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W.T. McCOY AND HIS DIRECTORSHIP OF EDUCATION

IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA 1919 - 1929.

by

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SUMMARY.

Section one is a chronological account of W.T. McCoy's career in New South Wales, Tasmania and South Australia.

McCoy rose from pupil teacher to inspector in the New South Wales Education Department. He gained the office of Director of Education in Tasmania in 1909 because of his tact and practical ability. He reconciled the factions in Tasmania and put the state education system on a sound footing.

McCoy took over the South Australian Education Department in 1919 after plans had been made for developments by the 1915 Education Act but there was no forceful leader available to put these plans into effect. Although he was appointed at a time of economic recession he did not allow this to block practical changes which consequently lifted education out of its lethargy. By his personal qualities and his capacity to lead he quickly gained the confidence of his officers and teachers. In 1923 he attended the third Imperial Education Conference in London, and then he visited educational institutions and observed educational practices in the United Kingdom, on the Continent and in North America. On his return he submitted a report and recommended to the Government practicable suggestions to improve local education. From 1924 to 1926 during the office of the Labour Government, which was most sympathetic towards educational development, McCoy was able to implement plans which he believed were most essential to the system in South Australia. A definite school building programme was inaugurated, school medical services were extended, a psychologist was appointed, central schools were established and the consolidation of rural schools was begun. After his second term abroad in 1927 McCoy brought back ideas for agricultural education and vocational guidance in the secondary schools.

Section two is a more detailed examination of the main aspects of McCoy's work for education in South Australia. Section two is divided into two parts. The first part examines the foundations and operations of the education system and McCoy's directorship so that he can be evaluated as an educational administrator. The second part deals with the

theory and practice of education in the state schools before and during McCoy's directorship in order that developments in education can be determined and McCoy's contribution assessed.

McCoy served under five different Ministers of Education and changing ministries enabled him to seize the initiative to adopt a progressive policy in education. He was unpatronizing and forthright, invariably frank, but constantly tactful with his Ministers. He spent much time in close personal contact with his Ministers. Through them he hoped to convince reluctant politicians that an adequate state education system cannot be operated on minimum resources.

McCoy inherited and accepted the highly centralized system of educational administration with its stress on efficiency, standardization and uniformity. Although he depended on the experience of his senior officers and established a sound organizational climate he was definitely the director of the organization. The time for significant community participation in educational decision making had not arrived, and neither the Advisory Council nor the schools were expected to be innovators in education.

McCoy was always anxious about the welfare of his teachers. In return he expected them to attain adequate qualifications and be efficient and effective in the classroom and be interested in the community. He established and maintained harmonious relations with the South Australian Public Teachers' Union.

In primary education McCoy followed the Australian practice of spreading educational facilities as evenly as possible over the whole State, and in places where no schools were provided correspondence tuition was organised. He established infant departments in large primary schools. He led the way in curriculum revision on the basis that schools should combine academic and practical activities and aim ultimately to produce good citizens. In post primary education he developed facilities to cater for the needs of South Australian society in the most practical way permitted by the times. He regarded high schools as the elite schools for the academically able, and he developed central schools to cater for the majority

of adolescents and to convert an apathetic society into realizing the advantages of post primary schools.

McCoy inherited a progressive system for the education of apprentices and a capable and experienced Superintendent of Technical Education in Fenner. McCoy supported Fenner in his task of establishing as sound a system of technical education as the resources of the state permitted. McCoy systematised the courses at the teachers' college according to the schools in which the trainees would teach in the future.

This is to certify that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any University and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text of the thesis.



William Taylor McGoy (1866 - 1929)

Director of Education, South Australia 1917 - 1929.

PREFACE.

A comprehensive account of the history of education in South Australia cannot be compiled while extensive periods in the State's development remain unexplored by researchers. This work aims to examine one decade - the 1920's. It is co-incidental that this decade corresponds with the directorship of one man. However, people and time are inseparably bound, so glimpses of the period can be seen through the story of this man's career. It is hoped however, that this work will make a small but constructive contribution to the history of public education in South Australia where only the achievements of J.A. Hartley and the first Director of Education, A. Williams have so far been evaluated.

Although all the Australian states constituted highly centralized educational systems in which every detail of administration was placed in the hands of an official staff, developments in education were often due to the personality, ability and vision of the Directors of Education. Systems of public administration are not entirely effective in themselves, but men in positions of power and control within the systems can create the momentum for development. Published research contained in A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker's book Peter Board. His Contribution to the Development of Education in New South Wales, and J.O. Anchen's book Frank Tate and His Work for Education indicates how even within rigid, centralized administrative systems these directors were able to help education develop in the changing world. This work attempts to examine how W.T. McCoy influenced education within the South Australian system.

McCoy is unique in the history of Australian education in that he has been the only person to hold directorships of education in two states. He rose from pupil teacher to inspector in New South Wales, and he was appointed Director of Education in Tasmania, and in 1919 Director of Education in South Australia. He worked in different states but in similar systems.

On his appointment to South Australia McCoy took charge of a comparatively new system, new in the sense that it had been constituted as recently as December, 1915. He already had nine years experience as a Director of Education while progressive forces were modifying the late 19th Century formalities of the narrow, inflexible primary school curriculum. During this time provisions were also being made for secondary schools and for making more realistic links between schools and life. The major portion of this work is devoted to the story of McCoy's efforts to develop the system along the lines of advancing educational practices.

McCoy's reputation as a Director of Education stands high in the memories of those who worked with him, and the commentaries written during and after his directorship have apparently genuine praise for his achievements, ability, ardour and genial humanity. A.J. Schulz, the Principal of the Teachers' College, in a descriptive review of education in South Australia in 1927 stated that

the development of the South Australian public education system during the last six years has been the most pronounced in the history of the state. 1

Throughout his essay Schulz implied that this progress was due to W.T. McCoy because as soon as he was appointed

practically at once a new and strong tide of educational progress set in. 2

Comments in the Advertiser at the time of McCoy's death credit him as being a successful and constructive Director of Education.

Mr. McCoy had spent nearly ten years of unremitting toil to perfect the education system of this state.

Mr. McCoy possessed high scholastic attainment, and his undoubted ability as an organiser, coupled with a broad vision, courage and tact made his tenure of office an admitted success. 3

It is possible that Schulz may have been pointedly praising his Director and undoubtedly elegiac statements in an obituary often need scrutinizing. McCoy was further commended by Sir Archibald Grenfell-Price

1. G.S. Browne ed. Education in Australia London 1927 p.177
2. Ibid.
3. Advertiser 13 August, 1929 p.15 e-d.

in a book entitled One Hundred Years of Education written for South Australia's centenary year.

"When Mr. McCoy took charge in 1919 he introduced many reforms and improvements. At no time during its history did the department progress more rapidly. Mr. McCoy was a man of dominating personality, and during his term of office he was enabled to carry out his policy of development. He obtained the enthusiastic help of progressive teachers, and his term will be remembered as a time of advancement in all directions." 1

Writing in 1938 I.L. Kandell, the American comparative educationist, placed McCoy amongst the men of vision in 20th Century Australian education "builders who did not confuse centralization with bureaucracy".² This evidence suggests that McCoy's directorship is worthy of investigation and evaluation. McCoy then appears to have been a leading figure in South Australian education. He follows in the line of significant Directors of Education. There is a need to evaluate his directorship if he is to take his proper place in an eventual comprehensive account of the development of public education in South Australia.

The organization of this study of McCoy's directorship, requires the examination of certain basic questions. What exactly were the educational developments during his directorship? Why did they occur? How much can be attributed to McCoy? What can be attributed to his predecessors, his associates or to propitious times? In attempting to answer these questions I have divided the text into two sections, the first is a narrative of McCoy's career and the second consists of a review and evaluation of McCoy's work in education in South Australia. Such a plan is inclined to induce repetition. I have consciously endeavoured to reduce repetition to a minimum, but this minimum may serve to emphasize important features of McCoy's achievements. I believe that sequential reference to various aspects of education should help to form a clear portrait of the man and his work. The answers to the questions listed make no pretence of being definitive. In spinning the various fibres to make the thread breaks sometimes occurred and weak lengths had to be roughly connected because of the lack of detailed

1. Op.cit. p.8

2. I.L. Kandel Types of Administrations (Melbourne 1938) p.50

understanding of the nature of all the fibres. This indicates that some people warrant further study and some features need further examination. Among the notable people are W.J. Adey and C. Fenner who were McCoy's conscientious and efficient executive officers and who later became Directors of Education themselves; A.J. Schulz who had already been Principal of the Teachers' College for nine years before McCoy's arrival and who was to hold that position for a total of thirty nine years; Dr. Gertrude Halley, the principal medical officer, who founded the school medical services, and Dr. Constance Davey, who contributed most significantly to psychological study and to special education in the State. There is also much work yet to be done on South Australia's pioneer efforts in the technical education of apprentices, and the voluntary work of the mothers' clubs, school committees and councils.

ABBREVIATIONS.

<u>Deb. S.A.P.</u>	<u>Debates, South Australian Parliament.</u> (Hansard)
<u>E.G.</u>	<u>The Education Gazette,</u> South Australia.
<u>Ed. Regs.</u>	<u>Regulations under the Education Act 1915</u>
<u>N.S.W. P.P.</u>	<u>New South Wales Parliamentary Papers</u>
<u>Report of Tour Abroad 1927</u>	Report by W.T. McCoy, Director of Education, of observations and enquiries made with regard to education during an official visit to Great Britain and other countries 1927. (Adelaide, 1928).
* <u>S.A.A.</u>	South Australian Archives
<u>S.A.P.P.</u>	<u>South Australian Parliamentary Papers</u>
<u>S.A.P.T.U.</u>	South Australian Public Teachers' Union.
<u>S.A.T.J.</u>	South Australian Teachers' Journal.
<u>Tas. P.P.</u>	Tasmanian Parliamentary Papers

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Explanatory Note: Many of the files examined in the preparation of this work were in the registry of the Education Department. Now all the files are deposited in the South Australian Archives. Although they are identified by their departmental numbers they can be traced in the archives. e.g. S.A.A. E.D. 2631/1920 means Education Department file number 2631 of 1920 in South Australian Archives. S.A.A. M.E. 218/1921 means Minister of Education file number 218 of 1921 in South Australian Archives. S.A.A. C.S.O. 741/1919 means Chief Secretary's Office file number 741 of 1919 in South Australian Archives.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

(The source from which they are derived is shown in brackets.)

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- William Taylor McCoy (1866-1929) Director of
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- English Teachers Leaving for Australia
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- Laying the Foundation Stone of the Technical
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- Some of the School Inspectors with C.C. Charlton
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- Laying the Foundation Stone of the Teachers'
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(Supplement to E.G. February, 1926) following p.301

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- Conspectus Showing Scheme for Training Teachers in
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SECTION I.

NARRATIVE OF W.T. McCOY'S CAREER

1866 - 1929.

CHAPTER ONE.

W.T. MCCOY'S CAREER IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

- I. Family background.
- II. Childhood and early education.
- III. Pupil teacher to inspector.

In his book Irish Families - Their Names, Arms and Origins Edward MacLysaght¹ states that although the name McCoy is fairly common in Ireland it does not appear very often in the historical records of the land. In the history of Australian Education William Taylor McCoy is not prominently known, but by his efforts and achievements he does deserve a respected place in the story of its progress.

The name MacCoy and its variations MacCooey and MacCay, all variants of MacKay, are found mainly in the northern province of Ulster on both sides of the present border. The MacCoys originally followed the MacDonnells from the southern isles of Scotland in the 13th Century as warriors and servants. McCoy's ancestors had connections with Ireland in particular with the little picturesque hamlet of Lisnarrick in County Fermanagh.

McCoy's grandfather, John McCoy (1810-1872)² was the first of three sons of Thomas McCoy (1790-1854) who was born in England and who died at Swan Street, Sydney. John was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne; he became a bootmaker and married Rose Humphries about 1834 at Lisnarrick. It is not known whether necessity or the spirit of adventure spurred John McCoy to come to New South Wales but family records reveal that their fourth child, John, born in 1841, died and was buried at sea on the voyage to Sydney, while their fifth child, Alexander, was born and buried at sea in 1843. Six additional children were born after the family settled in Australia.

McCoy's father, James Smith McCoy (1836-1878), was the second son in this large family and he followed his father's trade. His first wife, whose maiden name was Carruthers, died and left him with one child named Emily who was born in 1864. On 20 April, 1865, at the age of twenty-nine he married his second wife, Eliza Wilson. The marriage was solemnized at Chippendale, New South Wales, by the Rev. James Bickford, Wesleyan Minister.³ Eliza Wilson (1843-1901) was the second child in a family of five. Her father, Edward Cribben Wilson was born in 1817 at Radcliffe, Lancashire,

England, and died in Penrith, New South Wales, in 1890. Her mother was his first wife Elizabeth Collins (1808-1851) who came from Ireland and was married in 1838. When Eliza was eight years old her mother died and an awesome inscription in a Bible⁴ given to the child by her dying mother not only intensified the family tragedy, but also illustrated the formidable and terrifying concepts that a young child was expected to comprehend in those times.

This Bible was presented as a last memorial of the affection of a dying mother - Elizabeth Wilson - to her daughter, Eliza, accompanied by her earnest prayer to the Mighty God of Jacob, that her daughter may be guided by the principles, and cheered by the promise of this blessed book, when the hand which presented it shall be mingled with the dust. She caused this book to be purchased and presented it with her own hands on Saturday, 24th. and departed this life on Friday, 30th May, 1851 - aged 42 years.

