

A LIFE IN EDUCATION HISTOIRE DE VIE SCOLAIRE

Margaret Bayne and the Vancouver Girls' Industrial School

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In 1917, when Margaret Bayne was asked to consider applying for the position of Superintendent of the Girls' Industrial School in Vancouver, she did not find the idea very attractive but was sufficiently intrigued to discuss it with the principal of a similar institution in Washington State.¹ She finally did apply and was appointed to the post: "The undertaking looked harder than anything I had ever tried. It seemed full of worth-while possibilities and would probably be the difficult task I had long hoped would come my way." From this one might imagine that her life thus far had been without major challenges, but nothing could be further from the truth. One of the first women to study at the University of Toronto, she had taught in schools from Ontario to the Pacific North-West, had been a successful businesswoman, and had speculated in land, timber, and the stock exchange. As an ardent supporter of the movement for women's votes, she had been for several years secretary of the Washington State Suffrage Association, was acquainted with the leaders of the movement, and had travelled across North America raising funds for the cause.² This paper traces the earlier stages of her life that shaped her character, her ideas, and her convictions, and then examines the twelve years during which she exercised almost exclusive control over the aims and operation of the Vancouver Girls' Industrial School.

1 British Columbia Archives [BCA], MS2808, Margaret Bayne, *Roses in December*, 168. Unpublished memoirs. The title is part of a quotation from Sir James Barrie: "God gave us memory that we might have roses in December." The early part of this paper is based largely on these memoirs, and unless otherwise noted it should be assumed that facts and quotations are taken from them (hereafter *Roses in December*).

2 For another treatment of her career, see Jenea Gilley, "Daughter of Zelophehad: Margaret Bayne's autobiography and the framing of the single self," paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, University of Toronto, May 27, 2002.

“I am a part of all that I have met”³

Margaret Bayne was born in 1865 in Woodstock, Upper Canada, just before the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. The American Civil War had been “of intense interest” to her family, as her father had moved back to Canada from Tennessee to avoid conscription in the Confederate army, and politics was much discussed at home. She was acutely aware of the opportunities offered by the new Confederation of Canada: “What a land – its magic, its mystery, its emptiness ...everywhere waiting for my generation to go in and take possession.” Due to her father’s ill-health, she spent much of her youth with her Scottish grandparents, where “thrift and hospitality were the household gods,” where education was as important as religion, and where visiting politicians and speakers came to stay and discuss such current world events as the building of the Suez canal and the discoveries of David Livingstone.⁴

She was a bright and headstrong student with an excellent memory, which she attributed to having to learn passages of scripture at home.⁵ By present-day standards Woodstock high school was not very progressive, and she used a textbook in which her aunt had written her name 25 years before, but it produced some other alumni who also made their way in the world. Duff Pattullo went on to become Premier of British Columbia, Tom Wilson made a fortune from his discovery of a method of producing acetylene gas, while other boys distinguished themselves in astronomy and engineering.⁶ It is perhaps worth noting that these achievements are the ones she remembered: there was only one girl “who won any particular distinction [as an author]”, but “I cannot say her stories had any particular merit.”

As teenagers she and her sisters were introduced to the suffrage movement by a book called *Eminent Women of the Age*,⁷ and developed an interest in public affairs which they satisfied by

3 *Roses in December*, title page, a quotation from Alfred, Lord Tennyson (*Ulysses*, 18). He was one of her favourite authors and the subheadings in this paper are taken from his works.

4 The lesson of thrift was well learned. Her memoirs are written in a folio-sized 1929 diary, which she cut neatly in half, used its right-hand pages first, then reversed the book and worked her way back to January on the other pages. Her scrapbook is a second-hand copy of Volume 36 of the *North British Review*, priced at 50 cents.

5 As a punishment she once had to memorize all 32 stanzas of Gray’s “Elegy in a country churchyard” in 24 hours: “It was not difficult to do so.”

6 Wilson’s company went on to become Union Carbide.

7 *Eminent Women of the Age*, by James Parton et al. (1869), contains 45 biographical sketches of “the most prominent women of the present generation,” including Susan B. Anthony, Queen Victoria, Jenny Lind, the Empress Eugénie, Florence Nightingale, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Julia Ward Howe.

borrowing magazines from the library. In 1884 she passed her teacher's examination and went for practice-teaching to the Model School, where the principal advised students to take a position in a one-room school to get experience with all eight grades. She followed his advice and for a year taught forty pupils in a school in Princeton where some of the boys were the same age as she was. It is typical that during her first teaching job she not only found the time to learn the brand-new skills of typing and shorthand, but also recognized their potential: "The use of the typewriter has done more for the emancipation of women than all the lectures and speeches on suffrage." Later she noted that "considering the restrictions placed upon women we girls [she and her sisters] probably did pretty well – much better than the average young woman of the day."

“Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control”⁸

In 1888 Miss Bayne went to the Toronto Normal School, where she broadened her interests not just through her studies but through friendship with other young women, some of whom attended the Business College, and others the Women's Medical School.⁹ She took a teaching position in Dundas, and studied Latin, perhaps with the idea of entering medicine. A visit to Chicago afforded her a glimpse of wider horizons, and in September 1890 she became one of the first women to study at the University of Toronto, where "another new world opened before me, a world in which I knew less and less as the circle of my knowledge widened and revealed the immensity of my ignorance." Her odd combination of subjects (Shakespeare, palæontology, and science) is further evidence of her enquiring mind, and she would have liked to continue with pharmacy, but at that time no women were admitted to the college.¹⁰ Perhaps because of the limits on advancement imposed by this prevailing attitude, she was not successful in her academic studies, but other things were becoming more important.¹¹

This period marked the beginning of her formal involvement with the struggle for women's rights, which was to play a major part in

8 Tennyson, *Ænone*, 144.

9 Her visiting cards were simply engraved "Miss Bayne": BCA, MS 2808.

10 The only hint of weakness in her resolve appears at this time: she remembers "John McCrae, who later wrote *In Flanders Fields* [as] the medical who always grabbed my frog for me and killed it."

