

## **Canadian Higher Education and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Pension Plan**

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Article abstract

When the Carnegie Foundation was established in 1905, universities in Canada and Newfoundland were eligible for grants, on strict conditions that were seen by some as “colonial,” “continentalist,” or “imperial” intrusions on autonomy; for example, a Carnegie plan to create a federation of Maritime universities. This is a study of how Canadian universities found ways to comply with the requirement, of the compromises they had to make, or chose not to make, in governance, and of an ultimate shift in balance from sectarian to secular, and independent to publicly supported.

# CANADIAN HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING PENSION PLAN

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## Abstract

When the Carnegie Foundation was established in 1905, universities in Canada and Newfoundland were eligible for grants, on strict conditions that were seen by some as “colonial,” “continentalist,” or “imperial” intrusions on autonomy; for example, a Carnegie plan to create a federation of Maritime universities. This is a study of how Canadian universities found ways to comply with the requirement, of the compromises they had to make, or chose not to make, in governance, and of an ultimate shift in balance from sectarian to secular, and independent to publicly supported.

**Keywords:** Carnegie Foundation, faculty pensions, Canada

## Résumé

Lorsque la Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching a été fondée, en 1905, elle comprenait un régime de pension pour les professeurs d'université. Les universités canadiennes et de Terre-Neuve y étaient admissibles, à la stricte condition qu'elles soient ou deviennent non confessionnelles. À l'époque, il n'était pas rare que les universités canadiennes aient des dispositions confessionnelles dans leurs règlements de gouvernance. Les critères d'admissibilité étaient donc perçus par certains comme des intrusions « coloniales » dans leur autonomie. Le présent article est basé sur une étude d'archives explorant comment et pourquoi les universités canadiennes, sous l'effet de pressions exercées par leur corps professoral, ont trouvé des moyens de respecter cette exigence, les compromis qu'elles ont dû faire dans la gouvernance, et le changement ultime qui s'est produit dans l'équilibre entre système confessionnel et système laïc.

**Mots-clés :** Fondation Carnegie, pensions de la faculté, Canada

## Introduction

In 1905 Andrew Carnegie created and donated funds to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching to

provide retiring pensions to the teachers of Universities, Colleges, and Technical Schools...without regard to race, sex, creed, or color...in general to do and perform all things necessary to encourage, uphold, and dignify the profession of the teacher and the cause of higher education within the United States, the Dominion of Canada, and Newfoundland. (An-

drew Carnegie Letter of Gift, April 18, 1905, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1906*)

In today's dollars, the funded value of Carnegie's foundations would be nearly triple that of the Gates Foundation, which has a similar educational mandate. Access to the pension fund was tightly restricted to non-denominational and non-tax supported colleges and universities that also met the Foundation's standards of academic quality. Six years later Carnegie established and endowed the Carnegie Corporation, which continued the well-known and less restrictive grant program for

libraries and expanded its scope to include direct grant support for universities and colleges, mainly for scientific research.

From 1906 to 1929, the Carnegie Foundation and Corporation support provided to Canadian higher education, either in the form of direct grants or pension payouts, amounted to just under \$6 million (\$180 million in current Canadian dollars). Support from Carnegie (and Rockefeller) endowments to universities, museums, art galleries, and public libraries thus played an important but nevertheless supranational role in forming a national culture in Canada. The influence of both foundations is described well by Brison (2005).

What is less well-described is the Carnegie Foundation's influence on Canadian higher education, mainly through its pension fund, the rules and standards associated with it, and educational studies. This study will investigate how and why Canadian universities were attracted to the fund and found ways either to work around, comply with, or otherwise take advantage the Foundation's requirements, the compromises they either made or chose not to make in autonomy and governance, the internal conflicts that arose, the overall raising of standards, permanent shifts in balance from sectarian to secular, and the embryonic introduction of the concept systems of higher education.

The conduct of Carnegie's foundations in Canada was seen in some cases to be "colonial," or "continentalist" (Tippett, 2006, p. 1). For example, a report commissioned by the foundation proposed the rationalization of higher education in the Maritime provinces into a single system (Learned & Sills, 1922). The proposal, although initially welcomed by provinces, was, after much heated debate, rejected. However, some objectives of the report were realized anyway, by Foundation funding absent full rationalization. Reports proposing reform of medical (Flexner, 1910), legal (Redlich, 1914; Reed, 1921) and dental education (Geis, 1922) however, were adopted by Canadian universities without controversy (Lang, 2022). Grants from the Corporation were often very specific, for example to support the National Gallery and the Quebec Association for Adult Education. Strings were attached, but they were loose, broadly inclusive, and delegated extensive discretion to the board. (Carnegie, A. (1911, November 10). [Letter to Board of Trustees], CUCC). One string of particular significance to Canada was Carnegie's personal decision to add \$20 million to the Corporation's endowment to establish a Special Fund to which

only Canadian universities could apply. Otherwise, the Foundation treated American and Canadian institutions alike.

The pension fund, however, was as contentious and complicated as it was attractive. The strings were tight. It had rules. Andrew Carnegie's terms were specific and precise: "Institutions which are under control of a sect or require Trustees (or a majority thereof), Officers, Faculty or Students, to belong to any specific sect, or which impose any theological test, are to be excluded." (Andrew Carnegie Letter of Gift, April 18, 1905, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1906*).

The prospect of retirement pensions was attractive in Canada to the professoriate and to universities that were trying to recruit highly qualified faculty. In Ontario, a royal commission in 1906 identified recruitment of faculty as the most serious problem facing the province's universities (Flavelle, 1906). Canadian universities at that time made almost no provision for retirement. The University of Toronto purchased annuities for some faculty until 1891 when the provincial government prohibited the practice. (*Memorandum to the Carnegie Trustees*, April 9, 1908, Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). Immediately following, the university's faculty established their own contributory pension plan (Joannette, 1994). By 1906 the plan had collapsed (*Memorandum to the Carnegie Trustees*, April 9, 1908, Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). McGill briefly had a small privately endowed fund for the purchase of two or three annuities annually (*Pension Plan: Historical Development*, MUA, B.2.1.5.5). It was not a pension plan; access was not guaranteed, and the annuities had no fixed value.

Despite these minor initiatives, a question can be asked whether pensions for university faculty might have evolved, regardless of the Carnegie plan, as part of a general trend in Canada toward the establishment of permanent pension funds. By the end of the 19th century there were public sector pension programs at the federal level for the civil service and RCMP, and a few private sector programs for railways (Edwards, 1967) and financial services (Shilton, 2011). At that time *scientific management*—for example Fordism and Taylorism—were popular industrial concepts. According to Shilton (2011) this, mainly as a retention incentive, was the motivation behind the Canadian railway pension programs. There is no evidence that those pension plans were designed to aid recruitment.

Joannette (1994) locates the Carnegie Foundation pension program within this broader context. There is no evidence, however, of a spillover of this trend to higher education in Canada. If Shilton is correct, the industrial model was met with suspicion in Canada. Nor is there any evidence that Andrew Carnegie was concerned or even informed about the availability of pensions in Canada at the time of the plan's inception. Carnegie's interest in a pension plan for university faculty arose less from his experience as an industrialist and more from his association with Henry Pritchett, the president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, whose case for a plan to Carnegie was based on improving quality and raising standards.

The Carnegie plan was different from the existing Canadian pension programs in three distinctive ways. It was endowed in perpetuity and not conditional on the financial capability of employers. The federal civil service and railway pension programs were not truly permanent funds. In the case of federal civil service, the cost of the pensions was met by what today would be called legislated *current service* payments, financed within the federal budget annually (Shilton, 2011). In the private sector the arrangement was similar: the cost of the pensions was met year by year as an operating expense, often with changes in eligibility depending on what the firm could afford and chose to spend. An employee could not look forward to eligibility or, if eligible, to a specific amount. Under the Carnegie program, professors could look forward to both, as could their universities when negotiating with faculty whom they were trying to recruit. Were the concept of a "third sector" (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2016, p. 1515) understood in the early 19th century, that is where the Carnegie Foundation and its pension would be located, neither public nor private. The most that can be said is that in Canada, at the time that Carnegie decided to endow a pension fund, there was some interest in pensions, but the Foundation followed neither of the existing models, and was so different that it cannot be described as an evolutionary step based on prior Canadian experience. If it had evolutionary roots at all, they were in Carnegie's earlier endowments in support of Scottish universities and a relief fund for U.S. Steel employees who died or were disabled in service.

