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## Mount Allison College: The Reluctant University

In November 1978, the journal *University Affairs* reported that the Atlantic region of Canada may well have the distinction of having "the largest number of degree-granting institutions per capita in the world".<sup>1</sup> That this remains true is an indication of the failure of the numerous attempts which have been made, almost since the beginning of higher education in the region, to bring about university consolidation. In the 1840s, the legislature of Nova Scotia discussed two separate schemes for a single provincial university, while the lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick, Sir William Colebrooke, contemplated the establishment of a University of New Brunswick which would be a federation of colleges along the lines of the University of London. In neither province did these ideas bear fruit. When the University of New Brunswick was finally established in 1859, it was as a reformed version of a single college, King's. In Nova Scotia, a serious attempt was made in 1876 to induce college federation by means of the University of Halifax, an institution based again on the model of the University of London. It failed, however, to win wholehearted support from the institutions which it sought to unite, and in 1881 succumbed easily to the pressures imposed by a new and hostile provincial government.<sup>2</sup> Thus, as the twentieth century began, higher education in the Maritimes continued to depend upon a number of small institutions, most of them controlled by religious denominations. There was co-operation in some respects. The establishment of the Nova Scotia Technical College in 1907 was based on the agreement of the Nova Scotia universities to centralize the final two years of Engineering training at the new college, while in 1911 conferences of heads of institutions throughout the Maritimes were instituted. The question that such limited ventures did not answer was whether the continued existence of the various institutions did not in itself represent a wasteful duplication of effort, notwithstanding any measures of co-operation which might be attempted. In 1921, this question was addressed by

1 *University Affairs*, 19, No. 9 (November 1978), p. 2.

2 Outline accounts of early attempts at university consolidation can be found in Robin S. Harris, *A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1960* (Toronto, 1976), pp. 103-6; Denis Healy, "The University of Halifax, 1875-1881", *Dalhousie Review*, 53 (1973-74), pp. 39-56; W.S. MacNutt, "The Universities of the Maritimes: A Glance Backwards", *Dalhousie Review*, 53 (1973-74), pp. 431-48; Walter C. Murray, "College Union in the Maritime Provinces", *Dalhousie Review*, 2 (1922-23), pp. 410-24; Gerald T. Rimmington, "The Universities of the Atlantic Provinces", *Canadian Geographical Journal*, 73, No. 2 (August 1966), pp. 38-49; H.J. Somers, "The Atlantic Provinces", in Robin S. Harris, ed., *Changing Patterns of Higher Education in Canada* (Toronto, 1966), pp. 17-37.

William S. Learned and Kenneth C.M. Sills, the commissioners of the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Acting on the invitation of the universities and colleges themselves, and of the Government of Nova Scotia, the Carnegie Corporation instructed Learned and Sills to review the entire educational system in the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland and to recommend a basis upon which the corporation could give grants towards future educational improvements. Following a visit to the region in October and November 1921, the commissioners recommended in their report, released in May 1922, that all the English-language institutions of higher education should be centralized in a single university to be located in Halifax.<sup>3</sup>

The commissioners' proposal was predicated on the belief that "to seek to perpetuate present arrangements . . . is foregone defeat". Small endowment funds, underpaid faculties, poor library collections, and inadequate physical facilities were all too typical of the Maritime colleges, and especially of those under denominational control.<sup>4</sup> To these problems, the commissioners saw three possible solutions. The first, for each college to specialize in certain subjects after the freshman year and thus to differentiate itself from the others, they rejected as impracticable. The second, for Dalhousie to be developed to the exclusion of the other institutions, would be condemned by public opinion outside of Halifax. The third possibility, and the one which Learned and Sills espoused, was for each institution to move physically to Halifax and become a constituent college of a new "University of the Maritime Provinces". Or, since Dalhousie might be called upon to give up its buildings and endowments to the new university, the commissioners suggested that "Dalhousie University" might be another suitable name for the federated body. Whatever the name, it would be modelled, with adjustments, on the University of Toronto or the University of Oxford. While it would still be a small university in modern terms, the commissioners hoped that it would be able to hold its own in the national and international context of higher education.<sup>5</sup>

When representatives of the Maritime universities and governments met during 1922 to discuss the Learned-Sills report, it soon emerged that the commissioners' carefully reasoned proposal had aroused much support, and not only in Halifax. The University of New Brunswick showed little interest, but that was to be expected. The faculty of St. Francis Xavier voted to support the plan; Acadia University, despite fears as to the reaction of its Baptist constituency, did not at first dismiss it; King's College, Windsor, its own campus largely destroyed by a recent disastrous fire, was avowedly in favour. For Mount Allison, the President,

3 William S. Learned and Kenneth C.M. Sills, *Education in the Maritime Provinces of Canada* (New York, 1922), *passim*; Robert M. Lester, *Review of Grants in the Maritime Provinces of Canada and in Newfoundland, 1911-1933* (New York, 1934), pp. 8-10.

4 Learned and Sills, *Education in the Maritime Provinces*, p. 32.

5 *Ibid.*, pp. 31-43; see also Murray, "College Union", pp. 420-4.

Byron C. Borden, drew applause from the first major conference to be held on the Carnegie proposal in Halifax on 7 July 1922 when he announced that Mount Allison favoured the plan in principle and "would be disposed to enter into some Confederation scheme".<sup>6</sup> Encouraged, the Carnegie Corporation took a further step in January 1923, when it formally offered to contribute three million dollars towards the expenses which the scheme would entail.<sup>7</sup>

Yet the Carnegie proposal, the most serious effort ever to be made towards the rationalization of higher education in the region, was never implemented. The federation of Dalhousie and King's was formally concluded in September 1923, but the University of the Maritime Provinces continued to be an elusive dream. By the end of 1923, St. Francis Xavier and Acadia had both withdrawn from the scheme. Mount Allison, facing the uncertainties arising from the concurrent negotiations for the inclusion of the Methodist denomination in the projected United Church of Canada, delayed a final decision, and would opt ultimately to continue its work in Sackville, New Brunswick. As Robert Lester of the Carnegie Corporation reflected in 1934, "the federation plan of 1922, though based on a proposal discussed for a generation, was evidently premature".<sup>8</sup> Local particularism and denominational rivalry had, it would seem, triumphed over the regional interest of the Maritimes. Or had they? This paper will suggest that in at least one case, that of Mount Allison, the truth is more complex. Far from being a simple rejection of change in favour of particular local and cultural interests, the roots of Mount Allison's eventual attitude towards the Carnegie scheme lay deep in its concept of its mission to the Maritime Provinces and particularly to the rural population of the region.

The college which opened its doors in Sackville in 1862 was located on a rise of ground which some twenty years earlier had been named 'Mount Allison', in honour of Charles Frederick Allison, the founder of the original Wesleyan Academy. Over the years, 'Mount Allison' had come to signify more than a mere geographical location, and from the beginning the full title of the new institution was "the Mount Allison Wesleyan College".<sup>9</sup> It was in fact the third, and last, of the Mount Allison institutions to open, as an academy for girls had been added in 1854. The nineteenth-century history of the college can be divided into two very different periods, with the division occurring at the collapse of the University of Halifax in 1881. Each period was characterized by a particular view of Mount Allison's relationships to its constituency and to other colleges

6 *Minutes of a Conference of Representatives of Maritime Provinces Universities and Colleges* (Halifax, 1922), p. 11. On the attitudes of other institutions, see Ronald Stewart Longley, *Acadia University, 1838-1938* (Wolfville, 1939), pp. 125-6; Harris, *Higher Education in Canada*, pp. 353-4; Laurence K. Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada: A History* (Toronto 1971), pp. 86-7.

7 Lester, *Review of Grants*, pp. 11-2.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

9 *Acts of the New Brunswick Legislature*, 21 Victoria C57.

and the decisions made by Mount Allison in the 1920s can best be understood in the context of these historical developments.

The Methodists of the Maritimes were reluctant from the beginning to establish an independent degree-granting institution, though not because of any principled objection to higher education. Indeed, the original proposal of Charles Allison to found the Sackville Academy had envisaged that “higher branches of education” would be taught there, and from 1846 onwards a few Sackville scholars began to take advantage of newly-liberalized regulations at King’s College, Fredericton, to the extent of taking honours examinations there as extra-mural students.<sup>10</sup> By February 1852, the trustees of Mount Allison were informing the Nova Scotia Assembly that “there are three Professors engaged in the Higher Departments of Literature and Science; — that the course of Study includes all the usual branches of Collegiate as well as Academical education, so arranged as to prepare the Students for examination and the conferment of Degrees by King’s College, Fredericton”.<sup>11</sup> Yet in the same month, the editor of *The Wesleyan* newspaper declared, in an angry response to a suggestion that Nova Scotia government grants to denominational colleges should be diverted to the endowment of the non-denominational Dalhousie College, that “the Sackville Institution *is not* a COLLEGE, nor does it pretend to be a College, in the properly understood sense of the word, though in effect affording a ‘Collegiate Course’ of education”.<sup>12</sup>

The distinction made by the editor, Alexander McLeod, obscure as it might seem at first, was an important one. Indeed, it foreshadowed the language which would be used by Learned and Sills seventy years later, when they would describe Mount Allison as a “collegiate institute” rather than a college. Naturally, much had changed in those years and so the terms used in the two instances were not precisely the same. Whereas McLeod implied that Mount Allison had no ambition to grant degrees, Learned and Sills were observing that the degree courses which existed in 1922 formed only one part of the institution’s activities.<sup>13</sup> Despite that difference, however, Learned and Sills had identified the same characteristic that McLeod was seeking to emphasize, which was the tendency for Mount Allison to define itself not according to its institutional status but rather in terms of the services which it hoped to render to its constituency in various levels of education up to collegiate. As stated by some

10 Charles Frederick Allison to Rev. William Temple, 4 June 1839, Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society Records [hereafter WMMS], Box 101, file 11b, University of London, School of Oriental and African Studies; Rev. Enoch Wood to Rev. Robert Alder, 26 February 1847, WMMS, Box 31, file 221.

11 Ephraim Evans and J.H. Anderson, on behalf of the Trustees, to Nova Scotia Assembly, February 1852, MG 17, vol. 17, no. 77, Public Archives of Nova Scotia [hereafter PANS].