11 Student records show that she failed her first year twice, in 1890/91 and 1891/92 (University of Toronto Archives, Student Records, A69-0011). She makes no mention of this in her memoirs.

determining her future career. She came to know Augusta Stowe-Gullen, Canada's first woman doctor, and through her became formally involved in the suffrage movement. She founded the university's first Women's Literary Society, a bold enough step in itself, but made more so as that title was the accepted euphemism for a suffrage group. The Chicago World's Fair of 1893 was also the site of a major Women's Congress – "in no period of my life did I learn more in less time than the summer of 1893" – but the learning was not limited to women's issues. She listened to the evangelists Moody and Sankey and marvelled at the displays in the Electrical Building, but declined to take a ride in a captive balloon.

She did not return to university, but went from Chicago to Minneapolis and from there to Manitoba to "take a school" in Winnipeg, then one in Neepawa, before moving in 1894 to another near Regina. Her desire to keep moving took her back to Manitoba in 1895, and a year later to a school in Pincher Creek, Alberta, where she boarded at the dubiously named Fish's Cow Camp. Six months there was enough for her, and in 1897 she took a school at Gleichen, east of Calgary, where proximity to the Blackfoot Reserve allowed her to study Aboriginal customs. The ease with which she moved from school to school shows the demand for teachers in these isolated little settlements and adds another perspective to the problem of teacher transience, which is usually ascribed to poor conditions rather than a spirit of adventure.¹² But Miss Bayne was "getting enough of the land of wilderness," so moving westward "like the course of empires," in January 1898 she took a train to Kamloops, and thence to Seattle.

"I cannot rest from travel: I will drink life to the lees"¹³

Seattle was thronged with prospectors heading to the goldfields of the Klondike, but she immediately made an appointment with the Superintendent of Schools, wrote the teachers' examination, was granted a First-Grade Certificate, and took a position in the tiny settlement of Pysht on the Olympic peninsula. The Washington State *Barefoot Schoolboy Act* of 1895 made provision for publicly funded schooling for all, including three months in the summer for any district with even a single child, and she taught three siblings in her rented

12 See for example David C. Jones, "Creating rural-minded teachers: The British Columbia experience," in *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West*, ed. D.C. Jones, N. M. Sheehan, and R.M. Stamp (Calgary: Detselig, 1999), 155-76.

13 Tennyson, *Ulysses*, 6-7.

room.¹⁴ In the fall she moved to a school in Port Angeles, and next summer took over an educational book supply business that provided displays at teachers' institutes. This enabled her to build up a network of contacts with "superintendents, their lecturers, and their most enterprising teachers" as she travelled throughout Washington State. She studied school law to qualify for her Washington diploma, and through contacts made at the institutes (bolstered by her knowledge of Latin), secured a union high school post for King County, a position that basically involved individual supervision and tuition of students in isolated areas, and allowed her to continue with her educational book business.

Miss Bayne moved to nearby Kirkland in 1900 and embarked on yet another project, the publication of a regular school newspaper sent to every teacher in King County. She enjoyed the business aspects of this venture and expanded her network of useful contacts, which helped her get her first trip back to the east coast for the National Education Association meeting in Boston in 1903. Here the two strands of her life came together, as she met up again with Dr. Stowe-Gullen and returned to Washington with a renewed interest in women's issues, later founding her own suffrage club in Kirkland. In 1906 she gave up her teaching position to become Secretary of the Washington State Suffrage Association and for the next three years was involved in fundraising and other matters, making contacts all over North America. In 1910 the shortage of funds for the movement took her back to Chicago, where she was much impressed to see a woman, Ella Flagg Young, as superintendent of one of the largest school systems in the country. In thirty days she travelled 8,000 miles collecting about \$2,000 "for an unpopular cause," but her work was not in vain, as later that year Washington became the first state to grant women the right to vote.

This task completed, she turned her attention to business, and the current interest in timber speculation led her to conclude that "surely the way to get rich was to acquire some of this accumulated wealth [old growth forest] as cheaply as possible." To that end she registered a timber claim in the Coast Range, taking a teaching position nearby to keep an eye on it. She extended her interests to British Columbia, forming holding syndicates that she "unloaded at a favourable opportunity [and then] began to look for more." Never one to delegate tasks to others, she tramped around her claim at 83 Mile House, accompanying the surveyors with map, compass, notebook, and sleeping bag, calculating the number of trees per acre, and the profit

14 Washington, Secretary of State – Newsroom, www.secstate.wa.gov/office/news. Accessed 1 Nov. 2002.

to be made from them. Dismayed by the neglected condition of the memorial marking the site of explorer Alexander McKenzie's camp on the Pacific, she visited her fellow high school alumnus Duff Pattullo, now Minister of Lands, to complain, and thus established yet another set of contacts, this time with the provincial government. In 1914 she was "ready for another land adventure" and turned her attention to the lucrative potential of grain land on the prairies, taking a teaching position in Calgary to facilitate this venture.

The outbreak of war changed everything and she worked as a volunteer with the Red Cross, collecting donations of grain while teaching at a school in Red Deer. She maintained her interest in women's suffrage, and in 1917 heard Nellie McClung speak at the first election in the prairies at which women were allowed to vote. Later that year she returned to the West Coast, where she was asked by some of her influential women friends to consider applying for the position of Superintendent of the Vancouver Girls' Industrial School, which they (and the Attorney-General) felt "was essentially one which should be held by a woman."¹⁵ At the age of 52, after nearly thirty years of travel and experience as a teacher, administrator, suffrage organizer, fundraiser, and businesswoman, with a network of highly placed contacts in all those fields, she was faced with a new challenge, one that anyone familiar with her background could guess she would be unable to resist.

"He that only rules by terror doeth grievous wrong"¹⁶

For much of Canada's legal history juvenile offenders were denied the due process accorded to adults, and were treated either summarily or with a large degree of paternalism.¹⁷ In 1894 federal legislation provided for detention apart from older prisoners for children under 16,¹⁸ but

the first institutions for delinquent children were in general large and had few staff; regimentation was the order of the day and work was the basic program. While diligence and obedience were stressed, the keynote was cost; the more economically the children could be fed and clothed, the better.

¹⁵ "Loses his place at Girls' Home," *Vancouver Province*, Dec. 15, 1917, 25.

¹⁶ Tennyson, *The Captain*, 1-2.

¹⁷ D. Owen Carrigan, *Crime and Punishment in Canada: A History* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 431.