Canadian universities were quick to seek access to the Carnegie pension plan. Most of them, however, either misunderstood Carnegie's terms or misjudged the firmness by which the Foundation would enforce them. With

the establishment of the Corporation in 1911, they also understood that the Foundation's rules and standards for acceptance were the gateway to Corporation grants, and that applications for admission to the fund would be subjected to close scrutiny; for example, Queen's University, because seats on its board were reserved for Presbyterians, University of Toronto's because it was nominally tax supported, or Acadia University's because it was accountable to the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces.

Between 1910 and 1932 the Foundation commissioned six educational enquiries that influenced the evolution of Canadian higher education (Lang, 2022). In two of the studies—one of education in the Maritime provinces and Newfoundland, and one of medical education—the pension fund and the rules for access to it played pivotal roles.

## The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

In 1889 Andrew Carnegie, in *The Gospel of Wealth*, expressed his personal philosophy about wealth and philanthropy:

This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of Wealth: First, to set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and after doing so to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer in the manner which, in his judgment, is best calculated to produce the most beneficial results for the community—the man of wealth thus becoming the mere agent and trustee for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience, and ability to administer, doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves.... The man who dies thus rich dies disgraced. (Carnegie, 1889, p. 10)

The final sentence is important because it explains the structure of the Carnegie Foundation. Unlike other wealthy industrialists of the time who established trusts as residual bequests to be paid out after their deaths (Krass, 2011), Carnegie intended to, and very nearly did, dispose of his entire fortune before he died, keeping for

himself a pension equal to only that of his household employees (Andrew Carnegie, A. (1910, August 7). [Letter to B.A. Franks], CUCFAT). The Carnegie Foundation thus was a fully endowed fixed sum from the start, and managed by a board of trustees, most of whom were university presidents. Absent an actual endowment—as opposed to one only promised—a secure pension fund would have been actuarially impossible. Although technical, this arrangement had fiscal and fiduciary implications for the future conduct of the Foundation. Unlike the Carnegie Corporation, which was later founded with a separate endowment, that made one-off grants and awards from the interest earned annually on its endowment, the Foundation assumed actuarial obligations that had to be met regardless of the performance of its endowment, hence the selectivity and strict rules for admission to the pension plan. This distinction did not escape Andrew Carnegie, who suggested, but did not insist, that a contributory pension plan or an insurance plan might be preferable (Andrew Carnegie to Mrs. Craigie, December 2, 1904, CUCFAT; Savage, 1953) and who, when endowing the Carnegie Corporation, did not repeat the arrangement. Although the Corporation and the Foundation both then and later were often confused, they were different in mandate as well as in fiscal principle. According to their deeds of gift from Carnegie, the purpose of the Foundation, as its name denoted, was to advance teaching in colleges and universities by raising academic standards and improving the calibre of faculty. The purpose of the Corporation was to advance knowledge, not exclusively in higher education, as for example the Corporation's well-known financing of public libraries and its perhaps less well-known role in founding Canada's National Gallery (Brison, 2005). The foundations had different boards of directors and different presidents. The Foundation's board was bound by rules and limited to two specific purposes. Carnegie's deed of gift to the Corporation, on the other hand, was very broad. It gave its trustees "full authority to change policy or causes...when this, in their judgement has become necessary or desirable (Andrew Carnegie, A. (1911, November 10) [Letter to the trustees of the Carnegie Corporation], CUCC).

Neither the Foundation nor the Corporation was the first of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropic endeavours for the benefit of higher education. He had previously endowed the Carnegie Institute of Technology, the Carnegie Institution for Science, and the Carnegie Trust for

the Universities of Scotland. Nor was the Foundation his first pension fund. In 1902 he established the Carnegie Relief Fund for retirees and families of those who had died while employed in his steel mills.

The idea for a pension fund for college and university faculty came late in the history of Carnegie's philanthropy, post-dated only by the Corporation and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Nor can the idea be attributed to Carnegie alone. Howard Savage, the Foundation's assistant secretary and later treasurer, described the idea as an "impulse" (Savage, 1953). In 1904, Henry Pritchett, president of MIT, and using MIT as an example, persuaded Carnegie that low salaries and the absence of pensions were undermining the quality of American higher education. Carnegie expressed no interest in augmenting salaries. His preference was for a general contributory pension fund (Lagemann, 1999) to which he saw an immediate connection to the Relief Fund (Krass, 2011). The end, thus, was as much Pritchett's as Carnegie's idea. However, the means—adaptation of the Relief Fund, expansion to include the Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland, rejection of salary augmentation in favour of a general pension fund—were Carnegie's ideas alone. Carnegie, in going on to create and endow the Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, appointed Pritchett as its president, a position that he held for the next 25 years. The president of McGill, William Peterson, was a founding trustee and later board chair. Later, after Peterson left the board, Robert Falconer, of the University of Toronto, was named a trustee, and after that Peterson's successor at McGill, Arthur Currie. From 1905 to 1933 there was always at least one Canadian university president on the board.

To be eligible for participation in the pension plan a college had to meet a series of tests to attain *academic standing*, defined as follows:

An Institution to be ranked as a college must have at least six professors giving their entire time to college and university work, a course of four full years in liberal arts and sciences, and should require for admission not less than the usual four years of academic or high school preparation, or its equivalent, in addition to the pre-academic or grammar school studies. (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Rules for the Admission, 1906, p. 2).

Attached to but not part of the tests for "academic stand-



ing” was another rule, one that would prove to be highly contentious:

Institutions which are under control of a sect or require Trustees (or a majority thereof), Officers, Faculty or Students, to belong to any specific sect, or which impose any theological test, are to be excluded.” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Rules for the Admission, 1906, p. 3).

Even before the Foundation was fully in place Carnegie and Pritchett were assembling *standards of measurement* by which to measure college and university performance and planning a series of educational studies to be undertaken by the Foundation (Savage, 1953, p. 33). Nearly a century later the standards of measurement—for example faculty to student ratio—bear a strong resemblance to performance indicators. In this respect, the Foundation functioned as an independent and selective accrediting agency and gateway to Corporation funding. This was not unintentional. In his charge to the first trustees of the Foundation Carnegie made it plain that, in addition to setting measurable standards, the board could and should act selectively. There is evidence that the Foundation indeed did that: the rules for admission to the pension fund were revised six times between 1906 and 1929, each time becoming more selective. From 1908 onward the rules became more numerous, definitive, and stringent, especially following three successive events. In 1908 the Foundation introduced a scheme for classifying and rating universities (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1908). In 1909 the College Entrance Examination Board joined the Foundation in the mutual adoption of the Carnegie Unit (Roush, 1970; Savage, 1953) and in the next year the Carnegie Credit Hour (Savage, 1953; Shedd, 2003) as “standards of measurement” (Tompkins & Gaumnitz, 1954, p. 4).

Even if a college or university did not qualify for participation in the pension fund, standards were thus set. Carnegie and Pritchett from the start foresaw the Foundation as more than a pension fund. It would be an “educational influence” that would deal with “the most far-reaching educational questions and with the most important problems of educational policy” (Pritchett, H. (1905, November 8). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie], CUC-FAT). Its scope went beyond the setting and raising of measurable standards to include “bringing in of reason-

able unity in our arrangement of educational institutions (Congress of the United States, 1905). Pritchett went so far as to prophesy that the Foundation’s contribution centralization and standardization would be as great or greater in the end than the benefit of the pension fund (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1906*).