12 *The Wesleyan* (Halifax), 21 February 1852.

13 The others being centred on the non-degree-granting schools, the Academy and the Ladies’ College.

twelve hundred, largely Methodist, petitioners to the Nova Scotia Legislative Council in 1849, the aim was very simple: “to extend the benefits of a cheap and yet efficient Education, based on high, moral principles”.<sup>14</sup> Drawing pupils from all over the Maritime Provinces, and open to members of any religious denomination, the basis of the institution’s claim to government grants from both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia rested upon its service to the community at large and in particular to those who could not afford an expensive education. Fees, declared the trustees in 1852, would be “within the reach of all aspirants after literary and scientific attainments”.<sup>15</sup> A further source of pride was the Academy’s rural setting, and the chief virtues of Sackville as portrayed in the first school catalogue for 1843 (and in its successors for many years thereafter) were that it was “a retired country village, pleasant and healthy” and that it was “easy of access from all parts of the Lower Provinces”.<sup>16</sup> The Academy was the effort of a relatively small religious denomination — lacking the influence of Anglicans and Presbyterians, and the numbers of the Baptists — to serve both its own members and the still overwhelmingly rural population of the Maritime region.

Nor were these objectives essentially changed when the Mount Allison college was added to the Sackville institutions. An historian of higher education in the United States has commented that “college-building in the nineteenth century was undertaken in the same spirit as canal-building, cotton-ginning, farming, and gold-mining”.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps some of that eagerness was present when the Methodist conference of Eastern British America called in 1857 for the establishment in Sackville of “a College proper”, to provide “a complete University course” in literary and scientific subjects and to provide theological training for Methodist ministers.<sup>18</sup> After all, the conference was enjoying its newly-acquired autonomy from its British parent body, and its request for a college charter was carried swiftly through the New Brunswick legislature in early 1858 as a prelude to the Smashers’ attack on King’s College.<sup>19</sup> Yet later in 1858, the conference decided to proceed with the college only after what the *Provincial Wesleyan* described as “animated conversation”.<sup>20</sup> By the following year, the establish-

14 Petition of Wesleyans and others, 1849, RG 5, Series P, vol. 75, PANS.

15 Ephraim Evans and J.H. Anderson, on behalf of the Trustees, to Nova Scotia Assembly, February 1852, MG 17, vol. 17, no. 77, PANS.

16 *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of the Wesleyan Academy, Mount Allison, Sackville, N.B., for the year commencing 19th January, 1843*, p. 12.

17 Frederick Rudolph, *The American College and University: A History* (New York, 1962), p. 48.

18 *Minutes of Several Conversations Between the Ministers of the Wesleyan Connexion, or Church, of Eastern British America at their Third Conference* (Halifax, 1857), p. 18.

19 *Journals of the New Brunswick House of Assembly, 1857-58*, pp. 95, 97, 114, 124, 187, 260. See also W.S. MacNutt, *New Brunswick: A History, 1784-1867* (Toronto, 1963), pp. 367-72.

20 *The Provincial Wesleyan* (Halifax), 8 July 1858.

ment of the college was postponed owing to “the great business depression which is prevailing almost everywhere throughout these Provinces, and . . . the pressure of various other Connexional schemes upon the liberality of our people”. It was still hoped to proceed with the establishment of a theological professorship, but the rest of the college plan was to be held in abeyance.<sup>21</sup> The college finally opened in 1862, although again only after “protracted debate”. As the first Professor of Theology, Charles De Wolfe, observed, “the political strife to which some of our Colonial colleges have given rise, has rather frightened some of our timid people at the very name of such a thing”.<sup>22</sup>

Whether through timidity, modesty or simply realism, Mount Allison’s attitude to the college question from 1862 until 1881 would be consistent with its earlier reluctance to operate as an independent degree-granting institution. A college there would be, and degrees would be granted in every year from 1863 onwards; but the ideal for which the institution would strive would be to exist as a college in the English sense, as part of a larger university. In 1861, the conference had adopted as its first preference the establishment of “a proper Provincial University”, based on the models of the University of London and Queen’s University in Ireland, and only when this scheme proved impossible did it fall back upon the Mount Allison college legislation of 1858. On 17 January 1862, Humphrey Pickard, Principal of the Mount Allison Academy and soon to become the first President of the college, addressed this proposal formally to Leonard Tilley, leader of the New Brunswick government, and attacked the elevation of King’s College to “its recently acquired mis-nomer of University of New Brunswick”.<sup>23</sup> The appeal to Tilley, who had been closely associated with the new charter of the University of New Brunswick, was without avail, and the establishment of the Mount Allison College proceeded independently. The idea of the central, non-teaching university, however, was not forgotten. After he retired from Mount Allison, in an editorial in the *Provincial Wesleyan* in July 1871, Pickard praised the alumni society of King’s College, Windsor, for its recent advocacy of a central university, and asserted that Mount Allison’s Board of Governors “will readily consent to a suspension of its degree-conferring power, whenever its sister institutions shall be found prepared to severally agree to a similar suspension, in order that this common power may be centralized in a

21 *Minutes of Several Conversations Between the Ministers of the Wesleyan Connexion, or Church, of Eastern British America at their Fifth Conference* (Halifax, 1859), pp. 19-20.

22 Rev. Humphrey Pickard to Rev. N.B. Boyce, 16 August 1864, WMMS, Box 43, file 325; Rev. Charles De Wolfe to Boyce, 27 February 1863, WMMS, Box 43, file 319.

23 *Minutes of Several Conversations Between the Ministers of the Wesleyan Connexion, or Church, of Eastern British America at their Seventh Conference* (Halifax, 1861), pp. 16-7; Pickard to Tilley, 17 January 1862, RG 2, RS 8, Group I, 1/4, Provincial Archives of New Brunswick [hereafter PANB]. On the overall college question in New Brunswick at this time, see Frances A. Firth, “History of Higher Education in New Brunswick to 1864” (MA thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1951), pp. 424-84.

single independent University Board".<sup>24</sup> Mount Allison had always claimed to serve a Maritime, rather than a purely New Brunswick, constituency and, especially after its New Brunswick provincial grant was ended by the 1871 Education Act, it would turn increasingly towards Nova Scotia and would play an active role in the experimental University of Halifax.

The college question in Nova Scotia in the 1870s bore striking resemblances to its counterpart in New Brunswick some fifteen years before. In this case it was Dalhousie College which led the battle for a central teaching university, and in particular George Monro Grant, the prominent Presbyterian minister of Halifax who would later play a leading role in keeping Queen's University out of the University of Toronto. Mount Allison once again took the side of the non-teaching university; as its Board of Governors reminded the Nova Scotia Assembly in a petition of 1876, "they have earnestly and publicly striven to secure the establishment of a Central Degree-conferring University, distinct from the teaching Colleges as its affiliated branches".<sup>25</sup> Shortly afterwards the University of Halifax was established on just this basis, on legislation explicitly modelled after the University of London. In the new university, Mount Allison was named as one of six affiliated colleges, along with King's, Dalhousie, St. Mary's, Acadia and St. Francis Xavier.<sup>26</sup> It was true that the statute of 1876 was seen by its Liberal government progenitors as a step on the way to a teaching university, which Mount Allison could not have supported; but for the moment Mount Allison had what it had long wanted.

The ultimate failure of the University of Halifax arose both from lack of support among the majority of the affiliated colleges, and from the hostility of the Conservative provincial government which was elected in 1878 and which allowed the university to die three years later.<sup>27</sup> Mount Allison, however, was quick to promise "its readiness to the fullest extent compatible with the interests of our College and the rights and privileges of the students of Mt. Allison most cordially to cooperate with the proposed University of Halifax".<sup>28</sup> By 1879 curriculum changes had been made in order to conform with the University requirements; in 1880 a Presbyterian visitor to Sackville noted that the Mount Allison President, J.R. Inch, believed that through the University "the various denominational colleges might harmonize their courses of study, and be kept under the fostering care of government"; and in March 1881 Inch expressed

24 *The Provincial Wesleyan*, 26 July 1871.

25 Board of Governors of Mount Allison Wesleyan College to Nova Scotia Assembly, 1876, RG 5, Series P, vol. 78, PANS.

26 *Statutes of Nova Scotia*, 39 Victoria C28. See also Healy, "The University of Halifax", pp. 39-46.

27 *Ibid.*, pp. 49-53.

28 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1858-1899, p. 150, Mount Allison University Archives [hereafter MAA].

willingness that Mount Allison should surrender its degree-granting power, rather than simply continuing to send some students to take the University examinations.<sup>29</sup> Of the sixteen students who had taken B.A. examinations at the University by 1881, eight had come from Mount Allison College, and these included the only B.A. graduate of the University, S.D. Scott. Those who had begun the B.A. course by that time and would complete their studies through Mount Allison's own examinations included William Morley Tweedie, future professor of English at Mount Allison, John Clarence Webster, future historian and advocate of the Carnegie scheme, and Harriet Starr Stewart, who would become in 1882 the first woman to be awarded a B.A. at a Canadian institution.<sup>30</sup>

The Chancellor of the University of Halifax, G.W. Hill, singled out Mount Allison in his last report in December 1880 as the only college which had taken advantage of the opportunity afforded by the University "of having their students tested by examiners outside of their own institutions"; Mount Allison, in fact, was the only exception to a gloomy record of non-cooperation which signalled the approaching end of the experiment.<sup>31</sup> Even Mount Allison had never entirely submerged itself in the University, and Tweedie, describing himself many years later as "one of the orphans left to mourn" the University's passing, felt that his college could have given greater support.<sup>32</sup> Yet the support which Mount Allison did give, and the willingness of Inch in 1881 to envisage the surrender of its degree-granting powers, represent the end of the first phase of Mount Allison's development as a college. Mount Allison up until 1881 acted and saw itself as a rural, denominational institution offering a wide variety of educational services through its three major constituents, the Academy, the Female Academy and the College. Except in theological training, which had always been carefully differentiated from other college work, it had always been reluctant to stand alone as an independent, degree-granting body. Rather, it had sought to find some larger institution which could provide validation for its collegiate activity; least of all had Mount Allison sought the status or the title of a university.