¹⁸ W.T. McGrath, "Crime and Society," in *Crime and its Treatment in Canada*, ed. W.T. McGrath (Toronto: Macmillan, 1965), 210.

Physical punishment was frequently used, not through any desire to be cruel, but merely because it was genuinely believed that to spare the rod was to spoil the child.¹⁹

The delinquents were not just to be punished but taught a trade so that they could become useful members of society. Urbanization was leading to a growth in delinquency, especially in the slums, where children were most likely to be victims of parental neglect, and as petty offences began to increase so also did crimes of a more serious nature.²⁰ The *Juvenile Delinquents Act* of 1908 gave impetus to the reformers' crusade for children's courts where the individual could be treated "not as a criminal, but as a misdirected and misguided child," an approach dismissed by critics as the theorizing of "superficial and sentimental faddists."²¹

From 1911 to 1921 convictions for children under 16 for major offences increased by 124 per cent, and there was a growing concern over the use of drugs by young people in Vancouver. Although girls were becoming "more adventuresome in their lawbreaking," the great majority of female juvenile offenders stuck to the familiar territory of moral charges. Neglected girls who hung around the streets were assumed to be sexually active and promiscuous,²² an assumption later confirmed by the medical examinations ordered by Miss Bayne that consistently reported about a 50 per cent incidence of venereal disease.²³ In 1912 the Provincial Legislature passed the *Industrial Home for Girls Act*, authorizing the establishment of an institution for the "education, industrial training, and moral reclamation" of girls under 16 convicted of any offence punishable by imprisonment, or found by a judge to be guilty of "incorrigible or vicious conduct" beyond parental control.²⁴

The Vancouver Provincial Industrial School for Girls opened in 1914 under the superintendency of Thomas Collier of the Salvation Army.²⁵ In the first year twenty-two girls were committed to the institution, the majority 14 or 15 years old, and three-quarters of them

19 Donald Sinclair, "Training Schools in Canada," in *ibid.*, 248.

20 Carrigan, *Crime and Punishment in Canada*, 218.

21 Inspector Archibald of the Toronto police felt that he should not have to "kiss and coddle a class of perverts and delinquents who require the most rigid disciplinary and corrective methods to ensure the possibility of their reformation," *ibid.*, 417, 420.

22 *Ibid.*, 219-21.

23 *Fifth Annual Report of the Provincial Industrial School for Girls, 1918* (hereafter *Annual Report GIS*) (Victoria: King's Printer, 1919), 6.

24 *An Act for establishing an Industrial Home for Girls*, Statutes of British Columbia, c. 11, 1912, ss. 2-6.

25 *Sessional Papers of the Legislature of British Columbia, 1915*, C49 (hereafter *Sessional Papers*).

declared “incorrigible.”²⁶ Collier’s first annual report is rather vague, but it recounts that the girls were instructed in the household skills of cooking, bread-making, sewing, and laundry, accomplishments that might also fit them for domestic service. The established industrial school pattern was followed, with half the day devoted to school work and the other to the tasks necessary to house, feed, and clothe the inmates. Weekly church services were held, and the library had a small collection of “useful and moral books.” His pleasure in reporting the excellent health of the girls (“Long may it remain so!”) would probably have been spoiled if he, like his more practical successor, had insisted on more thorough medical examinations.²⁷

A strict daily routine required the girls to get up at 6:30 to prepare breakfast, which was at 7:30 and followed by prayers. All girls went to their “allotted tasks” until 9:30 when the juniors attended school. After dinner at noon, washing up, and a brief recreation period, the roles were reversed, with the seniors attending school while the juniors did other work, culminating in 45 minutes of drill. Free time from 4:30 to 5:00, tea at 5:15, and washing up preceded the evening’s supervised reading or games in the assembly room before bedtime at 8:00 in summer and 7:30 in winter. Half an hour’s reading in bed was permitted. On occasion philanthropic groups presented concerts, displays, and classes, and special treats included “a splendid auto drive” and “two gallons of delicious ice cream” donated by a local magistrate.²⁸ Collier’s reports do not reflect significant variations in the routine: “much the same as mentioned in the last report” is a typical comment, although there was an increased effort to donate knitted goods to the “brave boys at the front.”²⁹ Clearly the institution was operating in a way acceptable to society, giving at least the impression of something being done for the unfortunate inmates. No follow-up statistics are reported, so rates of success or recidivism are hard to gauge, but the continuing growth in interest in child welfare, especially among women in high positions, was to encourage a change of direction.³⁰

26 *Annual Report GIS 1914*, S5. The first five annual reports were published in the *Sessional Papers*. After Miss Bayne took over, this practice was discontinued for her term of office, and those typed and signed annual reports that survive are held by the Legislative Library. It should also be noted that reporting periods varied, and sometimes overlapped; for example there are two documents titled *Tenth Annual Report*, an interim one covering the period Nov. 1, 1922 to Sept. 30, 1923, and another covering April 1, 1923 to March 31, 1924.

27 *Annual Report GIS 1914*, S6.

28 *Annual Report GIS 1916*, T18.

29 *Annual Report GIS 1917*, T25.

30 Carrigan, *Crime and Punishment in Canada*, 419.

“That not one life should be destroyed, or cast as rubbish to the void,...so runs my dream”³¹

For some time it had been felt that the position of superintendent would be more appropriately filled by a woman, and Miss Bayne had the reputation, the qualifications, and (just as importantly) the political connections. She herself had “something more interesting in mind,” but agreed under conditions which show that she had already made herself familiar with the institution. All fourteen acres of the site on Cassiar Street were to be cleared and enclosed with a solid six-foot fence; further buildings were to be erected as necessary, and more staff were to be hired. She was to have personal control over engaging and dismissing staff, “thus eliminating government red tape and political dead timber.” It is a measure of her determination and influence that these conditions were accepted: Attorney-General Farris agreed to give her “a free hand and full backing for a two-year or longer experiment if desired.” Superintendent Collier was given one month’s salary in lieu of notice, and Miss Bayne took over on January 1, 1918.³² She was under no illusions about the difficulty of her task: in spite of the generally positive public view of the institution she saw it as “not an industrial school at all, but simply a place of detention and punishment,” even if it was better than the Boys’ Industrial School, which had been described as “not a reformatory but a deformatory.”³³

To prepare herself for her new position Miss Bayne made herself familiar with the literature, visited a similar institution in Washington State, and studied psychoanalysis, which she found valuable as hers was to be the only industrial school in Canada to keep and use psychoanalytical records. She had the girls tested by a psychologist, revealing “a large proportion of subnormals” who would need “constant custodial care,” and all were given a thorough medical examination, resulting – as noted above – in half of them receiving treatment for venereal infection.³⁴ She identified

31 Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, liv.