In 1852 Eliza came to Australia. There is evidence that from the age of thirteen until her marriage in 1865 she taught in schools of the Board of National Education in New South Wales.⁵ From the status of her later teaching posts it seemed that Eliza did not take advantage of the opportunities for advancement created by the expansion of national schools during the 1850's. She did not advance beyond the pupil teacher rank of the system introduced into New South Wales national schools by William Wilkins in 1851, and she did not rise up the classification scale established by the Board of National Education in 1856.⁶

II.

James Smith McCoy, who had been a prominent Methodist officer and worker in connection successively with Hey Street and Waverley Circuits, died in 1878 leaving his thirty five year old wife with seven children, two boys and five girls, the youngest a girl seven months old. Family stories rumour that a McCoy brother cheated the widow out of the boot business, which her husband had established in Liverpool Street, opposite Anthony Hordens. However, she established herself at 9 Alma Street, Darlington, with her young family and her youngest sister, Ellen Wilson, who

came to Australia in 1882. To support her family she returned to the New South Wales Education Department as a work mistress. Her record shows that she entered the service on 1 August, 1879, that on 14 January, 1881 she was instructed to act as work mistress at Surrey Hills South Public School for £84 per annum, and that from 1 April, 1890 her salary was £120 per annum. Apparently she then taught at Bourke Street Public School.

Although there was little worldly wealth in the McCoy home and although there were family traditions of the restraint of stern Methodism, it was a particularly happy place. W.T. McCoy was twelve years of age when his father died and he quickly assumed the mantle of responsibility. He became the prop and mainstay of the family. Social life revolved mainly around church activities at the Chippendale Methodist Church of which the mother was a devoted member. The family "sing songs", a common recreation of the times, were led by McCoy at the piano. He also possessed a fine baritone voice. Friday night visits to Paddy's Market provided a cheap diversion. McCoy was full of life and fun. His youngest sister, Elsie Kate, recalled that when he was appointed to the country he frequently sent eggs to the family in Sydney and on occasions he drew pen and ink sketches on the eggs depicting the characters of the locality. These efforts were invariably comical and highly amusing to the family. He was also interested in sport, and with his brother, Arthur, played in church cricket teams. All the children became teachers, except the youngest, Elsie Kate. William and his brother Arthur went to Cleveland Street Public School, and after teacher training William put himself through university by part time study. The three youngest girls - Minnie, Florence, and Elsie went to Darlington Public School and then to Sydney Girls' High School, an unusual course for girls from ordinary Australian families in those days. In the cases of Minnie and Florence their stay at the high school must have been short because they became probationary pupil teachers at the ages of fourteen and sixteen respectively.⁷ There can be no doubt that before her sudden death on 21 August, 1901, Mrs. Eliza McCoy

was extremely proud of her family and she in turn was loved and respected by her children and all who knew her.⁸

It is generally accepted that environment and experience in early life play a large part in personality. From his family home McCoy probably developed his devotion to duty, determination, decisiveness, kindness and sense of responsibility. On the other hand hereditary is probably of extreme importance in determining character and from the promising mixture of genes from his ancestors he gained his spirit of adventure, rugged individualism, zest for life and sly humour.

III.

As a means to further education with the advantage of a meagre income, McCoy entered the New South Wales Education Department as pupil teacher on probation at Ultimo Public School on 9 March, 1881.⁹ McCoy served the minimum time of four years in this apprenticeship system. During the day he taught classes under the supervision of the head teacher from whom he received instruction before and after regular school hours. Lesson preparation, continuous teaching and studying for annual examinations often imposed heavy mental and physical strains on these young people and the pitance they received was not in proportion to the work they performed.¹⁰ On 19 January, 1885 he was accepted as a student at Fort Street Training College. He had been in the college for only a little over three weeks when he was "censured for misconduct at Saturday drawing class and informed that repetition of such conduct would lead to dismissal". The actual seriousness of his action cannot be determined; the adage taught that to err was human, but there was nothing divine in the college's subsequent action of having the incident reported to the Education Department and consequently it remained permanently in McCoy's teaching record. However he completed the one year course with no other recorded debits and was appointed temporarily to Macdonald Town Public School where he remained for twelve months.¹¹

Over the following two years McCoy had charge of one teacher schools

at Lower Coldstream and Tatham. During 1889 he served as an assistant teacher at Penrith and Bathurst, and in October 1890 he was appointed to Kedfern. McCoy took this opportunity of a city appointment to register as a part-time student at the nearby Sydney university. During 1891 he gained passes in English I, Latin I, French I, Maths. I, and a satisfactory standard in Chemistry; the next year he passed Latin II, French II, Philosophy (Logic and Metaphysics) and History I. In 1893 he passed History II, and although he failed the annual examinations in Latin III and French III he successfully passed these subjects at the deferred examinations.¹² To teach full time and to study successfully a full time university arts course within three years was no mean feat. It shows the tenacity of McCoy which was characteristic of much of his later work. After serving as a first assistant teacher at Marrickville he served as head teacher at Glen Innes, Armidale and Burwood. During his headship at Glen Innes his record displayed evidence of independence in that he was "censured for his action in retaining a book-press intended for the Teacher of Warialda Public School".

These eighteen years experience as a practising teacher in small rural schools, as a staff member of larger country and city schools, and thereafter as a head teacher of successively larger schools gave him intimate knowledge of all the details and ramifications of the state system of education from a teacher's point of view. His values and attitudes about teaching must have been considerably influenced by the teachers in his family - his mother, brother and four sisters, and by this marriage to a teacher in 1894.¹³

The beginning of the 20th Century saw an increasing public interest in education in New South Wales. Speeches, which severely criticised the education system, delivered in June 1901 at the Fourth Annual Conference of the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Association in Sydney by B.R. Wise, the Attorney-General, and by Professor Francis Anderson, Challis Professor of Logic and Mental Philosophy at the University of Sydney, gained the attention of the press.¹⁴ Public meetings later in the year pressed for reforms in teacher training, technical education and the primary school

curriculum, the extension of kindergartens and specialized education for girls, and a revision of the system of school inspection.¹⁵ On 21 January, 1902, the Minister for Public Instruction, John Perry, called a conference of inspectors and senior administrative officers of the Department about educational reform, but it appeared that the system was not willing to initiate change within itself. In March the Minister announced the appointment of two commissioners, G.H. Knibbs, Lecturer in Surveying, and J.W. Turner, Principal of Fort Street Training College, to enquire into education in Europe and United States of America and to make recommendations for improvements in education in New South Wales. The Commissioners went abroad for nineteen months from April, 1902 and on their return in December, 1903, they submitted the first of their detailed reports which was on Primary Education.¹⁶ In the meantime Peter Board, a little known school inspector, took long service leave for six months and travelled the Continent and Britain observing educational systems, and on his return at the end of 1903 he presented a brief report of twelve pages recommending reforms in primary education.¹⁷

The Knibbs-Turner Reports and Board's Report demonstrated the defects in the narrow, unreal bookish approach in the contemporary New South Wales primary and secondary school curricula. Besides providing the pupil with knowledge it was suggested that the curricula should be practical. These reports reflected the Neo-Herbartian¹³ influence on educational thinking in Europe and United States of America. This stressed that education should have a moral aim and should also be concerned with the preparation for citizenship, it emphasized the importance of literature, history and science in the curriculum and the organization of subject matter on the culture-epoch system and the psychology of association. Recommended teaching methods emphasising freedom, activity, self expression and pupil interest were radically different from the formalism of the state schools in Australia. On the receipt of these reports the Minister called conferences in January and April 1904. The January conference concerned only Departmental personnel, but the April conference included representatives from private

schools and other state departments. Board was a very active and convincing speaker at this conference.¹⁹

All this publicity and the debates on education and the subsequent reforms had a significant influence on McCoy's professional life. In April, 1904 at the age of thirty-eight McCoy was appointed acting inspector of schools. Although it was only co-incidental that McCoy's first teaching appointment was in a school where Board gained his first headship and that McCoy's first inspectorate was also Board's first,²⁰ McCoy's experience as an inspector was linked with the fervour and ferment of the reformation in education. It was likely that the newly appointed acting inspector attended the important conference in the New South Wales Education Department called by Perry in April, 1904. However until 1909 McCoy had charge of the Lismore District, a large inspectorate of one hundred square miles with one hundred and twenty schools of all types. He believed that among his multifarious duties an inspector should keep the general public, as well as the teachers, informed of modern developments in education. He often gave public addresses and organized annual summer schools for teachers of small schools. This was to give them insight into modern methods of organization, teaching and school management. Over all McCoy's progress as a teacher and an inspector augured well for even higher things in the New South Wales Education Department.

The pattern of his career was fairly typical of most of the leaders of Australian State schools systems of his day.²¹ They were moulded into the requirements of the system by their progress from pupil teachers to head teachers after teaching experience at various levels in various schools. They were promoted by seniority after a successful and lengthy record with their own state departments. The majority had university training and had gained a degree, but they studied their tertiary subjects under considerable difficulties on a part time basis which was a testimony to their initiative and ability. Very few of them had an opportunity to gain university qualifications in education because most of them did their studies before diplomas in education were established in Australian universities. They were

trained by actual experience and learned from gradually increasing responsibilities, in fact success in teaching was considered a sufficient guarantee of their ability as administrators. Finally very few of them had the opportunity of overseas travel to make educational observations.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER I.

1. MacLysaght, E. "Irish Families. Their Names, Arms and Origins".
(Dublin 1957)
2. From information supplied by
 - a) Mrs. Jean McCoy Fowler
5/644 Pacific Highway,
Killara, N.S.W.
niece of W.T. McCoy.
 - b) the late Miss Elsie Kate McCoy,
Rosetta Clinic,
Pacific Highway,
Wahroonga, N.S.W.
W.T. McCoy's youngest sister.
 - c) Dr. W.T. McCoy,
19 Avenel Gardens Road,
Medindie, S.A.
W.T. McCoy's grandson.
3. Copy of Certificate of Marriage in possession of Dr. W.T. McCoy.
4. Bible in possession of Mrs. Jean McCoy Fowler.
5. Statements by Mrs. J. McCoy Fowler and the late Miss E.K. McCoy,
and evidence from teachers' records in the Education Department, N.S.W.
6. Turney, C. (ed) Pioneers of Australian Education (Sydney 1969).
pp. 209-10.
7. Teachers' Records Education Department N.S.W. Minnie A. McCoy
Florence McCoy.
8. An obituary notice in the Methodist, 14 Sept. 1901. p.8 (Paper in
the possession of Dr. W.T. McCoy), praised her virtues as a mother,
and her quiet, genuine Christian faith.
9. Teachers' Records. Education Department, N.S.W. W.T. McCoy.
10. See
 - a) Barcan, A. A Short History of Education in New South
Wales. (Sydney 1965) p.132.
 - b) Austin, A.C. Australian Education 1788-1900.
(Melbourne 1961) pp.234-237.

for comments on the pupil teacher system in Australia.
11. Two years previously in 1884 at the age of twenty-six Peter Board
was given his first head-teachership at this large, expanding,
industrial southern Sydney suburb.
See Crane, A.R. and Walker, W.G. Peter Board, His Contribution to
the Development of Education in New South Wales.
(Melbourne 1959) p. 3.
12. Examination Records in University of Sydney and Calendar of University
of Sydney 1895. p.212.

13. Certificate of Marriage (In the possession of Dr. W.T. McCoy) W.T. McCoy and Rachel Armstrong, Teacher, Hartley Vale, Spinster 27 Dec.1894.
14. Sydney Morning Herald
26 June, 1901 p.10 d-f
27 June, 1901 p. 7 c-d
15. a) Crane and Walker op.cit. p. 15
b) Sydney Morning Herald 11 Dec. 1901 p.6 e-f
16. Interim Report of the Commissioners on Certain Parts of Primary Education - 1903.
Journal of Legislative Council N.S.W. Vol. LXVI. p.375 et seq.
17. Crane and Walker op.cit. pp.17-18
18. See Barcan, op.cit. pp.212-214
for a summary of the Neo-Herbartian influence on education.
19. Smith, S.H. & Spaul1, G.T.
History of Education in New South Wales 1788-1925
(Sydney 1925). pp.193-194
20. Crane and Walker op.cit. p.3
Board was appointed inspector of schools on 1 July, 1893 at the age of thirty-one.
21. Comparisons with Directors of Education in office in other Australian States in 1919, when W.T. McCoy was appointed to South Australia, show that all except J.D. Story (Qld.) had a background of teaching, and all except C.R.P. Andrews (W.A.) had been raised in the Australian state systems of education.

State	Director	Age on appointment	Period of office	Qualifications
Vic.	F. Tate	39	1902-1928	M.A. (Melb.)
N.S.W.	P. Board	47	1905-1922	M.A. (Sydney)
W.A.	C.R.P.Andrews	33	1903-1929	M.A. (Oxon) Battersea T.C.
Qld.	J.D. Story	36	1906-1920	No degree. Formerly chief clerk in the Education Department.
Tas.	G.V. Brooks	44	1919-1945	Passed some University subjects but he did not qualify for a degree. Originally from S.A.

Source:

Johns, F. Who's Who in the Commonwealth of Australia.
(Sydney 1922, 1927 & 1947).

CHAPTER TWO.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION IN TASMANIA 1910 - 1919

- I. The delicate situation in Tasmania
- II. A replacement for W.L. Neale
- III. McCoy's directorship.

McCoy's advancement did not come in his home state. He was not prepared to accept the usual public service security with its associated mentality of sitting and waiting for preferment by seniority.¹ In January 1910 he was appointed Director of Education in Tasmania. A brief account of McCoy's work in Tasmania will reveal how some of Board's ideas and practices were translated to Tasmania and hence to South Australia, but more significantly McCoy's directorship in Tasmania will indicate how it was a proving ground for his ultimate influence in South Australia.