In initial drafts of *Rules for Admission* to the pension program achieving standing meant acceptability by the Foundation. To be accepted or associated a college or university had to be non-denominational. About this the Foundation was unequivocal. The requirement applied not only to financial dependence on religious organizations, it applied also to independence from any control by sectarian bodies. Further, it prohibited any denominational test in the appointment of trustees, faculty, and administrative officers, as well as in the admission of students. Colleges and universities not financed or directly controlled by religious organizations, but whose charters or by-laws did not expressly prohibit denominational tests, had to certify by resolution that they would not do so, nor would they allow “denominational doctrines [to] be taught to the students” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Rules for Admission, CUC-FAT, 1906, p. 3).

The non-denominational requirement was not the work of the Foundation’s president or trustees. It was in Carnegie’s deed of gift. Four years earlier, upon his installation as Lord Rector of the University of St. Andrews, Carnegie had drafted a controversial speech in which he rejected Christianity as practiced by the Church of Scotland, with whom his family had a contentious relationship, and called on students to do likewise (Carnegie, 1933). Carnegie, nevertheless, remained a practising, if somewhat erratic, Presbyterian (Lagemann, 1999). Pritchett shared Carnegie’s view, but for a fundamentally different reason. Although he was a devout Methodist (Flexner, 1943), he believed that no college of any denomination could deliver high quality academic instruction and promote religious doctrine at the same time. This, not surprisingly, did not sit well with many college presidents at a time when colleges and universities were predominantly denominational (Harris, 1976; Potts, 1971). Of the 627 colleges to which the Foundation sent a questionnaire inviting participation in the pension plan, 509 had denominational ties that rendered them “unacceptable” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advance-

ment of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1907*). Of the 509, only 13 continued to press their cases for acceptance, some of which to Savage, as the Foundation's assistant secretary (1953), "looked like dishonesty—at the very least it was laxity with a purpose" (Savage, 1953, p. 78); the Foundation's secretary publicly described the behaviour as "shady" (Furst, 1918, p. 4).

This was more than a suspicion. In one case a previously accepted Methodist college was removed from the pension plan because it had misled the Foundation about its denominational status (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report of the President and Treasurer, 1909*; Hohner, 1987). Finally, only seven were accepted (Furst, 1918). Some withdrew when the strict meaning of the non-denominational requirement became clear, while others sought ways around the requirement. Fourteen Canadian colleges and universities returned questionnaires. By 1909 four (Dalhousie, New Brunswick, McGill, and Toronto) were accepted. In 1912 Queen's, after ending its affiliation with the Presbyterian Church, was accepted but put on a waiting list contingent on the actuarial capacity of the pension fund.

Although Pritchett saw eye to eye with Carnegie on the debilitating effect of sectarianism on higher education, he had forewarned him that defining what was meant by "denominational" and "control" would be difficult and contentious (Pritchett, H. (1907, February 7). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie], CUCFAT). As president of the Foundation, Pritchett felt obligated to explain and defend the Foundation's non-denominational position in an address to the Conference on Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1908. Pritchett did not mince words: "The truth is the world is not ready to accept the theory that control of a college by a denomination means religious rather than denominational influence." Referring explicitly to the Foundation's rules for acceptance, he said, "it goes against the very spirit of intellectual freedom for which a college or university stands to put into its charter denominational tests in the choice of officers or teachers." (Pritchett, 1908, p. 19).

Basically, Pritchett went on to tell denominational colleges that they were facing a tragedy of the commons:

The primary objection lies in the multiplication of colleges and the consequent lowering of standards. If every denomination must have its share of colleges in order to accomplish its own ends, denominational

competition will inevitably produce the educational evils to which I have just referred. (Pritchett, 1908, p. 14)

His advice was, if colleges could not break their denominational allegiances, they should at least seek systematic coordination among themselves in the delivery of religious education (p. 14).

More in principle than in fact, Pritchett directed the attention of American denominational colleges to legislation in Manitoba that in 1877 allowed for the creation of a single university for the province with which sectarian colleges could affiliate and pool resources if they met the academic standards of the university—which the University of Manitoba did not until 1913—as the provincial examining and degree-granting institution (Harris, 1976; Morton, 1957). Pritchett did not mention Ontario's 1887 federation legislation, which at the time was more functional than Manitoba's. No Canadian university attended the assembly, but the religious conferences and synods whose aegis included respectively Acadia (Baptist), Mount Allison (Methodist), Queen's (Presbyterian), and McMaster (Baptist) were in attendance. The presence of the conferences and synods coincidentally proved Pritchett's argument about the controlling force of denominationalism.

The denominational colleges were not persuaded. Later in 1909, they submitted a memorial to the Foundation citing three reasons why they should be eligible. Their case, basically, was that denominational control need not necessarily lead to denominational conduct, and that many sectarian provisions in college charters were only nominal. The board was not convinced but decided to engage Andrew Carnegie directly before finally rejecting the proposal (Pritchett, H. (1909, April 9). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie], CUCFAT). Carnegie agreed with the board.

Although there was much disagreement among universities about the propriety of the non-denominational status as a condition for acceptance into the pension plan, but there was none about what the term meant. There was, however, uncertainty about the meaning of "tax supported" as grounds for ineligibility (Pritchett, H. (1906, October 6). [Letter to James Loudon, October 6, 1906]. UTA, Box 33).

The Foundation came under pressure almost immediately from the American Association of State Universities to either repeal the rule or amend it (Savage, 1953).

Pritchett asked Robert Falconer what application of the rule meant in Canada, perhaps realizing that Canada had no funding arrangement comparable to the American Land Grant College Act. Under the terms of the Act 90% of the proceeds from the sale or development of the land grants should be used to create endowments for universities designated to receive them. It was apparent to the Foundation that many states had either reduced previously existing tax-funded support or provided none in the first place, relying instead on the endowments as the means of financing their Land Grant universities (Johnson, 1981). The Association did not draw a distinction between state universities and Land Grant universities. When the Foundation amended the rule, with the advice of Falconer, it made this distinction and defined *tax support* as a responsibility of state government to provide of funding in a way that could not be tampered with politically from year to year. The issue would not have been new to Falconer. The distinction between revenue raised by taxation and revenue raised by endowments, excise duties, and licencing fees was central to the debate in Ontario about the University of Toronto's status as a non-denominational public institution. As early as 1876, the connection between tax support and political control was a controversial topic in the province of Ontario (Hodgins, J.R., 1877). The issue was not resolved until 1906 (Flavelle, 1906), which opportunely strengthened Falconer's hand in arguing for Toronto's acceptance into the pension plan.

Tax-supported universities were later added on the condition they have annual income of at least \$100,000, and the formal endorsement of their respective state or province. Those without tax support had to have an endowment of not less than \$200,000. Both financial provisions addressed the status of universities without state support but funded by land grant endowments. Thus, a fine but significant line, not unlike the non-denominational test, was drawn between state financial support and state control. An eligible college may be tax-supported but not state controlled, a provision at which some American state governments balked (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1909*; Johnson, 1981; Krass, 2011). The fine line exposed the Foundation's priorities: barring state control was the end game. Notably, no Canadian province expressed reservations. What was a political issue in some American states was not an issue in Canada. Every province with

a university seeking access to the pension fund immediately provided the required formal endorsement.

Robert Falconer, president of the University of Toronto, had a hand in revising the rules to accommodate tax-supported institutions. Early in 1908, before Toronto was accepted into the pension fund, Pritchett invited Falconer to present his views on the inclusion of "state universities" in the pension plan (Pritchett, H. (1908, January 29). [Letter to Robert Falconer]. UTA, Box 33). Enclosed with Falconer's reply was an undated typescript entitled "Admission to the List of Acceptable Institutions" that word-for-word became the revisions made later in 1908 in the rules for eligibility to accommodate tax-supported institutions (Falconer, R. (1908, April 9). [Letter to Henry Pritchett]. Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33).

Thirty-two tax-supported institutions secured the necessary state endorsements and applied, including the University of Toronto. Four, again including the University of Toronto, were accepted in 1909. At this time, citing the "immense task" of reviewing so many applications, the Foundation raised the bar for acceptance to include additional standards for equipment, resources, and expressed concern that an over-supply of students would diminish quality and efficiency due to "the presence of more students than they can really care for" even at the "strongest and best of them" (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Rules for Admission, 1909*).