32 “Loses his post at Girls’ Home,” *Vancouver Province*, Dec. 15, 1917, 25. A rather harsh decision after four years’ service.

33 BCA, MS2808, Scrapbook (hereafter Scrapbook), *Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1919. The development of the Boys’ Industrial School has been admirably chronicled by Diane Matters: “The Boys Industrial School: Education for Juvenile Offenders,” in *Schooling and Society in 20th Century British Columbia*, ed. J. Donald Wilson and David C. Jones (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1980), 53-70.

34 *Annual Report GIS 1918*, 6-7. It is typical of the period’s attitude to genetics that she felt this care was needed “so that society may be relieved of a serious menace and a perpetuation of feeble-mindedness.” Sterilization of mentally deficient inmates of mental hospitals or industrial schools was later permitted under certain conditions by the *Sexual*

several major problems that would have to be addressed. These included the inability to separate girls with a long record of incorrigibility from those who were merely neglected or mentally handicapped, relationships with the staff, the need to provide sufficient useful activities and training to keep everyone busy, privacy and security, and the attitude of the press, which was always ready to sensationalize stories of escapes or misbehaviour.

Her approach was simple and direct: "What is most needed by delinquent girls is training in morals, and in the manual and domestic arts together with physical renovation and development."³⁵ Health issues would be addressed by scrupulous cleanliness, a plain wholesome diet, and regular hours; outdoor work would be stressed, not just for exercise, training, or food production, but as "conducive to moral conduct,"³⁶ an approach that reflected the growth of the agrarian myth and the school garden program under way at that time.³⁷ The institutional atmosphere was to be humanized by relaxed dress requirements, more homely surroundings, and the introduction of an honour system rewarding good behaviour.

**“For good ye are and bad, and like to coin; some true, some light,
But every one of you stamped with the likeness of the King”³⁸**

There was a high annual turnover of inmates, but there were on average 35 girls as residents, the majority aged 15 or 16, although some were much younger, and they were generally committed for a period of not less than two years.³⁹ The reasons for their commitment also remained fairly consistent, with typically two-thirds being classed as incorrigible, while the remainder had been convicted of such offences as theft, vagrancy, prostitution, and breaking probation: "of such material is the motley group forming the human scrap heap that society sends to the GIS," she noted

Sterilization Act (Statutes of British Columbia, 1933, c. 59).

³⁵ *Annual Report GIS 1919*, 4.

³⁶ *Annual Report GIS 1918*, 7.

³⁷ See, for example, D.C. Jones, "The Zeitgeist of Western Settlement: The Myth of the Land," in *Schooling and Society in 20th Century British Columbia*, ed. Wilson and Jones, 71-90.

³⁸ Tennyson, *Idylls of the King; The Holy Grail*, 25-27.

³⁹ *Annual Report GIS 1916-1929*.

later.⁴⁰ She concluded that the girls fell into three broad categories: first, those who could be “successfully salvaged,” and next, those of “subnormal mentality,...victims of immoral influences and an easy prey to temptation,” who should never have been sent there in the first place.⁴¹ The third group, and the one that concerned her most, consisted of those “so sophisticated and vicious that attempted redemption is time wasted,” “rank offenders against discipline” who stirred up trouble, but whom she was unable to segregate from the others in spite of her constant appeals for alternative facilities.⁴²

Many of the girls felt that they had been treated unjustly by society, and tended to be “muscular-minded rather than academically-minded.” Parents were “more often a hindrance than a help,”⁴³ and the tragic home situations of some girls explained much: “Mother lives in a two-room shack-like house. Three older boys sleep in one bed in the kitchen. [Mother] and twins sleep in the other bed in the bedroom.”⁴⁴ Another girl was a “destitute orphan...with no relatives or family who are able to take care of her in any way.”⁴⁵ In another case a mother wanted her two daughters released so that one could take a position and support the family while the other “could stay at home with her and help take care of the little ones.”⁴⁶ Miss Bayne’s belief in the importance of a good home is obvious: she reported that a girl who earned a remission of sentence for exemplary behaviour had only gone wrong in the first place because of “unhappy home conditions.”⁴⁷

“Oh! Teach the orphan boy to read, or teach the orphan girl to sew”⁴⁸

Miss Bayne’s appointment was greeted with polite notices in the press as she embarked on what she found the hardest year of her

40 *Annual Report GIS 1919*, 6.

41 *Ibid.*

42 *Roses in December*, 185; *Annual Report GIS 1920*, 3; *Annual Report GIS 1919*, 7.

43 *Roses in December*, 185.

44 BCA, GR 10883, Box 14, File 4, “Superintendent of Neglected Children; Records with regard to child welfare 1919-1963,” letter from Margaret Bayne to Thomas Menzies, May 29, 1929.

45 BCA, GR 10883, Box 14, File 1, Judge of Juvenile Court to T. Menzies, Nov. 24, 1928.

46 BCA, GR 10833, Box 14, File 4, M. Bayne to T. Menzies, April 19, 1929.

47 BCA, GR 10883, Box 14, File 1, M. Bayne to T. Menzies, August 29, 1928.

48 Tennyson, *Lady Clara de Vere*, 69-70.

tenure. The Boys' Industrial School had come in for some harsh criticism and was moving towards a military model, with Reveille and Sick Parades signalled by bugle calls, but she went in the opposite direction, having long refectory tables cut in half to make the dining room more homely, permitting talking at meal-times, and allowing the girls to wear bright hair-ribbons.⁴⁹ Although she admitted that initially the girls regarded kindness as a weakness, she persisted, and set out to create a "harmonious home atmosphere."⁵⁰ This did not however imply idleness. An acre of land was cleared and three tons of potatoes harvested, but she wanted a further ten acres as there was "not enough housework to keep 30 or 40 girls busy even with daily polishing of floors and dusting out corners."⁵¹