The press release concerning McCoy's appointment and qualifications was published in the Mercury of Hobart on 22 January, 1910.² It is likely that the character references were written by the New South Wales referees with the Tasmanian situation in mind, but they provided useful comments on McCoy's character and career to this time. He was then aged forty-three. The Hon. C.A. Lee, Minister of Public Works in New South Wales, and member of the State Parliament for the Lismore area for twenty-five years, who had known McCoy during his inspectorship there, wrote about "his qualifications, great energy, high personal character and large business tact". The Under-Secretary and Director of Education, Peter Board, commented: "Good knowledge of educational administration, has good organizing capacity, exercises considerable tact and common sense in dealing with teachers, and has proved a successful officer of this department". Chief Inspector James Dawson, of the New South Wales Education Department stressed McCoy's "skilful, tactful and successful management of teachers and schools", stated his attributes as an inspector, "energetic and vigorous in the discharge of the many duties that devolve upon the inspector", and praised his characteristics, "a happy manner, a genial temperament, breadth of sympathy and sound discrimination".

McCoy was stepping into a difficult and tense situation. Early in 1904 W.B. Propsting, the Liberal Democrat Premier of Tasmania (1903-1904), invited W.L. Neale, a South Australian Inspector of Schools, to enquire into the administration of education and the system of primary schools in Tasmania. Propsting's choice of Neale probably rested on Neale's reputa-

tion as an inspector, and the fact that they had taught together when Propsting lived in South Australia. Neale had been an inspector since 1891 and he had been encouraged by Hartley. He was well known as the originator and organizer of the South Australian Superannuation Fund for teachers and for his assistance with the development of the Public Service Superannuation Fund. When Neale was head teacher at Kapunda Model School (1878-1884) Propsting was on his staff, and prior to Propsting's resignation from the South Australian Education Department in September 1886 he was Neale's first assistant at Sturt Street Primary School.³

Although he was given leave from South Australia for only two months to make his investigation in Tasmania, Neale wrote a comprehensive, discerning, trenchant report in which he criticised the antiquated procedures in Tasmania's educational system in the light of the New Education movement of which he was a very strong supporter.⁴ He regarded the system in Tasmania to be inefficient and expensive, and he suggested ways to increase its efficiency and to reduce expenses. Cheap and efficient had been significant words to catch the politicians' attention since the beginning of the national systems of education when education was regarded as a financial liability rather than an asset for the future.

Propsting's successor, Captain J.W. Evans, appointed Neale to the Directorship of Education in Tasmania in October, 1904, and expected him to initiate the reforms that he recommended in his report when he assumed office in January, 1905. This commission would have been herculean for any man who had so recently and so severely criticised the education department and its officers. Neale never succeeded in placating some of his executive officers. J. Masters, the former Director, who was now Secretary of the Education Department and the Senior Inspector, S. Lovell, remained disgruntled and never accepted Neale's report as a fair, objective assessment of Tasmanian education.⁵ In fact Lovell continually criticised Neale's administration by writing to the newspapers under a nom de plume.

With these initial disadvantages Neale set about his work with distinctive zeal and untiring industry. Although his directorship lasted only four years, he did reform much of the lax, politically percolated,

conservative Tasmanian education service. In the implementation of reforms he ran into difficulties with teachers. Some teachers criticised his educational ideals and methods, others, particularly head teachers on the verge of promotion to large city schools, and young teachers from Hobart Teachers' College were aggrieved that teachers imported by Neale from South Australia received preferential treatment.⁶ Dissatisfied teachers gained control of the executive of the Teachers' Union and this executive also constituted the Committee of Classifiers so these men and the politicians, who wished to embarrass the Evans Government, added with alacrity their fury to the factions. All this dissention led to three Royal Commissions to inquire into Neale's administration, two in 1907 and one early in 1909. The five politicians who conducted the 1909 Royal Commission recommended that Neale be dismissed, but P. Goyen, the Chief Inspector of Schools from Otago, New Zealand, dissented. In July 1909 Neale resigned. He refused the offer of the Principalship of Hobart Teachers' College, the institution which he had established in 1906, as part of his major reform to improve the quality of teachers by sound, initial teacher training.

As an administrator Neale was accused of rigidity and harshness and he displayed an appalling lack of tact. When the tone of his letters censuring teachers and his discourtesy towards some of his women teachers became known he lost much public sympathy. Nevertheless when he died in Adelaide on 16 December, 1913, even the Mercury, which represented the ultra conservative view and was the mouth piece of the Legislative Council which had been constantly hostile to Neale, acknowledged the enduring value of his work.⁷

He had established a practical system of public education. He started special schools for the blind and the deaf and dumb and developed woodwork and cookery classes. He was particularly concerned with teacher training and established a superannuation fund for teachers. Working closely with Dr. J.S.C. Elkington, Chief Health Officer, he established a medical branch in the Education Department, incidentally the first of its kind in Australia.

W.J. Rooney, Principal of Claremont Teachers Training College, Perth, and a product of the New South Wales pupil teacher system was appointed Director in Neale's place on 22 September, 1909. Rooney was relieved of his appointment at his own request, for personal reasons on 7 December, 1909. His wife had died under sad circumstances leaving him with four young children, the eldest child's health being described as precarious. The Tasmanian Government was therefore obliged to re-advertise the position immediately. A.E. Solomon, Attorney-General and Minister of Education, released a statement to the press that the appointment of Rooney could be taken as indicating that the position was open to applicants from outside Tasmania. His opinion was that a second call would draw out many desirable applications from those who might have held back earlier.⁸ Despite the desire of many teachers that a Tasmanian should be appointed and that Lovell was the popular choice, the point that McCoy was not a Tasmanian and consequently could assess local problems dispassionately was an obvious factor in his successful application. However, McCoy's varied and successful experience in the increasingly prominent New South Wales education system, and his reputation for tact, discernment and discrimination were probably amongst the chief factors that led to his appointment.

The editorial of the Mercury conscious of the troubles of Neale's directorship was not enthusiastic about McCoy's appointment.⁹ It warned, "he has yet to prove himself in the higher capacity of the organizing head of the department", and hoped "that in Mr. McCoy one has been found who will reach within measurable distance our ideal", and advised him "to go slowly until he sees exactly what is the present condition of affairs, and what the future may be". The Mercury was suspicious of experts and educational reformers, it wanted a man with common sense who was practical, realistic and businesslike, and who had some experience in administration.¹⁰ All the newspapers however, stressed that tact should be a quality of the new appointee.

McCoy's career in Tasmania did prove that he was a most capable head of a state department; and his own common sense vindicated his selectors' choice. In an interview with McCoy reported in the Mercury some of his character traits delineated by his referees were confirmed.¹¹ He explained his reasons for seeking the Tasmanian directorship in these words:

I am prompted in my action by a natural ambition to direct the educational affairs of a State, and a desire to extend my sphere of usefulness. Then, too, what an inducement do the climatic conditions of a State like this form, when other considerations are satisfactory.

McCoy certainly admitted his aspirations, but it must be remembered that he was adventurous to accept such a precarious post. His human quip about the Tasmanian weather was typical of his Irish "codology", or leg pulling. His sound common sense was revealed when he declared that "the past troubles will have no weight with me", and in his concluding comments that he had no intention of introducing "holus bolus" the ways of New South Wales and that he would be guided in all he did by the conditions which existed in Tasmania and by his own experience.

III.

Although a study of McCoy's work and achievements as Director of Education in Tasmania is beyond the scope of this work, mention should be made of them for background material for his directorship in South Australia. His directorship began with three distinct advantages. Firstly, the Tasmanians were tired of turmoil and they wanted a period of calm to develop the school system. Secondly, the political front was propitious. McCoy had the advantage of a strong Minister of Education in Solomon. The government was conservative and did not antagonise the Legislative Council from which most of Neale's political opposition had come.¹² Solomon was a member of the House of Assembly, whereas Neale's mainstay, Propsting, was a member of the Legislative Council and a weak mainstay at that because he had changed his political allegiance from an

opponent to a supporter of Evans. Thirdly, McCoy himself was blessed with sound common sense and tact. He was able to convert critics and win over doubters, and he had a flair for setting up sensible organization and functional administration.

With characteristic sagacity McCoy determined to remove the causes of the trouble as quickly as possible. Within a month of taking up his appointment he classified the teachers; this, Neale had failed to do, and the general public had been led to believe this so complex and contentious that it was impossible to achieve. This statement from the sub leader in the Tasmanian Mail was typical of the comments from the press.

The new Director of Education (Mr. McCoy) appears to have made a very excellent start in the administration of his department. For years past teachers have been clamouring for a proper system of classification, but have been unable to get one. Although he has only recently been appointed to the position of Director Mr. McCoy does not seem to have found any insuperable difficulty in any way of classifying the teachers. This seems somewhat remarkable in view of the fact that teachers were never able to find out where they were under the previous regime. If this first step is to be accepted as an augury of what is to happen, there is every indication that the agitation which has disturbed the Department for years has finally disappeared.¹³

He classified teachers into three distinct categories, firstly Certified Teachers, secondly Uncertified or Provisional Teachers and thirdly Students in the Teachers College and Junior Teachers.¹⁴ He then framed new regulations which defined the modes of entry into the teaching service, re-established departmental examinations for teachers, and specified details about promotions and transfers.¹⁵ Seniority alone was not to constitute a claim for promotion, literary qualifications and teaching skills were to be taken into account. "Promotion", he wrote in 1912, "cannot be gained by examination alone, practical skill is an equally important factor".¹⁶ He continually complimented teachers who were keen to improve their qualifications,¹⁷ but his complaints about the persistence of the old ideas about promotion being based only on seniority or examination were as equally continuous.¹⁸ McCoy adopted a system of "service marks" "to help old, earnest and efficient teachers".¹⁹ Overall, he imposed a system which was fair to all the

various teachers which a national educational service naturally incorporated. Teachers at least knew where they stood and what they required to ascend the hierarchical steps in the educational edifice. To create order out of dissention in such a short time was a creditable achievement.

In his re-organization of the central office in Hobart McCoy swiftly healed another sore spot. He systematised the work under three divisions so that administrative procedures operated smoothly and efficiently. All clerical work came under the control of the Secretary, the Accountant was responsible for accounts and statistics, and a Record Clerk controlled the movement of correspondence and kept careful records. Each clerk was given specific duties and responsibilities. In fact, his brief statement about his re-organization in his first report in 1910, in which he also praised the zeal and efficiency of the officers, seemed to falsify the fact that this area caused so much trouble previously.²⁰

McCoy defined the role of the school inspectors in the system. They were no longer to be examiners and mere mark givers, but they were to be advisers and stimulators. He strongly discouraged instruction which encouraged cramming for examinations, in fact his own experience emphasized that the teacher was the best judge of the abilities of his pupils, particularly in the problems of promotion. In the future, a teacher was not to be judged by the marks his pupils gained at the inspectors' examinations, but by his ability to nurture pupils "in right habits of conduct, thought and speech". Annual examinations conducted by inspectors were replaced by annual inspections and quarterly examinations conducted by head teachers. McCoy encouraged teachers to use their own initiative and he wanted them to be more than purveyors of information learned in rote fashion. Inspectors were to observe school work, to test the "efficacy of the methods employed by the teacher" and to judge "the progress of the pupils, especially in the three R's". Inspectors had to note only defects in the teaching and then discuss remedies and suggest better methods. They were exhorted "to encourage and inspire teachers with that zeal and enthusiasm without which the work in any school cannot be successful".²¹

McCoy constantly praised the teachers who showed interest in new developments. He encouraged attendance at area meetings and summer schools and deplored "the monotonous regularity with which a few of the weaker brethren stay away from the meetings".²²

McCoy successfully reconstructed a crumbling organization and set stable foundations by winning strong support from the people who worked in it.

McCoy changed the form of the annual report to the Minister. He obviously wanted to get away from a dull, uninspiring statement with statistical appendices. Neale's annual reports after 1906 showed little of the insight, objectively or literary merit of his 1904 Report on the System of Primary Education in Tasmania. They were dull, barren presentations in three sections - General Comments, Inspectors' Reports and Statistics.²³ McCoy adapted the form which he had been used to in New South Wales.²⁴ Inspectors no longer presented full reports about their districts, but extracts from their reports were included under such appropriate headings as Syllabus of Instruction, Moral Training, School Grounds and Sites. McCoy added reports from the Principal of the Teachers' College and the School Medical Officers. Photographs of modern development in educational practice were also included. He wanted the report to be as attractive as a formal parliamentary paper can be; he wanted it to attract attention and advertise the progress of the Department.

McCoy's successor in Tasmania, G.V. Brooks, originally a South Australian teacher imported by Neale, wrote laudatory comments about his predecessor in the introduction to his own first report in 1920. Brooks eulogized McCoy's leadership:

Rarely has a Departmental Head filled any office with such conspicuous success. Under his guidance the system of education in this State was brought thoroughly up to date in every detail, while at the same time the hearty goodwill of every section of the service was secured.²⁵

He then enumerated McCoy's particular achievements, and these form a useful base for a summary of McCoy's work for education in Tasmania.

under his direction the system of primary education was re-organized, Kindergarten and Montessori work introduced into large schools, and the principle extended to smaller schools. A more recent innovation promising well is that of a correspondence school for the benefit of children in the back blocks unable to attend any school on account of their isolation. He initiated and established a secondary school system, embracing secondary commercial, domestic and industrial training, and organized qualifying certificate, intermediate and leaving examinations in connection with it. As a sequel to the Nangle-McCoy Commission he in recent times thoroughly re-organized technical education in the State, and put it on a sound basis, the reform including the establishment of four Junior Technical Schools. The activities of the Department in the matter of Medical inspection of school children have been extended by the appointment of school nurses and the introduction of dental treatment for the scholars, in connection with which there are two travelling dental clinics.