In explaining this position, the Foundation extended Pritchett's 1908 prescription to denominational colleges to the tax-supported sector: co-operate, defeat inefficient rivalry, and rationalize systems. In a strongly worded letter explaining to the Governor of Ohio why all three of the state's universities' applications had been rejected, Pritchett ended by calling on the state to reconstruct its universities "in such wise that their functions may be differentiated and that each be assigned a definite place in a comprehensive and consistent educational system" (Henry Pritchett, H. (1909, June 9). [Letter to Judson Harmon]. CUCFAT).

Before the expansion of the conditions for acceptance, there were signals that the Foundation under Pritchett's leadership would seek to reform higher education. As early as 1905, before the pension was yet fully operational, Pritchett informed Carnegie that the Foundation would promote standardization as a means of raising the quality of higher education (Pritchett, H.



(1905. November 16). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie]. CUCFAT. In 1909 the Foundation warned universities that sheltered arms-length proprietary medical, dental, and law schools that they would not be accepted unless the schools were either brought up to the same standards of universities already on the accepted list or cut loose (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1909*). True to its word, in 1910 the Foundation commissioned the first in a series of educational enquiries on professional schools, later including dental and law schools in Canada, and Manitoba's 1877 federation legislation (Lang, 2022).

In Pritchett's introduction to Abraham Flexner's report on medical education, he explained that in an absence of a "unity of purpose or of standards" among colleges and universities that had sought acceptance, the Foundation was compelled to critically study their work and "commend [to them] the adoption of such standards...and bring about some fair conception of unity and the attainment ultimately of a system of schools intelligently related to each other (Flexner, 1910, p. xv).

Some prominent colleges took offence at the Foundation's open commitment to reform. The presidents of Yale, Wisconsin, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, and Washington all argued that the Foundation's non-denominational standards for acceptance and adoption of the Carnegie Unit were heavy-handed intrusions on their autonomy (Savage, 1953; Roush, 1970). Some rejected sectarian institutions characterized the pension program's requirements as a bribe to abandon their ecclesiastical principles (Henry Pritchett, H. (1909, March 13). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie], CUCFAT).

One critic predicted that an unacknowledged effect of the Carnegie pension fund would be the enablement of colleges and universities to shed higher-paid older faculty and replace them with lower-paid younger faculty in the name of efficiency (Ruggles, 1917). Pritchett took this seriously enough that in 1915, when announcing the results of an actuarial study commissioned by the Foundation, he reported that, if there was an effect on faculty salaries, it was to increase them (Pritchett, 1918). In Canada, the emphasis was on recruitment. Note should also be taken that in some Canadian universities—McGill, Queen's, Saint Francis Xavier, King's—faculty, not seeing incursions on their academic freedom, actively pressured their governing boards to take steps to ensure acceptance into the pension plan.

Almost from the start, there were questions about the financial feasibility of the pension plan (Cattell, 1909; Jastrow, 1910, 1916; Morison, 1964; Ruggles, 1917; Schindler, 2007). As strict as the rules for eligibility were, they did not limit participation in an actuarial sense. Fifty-two colleges and universities were accepted by 1907. By 1918 the number had risen to 73. The plan today would be described as a *defined benefit* plan with eligibility calculated on age and years of service: a fixed amount would be paid to beneficiaries with financial responsibility resting, in this case, on the Carnegie endowment and its management by the Foundation. As early as 1910, to control actuarially forecast costs, the Foundation began to consider age or service (but not both) as the basis for future pension eligibility, and in its 1912 Annual Report outlined the pros and cons of contributory and non-contributory pensions. In 1916 the Foundation's board issued a report that bluntly said, "Any pension system resting upon an endowment must inevitably reach its limit." The report advanced several options for age of eligibility and floated the idea of a contributory plan in which faculty and universities would participate along with the Foundation (Pritchett, 1916). Toronto took this seriously enough that it modelled the contingent actuarial costs of a contributory plan to the university into the 1950s (Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33).

A year later, C. O. Ruggles (1917), an economist at Ohio University, suggested that any revision of the plan should require that participating universities, upon acceptance, maintain salary scales, and that, in terms of cost, an insurance plan was more feasible actuarially, an idea that Carnegie himself perhaps had in mind as early as 1904 (Lagemann, 1999). Carnegie went on to suggest to Pritchett in 1907 (Savage 1953; Schindler, 2007) that an insurance plan might be more beneficial to faculty than expansion of the existing pension plan, a view that Pritchett then advanced in discussions with the nascent American Association of University Professors (Henry Pritchett to Harlan Stone, September 6, 1916). This led to the establishment of the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America (TIAA) in 1918, as a private business with the Carnegie Corporation as a major shareholder. The AAUP, however, did not initially look favourably on the Foundation's subsequent proposals to fold the insurance plan into a single comprehensive insurance and contributory pension plan with higher ages of eligibility (Pritchett, 1918), which the AAUP did

not believe was financially necessary (Harlan Stone, H. (1916, August 26). [Letter to Henry Pritchett], CUCFAT). The AAUP's position was supported by its membership, who, in a poll conducted in 1918, overwhelmingly favoured "alternative plans under control of the teachers concerned" (Graebner, 1979, p. 102.) In Canada, although university faculties—particularly at Queen's, McGill, Saint Francis Xavier, and Toronto (which for a brief time had a faculty-controlled plan)—lobbied for pensions, none expressed a preference for an insurance plan as an alternative.

Financial necessity, nevertheless, was an actuarial fact that had to be faced. In 1920 and again in 1922 and 1929, the Foundation revised the *Rules for Admission* to raise the age of eligibility, reduce the maximum benefit, and disallow teaching while retired and in receipt of a Carnegie pension. In 1925 the Carnegie Corporation, which by then was underwriting the Foundation's fiscal shortfalls, and concerned that they were becoming larger, commissioned a professor of actuarial science from the University of Toronto, William Alexander Mackenzie, to study the future viability of the pension fund. In 1928, Mackenzie reported that the fiduciary obligations were underfunded by nearly \$10 million, or by nearly 30%. Mackenzie described the current list of pensioners as "already overloaded." He recommended capping existing allowances and adding no new pensioners (Mackenzie, W. (1928, January 12). [Letter to Frederick Keppel], CUCFAT).

Facing these facts, the Foundation, under pressure from the Corporation, negotiated an agreement with the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America under which the Foundation would, from its own resources, continue to pay out defined benefit pensions to existing beneficiaries—of whom 202 were Canadian faculty (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, List of Pensionables, January 4, 1929, CUCFAT, Box 86)—but would not any add new beneficiaries. For new beneficiaries still eligible under existing rules, the Carnegie Corporation would purchase straight-life annuities as undiscounted defined contribution retirement stipends payable at age 70 (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *A Statement to the Teachers in Associated Colleges and Universities*, n.d., Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching pension plan thus gave way to the TIAA.

However, just as it would be a mistake to classify the Carnegie pension plan as a step in an evolutionary progression beginning with public service and private industry pension plans in Canada (Joannette, 1994), so too would it be a mistake to see the TIAA plan as an evolutionary modification or mutation of the Carnegie plan. By 1929, the Foundation's pension plan and the TIAA had co-existed for more than a decade. From the start they were fundamentally different. The TIAA plan was contributory, either on the part of individual faculty or their universities, or a combination of both. Neither the faculty nor the university had to be an associated member of Foundation. In other words, the contentious rules for admission did not apply. The TIAA plan was exactly what its title said it was: an annuity plan. There was no guarantee of annual payouts. Evidence of this is in the details of the agreement between the Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, and the TIAA to purchase annuities for the remaining faculty who had not yet retired but were eligible for Carnegie pensions. Because annuity payouts could not be guaranteed without the formal agreement of the AAUP, who held seats on the TIAA board (Stone, H. (1928, January 20). [Report to AAUP Committee on Pensions and Insurance], CUCFAT; Graebner, 1979, p. 102), the Corporation set up two "reserve" funds on which the TIAA could draw in the event that normal TIAA payouts fell short of the Carnegie guaranteed amounts (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1918*, pp 32–34). An additional grant from the Corporation subsidized the TIAA's management fees.