The demise of the University of Halifax in 1881 resulted, technically, from a stalemate between the Conservative-dominated Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia and the Liberal-dominated Legislative Council. While the Assembly

29 Minutes of the Mount Allison College Board, 1863-85, p. 60, MAA; *The Wesleyan*, 27 February 1880; J.R. Inch to S.D. Holmes, Provincial Secretary of Nova Scotia, 2 March 1881, printed in *The Wesleyan*, 22 January 1885.

30 University of Halifax, General Register, III, MG 20, vol. 344, PANS.

31 Minutes of University of Halifax Senate, 29 December 1880, MG 20, vol. 347, p. 396, PANS. Hill was the brother of P.C. Hill, the Nova Scotia Premier under whose administration the University of Halifax had been chartered.

32 W.M. Tweedie, "Early Days of Mount Allison and the University of Halifax", *Maritime Advocate and Busy East*, 29 (1938-39), No. 4, pp. 17-8.



would provide no further support for the University, the Council refused to approve either the abolition of the University, or the continuation of government grants to denominational colleges. Thus, the University was dead in practice though not formally abolished, and the denominational colleges, including Mount Allison, received no more government assistance. Rather than causing financial embarrassment, however, this was one of the factors which launched Mount Allison on a period of expansion which lasted for some twenty-five years, and indeed was its greatest period of expansion until after the Second World War. In part, this reflected the increased wealth which existed among Methodist families: the normal Nova Scotia legislative grant of \$2400 was promptly replaced in the year 1881-82 by the contributions of "a few gentlemen in Halifax", and a successful fund-raising campaign followed.<sup>33</sup> "Brethren", urged Inch at the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island Methodist conference in the summer of 1881, "our college — your college — must not go down".<sup>34</sup>

A further seemingly disastrous event which was turned to good account was the burning of the Academy in January 1882, which was described by the editor of *The Wesleyan* in a cheerful tone which suggested that he was well aware of the propaganda value of the fire, especially since no lives had been lost. Following a suggestion already made by the editor of the *Saint John News*, he urged that Mount Allison should take advantage of the currently prosperous condition of the country to consolidate its needs into one major appeal.<sup>35</sup> This was good advice, and was soon acted upon. Indeed, the expansion of Mount Allison in this period is inseparable from the prosperity which had accompanied the coming of the Intercolonial Railway and the initiation of the National Policy. Not only was this seen directly in the donations of such benefactors as Josiah Wood, the son of a Sackville shipbuilder who was now prospering in heavy industry in Moncton and who began the fund-raising campaign in 1881 by offering \$10,000 towards the construction of a new college building.<sup>36</sup> More generally, prosperity was the basis of the whole ethos of expansion. No longer was Sackville a "retired country village" in an exclusively rural setting. The railway linked it to Moncton, and also to the nearby town of Amherst, where such firms as Robb Engineering, the Rhodes, Curry Company, and the Amherst Boot and Shoe Company were emerging as major national industrial concerns. Sackville itself, though its years as a shipbuilding centre were numbered, was the site of several new industrial plants, including the successful Enterprise Foundry and Fawcett

33 Report of the Board of Governors of the Mount Allison Wesleyan College and Academies, in *Journal of the Third General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1882), p. 163.

34 *The Wesleyan*, 8 July 1881.

35 *Ibid.*, 13 January 1882.

36 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1858-1899, pp. 216, 220-21.

Foundry. While, in time, the new prosperity would fade, as local ownership slipped away from Maritime industries and as the Intercolonial Railway began to feel the political pressures which would ultimately destroy its favourable rate structure, in the later years of the nineteenth century the good times seemed to be securely founded.<sup>37</sup>

Thus the self-confidence of Mount Allison burgeoned in these years. "The college was organized twenty years ago with nothing but faith", proclaimed Inch to the Nova Scotia conference in 1885. "The history of the past twenty years is nothing to be ashamed of", he continued, "and whoever is living twenty years hence will find Mount Allison one of the strongest and best of colleges".<sup>38</sup> In 1886, in fact, Mount Allison became a university. The New Brunswick Act which created "The University of Mount Allison College" conferred wide powers, including "power to affiliate to the said University any other College desirous of such affiliation, or any schools wheresoever situated, in arts, in theology, in law, in medicine, in agriculture, in civil engineering, or in any other department of science or knowledge".<sup>39</sup> The old reluctance of Mount Allison to expand and to elevate its institutional status was clearly at an end, and the *Moncton Times* speculated in late 1886 that if university consolidation in the Maritimes were ever again discussed, Mount Allison's central position would make it "an eligible and not improbable site of our future Oxford or Cambridge".<sup>40</sup> Intellectually too, the vitality of Mount Allison was promoted by the arrival of young professors who brought with them new techniques and new ideas. In 1888 the recently-appointed Professor of English Language and Literature, William Morley Tweedie, rejected in his inaugural address the notion of studying literature through perfunctory assessment of certain "great writers" and insisted that the study of literature had to be understood as part of the greater study of man in society, an enterprise in which other disciplines shared. W.W. Andrews, a Methodist minister who became Professor of Science in 1890, rejected the teaching of science through lectures and reading alone. The student should conduct experiments and, as Andrews informed a Teachers'

37 This paragraph obviously draws upon recent studies of the Maritime economy in the late nineteenth century. See especially T.W. Acheson, "The National Policy and the Industrialization of the Maritimes, 1880-1910", *Acadiensis*, I (Spring 1972), pp. 3-28; Acheson, "The Maritimes and 'Empire Canada'", in David Jay Bercuson, ed., *Canada and the Burden of Unity* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 87-114; Ernest R. Forbes, "Misguided Symmetry: The Destruction of Regional Transportation Policy for the Maritimes", *ibid.*, pp. 60-86. On the local developments in Sackville, see Dale E. Alward, "Down Sackville Ways: Shipbuilding in a Nineteenth Century New Brunswick Outport" (BA thesis, Mount Allison University, 1978), pp. 109-19.

38 *The Wesleyan*, 2 July 1885.

39 *Acts of the New Brunswick Legislature*, 49 Victoria C41.

40 Quoted in *The Wesleyan*, 30 December 1886.

Convention in Amherst in 1894, should be encouraged to correct the text-books if necessary.<sup>41</sup>

An analysis of the matriculation requirements of Maritime universities published by the *Educational Review* in 1897 showed that Mount Allison's requirements were especially demanding in Science and in English, a finding which suggests that Andrews and Tweedie were not necessarily typical of all their faculty colleagues.<sup>42</sup> Nonetheless, the late nineteenth century saw numerous expansions in both curriculum and facilities at Mount Allison. From 1887 onwards, the girls' Academy was dignified by the title of Ladies' College, and it proceeded to add important new departments: the Conservatory of Music in 1891; the Owens Art Gallery in 1895; and the Massey-Treble School of Household Science in 1904. The University, as well as developing its arts curriculum by the addition of such subjects as Psychology and Political Science, also introduced courses in Law and, primarily through the influence of Andrews, the McClelan School of Applied Science in 1903. The quarter-century which followed the end of the University of Halifax was, in short, a period of unprecedented growth for the University of Mount Allison College.

Mount Allison remained, of course, a Methodist institution, and the responsibilities which followed from that status were not abandoned in the pursuit of expansion. A special educational issue of *The Wesleyan* in 1896 commented that Mount Allison was still a "poor man's college", in fact even more so than before, since bursary funds had shared in the general growth. An editorial in the same issue invoked that venerable Scottish character, "the lad o'pairts", as it urged parents to send their children to Mount Allison whether rich or poor.<sup>43</sup> A new element was added to the perceived obligations of the university, at least in the minds of some of its members, by the growth of the currents of ideas which would later come to be known as the Social Gospel. Andrews, for example, chaired the committee on Sociological Questions which, in its report to the Methodist General Conference in 1902, identified Christian stewardship as the remedy for economic and social evils, and advocated such measures as nationalization of public utilities and natural resources, and curbs on financial speculation.<sup>44</sup> Involvement in the temperance movement was common to both students and faculty, even though in 1898 the university President, David Allison, raised a storm by publicly airing doubts as to whether prohibition would necessarily

41 Inaugural Address of W.M. Tweedie, printed in the *Daily Sun* (Saint John), 11, 12 September 1888, MAA, 5501/13/17, pp. 70-71. Report of Cumberland County, North and West Colchester Teachers' Convention, 7-9 November 1894, in *Educational Review*, 8 (1894-95), p. 137; see also J.W. O'Brien, *A Parson Reminisces* (Sackville, N.B., n.d.), p. 26.

42 *Educational Review*, 10 (1896-97), p. 160.

43 *The Wesleyan*, 26 August 1896.

44 *Journal of Proceedings of the Sixth General Conference of the Methodist Church* (Toronto, 1902), pp. 175-8.

lead to abolition of the liquor trade. Allison was certainly going against the strong tide of opinion both in his own church and in other major Protestant denominations, and he hastened to appease his critics by stressing that he did intend to vote in favour of prohibition in the approaching national plebiscite.<sup>45</sup> Another major concern aroused by the social gospel, and one related to temperance, was electoral reform, and here too Mount Allison saw action, chiefly through the leadership of the Professor of Political Economy, B.C. Borden.<sup>46</sup>

Thus, physical growth at Mount Allison was accompanied by the introduction of new thinking both in academic matters and in regard to the university's social role. In all of these respects, the turn of the century was a time of self-confidence. The attendance of undergraduates at the university, which had stood at 25 in 1880-81, had grown by 1910-11 to 155; post-graduate degrees were also regularly awarded, with eight M.A. degrees conferred in the single year of 1907.<sup>47</sup> Given such expansion, it had been easy in 1902 for the university's Board of Regents to give a curt refusal to a joint invitation of King's and Dalhousie Colleges to participate in discussions aimed at producing a confederation of Maritime colleges.<sup>48</sup> Most members of the Mount Allison community would have agreed with W.W. Andrews when he called for further expansion of the Sackville institutions in an article in the student magazine, *The Argosy*, in December 1907. "Heretofore", he wrote, "if Mt. Allison has been convicted of folly by the passing years it has been not for the largeness but for the littleness of her plans".<sup>49</sup>

While the ideal of progress had replaced the ready willingness to adopt limitations which had been characteristic of Mount Allison until 1881, the early twentieth century would also reveal that the prosperity of Mount Allison, like the industrially-based prosperity of the region, was fragile. Not only had the university expanded at a rapid rate, and thus committed itself to continuing expenses for the maintenance of new buildings and programmes before it had any real indication of how high these expenses would be, but it had expanded on

45 *The Wesleyan*, 3 August 1898. See also Ernest R. Forbes, "Prohibition and the Social Gospel in Nova Scotia", *Acadiensis*, I (Autumn 1971), pp. 14-7.