He organized distinct courses in the Teachers' College according to the qualifications and ultimate teaching positions of the students and he co-ordinated college work with university subjects in arts and science. "In the matter of school buildings," Brooks continued:

a marked change took place in Mr. McCoy's tenure as director. As far as possible he standardized the different types of schools to suit varying localities, ranging from the large city school to the smaller type of building fulfilling the requirements of country districts.²⁶

At the beginning of his directorship McCoy introduced a Course of Instruction for the Primary Schools which was revised again in 1915 with the co-operation of teachers and inspectors.²⁷ This set out the nature and details of studies for each grade in the primary school; subjects were inter-related as far as possible and teachers were expected to use their initiative in the manner of teaching this prescribed work. Many teachers were keen to accept the new requirements, they obviously wanted guidance in the matter of their courses but they appreciated the new freedom that permitted them to try their own methods.²⁸ McCoy was unbenign towards teachers who aimed only at respectable examination results and consequently instructed by cramming. In 1915 he complained:

There are still, however, teachers who attach more value to the quality of the results achieved in the schools than to the development of the faculties of their pupils, and to the kind of training which will give children power of finding out things for themselves. They seem unable to realize that modern methods are not incompatible with thoroughness.²⁹

McCoy established separate infant sections in larger schools and by 1918 there were four in operation with another four planned.³⁰ Neale's inability to extend education to the country areas contributed greatly to his downfall but McCoy endeavoured to follow the Australian principle of providing similar educational facilities in both town and countryside. For children living in isolated parts of the island he set up subsidised schools where teachers were subsidised by the Education Department at the rate of £5 per annum per pupil.³¹ In 1913 forty of these schools catered for 483 children.³² From 1918 onward country children living three miles beyond state or subsidised schools could enrol with the correspondence school, which had its headquarters in the Hobart education office.³³

When secondary schools came into operation in 1913 McCoy believed that these provided pupils in the primary schools with greater stimulus to study and that the primary school benefited by endeavouring to imitate the school spirit that pervaded the high school, and by copying the prefect system and organized sport.³⁴

McCoy was the architect of the State's system of secondary education. By 1911 he had established super primary classes as a foundation, but while he was worried in 1912³⁵ because the budget allocation was insufficient for future needs he had Hobart and Launceston High Schools working in 1913. McCoy's main task was to form a progressive course of study over the four years of high school education. The Junior and Public Examinations set by the University Council determined and confined courses. In 1912 he commented:

The course of instruction is regulated by the examination, whereas, in my opinion, the examination should be regulated by the course of instruction.³⁶

He planned to construct the new secondary courses with the help of teachers

and not leave the choice of subject details entirely to the University Council. By 1913 his new courses for secondary schools were in operation,³⁷ but by 1915 although the demand for high school education was increasing it was hobbled by the war, inferior accommodation and inadequately qualified staff.³⁸ The planned progressive courses provided for the children in secondary schools were upset by the attitude and action of many parents. "It is a matter of regret", he wrote in 1915,

that a large number of parents view the High School as a place where the process known as 'finishing off' will be accomplished in a few months. They send their children for a period of something less than two years, usually until some employment turns up.³⁹

On the credit side however, McCoy regarded the Bursaries Act of 1915 as the "most momentous educational event of the year".⁴⁰ Bursaries were available for a two year secondary course in state or registered schools and four fifths of them were to be awarded to country children. High schools with complete four year courses could not be established everywhere, but intermediate high schools were to be established where parents guaranteed attendance for two years of twenty five post Qualifying Certificate pupils.⁴¹ As usual McCoy took a keen, personal interest in these schools and during 1916 he and the principal of the Teachers' College carried out the annual inspection of Tasmania's four high schools.⁴²

On the 8 August, 1916, the Tasmanian Government invited James Nangle, Chief Inspector of Technical Education in New South Wales, to act as a commissioner with McCoy to enquire "into the existing scheme of Technical Education in Tasmania, and, if necessary, to submit a scheme suited to the needs of the State".⁴³ On October 17 1916, they presented eight recommendations to improve technical education.

1. A Technical Education Branch should be established within the organization of the Education Department.
2. All Technical Schools and Schools of Mines in the State should come under the administrative control of the Technical Education Branch.
3. An organizing inspector of Technical Education should be appointed.

4. Four types of technical schools should be planned,
 - a) Junior Technical Schools for pre-apprentice education.
 - b) Technical Schools for the specific training in the mining commerce.
 - c) Technical Schools for higher technical courses.
 - d) Domestic Schools for girls.
5. An Apprentice Bureau should be operated to keep boys with a Junior Technical School Certificate in touch with employees.
6. Close co-operation should be encouraged between employers and employees.
7. There should be co-ordination of advanced technical courses with University work.
8. A correspondence branch should be organized for the benefit of country students who wished to pursue technical studies.⁴⁴

Two points were significant in all this. Firstly the New South Wales pattern of technical education was being transferred to Tasmania, and secondly, by 1918 McCoy had some of these recommendations actually in operation. The Education Department had set up a Technical Education Branch with Mr. F. Ellis as organizing inspector, and four junior technical schools had begun in Hobart, Launceston, Zeehan and Queenstown.⁴⁵ McCoy did not pretend that these schools aimed to teach a boy a trade but they gave "such a mental and practical training in the processes fundamental to art, trade and science, as will enable him to learn the techniques of a skilled industry quickly".⁴⁶

Neale had been responsible for establishing school health services and McCoy added another two utilities to this important work. In 1911 two school nurses were appointed because parents were often indifferent to doctors' reports and the nurses were expected to follow up the work of medical inspectors.⁴⁷ In 1916 dental clinics were established in Hobart and Launceston to care for the teeth of school children⁴⁸ and by 1918 country centres were visited by these clinics.⁴⁹

In 1911 the new buildings of the Philip Smith Training College close to the university were opened. In his report that year McCoy set out the purposes of the Training College under four broad categories. Firstly, the college had to provide a sound secondary education, secondly, it was expected to broaden and deepen the general culture of the student, thirdly, it had to furnish the student with the right outlook and inspiration, and lastly, it had to train the student in the aims, principles and methods employed in the practice of his profession.⁵⁰ However with the development of high schools his original aims changed and courses were remodelled accordingly. In 1913 courses in the college were revised, and students were now to receive their secondary education in high schools up to the Senior Public Examination standard. They were then to spend twelve months in selected schools "in order to gain such experience as will enable them to understand the difficulties to be met with in the work of teaching, and to appreciate the lectures in method and management to be given at the Training College".⁵¹ A close bond was being formed with the university, and the Principal of the Teachers' College lectured in education within the university. A practising school was organized at Elizabeth Street, Hobart, having demonstration grades from 2 to 6, with Mr. G.V. Brooks as the Master of Method, and in the lower school with Kindergarten, preparatory and first grade with Miss Amy Rowntree as Mistress of Infant Method. By 1915 McCoy hoped that in two years time junior teachers would disappear because student teachers would have matriculated and they would therefore be able to study university subjects and leave the college staff to devote its entire time to training and instruction in professional subjects.⁵² However this did not happen; not all students succeeded in matriculating and the State needed more teachers beyond the numbers of matriculants opting for teaching. In 1916 the training college was geared to accommodate three classes of students.⁵³ Firstly, matriculated students who attended the teachers college and studied at the university and who would eventually be appointed to the staffs of high schools or higher primary schools. Secondly, non matriculated students who would spend twelve months in a selected school before attending the teachers college for six months after which they would be appointed to primary schools. Thirdly,

students who had gained a pass in the Junior Public Examination would become Junior teachers until they reached the age of 18 years and then after a six months college course they would staff small country schools. It seemed odd that the most complex teaching post where one teacher taught several grades simultaneously in rural schools was afforded the shortest college course. However McCoy was always anxious to extend the minimum period of training. By 1917 the actual courses within the teachers college were marked by distinguishing letters, D course - a short course extending over six months (previously 15 weeks) for less important positions in the primary school; C course - a twelve months course for infant teachers; B Course - a twelve months course for primary teachers, and the A Course for prominent males who had completed the B Course and were qualified to continue their studies for two to four years to become teachers in the high schools.⁵⁴

During McCoy's directorship the secondary education aspect of the teachers' college curriculum was eliminated. McCoy, with the Principal, J.A. Johnson, moved with the demands of the times, but every change was carefully systematized. The close connection with the university was possible because McCoy was a member of the Council, as well as being a member of the Faculties of Letters and Commerce, of the Board of Studies and the Standing Committee.

McCoy was as much concerned about the physical welfare of the school children as he was about their mental nourishment. Although it was not practicable to demolish all the old, uncomfortable school buildings he constantly supported plans for renovations and remodelling, and gained the cooperation of the Inspector of Public Buildings in this work. In building new schools he allocated ten square feet per pupil and reckoned on window space being one fifth of floor space making sure that the light fell on the left hand side of the pupil. He was appalled at the backless forms common in Tasmanian schools on his arrival and he immediately suggested their replacement by dual desks.⁵⁵ Designs of open air class rooms seemed to have a peculiar attraction for him and in 1913 they were incorporated in Charles Street School to accommodate 100 children.

McCoy had admitted that it was ambition that spurred him to apply for the directorship in Tasmania. It was this same incentive that kept him watching for opportunities on the mainland when the rare occasions arose because it was the general practice in the Australian states to promote from within the education systems. McCoy was at the peak of his work in Tasmania in 1919. By his capable administration and strong leadership things were effectively and efficiently organized within the education department. He had been aided by sympathetic Ministers, particularly J.A. Lyons from 1914 to 1916, and the general availability of finances.⁵⁶ But his forceful, bright personality and human sympathy and sense of fairness vitalised the service and gained him the support of the teachers and the respect of the community. He had been an active member of the War Loans Committee and he was the power behind the War Savings activities in the schools which raised some £75,000. He was a keen bowler and President of the Hobart Bowling Club. His work and reputation in Tasmania made him a strong contender for a similar post in other places. When he was accepted for the South Australian Directorship of Education the Mercury, which had been so cautious initially came out with unreserved compliments.

"The choice proved abundantly justified, for during the period of over nine years he has had control of the Department, Tasmania's educational system has been developed and extended in a way little short of remarkable, until today it bears highly favourable comparison with the systems of other States." 57

The substantiation of this claim is beyond the scope of this work. The narrative of McCoy's work in Tasmania indicates that he was a man who could stimulate progress sometimes under difficult circumstances in the various facets of the state educational system.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER TWO.

1. In 1909 there were the following permanent senior officers in the Education Department of N.S.W.
Under Secretary
Chief Inspector of Schools
Deputy Chief Inspector of Schools
Principal Senior Inspector
10 Senior Inspectors
25 Inspectors
Source: Public Instruction Gazette 1909 March to July (Sydney)
Perhaps the prospects of future promotion up this echelon were not particularly propitious for McCoy.
2. Mercury 22 Jan. 1910 p.6 c-d
3. Teachers' Records - S.A. Education Department
4. Tas. P.P. 1904 No. 49
Report on the System of Primary Education in Tasmania
5. Tas. P.P. 1909 No. 1
Royal Commission on Education. Report of the Commissioners. 1909 p.285
6. This was never proved, not even at the 1909 Royal Commission, despite the concentrated case by counsel for the teachers.
7. Mercury 17 Dec. 1913 p.5 e
8. Mercury 9 Dec. 1909 p.5 a
9. Mercury 22 Jan. 1910 p.4 g
10. See Mercury
8 Dec. 1909 p.4 a
10 Dec. 1909 p.8 d
14 Dec. 1909 p.2 c
11. Mercury 22 Jan. 1910 p.6 c-d
12. In fact Neale's appointment was confirmed only by the House of Assembly. The Legislative Council had never ratified Evan's decision to appoint Neale.
13. The Tasmanian Mail 19 March, 1910 p.25 d
see also Mercury 11 March, 1910 p.4 e
14. Tas. P.P. 1910 No.9 p.3

15. Ibid., p.2
16. Tas. P.P. 1912 No.4 p.9
17. Tas. P.P. 1911 No.3 p.6
18. Tas. P.P. 1912 No.4 p.9
19. Tas. P.P. 1910 No.9 p.2
20. Ibid., p.2
21. Ibid., pp. 2-3
22. Tas. P.P. 1910 No.9 p.5
23. See Tas. P.P. 1905 No.12, 1906 No.10, 1907 No.4
24. In N.S.W. reports on Education covered other areas besides the Education Department. e.g. Library, Museum, University, Sydney Grammar School. The report on the Education Department included the Report of the Minister of Public Instruction followed by one from the Under Secretary, then the Chief Inspector's Report, and extracts from the inspectors reports under appropriate headings. e.g. N.S.W. P.P. 1905 Vol.I pp.179 et seq.
25. Tas. P.P. 1920 No.4 p.2
26. Ibid.
27. Tas. P.P. 1915 No.4 p.5
28. Tas. P.P. 1910 No.9 p.2; 1911 No.3 p.2
29. Tas. P.P. 1915 No.4 p.5
30. Tas. P.P. 1918 No.4 p.3
31. Tas. P.P. 1912 No.4 p.4
32. Tas. P.P. 1913 No.4 p.8
33. Tas. P.P. 1918 No.4 p.4
34. Tas. P.P. 1915 No.4 p.7
35. Tas. P.P. 1912 No.4 p.7
36. Ibid. p.6
37. Tas. P.P. 1913 No.4 p.3
38. Tas. P.P. 1915 No.4 p.3
39. Ibid., p.3
40. Ibid., p.2
41. Ibid., p.3
42. Tas. P.P. 1916 No.3 p.4
43. Tas. P.P. 1916 No.48 p.1

44. Ibid., p.15
45. Tas. P.P. 1918 No.4 p.7
46. Ibid., p.7
47. Tas. P.P. 1910 No.9 p.2
48. Tas. P.P. 1916 No.3 p.10
49. Tas. P.P. 1918 No.4 p.6
50. Tas. P.P. 1911 No.3 p.2
51. Tas. P.P. 1913 No.4 p.5
52. Tas. P.P. 1915 No.4 p.11
53. Tas. P.P. 1916 No.3 p.13
54. Tas. P.P. 1917 No.4 p.8
55. Tas. P.P. 1910 No.9 p.4
56. Selth, D.V. "The Effect of Poverty and Politics on the Development of Tasmanian State Education 1900-1950". (Unpublished M.A. thesis, university of Tasmania, 1969), Vol.1.1 passim.
57. Mercury 8 Aug. 1919 p.5 g

CHAPTER THREE.