Between 1906 and 1929, 480 Canadian faculty benefited from the Carnegie pension fund (Lester, 1942). In 1929 the University of Toronto studied the actuarial possibility of its own pension plan, into which it would roll the Carnegie annuities purchased for its faculty (*Regulations Governing the Administration of the Pension Scheme, 1929*, Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33), but in the end joined and supplemented the TIAA plan, as did McGill through a TIAA-like arrangement with a private insurance company (Frost, 1984). Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, and Queen's followed, as did the universities of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia (Joannette, 1994).

## Canadian Universities and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Although it might seem intuitive that the responses to and the influence of the Foundation's pension plan can be categorized by provincial jurisdiction—Maritime provinces, Quebec, Ontario, and so on—for the purposes at hand it is more illustrative and closer to the contemporary context to examine them by their status in terms of the Foundation's rules for eligibility concerning denominational status, fiscal support, and governance. In 1905 the roster of universities in Canada comprised three universities established by government and eligible for public support (New Brunswick, Toronto, and Manitoba), three privately endowed with occasional public support (Dalhousie, McGill, and Queen's), four denominational and Roman Catholic (Laval, Saint Francis Xavier, Ottawa, and St. Michael's), and seven denominational and Protestant (King's, Bishop's, Acadia, Mount Allison, Western, McMaster, Victoria, and Trinity). All except Laval, St. Michael's, Ottawa, and McMaster applied for participation in the plan.

By 1915 14 Canadian universities responded to the Foundation's invitation to apply for participation in the pension fund, with different results depending on their status vis-à-vis the fund's rules and standards for acceptance. Two—Dalhousie and New Brunswick—were immediately granted “acceptance” standing. The first two clauses in Dalhousie's charter were explicit: the university would be non-denominational and would rely on private philanthropy for funding. There was no provision for government support. The University of New Brunswick, by legislation also non-denominational and not tax-supported.

### Universities Established by Government and Eligible for Public Support

New Brunswick's acceptance was short-lived, but not before some of the university's faculty were enrolled in the pension plan. The Foundation decided that the university did not meet its matriculation standards, which was not surprising given that the bulk of the university's enrolment and programs at the time were sub-baccalau-

reate (Learned & Sills, 1922). Perhaps foreseeing this outcome, the Foundation's president, as a diplomatic courtesy to the University of Toronto, which, being tax-supported, was not yet on the “accepted” list, wrote to James Loudon, the university's president, inviting him to submit a case for the university's acceptance, particularly with tax-supported status in mind (Henry Pritchett to James Loudon, October 8, 1906, Falconer Papers, UTA). One week later he wrote to Maurice Hutton, then the acting president, regarding a question that he had raised about New Brunswick's acceptance, to say “I do not think it [UNB] is of an educational standard which would place it on the list” (Henry Pritchett to Maurice Hutton, October 15, 1906, Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). In 1907 Pritchett's prediction was confirmed (Pritchett, H. (1907, March 1). [Letter to Robert Falconer], UTA, Box 30).

A few weeks after Robert Falconer assumed the presidency of the University of Toronto from Hutton, he took up a letter from Pritchett who hinted that an exception to the “tax support” rule might be made for the University of Toronto because “the educational problem in Canada is very different and should be differently dealt with” (Pritchett, H. (1906, November 29). [Letter to Maurice Hutton], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). Pritchett repeated this view publicly again in 1908 (Pritchett, 1908a, p. 657). Pritchett set out three specific concerns that the university should address to gain acceptance into the pension program: the exact form of government, safeguards against political interference, and the extent of financial support that the university had received over the previous five years, an issue likely prompted by an erroneous report from McGill about Toronto's support from the provincial government (*The Provincial Government and McGill University*, 1906, MUA).

Addressing the Foundation's concerns about university governance and political interference was, fortunately, easier due to a report of a royal commission, the first term of which was to report on “management and government of the university” (Flavelle, 1906, p. iii). The report led to a revision of the University of Toronto Act, which had made its way through the provincial legislature only a few weeks before Pritchett took office. The new act took direct control of the university away from the government and vested it in an independent board of governors, a fact that President Loudon emphasized in his letter of resignation (Loudon, J.). 1906, July 11). [Letter to Edward Blake], Executive Committee Papers,

UTA, Box 67) and which Falconer, as his successor, re-emphasized in his response to Pritchett.

The Foundation also sought explanation of Toronto's matriculation status. This was triggered by three events. As part of its mandate to set and raise standards, and based on data collected from the invitational questionnaire, the Foundation concluded that the University of Toronto's matriculation standard was on par with Beloit College, which was exclusively undergraduate, had no professional programs, and no research mandate (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1908). That Falconer would take umbrage was not surprising (Robert Falconer, R. (1909, March 15). [Letter to Henry Pritchett], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). The issue, however, was partly the university's own doing. Shortly after Falconer took office, he proposed that the first year of the four-year Pass course in Arts and Science should be eliminated because, in his view, it was more like secondary school than university (Harris, 1976; Greenlee, 1988), and that its elimination would be a "serious advance" in the university's academic standards (Falconer, R. (1909, May 19). [Letter to Henry Pritchett], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). The issue, in Falconer's view, was also partly a misunderstanding of hostile claims made by McGill and Queen's, both of which at the time were still seeking acceptance into the Foundation's pension program (Falconer, R. (1909, January 29). [Letter to Henry Pritchett], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). After an exchange of several letters between Falconer and Pritchett, the Foundation concluded that the meanings of matriculation in the United States and Canada, and specifically the University of Toronto, were fundamentally different (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report, 1909*). This evidently was the exception to which Pritchett previously referred. Not only did the Foundation accept the exception, in the same report Pritchett advocated it for American colleges and universities.

Given that a royal commission had recently rejected the options of regular operating funding and a land grant as an endowment for the university (Flavelle, 1906), the University of Toronto was flustered by the issue of tax support. Falconer's first strategy was to persuade the Foundation that the university was not really supported financially by the provincial government. In this effort he was hampered by a claim already made by McGill in a petition to the Quebec government for funding which as-

serted, erroneously, that the University of Toronto was receiving \$750,000 annually from the government (*The Provincial Government and McGill University, 1906*, MUA). Falconer, in a long letter to Pritchett (Pritchett, H (1908b, April 9). [Memorandum to the Carnegie Trustees], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33) emphasized three points. The only public funding for which the university was eligible was a fixed share of revenue from excise and estate duties—not taxes—up to \$275,000, and there was no guaranteed minimum (Boggs, 2007; Flavelle, 1906). In fact, the university had never received that much. In the most recent year, 1905, the university's audit committee reported \$61,000 in revenue from the duties (University of Toronto, 1905). Regardless of sources of funding, although the Federation Act of 1887 initially allowed the university to provide annuities, no pensions were provided to university faculty, such provision had been prohibited by provincial regulation since 1891, although retirement annuities already funded could be grand-parented, which in 1906 cost the university \$7,600 in service costs (University of Toronto, 1906). In any case, according to Falconer, the previous annuities were "utterly inadequate" and left widows "destitute." In other words, the University of Toronto was not really "tax supported" as Falconer chose to interpret the Foundation's rules for acceptance. The argument did not persuade the Foundation. Despite the promise of "exceptional" treatment none was forthcoming (Henry Pritchett H. (1906, October 8) [Letter to Robert Falconer], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33).

Two years later Falconer reversed tack, in effect abandoning his previous argument. Having heard that Andrew Carnegie might increase the Foundation's endowment in order to accommodate state universities, Falconer, at Pritchett's invitation (Pritchett, H. (1908, January 29). [Letter to Robert Falconer], CUCFAT), wrote to Pritchett, outlining the terms under which state universities, including the University of Toronto, might be accepted into the Foundation's pension program (Robert Falconer to Henry Pritchett, April 9, 1908, Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). Falconer's proposal was adopted. In June 1909, the University of Toronto, along with the universities of Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, was accepted into the pension program (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Annual Report of the President and Treasurer, 1909*).