46 See report of Borden's sermon of 19 March 1899, in *Saint John Sun*, 8 April 1899, MAA, 5501/13/4, p. 181; also his speech in Moncton in early 1907, reported in *The Wesleyan*, 13 and 20 February 1907.

47 *Calendar and Catalogue of the Mount Allison Wesleyan College*, 1881, pp. 8-9; *The University of Mount Allison College Calendar*, 1911, pp. 71, 78-83. The number of undergraduates in attendance in any year is calculated without including 'special' students, who would be enrolled to take only a few university-level courses; Theology students are included only if also enrolled in the regular Arts programme.

48 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1899-1920, pp. 26-7.

49 W.W. Andrews, "Mount Allison Expansion and Consolidation", *The Argosy* (December 1907), pp. 123-5.

borrowed money. By 1911, when Borden became President, it was clear that the very existence of the university was threatened by an accumulated debt of \$90,000 and a substantial annual deficit.<sup>50</sup> Borden was inclined to blame the sudden crisis on the draining of wealth from the Maritimes to the West, and this theme was stressed in the determined fund-raising efforts which continued from 1911 until the outbreak of the First World War. "Mount Allison is supplying the Great West with teachers, clergymen and intelligent citizens", proclaimed an appeal dated 15 June 1911, and "expects her children in the Great West to come to her succour".<sup>51</sup> To reinforce the point, Borden travelled across Canada in the winter of 1912, forming alumni chapters as far westward as Vancouver. But these efforts were virtually cancelled out by the financial strains imposed by the war. "We are having a very pleasant year", wrote Borden sardonically in 1916, "barring the fact that over half of our students have enlisted, and are leaving us face to face with a very serious deficit for the year".<sup>52</sup>

The financial crisis at Mount Allison was somewhat eased in 1921 by a fund-raising campaign, which failed to reach its target of \$500,000, but did produce over half of that amount.<sup>53</sup> Nonetheless, during the previous ten years, when the university had survived only through the most stringent of economies, much damage had been done. The physical plant had been allowed to deteriorate to the point where Learned and Sills described it as "seriously defective". Apart from the men's residence and the art gallery, the buildings were either in poor condition or inadequate for their purposes.<sup>54</sup> Faculty salaries too had been allowed to fall behind. "It is too bad", commented Borden in 1918, "that men with the splendid intellectual and educational equipment of our Professors should be obliged to eke out an existence on salaries less than many clerks and brakemen on the railways are getting. One of our men refused an offer of a position in another college in which he was promised over twice the salary that we are able to give him". Between 1918 and 1921 some salary increases were effected, but a committee of the Massey Foundation noted in 1921 that salaries at Mount Allison were still well below the level of \$2500 which it regarded as the minimum acceptable for a "normal salary".<sup>55</sup> Obviously, funding was the key to restoring the health of the institution. Yet the malaise ran deeper than that, for the expansionist philosophy of the late nineteenth century had involved more

50 Byron C. Borden to Chester Massey, 4 December 1911, Endowment Files (Professorships), Mount Allison University, Comptroller's Office.

51 Correspondence 1912, B.C. Borden Papers, MAA, 7508.

52 Borden to W.E. Earle, 10 February 1916, MAA, 7837-177.

53 Learned and Sills, *Education in the Maritime Provinces*, p. 24.

54 *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 31.

55 Borden to Joseph Allison, 21 November 1918, Endowment Files (Professorships), Mount Allison University, Comptroller's Office; *Report of the Massey Foundation Commission on the Secondary Schools and Colleges of the Methodist Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1921), p. 62.

than financial prosperity. Confusion over the very nature and role of Mount Allison was reflected in conflicting statements by Borden. Fund-raising in Vancouver in April 1912, he had seemed to revert to an older view of Mount Allison: a Vancouver newspaper reported that “the gospel of the small college with the facility within it of bringing the teacher and the student into close personal intercourse and fellowship . . . was preached by Dr. B.C. Borden”.<sup>56</sup> Eight years later, on the other hand, he wrote in *The Wesleyan* that “when Sackville becomes the Capital of the United Maritime Provinces and Mount Allison the one institution owned by the United Methodist and Presbyterian Churches of Eastern Canada, conditions will obtain by which Mount Allison should become the great educational centre for Eastern Canada”.<sup>57</sup> Borden himself, and his readers, no doubt realized that this latter hope was extravagant, but it illustrated once again the conflict between the two ideals which the nineteenth century had bequeathed.

The Learned-Sills report afforded the chance of an honourable retreat from the struggle for an ideal and an identity for Mount Allison. It was a chance which at first was gratefully accepted. Learned and Sills, after all, had had the courtesy to recognize that Sackville “is geographically the ideal point for an institution serving the three Maritime Provinces”. Halifax, however, had commercial and political advantages, and it would also be geographically central if Newfoundland were included in the proposed scheme. Invoking the regional interest, and aware of the gathering political movement for Maritime rights, the commissioners presented a compelling argument.<sup>58</sup> For the colleges, there was the prospect of financial aid for the construction of new campuses in Halifax, where their long-established identities could be preserved. For Mount Allison, there was also the consideration that Sackville need not be entirely abandoned, for the Academy and Ladies’ College would expand into the buildings vacated by the university. Accordingly, the initial response was favourable. The university’s Board of Regents unanimously resolved on 24 May 1922 that it would “sympathetically consider” the plan of federation, and dispatched representatives to the various Methodist conferences of the region to explain the plan in detail. Borden, who played a leading role in the drafting of a constitution for the proposed new university during the conferences in Halifax later in 1922, joined the Presidents of Dalhousie and King’s in delivering this document to the Carnegie Corporation in New York in December. In April 1923, a further necessary step was taken when the Educational Society of the Methodist Church expressed warm approval of the scheme, and of Mount Allison’s participation.<sup>59</sup>

56 Borden Papers, MAA, 7508.

57 *The Wesleyan*, 26 May 1920.

58 Learned and Sills, *Education in the Maritime Provinces*, pp. 5, 23, 34, 50.

59 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, pp. 36-37; *Report of the Conference of*

In fact, however, Mount Allison never proceeded any further with the federation proposal, and it becomes necessary to ask the reason why. The obvious answer is that particularism prevailed; that, despite all the difficulties of the previous decade, there were still enough influential members of Mount Allison who believed that the university's destiny lay in continuing independence and growth. Combining with local vested interests, surely such advocates of a bigger and better Mount Allison must have won the day? This was certainly the view of one strong supporter of the Carnegie scheme, J.C. Webster, who in 1926 excoriated his old university for its *volte-face* and was inclined in particular to blame the personal empire-building of its new President, George Johnstone Trueman.<sup>60</sup> Yet a detailed examination of the evidence suggests that the ultimate refusal of Mount Allison to enter the federation scheme was not at all a continuation of the expansionist principle. On the contrary, it signified a return to a much older conception of Mount Allison's role. The decision to remain in Sackville, while implying the maintenance of a certain kind of independence, also implied the acceptance of new and severe limits on Mount Allison's institutional growth. In important respects, the Mount Allison of the inter-war years would more closely resemble the 'reluctant college' of the 1860s and 1870s than it would the burgeoning university which had emerged after 1881.

A local opposition to the removal of Mount Allison University to Halifax undoubtedly arose soon after the publication of the Carnegie proposal. Although Borden had commented to Learned with some surprise in May 1922 on the prevailing "unanimity of sentiment favouring university consolidation", by December he was warning of the growing disaffection of "some of our local Sackville interests".<sup>61</sup> H.E. Thomas, a Methodist minister who was one of the Mount Allison delegates to the first Halifax conference in July 1922, went so far as to declare that "when you pass a line running from Northumberland Strait to the Bay of Fundy, you will find people who never heard of such a place as Halifax".<sup>62</sup> Thomas himself was sceptical, as was Senator Frank B. Black, an influential resident of Sackville and member of the university's Board of Regents. It was Black who reported as chairman of the Board's federation committee in November 1922 that there would be major hidden expenses in-

*Representatives of the Universities and Governments of the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland* (Halifax, 1922), pp. 1-12; Henry S. Pritchett, Carnegie Corporation, to A. Stanley Mackenzie, 17 January 1923, DAL/MS/1/3, Dalhousie University Archives [hereafter DUA]; Minutes of the Educational Society of the Methodist Church, 1921-25, pp. 32-3, United Church Archives, Toronto [hereafter UCA].