McCoy's APPOINTMENT TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AND THE INITIAL YEARS OF HIS DIRECTORSHIP.

- I. The background of McCoy's appointment.
- II. His swift, significant reforms.
- III. Developments between 1921 and 1923.
The Teachers' College, Secondary and
Technical Education.

On the front page of the August, 1919 South Australian Education Gazette, the medium by which instructions and information were forwarded to teachers since 1885 appeared the official announcement from the Chief Secretary's office, dated 7 August, 1919, that "His Excellency, the Governor in Council, has been pleased to appoint William Taylor McCoy B.A., to be Director of Education, under the provisions of section 48 (1) of the Public Service Act 1916, Vice Maughan, resigned". The story behind the appointment was not as direct as the preciseness of the notice suggested.

On 20 May, 1919 the Minister of Education, Hon. W.H. Harvey, M.L.C., had sent a minute¹ to the Public Service Commissioner instructing that applications for the position of Director of Education be obtained and that a recommendation be forwarded within a week. The usual circular² was sent to all Heads of Departments within the State Public Service. The urgency of the Minister's request and the limited circulation of the notice of the vacancy probably indicated that the appointment of the Acting Director of Education, Mr. C. Charlton, was a foregone conclusion. However, on receiving correspondence from various sources, the Minister refused to take immediate action.

On the 24 May the executive of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union forwarded, through the Acting Director, three pertinent resolutions:

- (1) That there should be no haste in the appointment of a Director of Education.
- (2) That in our opinion the remuneration attaching to the position should be materially increased.
- (3) That the position of Director of Education should be thrown open to applicants from all parts of the English speaking world.³

Letters received over the next few days from organizations outside the Education Department re-iterated and substantiated these notions. The chairman of the Adelaide Diocesan Social Union, whose president was the Bishop of Adelaide, asked in a letter dated 28 May:

that the fullest notice be given throughout the Commonwealth at least that the important post of Director of Education in South Australia is vacant, and also that no necessary expenditure to secure the best man can get be spared.⁴

The next day a letter from the president of the Women's Non Party Association of South Australia requested the Minister to "defer the appointment of a Director of Education and make enquiries throughout the Commonwealth for a suitable Director".⁵ A letter from the chairman of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia set out three means by which the Union's Education Committee believed the very best man available could be appointed:

- (1) That applications be called for by advertisement throughout the whole Commonwealth.
- (2) That the work of sifting the applications and of making a recommendation to the Government be entrusted to somebody of educationalists representing the various branches of education in the State.
- (3) That the salary shall be increased to such a figure as will attract a first class man.⁶

On the 30 May the Secretary of the Independent Schools Headmistresses Association suggested that "applications should be called for by advertisement throughout the Commonwealth and Abroad, so that every opportunity may be given of obtaining a really good man". She continued and stressed "that the dignity and salary of the Director of Education should be increased so as to attract the best educationalist possible".⁷

In the meantime groups within the Education Department were expressing their opinions about the Government's intentions over the appointment and particularly about the possibility of an outsider being recommended. In connection with public expressions about the position the Headmasters Association had already forwarded a resolution to the Minister after their meeting on Friday, 30 May at the Y.M.C.A. Rooms.

This Association is unanimously of the opinion that the office of Director of Education should be filled from within the State, and it also desires to express the utmost confidence in the present Acting Director of Education.⁸

On 6 June, 1919 the Public Service Commissioner addressed a minute to the Minister of Education stating that six applications had been received for

the position. The remainder of the minute indicated that these were not the best candidates available. He continued that "no undue haste should be exhibited in making a selection" because he believed "the appointment is such an important one". In order to obtain the "best man available" the Commissioner made four suggestions:

- (1) That the salary attached to the post should be increased.
- (2) That applications for the position be invited by advertisement in the leading newspapers throughout the Commonwealth, and that, in the event of a suitable man not being secured thereby, a similar advertisement be inserted, through the Agent General, in the leading papers of England.
- (3) When the applications are received I would recommend that the Advisory Council of Education be requested to assist in selecting the best applicant.
- (4) That Mr. Charlton continue to act as Director pending a permanent appointment.⁹

The first three suggestions echoed the opinions of the public expressed in the letters to the Minister about the appointment. Suggestion number three was ruled out in red ink and initialled by the Commissioner, probably because the selection of a Director of Education was not a specified function of this body.

After Cabinet consideration the Premier, the Hon. Mr. Archibald Henry Peake, wrote a minute to the Public Service Commissioner, instructing that applications be invited throughout the Commonwealth at a salary of £1,000.¹⁰ Advertisements duly appeared and the usual circular was distributed within the South Australian Public Service stipulating a salary of £1,000 and a closing date on 21 July.¹¹ The Council of the University of Adelaide also entered the controversy. The matter was considered sufficiently important to call a special council meeting on 13 June. Afterwards the Chancellor, Sir George Murray, sent a letter to the Premier setting out the Council's views on the appointment.

Having in mind the important educational changes that have recently been made in Great Britain and France, and also the recent institution of High Schools in South Australia, the Council respectfully suggests that a Director of Education in this State should have not only a thorough experience of school organization and management, but also a wide intellectual outlook.

He should be capable of inspiring the officers under him with the love of learning and disposed to adopt measures for the encouragement and reward of teachers who have distinguished themselves, not only by their practical efficiency, but also by their mental power as attested by academic attainments. The Council fears that unless a man of some such qualifications is appointed, the standard of national efficiency in South Australia will fall below that in other states.

It is therefore respectfully urged

1. That no man should be appointed to the position of Director of Education in this State unless he has a University degree, or has undergone a course of academic training equivalent to that which a degree connotes.
2. That the salary attaching to the office of Director should be not less than the salary of the Director of Education in Victoria or N.S.W.
3. That applications for the position should be invited from other states in the Commonwealth and from Great Britain.
4. That age of applicants from beyond the Commonwealth should not exceed 40 years.¹²

The letter raised some interesting points. It mentioned "educational changes" in Europe but neglected to acknowledge educational development in the U.S.A. It referred to "the recent institution of High Schools in South Australia", but, in fact, these had been established since 1907.¹³ It naturally stressed that scholarship should distinguish the appointee and hinted that a young man might be more suitable to meet the immediate necessity for inspirational leadership. Such comments did not favour Charlton, the Acting Director, who did not possess a University degree and who was not renowned as a creative, imaginative innovator. The letter assumed that the role of the Director in South Australian education in 1919 was as important as that in the other states, although it surmised that the higher salaries of the Directors of Education in Victoria and New South Wales gave those states a higher reputation. However, the text of the letter gave influential weight to the force of opinion wishing to appoint the best possible man available in Australia and Great Britain.

The Inspectors' Guild had given very serious thought to the appointment and its members were perturbed at the likelihood of an appointee coming from outside the Department. On 3 July, 1919 they formed a depu-

tation to the Minister and presented a case along two broad lines.¹⁴ Mr. John Harry read a forthright and somewhat emotional case for the appointment of the Acting Director, and Mr. V.P. Pavia commented on the contemporary state of education in South Australia. Harry stated that the inspectors unanimously thought that Charlton was "the best man that could be appointed". He knew the system thoroughly, he had successfully administered the Department during the illness of former Directors and he had admirable characteristics for the post. "Mr. Charlton has a breezy, optimistic personality. He rouses enthusiasm. He gets people to work for him. He is alert, decided and fearless in his decisions. He is accurate in his judgments". Harry then continued to counter the objections that had been raised against Charlton. Charlton did not have a university degree, but the speaker considered a degree "is chiefly a matter of appearance and prestige". "The specific knowledge of education possessed by Mr. Charlton far outweighs any loss sustained through the absence of a degree". Charlton did not have experience in some other system, but it was argued that three months in another state, or "six months or more in Great Britain" would set this right. The case was concluded with rhetorical questions, "Why copy other lands? Why not graft a few fruitful boughs upon our own tree"? The spokesman then listed difficulties that would arise if the appointee came from another state.

1. He would know nothing of the men and women in our service.
2. He would be unfamiliar with our particular needs and conditions. e.g. back-block schools.
3. He would have to pick other men's brains.
4. He would be a man of somewhat limited experience.
5. There would of necessity, be a considerable delay in getting into touch with our conditions.
6. The Civil Service as a body would certainly not appreciate the appointment of an ornamental stranger. If an outsider is to be sought for Education, why not also for the Police, Irrigation and other Departments?

Pavia continued the case for Charlton in relation to the state of education in South Australia generally. He claimed that public and press

criticisms of the Education Department did not reveal the true situation: "It is a pity that more opportunities are not created for allowing your staff officers to talk over matters affecting the State system with you; or that there is no tribunal through which the general public could hear the other side - I venture to assert the truthful side". He went on to show that the major public criticisms of the state of education, that it was antiquated and that it lacked new ideas, were not correct, and that they reflected wrongly on the worth and the work of Charlton. Progress had been slow "at times so imperceptible as to suggest stagnation" because "the money voted by Government has been insufficient to pay for needed reforms". Pavia then listed reforms which had been carefully and thoroughly worked out.

- (a) Smaller classes, and as a result greater individual efficiency (on the part of teachers).
- (b) Better conditions and schools for the outback settler.
- (c) Itinerant teachers for solitary families.
- (d) Teaching by correspondence.
- (e) More up-to-date school rooms and consequently improved hygienic conditions.
- (f) Larger playgrounds and consequently greater physical development.
- (g) Greater liberality in providing necessary school apparatus and equipment.
- (h) Better homes for teachers and greater domestic comfort.
- (i) Extension of Domestic Art classes.
- (j) Greater facilities for technical education - the greatest reform of all.
- (k) A thoroughly equipped training College and home for the teachers.

Pavia deplored the unwarranted, uninformed complaints which were given undue publicity while departmental officers were unable to communicate to the public. In short, lack of funds was the impediment to progress and not the incompetency of Charlton or officers of his department.

Pavia claimed that progress in education in South Australia did not lag behind the other states. "Visits made during recent years by members

of our staff to the adjacent states have shown that South Australia has nothing to learn from them in primary education". This unsubstantiated comment was followed by "the late Royal Commission in its remarks of comparison, after seeing other states, placed on record its opinion that, save in the question of expenditure, the primary education of South Australia was equal to most, if not superior to some".

Finally Pavia pressed the claims for Charlton. "It is this intimate knowledge and consequent sympathetic understanding of our system and its officers that make him, in our opinion, so valuable a servant of the Government, and so excellent a guide for education in this State". It is officially recorded that the Minister agreed that the position was one of great importance and that the inspectors had a far deeper inside knowledge of the Department than those outside. He stated that the recommendation for the appointment would come from the Public Service Commissioner and that the appointment would finally be decided by the Government, but the inspectors' statement would be placed before Cabinet with the resolutions from the other bodies.

The opinions expressed by the Inspectors' Guild are worth re-considering. They presented the inside case for the appointment of the Acting Director, who by Public Service Regulations, was not able to speak publicly, for himself.

It could be asked as to how far the inspectors were stimulated by self interest and the fear of an unknown leader. Familiarity with local people and conditions could counter change and development. An appointee from outside the Department who did not know the teachers personally could establish a rational system of classification and promotion. Harry's complaints that an outsider "would be a man of somewhat limited experience" and that "there would of necessity be a considerable delay in getting into touch with our conditions" did not seem to be attributes of a man who would be obviously chosen on proven leadership. His emotive figure "ornamental stranger" might have been applied maliciously by public servants to an outside appointee, but it certainly was not acceptable to the Public Service Commissioner, who had previously suggested that the position should be

advertised interstate.

The case of Pavia appeared more direct and forthright although some of his listed reforms, such as "teaching by correspondence" and "a thoroughly equipped training college" proved to be part fantasies rather than realities when McCoy took charge. His claim that South Australia was abreast of the other states in primary education on the evidence of a Royal Commission which had taken its evidence seven years previously was most insecure. Pavia also avoided mentioning the growing dissatisfaction and grievances amongst teachers about conditions and salaries.¹⁵ However it was a significant commentary about the state of public education from leading assessors within the system and its complaint about lack of finance had a familiar contemporary ring, and one with which McCoy had to wrestle vigorously.

Did Pavia's accusation of the Government about its lack of financial support in any way irritate the Cabinet and make it more determined to appoint someone outside the Department? The inspectors' comments were prognostic of the environment in which a new Director, if appointed from outside the Department, would have to work and live.

The Minister's reaction to the Inspectors' Guild indicated the way he was thinking about the appointment. All applicants would be considered by Cabinet in the light of various opinions expressed about education throughout the community after the Public Service Commissioner had made his recommendation. The procedure was the traditional one, no special committee was to be set up, nor were the services of the Advisory Council of Education to be used.