## Universities Privately Endowed with Occasional Public Support

Like New Brunswick, Dalhousie ran afoul of the Foundation's rules for acceptance, but several years later. When the Foundation was established, most interest in it on the part of universities was the pension fund and the rules surrounding it. Advancing the cause of higher education was also part of the Foundation's mandate through its Department of Educational Enquiry (Lang, 2022). In 1910 the Foundation released an "educational enquiry" of medical education, which had an indirect but important connection to the pension fund (Flexner, 1910).

The Flexner report was bluntly critical of the medical school at Dalhousie. Flexner called the Halifax Medical College "feeble" and "highly objectionable," described the relationship between it and Dalhousie as "peculiar" and, in the Foundation's terms, "sheltered" by the university (Flexner, 1910, p. 321). Moreover, the report revealed to the Foundation that the Halifax Medical College was, unlike the university, tax-supported. This put Dalhousie's own status with the Foundation in an uncertain and precarious position. The university had no middle ground; it could either break all ties with the medical college or take it over. In 1911, Dalhousie bought out the college, and created a new medical school with full faculty status (Dalhousie University Senate, Minutes, May 16, 1910; Dalhousie University Board of Governors, Minutes, May 5, 1911, DAL).

All, however, was not smooth sailing thereon for Dalhousie. Instead of reverting to the status quo ante, the secretary of the Foundation informed President Mackenzie that the survey that led to the university's initial acceptance into the pension plan did not have to be repeated, but that detailed information had to be provided about each Dalhousie faculty member currently covered by the plan and any new members (Furst, C. (1912, July 13). [Letter to A. Stanley Mackenzie], DAL). This may have been due to wariness on the Foundation's part about the efforts of some former Halifax Medical College lecturers, who under the constitution of the college, had been appointed without any involvement on the part of Dalhousie (Halifax Medical College Constitution, DAL, FC 02 0203 no. 06939), to secure professorial status in the new faculty and in turn eligibility for the pension fund (Waite, 1994), an issue that the Foundation continued to pursue (Mackenzie, A. S. (1914, March 16). [Letter to

Henry Pritchett], DAL; Pritchett H. (1917, February 1). [Letter to A. Stanley Mackenzie], DAL). Here we begin to see evidence of a hand-in-glove relationship between financial incentives to improve quality—the pension plan—and the Foundation's reform agenda—"educational enquiries" and standards for acceptance into the pension plan.

The eligibility of McGill was complicated by clauses in its charter that allowed for government funding and the reservation of seats on its governing board for Protestants. The university, however, had never actually received any funding, despite strenuous pressure on the government to live-up to the terms of the charter. A further complication in the charter was an amendment made by statute in 1864 that required members of McGill's self-selected board to be "laymen of some Protestant denomination" (McGill University Statute, 1864, MUA). Prior to the amendment all that the charter said about religion was that instruction had to be in "true religion," which was taken to mean Christianity as a whole (McGill University Royal Charter, 1852). McGill's position, which the Foundation soon accepted, was threefold. First, beginning with its royal charter in 1852, the university was functionally non-denominational and had stayed that way, the later statute about board membership notwithstanding. Second, the theological college at McGill was associated with the university but not part of it, and was governed by a separate board. This argument was later to move the university more towards secularism when Peterson, still serving on the Foundation's board and risking a rift with the university's chancellor, was compelled to reject a large donation to construct a building on campus that would jointly house university and theology programs (Frost, 1984). The final argument, based on the language of its first statute, drew a fine line between the meanings of *denomination* and *religion*. This was a credible case given the then contemporary meaning of "Protestant" in Quebec. Finally, it would be naïve not to recall that Peterson, as well as being a member of the Foundation's board, was highly regarded by Pritchett (Henry Pritchett, H. (1918, February 8). [Letter to William Peterson], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 30).

At Queen's the status of its faculty of theology was also central to its strategy for gaining access to the Carnegie pension fund. President Gordon and the board of trustees from the start recognized that Queen's would have difficulty persuading the Foundation that the uni-



versity was “entirely unsectarian” (Neatby, 1978, p. 278). They were correct: the university’s application was declined because its governance was constitutionally Presbyterian. President Gordon and the board were inclined to take the Foundation’s decision as conclusive, although Gordon bypassed the Foundation and wrote personally to Andrew Carnegie arguing, as some other denominational universities did, that sectarian institutions like Queen’s could rise to meet the Foundation’s reform objectives (Gordon, D. (1905, August 24). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie], CUCFAT, Box 119). Gordon pressed this point further in a personal meeting with Andrew Carnegie (Pritchett, H. (1906, November 9). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie], CUCFAT, Box 31). Again, based on a point-by-point refutation of Queen’s case, the university’s application was deemed to be denominational (Pritchett, H. (1906, November 5). [Memorandum Concerning the Government of Queen’s University], CUCFAT, Box 31).

The university’s faculty, poorly paid and with no provisions for pensions, pushed back through its senate, thus igniting an intensely divisive debate that wracked Queen’s for two years. Following a meeting with Henry Pritchett, the board and senate, not being in agreement, decided to put forward a plan that would separate the faculty of theology from the university and reduce the influence of the Presbyterian Church in its governance (Daniel Gordon, D. (1908, March 11). [Letter to Sanford Fleming], QUA). This was opposed by the Church, clergy, and many lay Presbyterians. When the plan went forward to the Church’s General Assembly in 1908 with equivocal support from the board for advice only, it was defeated. The debate nevertheless set Queen’s on a path that led to secularization four years later, with the Presbyterian Church’s agreement to raise \$500,000 for the university’s endowment and fully fund the establishment of a theological college outside the university. Queen’s then became eligible for the pension plan.

## Roman Catholic Universities

None of Canada’s Roman Catholic universities applied (although Saint Francis Xavier later did). Pritchett anticipated this and spoke directly to it in his address to the Conference on Education (Pritchett, 1908, p. 14). He acknowledged the “well thought-out policy” of the Roman Catholic Church to use colleges “as agencies for propagation of the faith” and employ teachers “who were

independent of ordinary financial obligations.” They were in other words, a “living endowment” who did not need pensions from the Foundation and, in any case, taught at doctrinally sectarian institutions. In Canada at the time this applied to all Roman Catholic universities under holy orders (for example Jesuit Laval and Basilian St. Michael’s). St. Mary’s and Mount St. Vincent, which had previously sought arrangements under which their professional programs would be affiliated with Dalhousie, revived the idea as a possible means of bringing them within the orbit of the pension plan, essentially by separating denominational arts and science programs from non-denominational professional programs (Waite, 1994). The Foundation, having become suspicious of various workaround proposals from other non-denominational colleges (Savage, 1953) declined.

In 1919, the Foundation, after receiving applications from all the universities in the Maritime provinces for acceptance into the pension program, the Foundation commissioned another educational study “with a view to suggesting a constructive policy particularly of the institutions that had applied for aid” (Learned & Sills, 1922, preface). The resulting report called for the creation of a coordinated system by chartering a new university with which existing universities—Acadia, Dalhousie, Mount Allison, King’s, New Brunswick, Saint Francis Xavier—would be federated, some relocating to Halifax. The Corporation and Foundation, again acting hand-in-glove, would provide \$3 million to meet the costs of transition. In the preface to the report, Pritchett intimated that the previous requests from Maritime universities for financial assistance from the Foundation and the Corporation had been deferred but not finally rejected, and that depending on their response to the report, which expressly referred to the inadequacy of retirement provisions for faculty, could be reconsidered, including acceptance into the pension plan. This enticement was powerful enough for Saint Francis Xavier to reconsider its position.