Her most controversial innovation was the introduction of an honour system, especially as it appeared at first to be a spectacular failure when a rash of runaways took advantage of the relaxation of the rules. Miss Bayne admitted this, blaming also the "lack of active employment and physical exercise," but the next year she was vindicated, as there were no runaways.⁵² Although she was credited with introducing the honour system it was by no means her own idea. The 1912 *Industrial Home for Girls Act* set out the details of a scheme whereby girls obtaining sufficient good marks for conduct, school proficiency, and industrious habits could earn a discharge.⁵³ Just a year later a Juvenile Court judge noted improvements, and press notices became increasingly positive: "Honour system now" became "Honour system triumphs," and finally "Honour system brought to perfection."⁵⁴ It was credited with "uplifting self-respect and personal morale," making the girls "more refined and more moral," and enabling them to see the staff as "friends rather than custodians."⁵⁵ How much of this was due to the Hawthorne Effect is difficult to judge, as although the system clearly worked well for the girls Miss Bayne described as trainable, she continued to have serious problems with the more difficult cases.⁵⁶

49 *Sessional Papers, 1923*, J16; Scrapbook, *Toronto Star*, Oct. 21, 1920.

50 *Vancouver Sun*, July 25, 1919, 4.

51 *Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1919, 12.

52 *Annual Report GIS 1918*, 7; *Annual Report GIS 1919*, 1.

53 *Industrial Home for Girls Act 1912*, S15-16.

54 *Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1919, 12; July 25, 1919, 4; March 2, 1920, 1.

55 "The Provincial Girls' Industrial School and its woman superintendent," *Western Woman's Weekly*, Dec. 25, 1920, 7; *Vancouver Sun*, July 25, 1919, 4.

56 For the Hawthorne Effect, see R.F. Campbell, T. Fleming, L. Jackson Newell, and J.W. Bennion, "The inducement of change through the interaction of the subjects in an experiment with those conducting it," *A History of Thought and Practice in Educational*

“We only toil . . . and make perpetual moan”⁵⁷

Industrial schools, whether for orphans, Aboriginal children, or young offenders, divided the days between school work and domestic, agricultural, or mechanical tasks. These, it was hoped, would fulfil the dual purposes of preparing the young people for later life and making the institution largely self-supporting. It should be remembered that at this time less than 10 per cent of students attending public elementary schools in British Columbia went on to high school, and for the majority schooling consisted of little more than basic literacy, numeracy, and a smattering of history, geography, and natural science.⁵⁸ Girls came to the Industrial School with a wide range of ability and experience which made it difficult to achieve the school’s stated purpose: “To provide for delinquents such wise conditions of modern education and training as will restore the largest possible portion of them to useful citizenship.”⁵⁹ Miss Bayne extended time in the schoolroom from two and a half to three hours daily but admitted that academic work was a real problem, as so many of the girls were mentally retarded.⁶⁰ For that reason school studies were “supplemented with much hard work,” girls were taught to wrap parcels and make change, and they received instruction in woodworking and needlework.⁶¹

New courses in typing and stenography were initially taught by Mrs. Annie Sprout, whose connections with Sprout-Shaw Commercial College allowed successful girls to continue their studies outside the institution.⁶² The 1920s fashion for bobbed hair encouraged Miss Bayne to introduce classes in “marcelling and barbering” but the program was abandoned a year later following a dispute over apprenticeships.⁶³ Ever practical, she hoped that such courses would lead not just to moral reclamation but also to economic independence, which might prevent the girls slipping back into their former bad habits.⁶⁴

Formal schooling and commercial training might be important, but “since marriage is the greatest trade open to woman, household training is her greatest necessity.” Early in her time as superintendent

Administration (New York: Teachers’ College Press, 1987), 47.

57 Tennyson, *The Lotus Eaters*, 17-18.

58 F. Henry Johnson, *A History of Public Education in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1964), 53, 61.

59 *Annual Report GIS 1925*, 1.

60 *Vancouver Sun*, July 25, 1919, 4; *Annual Report GIS 1927*, 2.

61 *Annual Report GIS 1924*, 2; *Annual Report GIS 1927*, 2.

62 *Annual Report GIS 1918*, 3.

63 *Annual Report GIS 1925*, 2; *Annual Report GIS 1926*, 2.

64 *Vancouver Province*, Feb. 17, 1920, 11.

Miss Bayne hoped such training would also lead to domestic employment, but she later admitted that few of the girls looked forward to such a job, one pointing out that she could make a servant's weekly wage of \$15 in one night on her own. Cleanliness in Miss Bayne's mind was next to godliness, and visitors were impressed that "everything which could be polished glittered, and everything else was spotless," but household training did not stop there.⁶⁵ Cooking and sewing were also essential skills, and in her second year at the Industrial School the girls baked 8,000 loaves in addition to sewing 6,277 "dresses, aprons, towels, petticoats, bloomers, etc."⁶⁶ In the same year the gardens produced one and a half tons of potatoes, 2,500 lbs. of carrots, 1,000 lbs. of tomatoes, and 500 dozen eggs.⁶⁷ Within two years more land was cleared; the pigs, ducks, geese, rabbits, and chickens were supplemented by a small dairy herd, and there was "enough to keep all busy for the first time."⁶⁸ The amount of foodstuffs produced is staggering when it is realized that apart from two gardeners and some part-time paid assistance all the work was done by the girls and required considerable labour (Table 1).

Table 1: Hours of work by inmates at GIS, April 1924.

Housekeeping	1,850
Kitchen	912
Laundry	506
Dairy	463
Wood sawing	422
Sewing room	330
Bake room	156
Poultry	118
Gardening	53
School	561
Commercial	250

Source: "Official Report: Prisoners with hours of work," attached to *Annual Report GIS 1924*.

65 Scrapbook, *Edmonton Journal*, Feb. 7, 1924.

66 *Vancouver Province*, Feb. 17, 1920, 11. The meticulous reporting of figures in the annual reports and the minute details of expenditure in the Public Accounts were necessary to demonstrate both the success of the venture and accountability for public funds.

67 *Annual Report GIS 1920*, 2.

68 *Annual Report GIS 1921*, 1.