On the 6 August, 1919 the Public Service Commissioner recommended the appointment of Mr. W.T. McCoy in accordance with Section 48 (1) of the Public Service Act in terms of Sections 36 (1) i.e. without examination or probation, and 36 (2) and "that there is no person available in the Public Service who is as capable of filling the position as the person proposed to be appointed".¹⁶ Parliament was in session when McCoy's appointment was gazetted and the Premier's answer to a question about the

appointment of a new Director showed how Cabinet weighed the situation. It had gone outside the State to select a Director because "it would be as well to get out of the groove into which our education system has possibly got".¹⁷ It tried unsuccessfully to smother any adverse reflection on the present inspectors and teachers, but the obvious implication was that candidates amongst them demonstrated little potential for leadership, and that in fact the Departmental members themselves could be held partly responsible for the lack of progress.

The Adelaide press was enthusiastic about the appointment. The Editorial of the Register on 8 August, 1919, praised the Government for "not having followed the line of least resistance in the appointment of the new Director of Education", and alluded to the advantage of McCoy's "wide and diversified" experience. It anticipated that a man with his splendid "gifts and graces will soon mollify any friction among naturally disappointed local applicants, so that in harmony and good will all may link together to secure urgently needed reforms". The editorial concluded with a recommendation that after McCoy had become acquainted with conditions in the Education Department he should be sent to the U.S.A., "where old-fashioned ideas are being scrapped and educational systems developed in a manner whose observations and study would be immensely beneficial to South Australia".¹⁸

The editorial in the Advertiser on the same day accepted McCoy's reputation, but complained about the "arrested development" of education in South Australia.

If a State wants an up-to-date system of popular education, it must be prepared to pay for it. The man at the head may be ever so able and zealous but unless adequately supported with funds by Parliament, he can make no headway.¹⁹

The edition of the Daily Herald²⁰ on August 8, 1919 included the appointment as a news item and made no comments. However the sub-title of the announcement, "A 'live' man from Tasmania", indicated approbation.

II.

The fears of the Inspectors' Guild about an appointee to the directorship from outside the State being an "ornamental stranger" and the delay in progress whilst he would presumably be "getting in touch" were very soon allayed by McCoy's quick, penetrating appraisals of fundamental faults in South Australian education and his consequent sound decisions and corrective actions. His vigorous personality and zealous nature prohibited him from being an ornament of any sort, and because McCoy was free from local precedents and practices Peake's hope that an outsider would perhaps get the educational system "out of the groove" was likely to be realized.

At a press interview on his arrival in Adelaide McCoy displayed his usual constraint and caniness by refusing to be drawn into the controversy about the "fixed ratio" feature of teachers' promotion.

From what I can gather, it is a rule peculiar to South Australia, and I do not care to express an opinion upon it until I have thoroughly mastered it. 21

But he was too perspicacious to delay investigations into the reasons for the tone of discontent that he found amongst the teachers, and he set out immediately to restore satisfaction.

On taking up his appointment one of McCoy's first actions was to introduce a new scheme for the classification of teachers. This had also been one of his first accomplishments in Tasmania, but he did not have to start at base, which had been necessary in Tasmania, because South Australia already had a system of teacher classification. Although he apparently had done nothing in the past to have it amended, **Charlton**, criticised the existing system because it "tended to discourage the younger and more ambitious teachers from reaching out to the highest".²² There were bars to promotion which required teachers to have had experience in schools of a given average attendance, and they had little hope of being appointed to such schools for many years, in fact not until senior staff retired or died. The assessment of the quality of their service was arbitrary and variously

interpreted by the inspectors; there was no set scale, and teachers seldom knew exactly where they stood and this consequently created unrest.

McCoy's system removed all the bars, and the efficiency of the teacher's school work, measured by a scale of "skill marks", was to be the main factor in deciding promotion, but his qualifications were also taken into consideration.²³ The teacher knew exactly where he stood because the imponderables of teaching - initiative, zeal, devotion - were given numerical valuation, and all teachers were placed on a seniority or promotion list which was kept up to date annually by the Classification Board.²⁴

By the beginning of 1920 McCoy proposed a radical change in the role of the inspector. Teachers were given more freedom in the performance of their work and relieved of the tedious routine of teaching for results. Although inspectors were expected to examine the children's progress in reading, writing, composition, spelling and arithmetic they had to spend time noting the influence of the teacher and observing the ordinary school routine. "The estimate of a teacher's work", McCoy explained in his 1920 annual report,

should be measured by his ability to train his pupils in right habits of thought, speech and conduct, by his success in developing the intelligence, resource, and initiative of his pupils, by the results of his efforts to make the knowledge gained by them of some practical use, by a consideration of the moral forces at work in the school, and by the zeal and interest he brings to his work, as well as by the result of his teaching. ²⁵

Although the manner of measuring the development of some of these qualities in school children was uncertain teachers were to be respected as individuals and encouraged to use their initiative and to teach according to the strengths of their own personality and not by mere rote procedures.

In the first half of 1920 teachers' salaries were reviewed and from 1 July increases were paid. The old salary scheme was abandoned and McCoy claimed that the new scheme was "based on scientific principles", and it encouraged "teachers to improve their efficiency".²⁶ Salaries were now regulated by twin factors, viz., (1) the nature of a teacher's position and his responsibilities and (2) the qualifications of a teacher and his practical skill in teaching. Each of these factors was given a quota.

By the "position quota" a teacher received annual increments, which had been a feature of South Australian salaries for many years, but these increments were to be paid only to teachers who had reached a prescribed minimum efficiency. The "qualification quota" provided a direct and immediate salary increase to the teacher when he improved his academic qualifications and skill by gaining a higher certificate. Although he might become eligible for higher positions his successful efforts, under the new scheme, were rewarded by an immediate salary increase. The salary of a teacher was the sum of his "position quota" and his "classification quota". A teacher who improved his classification gained an immediate salary increase although he might remain in the same position.²⁷ The teacher's level of efficiency in teaching was decided by the inspector and his academic status was determined by his examination successes. Teachers were divided into three major classes numbers I, the highest, II and III. Each class was divided into two divisions and distinguished by the letters A and B.²⁸ Promotion depended on the classification of a teacher's position in a school and an increase in his skill, as shown by passes in Teachers' Examinations, which were recast in 1919, and became effective during 1920.²⁹ McCoy believed professional studies would lead to increased efficiency in the classroom.³⁰ He realized from his own sound sense and from his experiences in Tasmania that no department can operate successfully without the co-operation of its satisfied members. While recognising the diversity of human factors in a teacher's role he believed that the only fair way to proceed was to formulate as much as possible and to leave as little as possible to fortuity.

Early in his directorship McCoy gave his full attention to matters that directly influenced the school children themselves. With the assistance of some twenty teachers, the inspectors, members of the Curriculum Board, and the Superintendent of Primary Education McCoy produced a new course of instruction.³¹ The length of the primary school course was reduced by one year, making it seven years in all. The scope and nature of the studies and the type of training for each of the seven grades was

set out together with explanatory notes and directions for the guidance of the teachers. The course of instruction was not completely comprehensive, the development of character and the formation of social habits were left to the initiative of the teacher. McCoy saw the primary school as an important implement in moulding the morals of a child as well as assisting his physical and intellectual development. In his preface to the course he stated:

Promptness, neatness, accuracy, patience, persistence, a due regard for the rights of others, self-reliance, ideals such as patriotism, religious toleration and freedom of thought, and sentiments of reverence for age, of sympathy for the needy and suffering, should be inculcated at all seasonable times, whether they are prescribed or not. ³²

He stressed the principle of correlation between subjects and recommended methods that aroused the children's interest and stimulated self activity. Teachers should always be clear in their own minds about their aims in teaching each subject, and they were required to construct a programme of work at least two weeks in advance of the matter to be taught so that by the end of the year they would be able to show a progressive plan of the work they had taught.

This course of instruction resembled the one he had planned in Tasmania and although it was prescriptive about the matter to be taught it did demand thoughtfulness and intelligence on the part of the teacher in the method he adopted to teach that matter. It did not stifle initiative, but it was liable to foster formalism and similarity between schools. Although it seemed too systematised and centrally directed in comparison with the freer, local control of English elementary schools it did prove a helpful guide to teachers who had comparatively little training and who often held qualifications based on secondary school standards.³³ Teachers welcomed a set syllabus because it removed uncertainty and gave them something definite to teach.³⁴ It was useful to young inexperienced teachers, especially when the graded series of departmental publications in arithmetic,³⁵ history and geography were produced, and to teachers in country areas where reference material was restricted. It also provided a useful

yard stick for inspectors in assessing and helping teachers.

In January 1920 McCoy began separating the infant department from the main primary school in schools where attendance exceeded 500 children.³⁶ By the end of the year there were twenty such infant schools in existence. He initiated this separation in Tasmania in the belief that large schools tended to become too unwieldy and that the head teacher was unable to give adequate attention to all the grades, in fact the lowest grades tended to receive the least attention and retardation often started in these important initial years of a child's school career. He aimed to staff the infant departments with women especially trained for teaching there, and to put them under the control of an infant mistress whose duties would be similar to a head teacher. Being free from a personal class she could help and encourage her assistants and be responsible for the organization, discipline and methods of instruction in the department. Infant school work was based on Froebelian and Montessorian principles and became noted for its freshness, happiness and lack of formalism, and its teachers were generally enthusiastic and became renowned for the decoration of their rooms and their accumulation of teaching aids.

In 1918 the Education Department was taking an informal interest in education by correspondence for children living in isolated parts of the State. Miss Lydia Longmore, a school inspector, with the help of a number of volunteers, carried out the task of teaching such children by post, but as the demand increased the voluntary helpers could not cope and the appointment of a full time staff became necessary. At the beginning of 1920 McCoy established a properly organized correspondence school³⁷ with five full time, certificated teachers under Miss S.W. Twiss. By the end of the year there were 240 children on the roll, ninety of whom had never been in a school room.³⁸ The school catered for all grades in the primary school and the children received fortnightly assignments in writing, spelling, composition, arithmetic, history and geography. Instructions were also sent to the supervisor, usually the mother or elder sister, and when the child returned the work a personal letter was sent to him

by the teacher giving further instructions, guidance and advice. The initial success of the venture was due to out-back clergymen, inspectors, and the Commonwealth Welfare Officer on the Trans-Australian Railway, who distributed the information about the school and secured children for enrolment; the parents showed great interest and the pupils themselves were keen because enrolment was entirely voluntary.

McCoy wanted comfortable school buildings for the children and adequate residences for his teachers. The physical environment had to be satisfactory for the stimulation of the educative processes. His specifications for new schools were the same as he had laid down in Tasmania - ten square feet per pupil, light falling on left of pupil, and window space being about one fifth of the floor space. The erection of new schools and the remodelling of old schools, and the provision of comfortable and suitable school furniture were limited by available funds, but in his first report McCoy re-iterated the plea of former directors that school buildings should be well-lighted, properly ventilated and furnished with seats suitable to the size of the child.³⁹ Evidently this plea did not go unheard because the expenditure on school buildings and furniture showed an appreciable increase in 1921.⁴⁰

Provision had been made in the 1915 Education Act for the position of Superintendent of Secondary Education and soon after his own appointment McCoy moved to have this position filled. The appointment of a responsible officer for this work was the chief way to start the reforms and development in secondary schools which McCoy believed to be absolutely necessary. The process of appointing took eight months and eventually William James Adey, principal of Adelaide High School, was appointed. Adey had been chosen by Williams to be head master of Adelaide High School in 1908.⁴¹ In 1911 Edward Jordan resigned.⁴² He had been specifically appointed to inspect high schools and then, as this was not considered a full time post, he was expected to assist with the inspection of primary schools, a task which he looked upon with disdain. So Adey was then expected to run his own school and visit other high schools year

by year. This practice appalled McCoy, he censured it as not only "mischievous", but "unfair to the teachers and unfair to the pupils".⁴³

On the administrative side McCoy had new regulations issued by 20 November, 1920⁴⁴ embodying all the changed policy of the Department. Although such action was necessarily in accordance with the Education Act it did indicate the swiftness of the changes within twelve months of McCoy's appointment, and it reflected McCoy's determination to regularize procedures in order to minimize doubts that caused friction in the working parts of the system.

By the end of 1920, fifteen months after his appointment, McCoy had re-organized many aspects of education in South Australia. The system of recruitment, employment and transfer and promotion methods for teachers were altered. Departmental examinations for teachers were re-introduced, teachers' classification was altered to include methods of determining efficiency, and consequently the salaries of teachers, which were increased from 1 July, 1920. He re-classified primary schools according to their annual average attendance.⁴⁵ He recast the role of the inspector. He issued a new Course of Instruction for the Primary School, separated infant departments in large primary schools, organized the correspondence school and showed his determination to improve school buildings and furniture. By securing the appointment of a Superintendent of Secondary Education he could begin organization for the sound development of secondary education. He had made provision for the establishment of higher primary schools⁴⁶ and for the introduction of a new scheme for teacher training,⁴⁷ and because he had convinced the Government that the Teachers' College was housed in an inadequate building an allocation of £20,000⁴⁸ was made for erecting a college near the university.

Planning all these changes in such a short period should have tied McCoy to his desk, but in his 1920 annual report he stated that he had visited 283 schools and had addressed meetings of teachers all over the State.⁴⁹ By these visits he became acquainted with the schools, and the teachers and the parents became acquainted with him, and his ideas on education. He did not rely entirely on the written word when the new

course of instruction was introduced but he visited important centres to explain its implications.⁵⁰

As McCoy was appointed from outside the State it would seem normal that Cabinet and the Education Department would expect change; change certainly did take place and although it was on the pattern of the centralization of the other Australian states, it did prove beneficial to both the teachers and the taught. A South Australian appointee to the directorship would have possibly personalized everything, especially the promotion lists of teachers, but McCoy coming from outside, wanted things rationalized. Although many of these changes bear the mark of McCoy and New South Wales practices some basic patterns had been laid by the 1915 Education Act, but the significant factor is that he got changes functioning successfully; he had the capacity for making swift accurate appraisal which he followed by quick, effective action.