Late in 1920 the university’s board passed a resolution instructing the president to invite the Foundation to include the university in the study (Board of Governor’s minutes, December 17, 1920, StFXUA, RG 5-9-12329). The Foundation quickly accepted (Pritchett, H. (1921, January 4). [Letter to H. P. MacPherson], StFXUA, RG 5-9-1383) The incentive of access to the pension fund was attractive enough for the university in 1921 to amend the composition of its board by increasing the

number of lay members and decreasing the number of priests. In 1922, the university's faculty, with the prospect of pension eligibility principally in mind, informed the Foundation that they unanimously supported the report (Pritchett, H. (1922, February 3). [Letter to A. Stanley McKenzie], CUCFAT). The university's board, still interested, sought exemption from relocation to Halifax (Reid, 1984). Despite the expressed desire of the faculty, the diocesan bishop of the Hierarchy of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland commissioned a report that put forward several arguments against Saint Francis Xavier's entering the proposed confederation, the two strongest of which were a concern about the loss of the university's pastoral presence in rural Nova Scotia, and a concern confederation would lead to conflicts with Catholic views. After nine months of fence-sitting, and after the Foundation's report declared the university to be one of only two universities—the other was Dalhousie—that met the Foundation's academic standards, the board decided against confederation (Saint Francis Xavier University Board of Governors, Minutes, October 20, 1922, StFXUA, G5-9-12362). The shift in the sectarian balance of the university's governance, however, remained in place.

## Independent Protestant Universities

The strategic posture of Protestant universities vis-à-vis eligibility for the Foundation's fund depended more on denominational jurisdiction than on provincial jurisdiction; for example, Methodist universities took a generally uniform approach, as did Baptist and Anglican universities.

### Anglican

No Anglican university in Canada—Bishop's, King's, Western, Trinity—sought admission to the Carnegie pension plan. On the one hand, like Roman Catholic universities, many of their faculty were ordained in holy orders. On the other hand, they felt pressure to compete for faculty and retain clergy. In 1910, the American Episcopal Church committed \$9 million for an endowed pension fund. It is not possible to say with certainty that the church took this step as a response to Foundation's initiative, but it is a matter of fact that the church recruited an assistant secretary from the Foundation to set up

a pension fund on the Carnegie model (Savage, 1953; Stearns, 1994). The Anglican Church in Canada followed suit shortly thereafter.

King's College, like Saint Francis Xavier, was initially attracted to the prospect of access to the pension fund through the federation recommended by the Foundation in 1922. The prospect was nipped in the bud by both good and bad fortune. The bad fortune was a fire that demolished the college's campus in Windsor and forced relocation to Halifax. The good fortune was that, with the Foundation's approval and the support of the college's faculty, King's and Dalhousie reached a federation agreement five years before a final decision was made about the Foundation plan (Learned, W.S. (1923, April 14). [Letter to G.F. Pearson], DAL, UA-3-173-10). King's, thus, never had to face the choices that Saint Francis Xavier had to make.

### Methodist

The Methodist church was organized around interlocking conferences. Methodist universities to varying degrees fell under the control of these conferences, one result of which was that Canadian Methodist universities and American Methodist universities took the same strategic approach to securing access to the Foundation pension fund without compromising doctrinal principles. The approach involved two steps. The first was to amend governance either by tilting the balance of membership towards less sectarian representation and more lay representation or by restricting certain administrative authority—for example, requirements for admission—to a lay subset of governors. The other was to formally set faculties of theology outside the universities under separate governance.

Mount Allison University, which was governed by the Eastern British America (Methodist) Conference, sought access to Foundation funding in 1907 (David Allison, D. (1907, August 3). [Letter to Andrew Carnegie], MAA) without reply. A follow-up request in 1908, however, was firmly declined, with the explanation that Mount Allison was indeed denominational by Carnegie standards (Bertram, J. (1908, April 30). [Letter to David Allison], MAA). Of the 32 governors allowed by the previous 1895 charter, 22 were appointed by the Methodist Church. Like other universities also governed by the Eastern Methodist Conference, Mount Allison moved on to revise its charter twice—in 1913 and 1917—in efforts to meet the Foun-

dition's conditions for non-denominational governance by recomposing its *ex officio* board membership and re-naming the board (Charter of the Regents of Mount Allison College, 1915; Charter and By-laws of Mount Allison College, 1917, MAU, 92819060 & 92819190). This was the course of action taken with success previously by two Methodist colleges in the United States—Wesleyan and Randolph-Macon—to promise “undenominational administration” (Potts, 2015, p. 28; Stearnes, 1994). Mount Allison, however, did not take this further step to amend its charter and its application was not accepted, but the changes in governance remained in place. This proved to be moot as the Foundation later retracted the admission of the American Methodist Colleges that had attempted the non-denominational administration work-around (Stearnes, 1994).

Later, in response to the Foundation proposal for a university federation in the Maritime provinces, Mount Allison agreed to relocate its faculty of theology to Halifax, along with all other professional schools in the federation (*Mount Allison and the Carnegie Plan for University Federation, Appendix 1* [April, 1928], MAUA). Mount Allison, apart from Dalhousie, was the last Maritime university to withdraw from the proposed federation. Mount Allison predicted that the Foundation, even after the plan for federation collapsed, would pay out some of the \$3 million it had committed for transition to the plan, absent pension fund eligibility (*Mount Allison and the Carnegie Plan for University Federation, Appendix 1* [April, 1928], MAUA). The prediction turned-out to be correct (Lang, 2022).

Victoria followed an almost identical course of action, but only after an attempt to gain access to the Foundation pension fund through federation with the University of Toronto failed. Did the Foundation's acceptance of the University of Toronto into the pension fund extend to the denominational universities federated with it under the Federation Act of 1887? Victoria assumed that it did (Friedland, 2002; Sissons, 1952). To this Toronto responded without equivocation. Falconer told Pritchett that he would not “lay their case before the board [of the Foundation] or enter in negotiations on their behalf” and that he was “in no way responsible for any of their [faculty] appointments” (Falconer, R. (1909, May 19). [Letter to Henry Pritchett], Falconer Papers, UTA, Box 33). Four years later, when the president of Victoria sought inclusion for himself in the pension fund, he was refused on

the grounds of Falconer's previous position (Clyde Furst to Robert Falconer, April 26, 1913, CUCFAT). Thus, a strong message was sent, not only to the federated universities, but to all denominational universities in Canada. It also probably explains why Pritchett, in his 1908 address to denominational colleges, advocated Manitoba's as yet untested federation legislation instead of the Ontario legislation, which had then been in place for 20 years.

Victoria's next step was to amend its governance so that it would appear less denominational in the eyes of the Foundation (Victoria University Board of Regents, Minutes, September 8, 1914, VUA). Victoria's plan, in essence, was to place its faculty of theology under separate governance, leaving the university board largely unchanged ([Ontario] *Bill 51, An Act to consolidate and amend the Acts respecting Victoria University*, March 23, 1915, VUA). This was insufficient in the eyes of the Foundation. As in the case of Mount Allison, the changes made in Victoria's governance remained in place.

## Baptist

Acadia University, by the Foundation's standards, was at the same time less and more sectarian than other denominational colleges. It was less sectarian in that its charter said explicitly that no religious tests could be required in the appointment of faculty and the admission of students. The university was, however, more sectarian in that the appointment of its governors was entirely in the hands of the Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces, which owned the university and officially spoke for it. This arrangement was not unusual for other Baptist colleges in the United States (Potts, 1971) and in Canada (Harris, 1976; Johnston, 1976).

McMaster University was under the control of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. Acadia did not seek initially seek support from the Foundation, but McMaster almost did, albeit with reluctance (Trotter, T. (1906, February). [Letter to A.C. McKay], CBA). The university's administration shared the Foundation's concern about the cost of recruiting and retaining qualified faculty but could not come to agreement with the Convention-controlled board about the denominational compromises that accepting Foundation support might entail (Johnston, 1976). When, as an alternative, with the Board's concurrence, the university sought support for a new science building from the Carnegie Corporation, the

Corporation, like the Foundation, refused to bend; the rules for admission applied to both. The refusal, however, prompted the Convention to itself provide equivalent matching funding, with the result that the Foundation's aim of improving the quality of education was advanced by the financial incentive alone, denominational compunction aside.