60 J.C. Webster to A.S. Mackenzie, 30 April 1926, DAL/MB/1/3, DUA.

61 Borden to Learned, 6 May 1922, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, Carnegie Corporation Archives [hereafter CCA]; Borden to Learned, 27 May 1922, *ibid.*; Borden to Learned, 14 December 1922, *ibid.* Materials from this repository are cited with the kind permission of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

62 *Minutes of Conference of Universities and Colleges*, 7 July 1922, p. 22.

volved in the move to Halifax. Almost two years later, in October 1924, Black and Thomas together proposed that Mount Allison should withdraw from the federation scheme, since the earlier withdrawal of the University of New Brunswick, Acadia and St. Francis Xavier had made the plan impractical; they were narrowly defeated, by 11 votes to 9.<sup>63</sup> Also a powerful opponent was C.C. Avard, a graduate of Mount Allison and publisher of the *Sackville Tribune*, who had laboured for many years in his editorials to convince Sackville residents that the university was an economic and cultural asset to the town, and who also stressed the financial risks which Mount Allison would face in moving to Halifax, as well as the danger that “the traditions of ‘Old Mount A’” would soon be forgotten.<sup>64</sup> Thus, when J.C. Webster in 1923 dismissed the Sackville opponents of federation as being of little account and described them, with the exception of Black, as “the grocers and other shop-keepers [who] will undoubtedly be anxious not to lose their customers”, he under-estimated.<sup>65</sup> Where Webster was correct was in stressing the crucial importance of the personal role of George Trueman, a graduate of Mount Allison and a native of the nearby village of Point de Bute. Following several years of teaching and administration, Trueman had become principal of Stanstead College in Quebec in 1908. From 1920 until he returned to Mount Allison as President in 1923 he had served as assistant secretary of the Board of Education of the Methodist Church. Based in Toronto, he had spent much of that time travelling in various parts of Canada in order to inspect all the various Methodist colleges and schools.<sup>66</sup>

Trueman therefore came to Mount Allison well briefed in a national context. He also came as a known supporter of the Carnegie federation scheme. Trueman, in fact, had already exercised considerable influence upon Mount Allison’s initial reaction to the scheme, as one of several individuals to whom his predecessor, Borden, had turned for advice. Writing to Borden on 21 December 1921, before the release of the Learned-Sills report but after Borden had been informed of its likely general contents, Trueman had given a favourable account of the federated University of Toronto, and especially of the progress of Victoria College, the Methodist college within that university. The prosperity of Victoria contrasted, in his opinion, with the disadvantages encountered by Queen’s and McMaster as a result of their decision to remain independent. As for Mount Allison, Trueman foresaw strong opposition to a move to Halifax, but feared that the alternative would be that Mount Allison “will gradually drop behind and become a third-rate institution”. While admitting that a city environment

63 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, pp. 46, 92.

64 C.C. Avard, “University Federation — The Other Side”, *The Argosy* (December 1922), pp. 60-5.

65 Webster to A.S. Mackenzie, 28 October 1923, DAL/MS/1/3, DUA.

66 See Margaret Norrie, “George Johnstone Trueman” (BA thesis, Mount Allison University, 1954), pp. 5-13.



held moral dangers for students, he refused to regard this as a conclusive argument:

The proper place for a secondary college is a rural town, or the open country, but the place for a university is near a city. The city is becoming increasingly the centre of the nation's life. It is a University in itself with its lectures, its social organizations, its music, its great preachers, its distinguished visitors, its parliaments, its opportunities for social study.<sup>67</sup>

Trueman's letter, which concluded by explicitly favouring the federation scheme, was considered by Borden to be a "statesmanlike document";<sup>68</sup> excerpts from it, together with other letters favouring federation, were published in *The Wesleyan*, *The Tribune*, and in the alumni magazine *The Mount Allison Record*.<sup>69</sup> Borden was, and would remain, a staunch proponent of federation, and it seemed that his successor was of the same mind. Coming directly from the Methodist headquarters in Toronto, Trueman was also well acquainted with another vital issue of the day: church union. As early as 1903 the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches had entered into negotiations aimed at effecting a union, and after many setbacks and interruptions a "Basis of Union" was agreed in October 1921. Among the clauses of this agreement were several relating to church colleges, one of which specified that "the policy of the [United] Church shall be the maintenance of a limited number of thoroughly equipped Colleges . . . and in furtherance of this policy amalgamation shall be effected as soon as possible in localities where two or more Colleges are doing the same class of work".<sup>70</sup> Obviously, church union would mean rationalization, and Mount Allison's future role might well be affected. The Presbyterian Church had its own theological college in Halifax, at Pine Hill, and also a traditional if informal relationship with Dalhousie; it was possible that church union in and of itself could cause the disappearance of Mount Allison as a university, if theological work were transferred to Halifax and the more general Methodist constituency were lost in the larger entity of the United Church. Such was the fear of W.G. Watson, member of the Theological Faculty of Mount Allison, when he complained to Trueman in November 1921 of "the aggressiveness of these longheaded Presbyterians". Watson's view was that the Methodists should negotiate for the opposite result: "I think that Pine Hill should come here, and that it ought to be made quite clear that Mount

67 George J. Trueman to B.C. Borden, 21 December 1921, MCIV/H9i/3, UCA.

68 B.C. Borden to J.W. Graham, 3 March 1922, MCIV/H9i/1, UCA.

69 *The Wesleyan*, 10 May 1922; *The Sackville Tribune*, 11 May 1922; *Mount Allison Record* (March 1922), pp. 28-36.

70 "The Basis of Union", in *The Manual of the United Church of Canada* (Toronto, 1937), p. 37.

Allison will be the institution of the United Church".<sup>71</sup> That the two issues of university federation and church union were bound up together was evident, and in October 1923 the Mount Allison Board of Regents resolved to defer further action on federation "until the Church Union scheme had been finally disposed of".<sup>72</sup>

This postponement, which had the support of such committed federationists as Webster and the President of Dalhousie, Stanley Mackenzie, should not be interpreted as a measure directed against federation. "Trueman believes", wrote Webster to Mackenzie a few days later, "that the great majority of the men of influence among the Methodists will favour Federation".<sup>73</sup> Unknown to Webster, however, Trueman was about to change his personal view, and for reasons which had little to do with "men of influence". When Trueman had declared himself in favour of federation in 1921 he had been far removed from his rural origins as a farm boy in Point de Bute. He had not lived in the Maritimes for some thirteen years, and had recently begun a new career as a church administrator in Toronto with every intention of remaining there. Although his diary reveals that at times he found city life perplexing,<sup>74</sup> his fascination with the cosmopolitan texture of the city had shown clearly in his letter to Borden, and had influenced the advice which he offered on the federation scheme. The Trueman who returned to his home as President of his old university was a different matter. Even in his inaugural address on 18 October 1923 the signs of a change of heart can be discerned, although they were evidently missed by Mackenzie and Webster, both of whom were present to receive honorary degrees. Trueman's remarks about the proposed federation were balanced and correct, as he identified the "greater opportunities of the large university", while noting that there had been considerable opposition. On Mount Allison itself, his tone was warmer, as he invoked the image of "this campus, in this little country town, swept by the winds of restless Fundy". Here, he continued, "our students will not find the modern equipment of a great university, nor the experience of life as seen in Montreal, Toronto, or Halifax". They could, however, derive faith, inspiration and the love of learning from the close contact with dedicated professors which only a small college could provide.<sup>75</sup>

71 W.G. Watson to G.J. Trueman, 10 November 1921, MCIV/H9i/3, UCA.

72 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, pp. 58-9.

73 Webster to Mackenzie, 28 October 1923, DAL/MS/1/3, DUA; see also Mackenzie to B.C. Borden, 6 March 1923, *ibid.*

74 As in one episode concerning a motor collision with a Toronto lawyer, which cost Trueman \$500 though he felt the accident had not been his fault. Diary of G.J. Trueman, vol. I, 1891-1939, p. 199, MAA.

75 Inaugural Address of G.J. Trueman, 18 October 1923, printed in *The Wesleyan*, 31 October 1923.

One interested observer who did perceive the significance of Trueman's reflections was the newly-appointed President of the Carnegie Corporation, F.P. Keppel, who read the text of the address in January 1924 and immediately wrote to Trueman that he was "not quite clear from it just how your mind is working with reference to educational federation". Trueman's reply was avowedly that of "a Sackville man and one whose people have lived in this vicinity for a century and a half", as he acknowledged "that I would dislike to see the University moved away". Nonetheless, he continued, "I see no great future for the institution except in the federation with other colleges".<sup>76</sup> For the time being, a change of heart did not imply a change of mind. Yet Trueman had revealed a personal and emotional commitment to Sackville, and since opinion on federation was divided at Mount Allison, his influence as President was greater than it would have been if there had been a consensus one way or the other. Furthermore, there were rational grounds on which a rejection of federation could be based. From the beginning, as Borden had warned Learned as early as May 1922, there had been questions about the financing of the scheme.<sup>77</sup> The \$3 million offered by the Carnegie Corporation would not have covered the full costs of the move to Halifax, leaving a balance to be raised by the colleges themselves. Black, in 1922, had estimated the cost of moving at \$1.5 million for each college.<sup>78</sup> There was also the question of government grants. The Learned-Sills report had envisaged that the new University of the Maritime Provinces would be in a position to apply for both federal and provincial funding, but with Acadia and St. Francis Xavier opting out of the scheme the prospects of such subsidies would be remote.<sup>79</sup> A convincing argument could thus be made that by moving to Halifax in these circumstances Mount Allison would weaken its financial position at the same time as it would weaken the support of its alumni by repudiating its traditional association with Sackville. In due course, it might simply cease to exist, except perhaps as the name of a hall of residence on the Dalhousie campus. Trueman recalled later, in the draft of his unpublished history of Mount Allison, that various attempts to win reassurance on these points from Halifax supporters of the federation scheme had met with scant response: he had been "led to believe that Dalhousie did not expect that Mount Allison would develop a separate campus with ample space for playing fields, gymnasium, and the development of her individuality as a College".<sup>80</sup>

Always against these considerations, however, had to be set the bleak warning of Learned and Sills that "to seek to perpetuate present arrangements . . . is

76 Keppel to Trueman, 30 January 1924, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, CCA; Trueman to Keppel, 6 February 1924, *ibid.*

77 Borden to Learned, 27 May 1922, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, CCA.

78 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, p. 110.