Miss Bayne's expectations for her girls were high, and perhaps physical exhaustion rather than the honour system was responsible for the improved discipline. Never one to shun hard work, she was convinced that the girls enjoyed it too, although some of her claims seem a bit farfetched. School gardening may have been "a joy [and] early rising willingly done," but it is a little hard to accept wood sawing as "a happy pastime," when "for seven years we have been sawing wood from stumps salvaged from land clearing."⁶⁹ Nevertheless, in her opinion, no figures could show "the moral improvement of the place due to plenty of outdoor work," especially if this could be carried out in a "farmerette dress...a one piece dress of nurse cloth blue...the most popular thing in the school, and the girls will hoe interminable rows of potatoes just for the privilege of donning the fetching looking overalls provided for the purpose."⁷⁰

There was little time allowed for recreation or leisure, as in Miss Bayne's opinion idleness led to problems. "It will be a merry Christmas here, for we all work hard – we're too busy to think of trouble," she claimed, pointing out that the Christmas dinner of roast goose cost the government a mere one and a half cents for each girl.⁷¹ There was always a Christmas pageant, usually culminating in "Rule Britannia," as Miss Bayne was a loyal supporter of the Empire. In 1919 and 1927 the Prince of Wales visited British Columbia, and on both occasions she led the girls to Hastings Station to wave at the royal train, having prudently written to the authorities to ensure that not only would the train slow down, but that the Prince would appear to return their greetings.⁷² Birthdays and public holidays were always celebrated, but Sundays were difficult as church services were not enjoyed, and the "enforced idleness" led to problems. Miss Bayne drew on her wide array of suitable acquaintances to address the girls, including such dignitaries as Minister of Lands Duff Patullo, Nellie McClung, and Mrs Pankhurst, whom she described as "the greatest woman in the British Empire."⁷³ In addition there were speakers on more practical subjects such as motherhood and childcare.⁷⁴

69 *Annual Report GIS 1926*, 2-3; *Annual Report GIS 1927*, 3.

70 *Annual Report GIS 1926*, 5; Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, Oct. 24, 1919.

71 *Vancouver Sun*, Dec. 22, 1921, 1.

72 *Vancouver Province*, Dec. 16, 1926, 16; Scrapbook, unidentified press cuttings, 1919 and 1927.

73 *Annual Report GIS 1918*, M48; Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, Nov. 29, 1919.

74 *Vancouver Sun*, July 25, 1919, 4.

“The woman is so hard upon the woman”⁷⁵

While great emphasis was placed on the honour system and its positive effects on the girls' behaviour, this did not eliminate the need for harsher methods on occasion. Miss Bayne repeatedly emphasized her new approach, with comments like “this is not a place of punishment,” “we have abolished punishment,” and “human sympathy and kindness have taken the place of disciplinary punishment,” but it should be noted that these referred to the general treatment of young offenders committed to her charge, and that severe breaches of the institution's rules were dealt with very strictly.⁷⁶ She had two rooms converted into “secure and sanitary cell chambers by using cages from the Okalla prison farm,” and these were to figure in an incident that caught the attention of the press, and that help demonstrate why Miss Bayne grew so infuriated with the selective coverage of events at the Girls' Industrial School.⁷⁷ In August 1927 a policeman claimed that girls had been locked in cages and hoses turned on them, but at a public meeting Premier Oliver came to her defence, throwing down a \$50 bill as a wager that the charge could not be proved.⁷⁸ An opposition MLA embellished the accusation a few months later, claiming that girls were “being punished by being locked in steel cells and having a stream of water played on them by the lady superintendent.”⁷⁹ Miss Bayne later acknowledged that incorrigibles were at times placed in the steel cages and that “a garden hose had on one occasion been used on a girl with hysteria.”⁸⁰ What is not recorded, unfortunately, is whether the policeman ever got his \$50 from the premier.

The serious trouble-makers were generally few in number but had a disproportionate influence on the others, who tended to follow their lead, and Miss Bayne's constant requests for separate facilities were not answered. This was one of her few failures, because usually, “when I want money for something for the school I go down to the Attorney-General and howl my head off till I get it!”⁸¹ She did, however, hold the whip hand. She had one incorrigible girl transferred to the women's prison at Okalla for “persistent and rebellious defiance of authority,” an action that “had the desired effect” as six or seven

75 Tennyson, *The Princess*, 222.

76 *Annual Report GIS 1918*, 5; Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, Nov. 29, 1919; *Western Women's Weekly*, Dec. 25, 1920, 7.

77 *Annual Report GIS 1918*, 6.

78 Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, Aug. 27, 1920.

79 Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, Nov. 25, 1920.

80 Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, Jan. 18, 1921.

81 Scrapbook, *Toronto Star*, Oct. 21, 1920.

months later the girl returned “in chastened mood, and has constantly endeavoured to behave herself.”⁸²

One of her first requests was for a six-foot fence, not so much to keep the girls in as to keep prowlers and prying eyes out. Her ongoing battle with the press started from this, and especially from an article headlined “Fences Necessary to Protect Girls: Superintendent of Feminine Destinies Scores Fire-Escape Romeos,” which alluded to soldiers, hacksaws, and attempted assignments.⁸³ She soon found out that “periods of rest pass unnoticed,” but that escapes were sensationalized and the general public “remembers only the spectacular,” something that made her particularly angry because of the potential for harm to the girls: “The vicious publicity accorded certain cases at this school will react most unfavourably towards the girls upon their release.”⁸⁴ After her first year the number of escapes was never very great, and depended largely on the influence of “certain recidivists [who] stirred up trouble.”⁸⁵ They told “thrilling stories” of their escapades, such as the girl who spent forty-five days on the run with her boyfriend stealing cars.⁸⁶ Miss Bayne saw the need to “take the glory out” of the escapes, which she blamed largely on bravado and dares.

The press, however, gleefully continued to run the stories: six girls apprehended in Hastings Park “took pleasure in tearing to pieces and breaking up everything removable in the Inspector’s car while being driven to the police station. Their songs and yells shattered all to pieces the calm of the Sabbath eve.”⁸⁷ The introduction of the honour system was blamed for two incorrigibles who smashed seventeen windows and “terrorized the staff and other inmates with an axe” before being arrested in their nightgowns by a police officer who was “much blood-besmattered.”⁸⁸ The paper later admitted that the disturbance was not even great enough to justify waking Miss Bayne, and that the cuts from broken glass were in fact trifling.⁸⁹ Her girls had enough trouble getting jobs because of the “bar sinister of a criminal record” without sensational accounts of exploits at the school, and she did her best to protect them.