III.

A new scheme for the training of teachers which McCoy set out in his 1920 report was put into operation in January, 1921. He explained that the new scheme aimed to produce "better educated and better trained teachers, especially for the country schools", and that it was based on three fundamental principles, viz. :-

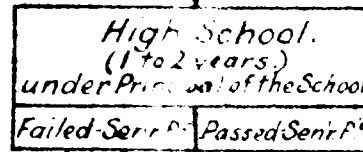
- (1) That the candidate should have practically completed his ordinary education before entering upon his professional course - the lowest standard of entrance being raised to at least that of the Junior Public Examination.
- (2) That he should complete his professional course before he is permitted to teach.
- (3) That in order to obtain uniformity of educational aim and effort, all the various courses should be controlled by one person, instead of several, as formerly was the case.⁵¹

Like most of his contemporaries McCoy talked about teacher training and not teacher education. His first principle anticipated the disappearance of the pupil teacher. Originally young people who had ambitions to

CONSPECTUS SHOWING SCHEME FOR TRAINING TEACHERS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Entrance Examination - Junior Public.

*Other entrants at
Junior Public standard.*



*Other entrants at
Senior Public standard.*

TRAINING COLLEGE.

Minimum age of entrance to all courses - 17 years.

<p>A. Short Course. <i>(1 year)</i> <i>Academic & Professional training for teachers of Small Country Schools, &c.</i></p>	<p>B. Primary Course. <i>(2 years)</i> <i>Professional and University training.</i></p>	<p>C. Infant Teacher Course. <i>(2 years)</i> <i>Academic and Professional Training for Infant Teachers.</i></p>	<p>E. Commercial Course. <i>(2 years)</i> <i>Academic and Professional Training for Commercial Teachers</i></p>	<p>F. Domestic Arts Course. <i>(2 years)</i> <i>Academic and Professional training. (Technical Training to be taken at Domestic Arts Centre Norwood.)</i></p>	<p>G. Woodwork Course. <i>(1 year)</i> <i>Students specially selected on account of Natural aptitude. (Technical Training to be taken at Gilbert Street Woodwork Centre)</i></p>
<p>D. Secondary Course. <i>1-2 years additional University training (for selected students from Primary Course)</i></p>					

be teachers assisted and taught in the primary schools which they had just left; they remained in this apprenticeship position for about four years and gained secondary school qualifications before they entered the Teachers' Training College for a short course of about six months duration. Since 1900 in South Australia this pupil teacher period had decreased from four years to one year and the entry qualification to teaching had gradually been raised as the influence of the high schools spread.⁵² His second principle stressed the attainment of success in professional studies and left liberal, academic studies in second place, he perpetuated the dichotomy between training and education in the Teachers' Training College. McCoy's third principle reflected his passion for neatness of organization and efficiency of function.

The instrument in this preparation was the Teachers' Training College. Dr. A.J. Schulz⁵³ had been principal of the college since March, 1909, but probably because he was appointed at the age of twenty-five years after a brilliant career at Adelaide University and the University of Zurich he was too young and inexperienced to have initiated reforms, particularly those needed for the non-academic type of student teacher destined for the primary school. McCoy codified the College's chief aims as:

to improve the general culture of the student, to impart instruction in certain professional subjects not previously taken in his secondary course, and to give him such a knowledge of the aims of education and methods of teaching as will assist him in his future work in the classroom. 54

He systematised the courses on lines similar to his previous scheme in Tasmania. Each of the seven courses provided the necessary academic and professional training for specific teaching positions. Entrants had to be of a minimum age of seventeen years. People who held the Junior Public Examination Certificate could select the A Course which lasted for one year and provided academic and professional training for teachers in small country schools. People who sat for, but failed, the Senior Public Examination could be admitted to the A Course or to the G Course

if they had natural aptitude at woodwork. The latter course lasted for one year and also took students who had passed the Senior Public Examination. All other courses required the entrant to have the Senior Public Examination standard. The B Course lasted for two years and provided professional and university training for the more important positions in the primary schools. Students who showed promise at university studies were given one or two extra years in the D Course and they gained positions in the high schools. The C Course gave academic and professional training for two years for infant teachers. The E and F Courses provided training for commercial and domestic arts teachers respectively, and they lasted for two years.

The College staff taught general subjects e.g. English, history, mathematics for the A1 and A groups, and "professional" subjects (e.g. principles of method, psychology, nature study, hygiene, music, drawing and elocution) for all students. Qualified students attended lectures in arts and science at the university. Concurrent teaching practice was conducted in the practising schools at Currie Street, Flinders Street and Gilles Street under newly appointed masters of method assisted by skilled demonstration teachers. Infant schools, under mistresses of infant method, were established at Gilles Street and Currie Street to receive student teachers in the C Course.

In order to attract high school children to teaching 150 studentships were made available for a one or two years course beyond the Junior Public standard. Boys were granted £40 per year, girls £30, and if students had to live away from home they received £20 per year boarding allowance.

In March 1921 the College moved from its cramped quarters within the university to temporary premises in the "Old Police Barracks" and in July it was renamed the "Teachers' College".⁵⁵

During 1921 a careful revision was made of the subjects taught in high schools. Up until then the work in these schools had been geared to the public examinations of the Adelaide University. McCoy was critical of learning by cramming for examinations because this process had little permanent value. He believed that a three year secondary course

was not sufficient preparation for a university course, and that high schools should do more than prepare pupils for examinations; they should create a sense of right conduct in pupils.

The instruction must be sound and of a permanent character; the curriculum must be sufficiently comprehensive to avoid narrowness of outlook, and sufficiently varied in character to give a wide study to varying interests or capacities.⁵⁶

With the aid of the new superintendent and a committee of teachers the first definite course of instruction was published by the Education Department embodying these principles and it was proposed to put it into full operation in 1923. Only the second and fourth years of the new four year course were to be examined by public examinations and they were programmed to the requirements of the Intermediate and Leaving examinations of the university. A fifth year was planned in larger schools for consolidating work at Leaving Honours. The curriculum was a compromise between free non-examination years and prescriptive public examination years, but it also aimed to provide a good general education for children who would leave at fifteen or sixteen years of age to take positions in commerce and industry, as well as to prepare pupils who desired to proceed to tertiary institutions to train for the professions. Regulations awarding scholarships were revised in 1921. Sixty Exhibitions were awarded on the basis of the Qualifying Certificate Examination at the end of the primary school course in Grade VII, and forty of these were reserved for country children.

During December, 1921 the first rural camp school was conducted at Kuitpo Forest, Meadows, with twenty five boys from Adelaide High School. The course was planned by Mr. H.H. Corbin, Consulting Forester and Lecturer at the University and the camp master was Mr. W.M.C. Symonds a high school assistant. With the continuance of such schools Adey hoped that "many lads who would otherwise drift into offices will turn their attention to the outdoor life of farmers and foresters and increase the ranks of the primary producers".⁵⁷

The area of technical education was the domain of Dr. C. Fenner who had been appointed Superintendent of Technical Education on 5 November, 1916, some three years before McCoy's appointment. In his report McCoy referred to the steady, satisfactory progress in Technical Schools, Apprentice Classes and the South Australian School of Art and Craft, but he regretted that financial restrictions prohibited the extension of their activities.⁵⁸ However he was now pleased to emphasize that a syllabus for the guidance of teachers had been issued for the subjects studied in the Technical Schools. In the same year Fenner reported that all examinations in the seventy four subjects with their two or more grades were set by the Education Department and that certificates were awarded to the successful students.⁵⁹ Such systematization was dear to the heart of McCoy.

In 1922 the Travelling Dental Clinic was introduced to educate the children, and often the parents, about the importance of clean, sound healthy mouths and to treat tooth decay.⁶⁰

The new regulations issued in November, 1920 made provision for the establishment of higher primary schools and these were actually established in sixteen country centres in 1922.⁶¹ McCoy wanted these schools to cater for children who had completed primary school and whose parents did not want them to remain at school beyond the statutory attendance age. Often this interval between Qualifying Certificate and leaving school extended over two years and when these children did attend a high school the course of study often did not suit their present or future needs and they profited little from one or two years studying a foreign language, mathematics and science. In fact their presence often hampered the high school work. In 1920 McCoy envisaged that a basic course consisting of English, civics, music and physical culture should be studied in conjunction with one of three elective courses likely to be of assistance in the children's future vocations. The three electives courses were firstly a commercial course including arithmetic and geography, the elements of book keeping, commercial correspondence, business principles, secondly an industrial course designed to develop technical skills and prepare boys for apprenticeship

to a trade - trade arithmetic, science, geometry, mechanical drawing, and thirdly a domestic course - including cookery and laundry work, needlework, home and personal hygiene and care of infants.

In practice in 1922 however, probably because of the impracticability of obtaining competent teachers and the limited facilities and finance, and the fact that these schools were located in the country, some of the basic subjects covered work similar to that taught in first and second year high school. The selection of optional courses was limited to the selection of two to four subjects rather than the pursuit of co-ordinated courses. McCoy's original ideas for higher primary schools were more closely practised in the central schools when they were established in 1924.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER THREE.

1. S.A.A. M.E. 39/1919. Minister of Education to Public Service Commissioner. 20 May, 1919.
2. Ibid., Circular No. 96 20 May, 1919.
3. Ibid., S.A.P.T.U. to Acting Director 24 May, 1919.
Adelaide Diocesan Social Union to Minister 28 May, 1919.
4. Ibid., These are the actual words of the letter but the meaning is obvious.
5. Ibid., Women's Non Party Association of S.A. to Minister 29 May, 1919.
6. Ibid., Kindergarten Union of S.A. to Minister 29 May, 1919.
7. Ibid., Independent Schools Headmistresses Association 30 May, 1919.
to the Minister.
8. Ibid., Headmasters Association to Minister 30 May, 1919.
9. Ibid., Public Service Commissioner to Minister 6 June, 1919.
The six applicants were probably local men because the advertisement for the vacancy appeared only within the S.A. Public Service.
10. Ibid., Premier to Public Service Commissioner 11 June, 1919.
11. (a) Circular 100 18 June, 1919.
(b) In his speech at the opening of Parliament on 10 July, 1919 the Governor informed the Parliament that applications had been called from all over Australia. Debates during the Address-in-Reply indicated that Labour members approved of the move.
See Deb. S.A.P. 1919 Leg. Council; p.4 pp.241-242
Assembly; pp.44-45 pp.261-262
12. S.A.A. C.S.O. 741/1919.
13. Of the 21 high schools in South Australia in 1919, 16 had been established prior to 1910, 4 in 1913 and one in 1915.
See S.A.P.P. 1920 No.44 p.9.
14. S.A.A. M.E. 39/1919. The docket contains the complete case of the deputations.
15. See S.A.T.J. July 1919 Editorial "Backward and Forward" pp.1-2.
Aug. 1919 Editorial "Non Possumus" pp.21-22.

16. S.A.A. M.E. 39/1919 Search in the files of the Chief Secretary's Office revealed no trace of the names of the applicants. The Mercury of Hobart 8 Aug. 1919 p.5 g stated that there were 26 applicants.
17. Deb. S.A.P. 1919 Assembly p.328.
18. Register 8 Aug. 1919 p.6 c.
19. Advertiser 8 Aug. 1919 p.6 i.
20. Daily Herald 8 Aug. 1919 p.4 f.
21. The Observer 9 Aug. 1919 p.23 a.
22. S.A.P.P. 1920 No.44 Report of the Minister of Education. p.21.
23. Ed. Regs. (1920)
XIII Skill Marks p.26.
24. Ibid., XI Classification Board p.25.
XII Classification of Teachers pp.25-26.
25. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p.22.
26. Ibid., p.26.
27. This was very similar to the N.S.W. system which McCoy had introduced into Tasmania.
Crane & Walker op.cit. pp.257-258.
28. Identical to Wilkin's scheme which was based on Kay-Shuttleworth's English plan, introduced into N.S.W. in 1854.
Turney op.cit. p.207.
29. Ed. Regs. 1920 XIV Teachers Examinations pp.26-29.
30. S.A.P.P. 1921 No. 44 p. 24.
31. Ibid., p.21.
32. Course of Instruction for the Primary Schools (Adelaide 1920) p.5.
33. A teacher who held a university degree in the primary branch was a rarity and even towards the end of McCoy's directorship a large proportion of the primary school teachers were still not even certified. See below Table 11.
Teachers in primary and higher primary schools who held degrees.
1921 - 5 1922 - 6 1923 - 3 1924 - 5 1925 - 8 1926 - 9
1927 - 16 1928 - 24 1929 - 16
Source : Reports of the Minister of Education.