79 Learned and Sills, *Education in the Maritime Provinces*, pp. 48-50.

80 G.J. Trueman, Draft of History of Mount Allison, MAA.

foregone defeat".<sup>81</sup> If it were true that the failure of the federation scheme would put the Maritimes at a permanent educational disadvantage as compared with the federated universities of Ontario and the west, then the responsibility for prompting that failure would be a heavy one, particularly when seen in the context of the concurrent movement for Maritime Rights in the economic and political field. To J.J. Tompkins of St. Francis Xavier University, for example, whose advocacy of the federation scheme in spite of the opposition of his superiors brought about his removal from the university to become parish priest of Canso, the issue was no less than "justice for the Maritime Provinces in matters educational".<sup>82</sup> Trueman faced strong conflicting pressures. On the one hand, local and denominational opposition hardened in Sackville and among the Methodists of the region. In December 1925, Trueman confided to J.W. Graham, the Secretary of the Methodist Board of Education to whom he had formerly been assistant, that "our Board at the present time is strongly in favour of remaining in Sackville and nearly all of the old Methodist group whom I meet are of the opinion that this is the wise course".<sup>83</sup> Among the faculty, as he wrote shortly afterwards to G.F. Pearson, one of the Halifax proponents of federation, only the scientists retained any enthusiasm for the scheme, and they were in a minority.<sup>84</sup> On the other hand, as Mackenzie wrote to Trueman from Dalhousie at the end of April 1926, much depended on Mount Allison. A union of King's and Dalhousie alone could not be regarded as any real fulfilment of the Carnegie scheme. If Mount Allison joined, however, then those colleges which stayed out could be seen as exceptions to a general rule of federation. Moreover, Mackenzie believed that Mount Allison's participation would induce the Roman Catholics of Halifax to "immediately fall in line" by entering their own St. Mary's College in the federation quite independently of the attitude of St. Francis Xavier and despite discouragement from Rome. Mackenzie, invoking the Maritime Rights movement, wrote enthusiastically of the prospects for such a federation, and shortly afterwards his colleague on the Dalhousie Board of Governors, G.S. Campbell, informed Trueman directly that "the future of Federation lay with Mount Allison".<sup>85</sup>

By the spring of 1926, however, the Mount Allison decision had, in essence,

81 Learned and Sills, *Education in the Maritime Provinces*, p. 32.

82 Tompkins to Learned, 2 April 1922, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, CCA. On Tompkins's transfer to Canso, see Tompkins to Learned, 21 December, 1922, *ibid.*; Learned to Tompkins, 26 December 1922, *ibid.*; Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education*, p. 87.

83 Trueman to Graham, 12 December 1925, MCIV/H9j/1, UCA.

84 Trueman to Pearson, 29 January 1926, DAL/MB/1/3, DUA.

85 Mackenzie to Trueman, 30 April 1926, DAL/MB/1/3, DUA; Campbell to Mackenzie, 11 June 1926, *ibid.* On the question of Roman Catholic participation, see Shook, *Catholic Post-Secondary Education*, pp. 66-7; and on the concurrent Maritime Rights movement, see Ernest R. Forbes, *The Maritime Rights Movement 1919-1927: A Study in Canadian Regionalism* (Montreal, 1979), *passim*.

already been made. Trueman always maintained that it had not been made until 1929, and in a technical sense he was right: the Carnegie Corporation's offer of support to the overall scheme did not lapse until that year, and not until May 1929 did the Mount Allison Board of Regents formally resolve to abandon the notion of federation.<sup>86</sup> Nonetheless, Trueman's private correspondence reveals that the outlines of the eventual settlement were clear in his own mind as early as January 1926. In December 1925 he had still been undecided, writing to Graham on the 12th that "I can see the advantages so clearly both of going to Halifax and of remaining here".<sup>87</sup> The dilemma was no less acute because of his own emotional attachment to the prospect of remaining in Sackville, but there were two major obstacles which had to be overcome before that personal preference could be transformed into a conclusive determination. The first was to settle the issues arising from church union in such a way as to give Mount Allison a realistic chance of survival in Sackville. By the end of 1925 church union itself had been accomplished, but negotiations over the church educational institutions still lay ahead. Secondly, Trueman would have to grapple with the larger question of Mount Allison's place in the Maritime region, and do so in the context of the ambivalent legacy which had been left to the university by its nineteenth-century past. Could Mount Allison find its true role as that of a small, rural church college? Or would continuing independence imply a need to grow in order to survive, and thus commit Mount Allison to continuing competition with other colleges to the detriment of the region as a whole? As Trueman had reflected earlier in 1925 in his annual report, "we shall have to study the question in the light of the past, try to visualize conditions in these Provinces as they will be fifty years from now, and make the wisest decision of which we are capable".<sup>88</sup>

By 2 January 1926, Trueman had reached a conclusion, and expressed it privately in a letter to Graham:

We at Mount Allison . . . have about concluded that all the colleges should centre in Halifax for graduate and professional work, but should continue to give Arts and pre-professional courses in our smaller centres. I

86 See Minutes of the Central Advisory Committee of the Carnegie Corporation, 24 April 1928, pp. 6-8, MAA; Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, pp. 196-7. The Carnegie Corporation had previously set 1 July 1928 as the expiry date for its offer of assistance to Mount Allison for its move to Halifax, but this had apparently been extended for one year to match the expiry date for the overall offer of aid to the federation scheme.

87 Trueman to Graham, 12 December 1925, MCIV/H9i/1, UCA. Earlier in 1925, Trueman had briefly explored the possibility of moving only the third and fourth years of undergraduate work to Halifax, thus leaving a junior college in Sackville; but this idea was apparently soon abandoned. See F.P. Keppel, memorandum of interview with G.J. Trueman, 5 February 1925, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, CCA; Report of G.J. Trueman, 20 May 1925, Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, p. 106.

88 *Ibid.*

have made up my own mind about this, after much study of the question, and am not likely to change my view until the experiment is fairly tried. That will make it too late to secure Carnegie money. The money, I trust, will become available for the graduate and professional schools in Halifax.

In the same letter, Trueman stated that the one essential condition for the initiation of this plan was that Mount Allison should have "the full support of the Pine Hill group for our Arts and other work": in other words, Mount Allison should be recognized as the Arts college of the United Church in the Maritimes. In return, Trueman was willing that Mount Allison should give up regular theological work, and he hoped that Mount Allison and Pine Hill would then enjoy a close and complementary relationship.<sup>89</sup>

Trueman's mind had been made up by a fruitful visit to the Presbyterian College during the last week of December, during which the outlines of the new relationship between Pine Hill and Mount Allison had been privately agreed.<sup>90</sup> The advantages of the arrangement for Mount Allison were obvious. According to figures supplied by the University to the Halifax *Morning Chronicle* in 1923 and reproduced in Table 1, Methodist students had continued in that year to comprise 62.6% of the overall undergraduate student body, with Presbyterians adding a further 22.3%. By ensuring overall United Church support, therefore, Mount Allison would be safeguarding its existing enrolments. There was also the possibility, though not one that could be openly discussed, of attracting a greater number of students from the ranks of those Presbyterians who had joined the United Church, particularly as in 1923 Presbyterians had formed the largest denominational group of students in the region. Furthermore, by binding Mount Allison and Pine Hill together, it could be hoped that the United Church clergy of the region would in future have the same regard for Mount Allison as had had the Methodist clergy in the past, and that this would be reflected in effective promotion of Mount Allison's interests by local ministers. The advantages for Pine Hill were also clear: under the new arrangement, Pine Hill would not only survive but would have its staff augmented by the addition of two theological professors from Mount Allison. Although the arrangement would depend ultimately upon ratification by the governing bodies of the institutions and by the general council of the United Church, the Principal of Pine Hill, Clarence MacKinnon, saw every reason in January 1926 to hope that it would prove to be "another of these happy measures that have so wonderfully knit the uniting churches together".<sup>91</sup>

89 Trueman to Graham, 2 January 1926 (the date on the letter is 2 January 1925, but the contents make it clear that this is an error), MCIV/H9i/1, UCA.

90 See Trueman to Clarence MacKinnon, 2 January 1926, MacKinnon Papers, Union of Colleges File, United Church, Maritime Conference Archives, Halifax [hereafter MCA].

91 MacKinnon to Trueman, 9 January 1926, MacKinnon Papers, Union of Colleges File, MCA. For the very different views of this agreement expressed at Dalhousie University, see A.S.

Table 1

## RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS OF STUDENTS AT MARITIME UNIVERSITIES, 1923

Denomination	Mt. A.	U.N.B.	Acadia	King's	St. F.X.	Dal.	N.S.T.	Total
Anglican	22 ( 9.2%)	38	16	64	2	102	11	255
Baptist	8 ( 3.4%)	33	211	2	—	71	15	340
Methodist	149 (62.6%)	19	18	7	1	68	8	270
Presbyterian	53 (22.3%)	29	31	10	6	380	17	526
Roman Catholic	1 ( 0.4%)	18	1	—	192	97	6	315
Others	5 ( 2.1%)	1	1	—	—	34	—	41
Total	238	138	278	83	201	752	57	1747

Source: G. Fred Pearson, *Statistical Studies of the Colleges Situated in the Maritime Provinces* (Halifax, N.S.; reprint from the *Morning Chronicle*, 1923), p. 3. The table was based upon data solicited by Pearson from the institutions themselves. The percentages of denominational background of Mount Allison students were not included in Pearson's original table.

Note: The figures given for Mount Allison in this table include special students, and the total is therefore higher than that given in Table 2.

For Trueman and Mount Allison, there was now a firm basis for remaining in Sackville, and symbolic of this was the decision to proceed with the construction of a new library, which had originally been planned as a memorial to the dead of Mount Allison in the First World War, and had then been deferred pending decisions on church union and university federation. A special meeting of the Board of Regents on 4 February 1926 took the related steps of approving the new relationship with Pine Hill and authorizing a start on the Memorial Library.<sup>92</sup> While Trueman continued to maintain that the question of federation was still open, since the new library could conceivably have been used by the Mount Allison Academy and Ladies' College even if the university had removed to Halifax, he acknowledged to President Mackenzie of Dalhousie in April that "the opinion is fairly general both on the Board and among our friends outside that the federation scheme is indefinitely postponed". In his own opinion, he continued, "there is a place for the small rural college and if it limits its attendance to about four hundred students, and confines its work to Arts and the preparation for professional courses, I think it can make a fine contribution to the life of the larger community".<sup>93</sup> Here Trueman expounded a theme which he had stressed both privately and publicly since the beginning of 1926. To MacKinnon, he had advocated the retention of Arts and pre-professional work "here in the smaller community where we can sift out our students, give them special attention, and send the fit to the big centre. This plan also works in well with our Academy and Ladies College".<sup>94</sup> In the *Halifax Chronicle* at the end of January, he expressed similar sentiments, advocating centralization of professional and graduate schools in Halifax, while the smaller colleges would continue as "local centres".<sup>95</sup>

What Trueman was essentially supporting was a return to the acceptance of limits on Mount Allison's institutional growth, not as an undesirable restriction, but as an affirmation of the particular role of Mount Allison in serving the Maritime region. In terms of numbers, the limit of 400 students did not represent an immediate curb, since the undergraduate population of Mount Allison in 1925-26 was only 227, and the number would be allowed to rise towards the anticipated maximum during the late 1920s.<sup>96</sup> Once this figure had been attained, however, the intention was to avoid any further increase. Although Mount Allison would retain the title of university, it would have no further

Mackenzie to Morse A. Cartwright, 3 March 1926, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, CCA.