82 BCA, GR 10883, Box 14, File 1, M. Bayne to T. Menzies, Dec. 12, 1928.

83 *Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1919, 12.

84 *Annual Report GIS 1925*, 1.

85 *Annual Report GIS 1919*, 1.

86 *Annual Report GIS 1927*, 12; *Annual Report GIS 1926*, 4.

87 *Vancouver Sun*, March 23, 1920, 9. Disturbances on the “Sabbath eve” are presumably much worse than those which occur when it is called “Saturday night.”

88 *Vancouver Province*, May 24, 1918, 7.

89 Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, 1918.

“Manners are not idle, but the fruit of loyal nature, and of noble heart”⁹⁰

Her initial success, according to Miss Bayne, resulted from a combination of interesting schoolwork, increased outdoor activity, constant employment, the “absence of vicious subnormal leaders,” and a well-trained harmonious staff.⁹¹ One of the conditions she laid down was that she should have a free hand in hiring and firing staff, and there was a steady increase in the number of staff employed (Table 2). The most crucial positions were the matron, the engineer (responsible for maintenance and janitorial duties), and the gardener. Filling these positions with competent long-service personnel was essential for the smooth running of the institution, and Miss Bayne was largely successful in doing this.

Table 2: Staffing and other expenditures for GIS, 1915-1929

Year	FTE Total Staff* / Expenditure	Staff Salaries	Other Expenditures
1915	6 / \$8,037	\$4,175	\$3,862
1919	8 / \$23,873	\$8,773	\$15,100
1924	12 / \$32,528	\$13,134	\$19,394
1929	13 / \$29,286	\$13,324	\$15,963

*Approximation of full-time equivalent staff positions

Sources: Public Accounts, *BC Sessional Papers*, 1914-15, 1918-19, 1923-24, 1928-29.

One of the most difficult positions to fill was that of matron, and during Miss Bayne’s 12-year tenure there were six different matrons. It is significant that as the matron’s salary increased relative to other senior positions, so did the length of service. In 1919 the matron earned \$840, and by 1929 this had risen by 14 per cent to \$960, while other salaries rose about six per cent.⁹² Another likely factor is the

90 Tennyson, *Idylls of the King; Guinivere*, 335-36.

91 *Annual Report GIS 1922*, 1.

92 All these salary figures are taken from the “Public Accounts” published annually in the *BC Sessional Papers*.

amount of assistance available to the matron, as there was a considerable increase in the number of other minor household employees, who were certainly expected to work hard: "Each staff member when on duty works 12-13 hours a day, averaging 10 hours for 7 days a week."⁹³ Male senior staff were better paid, and tended to remain much longer. Mr. J.R. Clark was hired as engineer and janitor in 1917, and stayed until 1926. His initial salary was \$1,200, which increased in three years to \$1,560, \$180 more than Miss Bayne's, although hers did rise to \$1,500 the next year. Nevertheless, in every year of her tenure but the last Miss Bayne earned less than her engineer. Mr. F.W. Cameron took the position of gardener in 1916, remaining until 1920 when he was replaced by Mr. A. Dallen and Mr. T. Hoskins, with salaries between \$1,200 and \$1,300. She presumably justified the hiring of another gardener by the savings in food costs and profits made from the sale of produce, which helped reduce operating expenses by \$3,400 between 1924 and 1929.⁹⁴ Mr. R.C. McCaul earned \$1,300 as teacher and agricultural instructor, and there were numerous other staff, but the turnover was quite high, and they were paid considerably less.

As the suburbs of Vancouver expanded the location of the school became less suitable, with constant traffic and curious passers-by acting as distractions for the girls. The cottage system of residences was becoming fashionable for correctional institutions and Miss Bayne was much in favour of the scheme, which would enable her to segregate the girls into her categories of "subnormal, persistently incorrigible, and trainable," but the present location was unsuitable.⁹⁵ She wanted a new 40-acre site, but this was the Depression, and it is a measure of her powers of persuasion that her funding remained at such a high level, even though institutional buildings, including hers, were falling into such disrepair that a Grand Jury reported the "criminal" condition of safety equipment such as fire escapes and hoses.⁹⁶

93 "Matron's Report," attached to *Annual Report GIS 1925*.

94 Her rather progressive suggestion that the girls should be paid for their work on the land to "provide a nest-egg for becoming clothes, a natural desire of girlhood," went no further; *Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1919, 12.

95 This system was also originally proposed for the Boys' Industrial School, but never carried out; see Matters, "The Boys' Industrial School"; *Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1919, 12.

96 *Annual Report GIS 1926*, 6; *Vancouver Province*, April 29, 1924, 1.

“I am become a name”⁹⁷

For a decade the Girls' Industrial School received widespread acclaim, being described in the national press as “one of the finest institutions of its kind in the country,” and by authorities on child welfare as “a perfect disciplined institution.”⁹⁸ Miss Bayne herself was much in demand as a speaker and received high praise for her “intuitive understanding of girls' nature, sympathetic friendship, organizing ability, firmness of character,...unusual educational and moral training,...humanitarian idealism and practical good sense.”⁹⁹ The work, however, was taking its toll on her health, and she suffered a partial hearing loss after an influenza epidemic in 1926.¹⁰⁰ Changing social attitudes made it necessary to defend her methods against “the adverse criticisms of institutional life,” although she pointed out that the percentage of success was sufficiently high to show that the school's work was “inherently worthwhile.”¹⁰¹

More significant, however, was her growing conviction that she had not been as successful as she had hoped:

Twelve years of my hard work and planning went into the building of this industrial plant....These were 12 years of joy at the number of lives successfully established; they were years of sorrow for the failures, years of realization that the well worked-out plan was not the answer to the problem of delinquency.¹⁰²

In her brief final report she stated:

There was a time when a thorough training in housekeeping was deemed sufficient for the majority of girls here. This is no longer good enough....Industries must be carried out that will enable the girls to go on to positions other than those of a housekeeping nature.¹⁰³

A trade school was needed where housekeeping, although very necessary, would be subsidiary, but her real concern lay much deeper: “The problem seems to be a social and economic one, but in reality it

97 Tennyson, *Ulysses*, 11.

98 Scrapbook, unidentified press cutting, March 20, 1928, passage underlined; *Vancouver Sun*, June 1, 1929, 3.

99 *Western Women's Weekly*, Dec. 25, 1920, 7.