This, too, was typical of Baptist conventions in the United States, which by 1914 raised \$2 million in matching funding for Baptist colleges from supporters who were less troubled by sectarian higher education than Carnegie (Potts, 1971). At the time the Baptist church in Canada was averse to any connection with government or other political involvement. McMaster was the only university that refused federation with the University of Toronto and the funding opportunities that went with it after the Federation Act of 1887. The Baptist Convention owned McMaster until 1957. Acadia refused in 1926 to participate in the federation proposed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Maritime provinces for the same reason and forewent funding eligibility. The behaviour of Acadia and McMaster was more than a matter of sectarian pique. It was in line with Reformed Baptist dispensationalist theology. Acadia and McMaster both participated in the TIAA, which imposed no non-denominational test for participation, and which, as a private business corporation, was not an extension of government or a third sector organization (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2016).

## Conclusions

Did the Foundation, either by design or conduct, employ the pension fund to change the sectarian-secular balance of higher education in Canada? The answer is maybe. This is the issue behind Daniel Gordon's challenge to the Foundation. Despite Andrew Carnegie's well-known antipathy towards sectarianism (Krass, 2011; Wall, 1970), the Foundation's position, as enunciated in Henry Pritchett's 1908 defense of the non-denominational rule, was not anti-sectarian. That position was based on economic affordability. Denominational universities could not afford to serve two purposes at once and expect to maintain quality in both. This was the issue behind Daniel Gordon's challenge to the Foundation on behalf of Queen's. Gordon's argument, although diplomatically posed, was simply "Why not?" Why assume that Queen's could not meet the Foundation's academic standards within the

resources available to it, supplemented by the pension program? The fact that it was Pritchett who advised Carnegie that the non-denominational rule had to be enforced in Queen's case implies that the Foundation put the sectarian test ahead of its academic standards. On the other hand, there is convincing evidence that, in its conduct toward Canada overall, the Foundation put academic standards ahead of sectarianism. The first evidence, after Robert Falconer's intervention, was the Foundation's formal recognition that the Foundation's matriculation standards meant something different in Canada, not just for secular Toronto, but for all Canadian universities. The second was the Foundation's early recognition of the Canadian federation model of higher education. Federation offered a political and financial solution to the affordability problem while at the same time permitting sectarian diversity. The Foundation not only tolerated federation in Canadian higher education, it promoted it, and continued to do so even after the pension fund expired (Learned & Wallace, 1932). In Pritchett's 1908 defense of the non-denominational rule he commended Manitoba's federation model as a means of sectarian-secular co-existence. Federation in practical effect was a defense against secularization. Federation was the central proposition in the Foundation's plan for raising the quality of higher education in the Maritime provinces.

With the passage of time, then, the Foundation had reversed its priorities and put the improvement of quality before sectarianism. Ironically but significantly, it was the denominational universities, not the Foundation, that scuppered the plan for higher education in the Maritime provinces by putting sectarian interests ahead of improving quality.

Whatever the Foundation's designs and intentions, did the pension program cause a shift in the balance between sectarian and secular in Canadian higher education? Yes and no. On the one hand, every denominational university that sought acceptance into the Foundation's pension program took steps of some kind in the direction of secularism. Mount Allison, Queen's, Saint Francis Xavier, and Victoria all amended the balance between sectarian and secular in their charters and by-laws in hope of complying with the Foundation's non-sectarian rule. Whether those amendments satisfied the Foundation or not, they remained in place. Even McGill, which was accepted very early, had to explain to the Foundation what its Protestant board composition



meant within the context of Quebec. McGill insisted an explanation was not necessary, although Frost (1984, p. 85) concluded it would have “if the price is right.” Universities with internal schools of theology built organizational partitions between their universities and their theological faculties. McGill, whose faculty of theology was already outside the university, resisted internal pressure and financial incentive to bring faculty into the university. All these changes remained in place.

On the other hand, these changes were confined to governance and organization. In no case did any denominational Canadian university make any doctrinal changes or even countenance the possibility. The faculties of theology were under different governance, but otherwise were doctrinally unchanged. Universities under control of religious orders or conferences remained so.

The balance between sectarian and secular notwithstanding, did the Carnegie Foundation pension program affect the quality Canadian higher education? Yes. From the start Andrew Carnegie and Henry Pritchett insisted that, whether all universities met the standards for acceptance into the pension fund or not, the standards would have been set and institutions would aspire to meet them. The presence of the plan itself would be an incentive. This appears to have been the case in Canada. When the standards were applied, as for example they were in the Maritime provinces, universities objected to recommendations that would impinge their denominational autonomy but accepted all recommendations for academic improvement, even when the judgements were harsh. So did Canadian universities with medical, dental, and law schools. The acceptance not only raised standards, it also resulted in structural change, as medical schools and law schools that had previously been outside universities became part of them. Four university faculties and two senates went on record in support of the Carnegie program, something that they would have been unlikely to do had they found the standards academically objectionable.

Although only a few Canadian universities directly benefitted from the pension program, did, as Carnegie and Pritchett predicted, the very existence of the pension fund have a leveraging effect that advanced the Foundation’s intentions and increased support for universities generally? The answer is yes. Financial support from the Presbyterian church was a key part of the resolution of Queen’s debate that delayed the universi-

ty’s eligibility for the pension fund. Financing from the church made possible the establishment of the faculty of theology outside the university. The Anglican Church established its own pension fund on the model of the Carnegie fund. To maintain the religious independence of Acadia and McMaster, Baptist conventions raised funds to match funds that otherwise would have flowed from the Foundation and the Corporation (Lang, 2022). After the collapse of the plan for confederation in the Maritime provinces, the United Church raised \$2 million to correct capital shortfalls that the Learned and Sills report identified (*Mount Allison and the Carnegie Plan for University Federation, Appendix 1* (April, 1928), MAUA). During the negotiations of a Maritime university federation Acadia raised \$750,000, \$150,000 of which came from the local citizenry (Longley, 1939).

Did the Foundation meddle and intrude on institutional autonomy? More no than yes. The Foundation, using the carrot of the pension plan and the stick of acceptance standards, drove wedges between denominational universities and the religious orders and conferences that controlled them. The Foundation did this in the name of raising the standard of quality, an argument that no denominational Canadian university rejected. Several not only did not reject the argument, they used it to lever financial support from their respective churches. Accepting the Foundation’s academic standards and in turn seeking access to Foundation funding, however, did not mean that any of the denominational universities willingly sought independence from their respective churches. This left the universities in a tug of war between secular academic autonomy, which the Foundation did not threaten, and institutional sectarian autonomy, which it did.

From this follows a reasonable conclusion that the outcome of the Foundation’s efforts, intrusions or not, was tempered by the resilience and sometimes push-back from the universities and their denominational sponsors, and possibly by the continued membership of Canadian university presidents on the Foundation’s board. For example, it was Toronto’s Robert Falconer who influenced the revision of the Foundation’s rules to allow the admissibility of state universities, and who persuaded the Foundation to recognize and ultimately promote the Canadian model for matriculation standards.

Was it also “colonial?” Assuming that by “colonial” the Foundation’s critics mean that Canada was treated



as a colony of the United States, the answer is no. The Foundation sought Canadian advice, adopted it, and propagated Canadian matriculation standards and the federation model across the board. There is peripheral evidence of what might be called *reverse colonial* behaviour. Like the Anglican Church pension modelled on the Carnegie pension plan, in 1906 the British Treasury struck a committee to advise in a pension plan for university faculty. Appointed to the committee was the First Secretary of the Carnegie Trusts for Universities in Scotland, who was familiar with all aspects of the Carnegie plan, which the British plan recommended by the committee closely resembled (Logan, 1985).

Daniel Gordon's argument on behalf of Queen's eligibility for the pension fund provides further insight into the "colonial" question. Gordon's argument was not that the Foundation's rules and standards were wrong and should not be applied to Canada; it was that Canadian universities like Queen's, sectarian or not, should be allowed to demonstrate that they met the standards on the same terms as American universities. Falconer's argument was the reverse: the matriculation standards were wrong, and inapplicable to Canadian universities, again sectarian or not. This might seem anti-colonial were it not for the outcome: the Foundation recognized the Canadian model and commended it to American universities.

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