92 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, pp. 123-6.

93 Trueman to Mackenzie, 16 April 1926, DAL/MB/1/3, DUA.

94 Trueman to MacKinnon, 2 January 1926, MacKinnon Papers, Union of Colleges File, MCA.

95 *Morning Chronicle*, 28 January 1926.

96 *Calendar of Mount Allison University*, 1926, pp. 111-7. By 1930-31, the undergraduate attendance had reached 395. *Calendar of Mount Allison University*, 1931-32, pp. 128-38.



pretensions to becoming the large, multi-faculty institution which had so often been envisaged in the last years of the nineteenth century. As Trueman put it in his annual report in May 1926, it would be necessary to “give up all idea of ever becoming a University in the strict sense of the term”.<sup>97</sup> Instead, Mount Allison would consist of a cluster of three component institutions — the University, the Ladies’ College and the Academy — and each one of them in its own way would offer an inexpensive, church-related education. Significantly, a brochure published in 1926 under the title of *The Two Million Dollar Educational Plant of the United Church, Sackville, N.B.*, described each of the three institutions and then went on to list all the resident students without distinction between university students and others. Attached was a map showing the wide distribution of the home communities of the students throughout the Maritimes and Newfoundland: the emphasis was not upon the institutional status of Mount Allison, but rather upon the regional constituency to which it offered its varied educational services.<sup>98</sup>

This view of Mount Allison was very much the personal ideal of Trueman. None of its elements — the small size, the rejection of institutional aggrandizement, the church relationship, the complementary nature of the three institutions, the rural setting and the regional constituency — was original to him. Yet it was Trueman, always conscious of his own Maritime background, who could combine the elements into a coherent vision. In part, he had been influenced by the strength of the opposition to the federation scheme, reflecting to Keppel in February 1926 that “our people are conservative and one cannot lead faster than others will follow”.<sup>99</sup> Later in 1926, however, he admitted to Keppel that his own opinion had changed since his initially favourable response to the federation scheme: “I am not an out and out federationist, although I was when I was living in Toronto in close touch with Victoria. While I may explain that fact by saying that in the interim I have had additional experience and am now in a better position to judge, I am not unconscious of the influence of my old home surroundings and family friendships of five generations”.<sup>100</sup> For Trueman, local particularism in the sense of an unrealistic desire for a greater Mount Allison could not be justified, and he expressed the belief to Keppel in April 1927 that he had been able “to make our Board understand in a way that they never seemed to realize before . . . that Mount Allison’s place in the scheme of education will be that of a small Arts college”.<sup>101</sup> In a different sense, however, local feeling was

97 Report of the President of Mount Allison University for the year 1925-26, *Mount Allison Record* (March 1927), p. 29.

98 Mount Allison Educational Institutions, *The Two Million Dollar Educational Plant of the United Church, Sackville, N.B.* (Sackville, 1926), *passim*.

99 Trueman to Keppel, 17 February 1926, Mount Allison University File, 1920-1928, CCA.

100 Trueman to Keppel, 16 November 1926, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, CCA.

101 Trueman to Keppel, 21 April 1927, Mount Allison University File, 1920-1928, CCA.

the key to Trueman's concept of Mount Allison. Several years later, in an official letter to the President of Dalhousie on matriculation requirements, he recalled that "I did not have the privilege of attending a high school when I was a boy". Yet, he continued, "a number of us who went to College with very poor standing were able to overcome that handicap, and do as well in our later years in University as those who had entered with a high standard. I know that conditions are much the same in these Provinces today as they were then, and I believe there should always be a way left open to try out the boy who, on account of his place of residence and the restricted income of the family, has had no opportunity to prepare himself properly for University entrance".<sup>102</sup> The experience of Trueman's youth in the 1880s and 1890s had been that, industrial prosperity or not, the chance of self-advancement had not come easily to young people in rural Maritime communities, and his greatest ambition was to make Mount Allison a means of affording more equal opportunities.<sup>103</sup>

Certainly, the rural areas of the Maritimes were experiencing severe economic dislocation during the early and middle 1920s, a period of dire economic depression throughout the region and one of substantial out-migration. Table 2 reveals that this was reflected in the enrolment figures at Mount Allison, in the form of a temporary reduction in the number of undergraduates between 1922 and 1924, and a more prolonged tendency for the number of Maritime Provinces students of rural origin to hold steady in absolute terms and thus to decline as a proportion of the whole. By the year 1927-28, the number of undergraduates who came from small Maritime communities (from unincorporated places or from incorporated centres of 1000 people or less) stood at 66, only four more than in 1920-21 and comprising 29.3% of the total Maritime undergraduate body as opposed to 45.3% at the beginning of the decade. As Table 3 indicates, this trend was evident at the other Mount Allison institutions also, as the first half of the 1920s saw an absolute as well as a relative decline in the combined total of students who listed their homes as being small communities. In the later years of the decade, however, the trend was halted and then reversed. In September 1928, the year in which the proportion of rural students at Mount Allison began once again to rise, Trueman felt able to assure a Winnipeg alumni group that, while the problem of out-migration from the Maritimes had by no means been solved, the increasing numbers and high academic standards of students at Maritime universities proved that "those who remained at home were not altogether the stupid ones".<sup>104</sup> By the fall of 1930, 38.0% of the Maritime

102 Trueman to Carleton Stanley, 22 March 1934, DAL/MB/1/3, DUA.

103 Trueman was also aware of the deficiencies in the lower grades of education in rural areas, and in 1924 had publicly called for reforms in the school taxation system of New Brunswick and better training for rural schoolteachers, with a view to improving the situation. See the text of his speech of 21 August 1924 to the Union of New Brunswick Municipalities in the *Moncton Times*, 25 August 1924.

104 *Manitoba Free Press* (Winnipeg), 12 September 1928.

Table 2  
HOME BACKGROUND OF MARITIME PROVINCES UNDERGRADUATES AT MOUNT ALLISON,  
1920-31

	1920-21	1921-22	1922-23	1923-24	1924-25	1925-26	1926-27	1927-28	1928-29	1929-30	1930-31
Home Community	32	36	28	23	36	38	44	51	67	62	66
City or town, population over 10,000	(23.4%)	(24.2%)	(20.7%)	(19.2%)	(20.1%)	(19.1%)	(20.7%)	(22.7%)	(23.6%)	(19.7%)	(19.6%)
City or town, population 5001-10,000	14	20	14	14	23	39	43	42	50	55	62
	(10.2%)	(13.4%)	(10.4%)	(11.7%)	(12.8%)	(19.6%)	(20.2%)	(18.7%)	(17.6%)	(17.5%)	(18.4%)
Town, population 2501-5000	8	11	13	14	21	27	30	29	38	51	46
	( 5.8%)	( 7.4%)	( 9.6%)	(11.7%)	(11.7%)	(13.6%)	(14.1%)	(12.9%)	(13.4%)	(16.2%)	(13.6%)
Town, population 1001-2500	21	18	28	26	35	31	32	37	40	38	41
	(15.3%)	(12.1%)	(20.7%)	(21.7%)	(19.6%)	(15.6%)	(15.0%)	(16.4%)	(14.1%)	(12.1%)	(12.2%)
Other	62	64	52	43	64	64	64	66	89	108	122
	(45.3%)	(43.0%)	(38.5%)	(35.8%)	(35.8%)	(32.2%)	(30.0%)	(29.3%)	(31.3%)	(34.4%)	(36.2%)
	137	149	135	120	179	199	213	225	284	314	337
Not included (outside of Maritime Prov.)	36	33	28	26	28	28	27	22	40	42	58

Sources: *Calendars of Mount Allison University, 1921-31*; Canada, *Census of Canada, 1921*, vol. 1, Table 12, pp. 234-41; and Canada, *Census of Canada, 1931*, vol. 2, Table 8, pp. 8-14.

- Notes: 1. This table does not include 'Special' students, who would be enrolled to take only a few university-level courses, nor summer school students. Theology students are included only if also enrolled in the regular Arts programme.
2. Census data of 1921 are used for the years up to and including 1924-25; data of 1931 are used for the subsequent years.

Table 3

## HOME BACKGROUND OF MARITIME PROVINCES STUDENTS AT MOUNT ALLISON INSTITUTIONS, 1920-31

Home Community	1920-21	1925-26	1930-31
City or town, population over 10,000	88 (14.0%)	87 (14.0%)	156 (16.7%)
City or town, population 5001-10,000	97 (15.5%)	97 (15.6%)	135 (14.4%)
Town, population 2501-5000	50 ( 8.0%)	67 (10.8%)	84 ( 9.0%)
Town, population 1001-2500	143 (22.8%)	168 (27.0%)	234 (25.0%)
Other	<u>249</u> (39.7%) 627	<u>203</u> (32.6%) 622	<u>327</u> (34.9%) 936
Not included (outside of Maritime Provinces)	98	54	92

Sources: *Calendars* of Mount Allison institutions, 1921, 1926, 1931; Canada, *Census of Canada, 1921*, vol. 1, Table 12, pp. 234-41; and Canada, *Census of Canada, 1931*, vol. 2, Table 8, pp. 8-14.

- Notes: 1. This table does not include extra-mural students taking correspondence courses, but does include those attending the Maritime Summer School in 1925 and 1930 respectively.
2. Census data of 1921 are used for the year 1920-21; data of 1931 are used for 1925-26 and 1930-31.