100 *Vancouver Sun*, June 1, 1929, 3.

101 *Annual Report GIS 1927*, 5-6.

102 *Roses in December*, 187.

103 *Annual Report GIS 1929*, 1.

is a social and spiritual one. We cannot arrive at social and economic justice except by moral and spiritual regeneration.”¹⁰⁴

Her emphasis on values clearly set her apart from the sociological approach to society’s ills that was becoming increasingly fashionable at the time, and in addition she had lost her political support. Her backers in the Liberal party had been replaced by a government “whose vision of social service was the use of staff positions in the service as safe and comfortable berths for its political dead timber and parasites.” The frigidly polite tone of her correspondence with the new Attorney-General is a far cry from her dealings with his predecessor. She had always kept the girls’ medical records, but now they were in the hands of the institution’s doctor, who refused to say who had given her permission to keep them.¹⁰⁵ This affront to her long-established personal control appears to have been the last straw, and gave her “the opportunity to apply for superannuation and so voluntarily to step down in honourable retirement.”¹⁰⁶

“Sunset and evening star, and one clear call for me!”¹⁰⁷

It is hard to measure the success of institutions like the Girls’ Industrial School. Follow-up statistics usually refer only to a year or so after the release of inmates, and letters or anecdotes are often unreliable, especially as presumably only those with positive memories would keep in touch. Nevertheless, the information available does tend to confirm the validity of the categories into which she divided the girls (Table 3).

The serious trouble-makers were the ones who returned to the institution, and their number was proportionately small, as she noted. Those listed as “failures” or “unsatisfactory” she describes as being of “subnormal mentality...victims of immoral influences and an easy prey to temptations,” to whom must be added those who were placed in mental homes.¹⁰⁸ The third category, the “trainable” girls, made up more than half the number; they got married or otherwise “made good,” and these were the ones of whom she was justly proud. They furnished proof that she was right: that not all the girls were bad lots,

104 *Roses in December*, 187.

105 “I beg leave to enquire if [this] is the desire of your department,” she asked in a letter which concludes, “Awaiting your esteemed reply, I have the honour to be, Very truly yours, Margaret Bayne.” BCA, GR 10883, Box 14, File 2, Margaret Bayne to Hon. G. Poole, Attorney-General, March 5, 1929.

106 *Roses in December*, 188. Note the careful avoidance of the split infinitive.

107 Tennyson, *Crossing the Bar*, 1-2.

108 *Annual Report GIS 1919*, 6.

Table 3: Records of girls' situations after release from GIS

	1919	1920
Married	6	13
“Made good”	20	27
Died	1	2
Returned to institution	4	4
Mental home	1	2
“Failures” or “Unsatisfactory”	14	15

Source: Annual Report, Girls' Industrial School 1919, 1920.

but that with hard work, discipline, patience, and understanding they could go on to be good citizens and lead productive lives. “I am doing my best to be what you would like me or any of your girls to be...I do not know where I would be today if I had not come to you...but I did not come away from you as I was before,” wrote the head stenographer of a large firm.¹⁰⁹ Another former inmate drew a comparison that must have pleased her: “When I am older I am going to be able to boast that I have known two really great women – one, Dr. Stowe-Gullen, and the other Miss Bayne.”¹¹⁰ Her memoirs contain numerous anecdotes about her girls doing well in marriage, family, and business spheres, but she ruefully acknowledges “quite a few failures.” One girl is “queen of the underworld” in a large Canadian city, another “the moll of a safe-cracking gang,” and yet another a member of a wide-spread dope ring.¹¹¹

She was succeeded as Superintendent of the Girls' Industrial School by Mrs. Annie Westman, a trained nurse who had been in charge of a children's hospital, and was described as being like Miss Bayne in that she was “a disciplinarian,...confident, capable and in the very prime of life.” She “expected rather a stormy time and was not disappointed,” being greeted with “a small riot and 18 runaways,”¹¹² but she showed she would stand no nonsense by revoking privileges

109 Scrapbook.

110 *Western Women's Weekly*, Dec. 25, 1920, 7.

111 *Roses in December*, 183-84. Perhaps one can detect even a touch of pride in that at least these girls were successful in their chosen fields.

112 *Vancouver Sun*, July 1, 1929, 3; *Annual Report GIS 1930*, 1.

for all the girls for any attempted escape.¹¹³ She was promptly faced with an additional problem, the housing of several Doukhobor children whose parents had been sent to Okalla Prison following demonstrations and violence in the Kootenays.¹¹⁴

Miss Bayne had purchased a cottage overlooking English Bay for her retirement, and she spent the rest of her life there, enjoying her garden, her books, and the peace and quiet. She occasionally spoke at meetings, and wrote her memoirs for her niece. She had spent twelve years at the “difficult task” she had hoped would come her way, and in spite of her successes concluded that “the industrial school...is not the answer to the problem of delinquency.”¹¹⁵ She realized that it was unrealistic to expect a single policy or institution to deal with girls whose backgrounds, abilities, and attitudes were so diverse, and in this she was ahead of her time. She kept herself informed of new discoveries and modern ideas through contemporary publications, but for strength, guidance, and inspiration always came back to “other books – old friends, beloved of other days,” where Lord Tennyson’s account of Ulysses’ vision for his son could well have been written for her:

...to fulfil
This labour: by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and through soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.¹¹⁶

113 *Annual Report GIS 1932*, 2.

114 *Annual Report GIS 1930*, 4. Their letters show that although obviously unhappy they were well-treated; they were allowed their vegetarian diet, and were not regarded as regular inmates of the institution; BCA, GR2817, Box 1, File 1, British Columbia, Department of Provincial Secretary, “Records with regard to neglected children 1929-1950.”

115 *Roses in December*, 185.

116 Tennyson, *Ulysses*, 35-38.