Provinces undergraduates at Mount Allison listed their homes as being towns or cities of over 5000 people, as did 31.1% of the combined total of Maritime students at the three institutions. A further 13.6% of the undergraduates and 9.0% of the total number of students came from towns with populations between 2501 and 5000. Thus, 48.4% of the undergraduates and 59.9% of the overall Maritime student body originated from towns or other communities with a population of 2500 or less, including 36.2% and 34.9% respectively who came from small communities. It was enough to give point to Trueman's perception of Mount Allison as an institution which could not only offer to all its students the benefits which arose from a small enrolment, but which could serve in particular as a means of entry to the various levels of education for persons of rural origin.<sup>105</sup>

As with any personal ideal translated into actuality, Trueman's vision of Mount Allison was not without flaws. One drawback was the failure to have it formally recognized outside of the university itself. Trueman had anticipated difficulties in having his accord with MacKinnon recognized as the permanent basis of settlement of the United Church educational institutions in the Maritimes, chiefly from "those members of the Pine Hill board who are also members of the board of Dalhousie University".<sup>106</sup> Yet there was little opposition from this quarter, and the arrangement was ratified by both institutions and by the United Church. Criticism of Mount Allison by former Presbyterians existed, and was intensified when the university launched a million-dollar fundraising campaign in 1929; but the agreement of early 1926 endured.<sup>107</sup> Where Mount Allison failed entirely was in an effort in April of 1927 to persuade both Dalhousie University and the Carnegie Corporation to agree to what the Board of Regents termed "a less ambitious plan of federation", which would have

105 On the economic dislocation in rural Maritime communities which was particularly severe in the years 1920-25, see Forbes, *Maritime Rights*, pp. 64-65, 111. The substantial increase in the attendance of students from rural areas at Mount Allison in the years 1928-30 was no doubt partly the result of the temporary upturn in the Maritime economy in the late 1920s, but was also influenced by deliberate canvassing on the part of Mount Allison representatives. See, for example, the diary of the wife of the Principal of the Ladies' College: Victoria Burrill Ross, *Moments Make a Year* (Sackville, c. 1958), pp. 33, 55. In general, the interpretation of attendance statistics at Mount Allison is hindered by the lack of comparative data for other institutions in the region, and it is to be hoped that this need will soon be supplied by the undertaking of other university histories.

106 Trueman to MacKinnon, 13 January 1926, MacKinnon Papers, Union of Colleges File, MCA.

107 On the criticism of Mount Allison voiced in 1929, and on a related attempt to reopen the question of removal to Halifax, see Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, p. 197; A.S. Mackenzie to F.P. Keppel, 17 May 1929, Maritime Provinces Educational Federation Files, CCA; [Morse A. Cartwright], Memorandum of Conference on Mount Allison Situation, 1929, Mount Allison University File, 1929-1955, CCA; Walter C. Murray to J.W. Graham, 5 August 1929, UCC/BCSS, Series I, Box 6, File 70, UCA; Graham to Trueman, 12 August 1929, *ibid.*

embodied uniform matriculation requirements, uniform tuition fees, a common curriculum, and a common examining board to be shared by Dalhousie, King's and Mount Allison. Mount Allison was prepared to give up its M.A. degree, to restrict its undergraduate enrolment to four hundred, and to support the building up in Halifax of professional and graduate schools. In due course, all degrees might be awarded by a "Central University" — a modern version of the University of Halifax — though the proposal suggested that this issue be left open for the time being.<sup>108</sup> Such an agreement would have formalized and solidified Mount Allison's new resolve; but the scheme was rejected summarily both by Dalhousie and by the Carnegie Corporation as being too loose to be the basis for a genuine federation.<sup>109</sup>

A further difficulty was the fact that, no matter how modest might be the stated aims of Mount Allison in the future, the decision to remain in Sackville necessarily implied the raising of large amounts of money for endowment funds and for new buildings. The advice of Learned and Sills might be ignored in a general sense, but their strictures upon the bad condition of Mount Allison's physical plant and equipment were unquestionably justified, and were becoming all the more so as student numbers rose towards the 400 level. While Trueman remarked to Graham in January 1928 that "I dislike the idea of going out for money intensely",<sup>110</sup> there was no realistic alternative. The million-dollar campaign which was conducted in early 1929 aimed at the building of a science building and a women's residence for the university, and a school and laboratory building for the Academy, as well as adding \$400,000 to endowment funds. By the end of the 1929-30 academic year, less than half of the projected amount had been raised, and only just over \$164,000 received in cash. Not only were pledges of doubtful value as the economic depression deepened in the 1930s, but the one building which was constructed — the science building — was built on the basis of a bequest which was totally wiped out by the stock market crash of 1929.<sup>111</sup> Thus, the financial price of remaining in Sackville was expressed in the form of a large and growing burden of debt.

In addition to these practical hindrances, Trueman's ideal could also be questioned as an ideal: to what extent did it really answer the needs of the region in the inter-war years? By the mid-1930s, both Mount Allison and Pine Hill were facing criticism within the Maritime Conference of the United Church over

108 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-33, p. 162.

109 W.S. Learned to F.P. Keppel, 3 May 1927, Mount Allison University File, 1920-1928, CCA; Memorandum of the Findings of the Board of Governors of Dalhousie University, 16 September 1927, DAL/MB/1/3, DUA; Lester, *Review of Grants*, pp. 18-9.

110 Trueman to Graham, 12 January 1928, UCC/BCSS, Series I, Box 6, File 70, UCA.

111 See *Mount Allison Record*, 12 (1928-29), pp. 51-7; *ibid.*, 14 (1930-31), p. 95. On the Jost bequest, which was initially reported to amount to \$400,000, see Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1913-32, p. 229; Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-33, p. 269.

their response to the social consequences of the depression. In 1934, the conference urged that there was a "crying need" for more sociological training for candidates for the ministry.<sup>112</sup> Three years later, Mount Allison was specifically attacked in the conference for its failure to provide leadership in adult education along the lines pioneered by St. Francis Xavier, and to become involved in the co-operative movement. Although representatives of the university were able to deflect this accusation by arguing that "Adult Education was not synonymous with Co-operatives" and enumerating different kinds of adult education projects which Mount Allison had launched, the point was one of substance.<sup>113</sup> The strong underlying assumption of Mount Allison's remaining in Sackville rather than moving to Halifax was that it would be fulfilling its social role simply by virtue of so doing, in that it would be ensuring greater equality of access to formal education. The notion that the university should actively extend its functions into the wider community for the purpose of bringing about social change was not contradictory to that assumption, but neither did the two necessarily go together. Thus Trueman's personal reaction to the controversies in the 1937 conference was to argue that it would be foolish and costly for Mount Allison to attempt to duplicate the efforts of St. Francis Xavier; instead, other directions should be explored, such as the development of handicraft training which Mount Allison was already well equipped to provide through its Owens Art Museum and school of fine and applied arts.<sup>114</sup> Mount Allison, in fact, could already point to one innovation in adult education, the Maritime Summer School, which began in 1924 to offer credit courses directed largely at teachers upgrading their qualifications. Like the Extension Department, however, which concentrated exclusively upon correspondence courses, the Maritime Summer School was aimed at widening the availability of academic education and improving its quality, rather than implying any move outside of the formal academic sphere.

The decision taken by Mount Allison in the 1920s to reject the Carnegie federation scheme, therefore, did not absolve the university from difficulties and criticisms in the following decade. Nonetheless, the decision was no simple exercise in local self-interest. It implied a scaling down of the institutional aspirations of Mount Allison in a way which would have been inconceivable during the period of expansion of the late nineteenth century. The transference of Theology to Halifax was a major break with the past, even though it promised to solidify Mount Allison's position within the United Church. The severe curtailment of post-graduate studies was another major change. Although Mount Allison had made no formal agreement to abandon the giving of Master's degrees, as it had offered to do in 1927, few such degrees were now awarded: only seven in the

112 United Church of Canada, *Minutes of the Tenth Maritime Conference* (Sackville, N.B., 1934), pp. 16, 45.

113 W.T.R. Flemington to G.J. Trueman, 8 June 1937, Trueman Papers, 7837-53, MAA.

114 Trueman to Flemington, 12 June 1937, Flemington Papers, 7835-23, MAA.

decade from 1927 to 1936, as opposed to 33 in the previous decade.<sup>115</sup> The limitation of undergraduate enrolment to 400 was a further important innovation, and was reaffirmed by Trueman in his annual report of May 1929.<sup>116</sup> For some, these restrictions might be unpalatable necessities, acceptable only insofar as they served the purpose of keeping Mount Allison in Sackville. For Trueman, however, whose personal conversion away from the Carnegie scheme had been crucial in determining Mount Allison's course, the essential justification for Mount Allison's existence was that it should serve its constituency as a small, rural college.

Mount Allison thus returned in the 1920s to the older of the two roles which it had essayed at different times in its earlier history. From the time of its foundation up until the demise of the University of Halifax, Mount Allison College consistently saw its future as that of a constituent part of a larger, federated university. After 1881, there followed a period when such modesty was thrust aside: the college became a university, diversified its curriculum, and entertained hopes for continuing growth. In a superficial, institutional sense, the rejection of the Carnegie scheme had more in common with the second role than the first, for it was a commitment to independence. Yet on closer examination the evidence reveals that the decision was not made on narrowly institutional grounds, but instead implied a particular response to the perceived educational needs of the Maritime population, and especially of its United Church and its rural segments. That a small size, rural surroundings and a deliberately limited curriculum should be essential to that response showed that the aspirations of Mount Allison in the 1920s, and of its President in particular, were in reality closer to those of its early years than to those of the late nineteenth century. Seen in this context, the decision to remain in Sackville was undoubtedly a conservative act. Yet this was not the conservatism of blind resistance to change, nor even that of reasoned rejection of change. It was rather the acceptance of change — in the sense of altering the existing nature of Mount Allison — in the interests of recapturing an older ideal.

115 *Calendar of Mount Allison University, 1937-38*, pp. 113-6. During the period up until 1932, Mount Allison students were advised to go to Dalhousie for graduate work, though by early 1933 Trueman was contemplating a resumption of the M.A. degree in response to competitive pressure from Acadia. Trueman to Carleton Stanley, 5 January 1933, Trueman Papers, 7837-11, MAA.

116 Minutes of the Regents of Mount Allison, 1920-1933, p. 200.