34. S.A.P.P. 1922 No.44 p.28.
Charlton, the Superintendent of Primary Education reported that the teachers were satisfied with "the compact form in which their instructions have been issued to them". They could easily find the matter to be taught and they knew exactly at what stage their grade should be.
35. Ibid., p.28.
Charlton explained that "The Adelaide Exercises in Arithmetic for Grades II to VII" had been written by 15 selected head teachers.
36. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p.22.
37. Ibid., p.24.
38. Ibid., .28.
39. Complaints about over-crowding and insufficient school accommodation were common. See Register, 1 April, 1921 p.3 c.
Letter from "Parent" asking members of parliament to support the Dec. 1920 resolution of united school committees for proper school buildings.
Daily Herald 28 March, 1921 p.4 f.
29 March, 1921 p.4 b-c Editorial commenting on the disclosures at the Easter Conference of the S.A.P.T.U. about the bad school accommodation.
40. See below Table 13.
41. Beare, H. op.cit. p.334.
42. Beare, H. op.cit. p.360.
43. S.A.A. m.e. 132a/1920 McCoy to Ritchie 1 Dec. 1919.
44. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p. 21.
45. S.A.P.P. 1922 No.44 p.41 Appendix III.
46. Ed. Regs. 1920 III. Higher Primary Schools. p.3.
47. Ibid., X Modes of Entering the Service, and the Training of Teachers. pp.21-25.
48. S.A.P.P. 1921 No. 44 p.17.
49. S.A.P.P. 1921 No. 44 p.27.
50. See (a) E.G. Nov. 1920 p.209 for the Director's Country Itinerary
(b) S.A.T.J. 30 Nov. 1920 pp.84-85 for report on the "eminently practical and helpful address" in Price Hall 15 Nov. on the new curriculum.

51. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p.21.
52. See the annual report of the Principal of the Teachers' College in 1921 for a brief historical background of the College.
S.A.P.P. 1922 No. 44 p.38.
53. Beare, H. op.cit. pp.250-251.
54. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p.21.
55. S.A.P.P. 1922 No.44 p.38.
56. Ibid., p.24.
57. Ibid., p.35.
58. Ibid., p.25.
59. Ibid., p.36.
60. S.A.P.P. 1923 No.44 Extracts from the Report of the Travelling School Dental Clinic pp.38-39.
61. Ibid., p.21.

CHAPTER FOUR.

IMPERIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE 1923 AND THE

MIDDLE YEARS OF MCCOY'S DIRECTORSHIP.

- I. McCoy's plea to attend, and his scheme for recruiting exit students from English Teachers' Colleges.
- II. The Imperial Education Conference.
- III. McCoy's report.
- IV. The Labour Government.
- V. The building programme.
- VI. Expansion of school medical and psychological services.
- VII. Agriculture, woodwork and domestic science included in rural school courses.
- VIII. Central Schools.
- IX. Re-organization at the Education Department.
- X. Night lectures at Adelaide University.
- XI. Hostels.
- XII. Consolidated schools.

I.

In 1907 the Secretary for the Colonies issued invitations for the first Empire Conference on Education and New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia were represented by their Directors of Education. The Imperial Government considered the work of this conference so important that it called a second conference in 1911 which the Directors of Education in New South Wales and Western Australia attended. In October, 1922 invitations were issued, through the Board of Education, for a third conference to be held in London in June 1923, but the South Australian Government declined the invitation.¹

To make the Government change its decision McCoy marshalled a case around these points.² In the crisis of war Great Britain realized that the strength of the nation rested upon a proper educational system so with this conviction the 1918 Education Act was passed. Australia as a member of the Commonwealth must develop as a nation and this development was assured through education. Because of its geographical isolation, Australia needed stimulation from new ideas and such conferences provided this. The 1923 Conference was being convened to discuss educational issues directly concerned with the Dominions - the inter-change of teachers, the establishment of a central bureau of education for the distribution of essential educational information, the design of school buildings, vocational training, medical inspection, courses of study, and the training of teachers. Such discussions should be heard by the Director of Education, but of more importance were the informal discussions and exchange of views amongst the delegates where failures were confessed and successes proclaimed. The Director could personally observe and discuss the latest developments in educational practice in the United Kingdom and on the Continent. South Australia had a very sound system of education and should be represented proudly with all the other dominions, states and colonies in the presence of eminent English experts in education. Although there was a grave financial crisis all over the world the cost of sending a representative to the conference would be

"infinitesimal", in fact improvements, as well as economics, could be effected as a result of his visit. Business houses and other government departments send their chief officers abroad for experience. Overall many advantages would accrue to the Education Department and to the children of South Australia from such a visit.

McCoy's submission was riddled with statements without proofs and explanations. How did the strength of a nation rest upon its system of education? What exactly would be the advantages to the Education Department if McCoy attended? How would the children of South Australia really benefit? Whether it was the convictions connected with some of the arguments that caused the Government to change its mind, or whether it was that the new Minister of Education, Thomas Pascoe, who replaced Ritchie on 3 November, 1922, was more sympathetic, is not known, but on 7 January, 1923 the Government decided that McCoy should attend the conference.

On the eve of his departure for England McCoy suggested a scheme to the Minister to overcome the shortage of trained teachers in the State.³ One of the difficulties originating from the liberality of free education was the continuous shortage of competent teachers. In addition to the larger schools scattered over the State, fourteen schools had an average of six and seven pupils and fifteen schools had an average of seven and eight pupils. In the first two months of 1923 there had been an unprecedented number of resignations, mostly women about to be married, fifty eight in 1923 as against sixteen during the previous period in the preceding year. Deaths also tended to increase the shortage, together with the demand for more schools in the expanding State.

McCoy's scheme for meeting the increasing staffing difficulties in state schools gained the attention of the Government and its very quick approval because it was a substantial money saver. He pointed out that there were several large teachers' training colleges in England and that young, ex-students were finding it increasingly difficult to obtain positions. The trained teacher who possessed the certificate of the Board of Education had received no less than two years' training in addition

to four years' secondary education. In South Australia there was but one teachers' college and a fully trained teacher who had spent two years in it would have probably spent four years in a secondary school, the two years previous to college as a probationary student, and his first two years as an ordinary secondary pupil without allowances. The cost to the State for the two years in high school and two years in college was between £210 and £290 according to the location of the home of the student. McCoy argued that it would be a financially sound proposition to advertise in England for trained men teachers and to advance the successful applicants £60 passage money, which could be repaid at £2 per month for two years and then this would be fully refunded after three years' service. Because the Commonwealth paid the actual fare the State would gain a trained teacher at an ultimate cost of £60. McCoy claimed that "the advantages to the department of importing a number of selected men teachers would be very great", but he did not elaborate this except by stating that "competition with English trained teachers would have a quickening and beneficial effect on the service".⁴ He believed that young men teachers in South Australia would be in no way at a disadvantage because there was not a sufficient supply of teachers to fill the existing vacancies.

On his arrival in London McCoy was asked to interview applicants and to select seventy young men, preferably single, between the ages of twenty-one and thirty years who held certificates from the Board of Education. They had to be physically fit and be prepared to enter into a bond to serve the South Australian Education Department for three years from the date of landing in South Australia, and, as a guarantee of good faith, £2 per month was withheld from their salaries for two years, and this sum was to be returned to them on the completion of their third year of service.

McCoy spent the first part of his visit to England writing some 300 letters, answering enquiries about these positions and sorting applicants. During May and June, 1923 he interviewed likely candidates in London, Exeter, Bristol, Aberystwyth, Chester and Manchester. In a letter to Pascoe,⁵ he commented on "this strenuous task" and in one of his few extant hand-



ENGLISH TEACHERS FOR AUSTRALIA. — Mr. W. T. McCoy, Director of Education for Queensland, standing with English teachers who left London yesterday to take up appointments in Queensland.

J.E. Stalley A. Wilson T.G.T. Burville K.E.F. Grant W.T. McCoy C.J. Robinson

E. Hamilton A.S. Raymond

written letters to Charlton, he claimed, "The whole business has all but driven me silly but it is worthwhile".⁶ Indeed the interviewing stopped him from visiting schools and delayed and shortened his visit to America, but the scheme was McCoy's own, and he was determined that it should succeed. He hand-picked the teachers himself. In his correspondence to Charlton from Bristol, Llandudno, and London he kept enumerating the procedure he wanted Charlton to take when these young men arrived in Adelaide. They were recently qualified, young, enthusiastic teachers with no experience, and he wanted them to be carefully placed with sympathetic head teachers. He did not want them treated as immigrants and he suggested that the Departmental officials and the Teachers' Union might welcome them and put them in adequate temporary accommodation until they found suitable lodgings.

These teachers totalling 66 in number, arrived in three groups during 1923. The first batch of thirteen, arrived in the "Largs Bay" on July 31, 1923 and they were quartered temporarily at the "Grosvenor Hotel" and given attention according to McCoy's instructions.

After a deputation of the recently engaged English teachers requested that the £2 per month chargeable against their salaries be remitted for the remainder of the term of three years because they had not calculated on such high super-annuation charges, McCoy supported their request in a memorandum to the Minister on 14 December, 1923. He referred to them as "these boys", and reported "that their work has been generally satisfactory, and that in some cases it had been particularly so".⁷ The Minister approved that from 1 January, 1924 payments of single men were to be reduced to £1 per month and payments of married men to be entirely suspended.

By the end of 1926 fifteen of these sixty-six English teachers had left the South Australian Education Department.⁸ No reasons were recorded for six of the leavers, but of the others one died, two went to other positions, two resigned because of illness, two had their appointments terminated and two returned to England. On numbers alone, McCoy's experiment was a success, South Australian schools gained trained teachers economically when the demand for teachers exceeded the supply. In fact thirty-two

of these men remained teaching in South Australia for the rest of their careers. Although they were initially given some favourable treatment and became known as "McCoy's Boys"⁹ they were not treated entirely as favourites. They were absorbed into the system and they caused none of the irritations that had occurred when Neale imported South Australian teachers into Tasmania.

II.

The third Imperial Education Conference was officially opened by the Duke of York at the Board of Education Offices, Whitehall, on 25 June, 1923.¹⁰ Although Tate was often quoted in the Times during the conference, McCoy among the fifty delegates from thirty seven different parts of the Empire, was not ignored by the press. One report referred to his contradiction of an inference in an article in The Empire Review by H.A.L. Fisher entitled 'Education and the Empire' which indicated that Australians were less literate than people in England, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.¹¹ The latter section of the same report outlined his explanation of the functions of the inspectors in South Australia. He stated that the old system of examinations by inspectors in the primary schools had been scrapped and that teachers set their own examinations and recommended their pupils for promotion. However, he believed that in Australia some formal inspection was necessary.

As the Department employed a large number of teachers of ranging ability in a large number of schools of different sizes, it had been found necessary to adopt measures to judge the relative merits of these teachers and to do it in such a way as to encourage professional enthusiasm and progress, and to maintain a healthy tone in the service.

He referred to the popularity of the Qualifying Certificate with the Parents. It was the final examination in the primary school and it was used as an entrance test to the free high schools. In another session McCoy explained the organization and functioning of rural schools in South Australia.¹²

One session was devoted entirely to problems of administration and McCoy had been nominated¹³ to introduce a plan for establishing a Bureau of Education which would collect statistics, record experiments and compile and publish an annual book for distribution amongst the contributing countries.¹⁴ In fact the leader in the Times, at the close of the conference, singled out McCoy and named his suggestion as "perhaps the most fruitful idea propounded".

Such a bureau would, we think, be extremely useful both to our Board of Education and to the corresponding authorities throughout the Empire. It would form by its publication, as it were, a permanent Conference and would help to make such gatherings as that just concluded even more practically effective, than they are at present. 15

McCoy believed that the most important direct result of the conference itself was the wider and deeper knowledge of administration he gained through the direct intercourse with its members.¹⁶ The Preliminary Statement of Transactions and Conclusions published at the end of the sessions re-affirmed this.¹⁷ Although the discussions were full of interest they could not lead to definite conclusions about educational principles or administrative methods. The type of educational administration was determined by history and political causes and not by abstract theories of education, it was neither practicable nor desirable that there should be uniformity of educational procedures in all parts of the Empire. The Conference stimulated the

sense of education as a great flood of civilization flowing through innumerable and varied channels, and irrigating fields of spiritual and intellectual fertility in every corner of the Empire. 18

This and similar comments were typical of the colonial sentimentality of the time and the possibilities of education for international understanding tended to be ignored.

The conference dealt with methods of inter-changing teachers between country and country, and the means for mutually recognizing certificates and services of teachers. It stressed the importance of close and continuing supervision of the physical well-being of children and looked at

ways of evaluating the educable capacity of children. The possibility of holding a future conference in a Dominion was also mooted.¹⁹ The conference provided the stimulation and inspiration, but travel and observation gave McCoy the clues to correcting deficiencies in the South Australian system of education.

Among the things that particularly caught McCoy's attention were rural education, the need for school medical inspections and the means of assisting abnormal children. The consolidation of rural schools in Ontario provided the pattern for a similar movement in South Australia. Boys' and Girls' Agricultural Clubs in Canada and the United States of America, together with agricultural education in Sweden and Denmark, and to some extent in England and Wales, and most particularly the twenty years of success of Hurlstone Agricultural School in New South Wales, presented ideas for developing schemes for agricultural education. Observations of continuative education in England, Wales and Scotland helped to clarify his ideas on this problem. Information from England and Europe on the importance of detailed medical inspection of school children, and the methods of educating backward and mentally defective children caused him to recommend the extension and establishment of these necessary services in South Australia.

III.

The report which McCoy presented to Parliament on his return had a specific aim.

The purpose of the report is rather to indicate where our system is defective, and to point out the lines along which development might proceed in order to make it complete, and so to provide the children of South Australia with the same educational opportunities as are enjoyed by children in other countries.²⁰ He listed the defects in the South Australian scheme under four categories.

- (1) The different types of education (commercial, technical, domestic and general) beyond the primary stage.
- (2) Agricultural education up to the college stage.
- (3) The medical and dental inspection of pupils.
- (4) The training and education of mental defectives and backward children. ²¹

In his recommendations however, he included improvements beyond these four areas, notably in his proposals for consolidated country schools and his plans for erecting new school buildings.

McCoy made ten recommendations at the conclusion of his report, and he indicated that it would be necessary to appoint special officers to organise some of these projects. In summary these recommendations were:

- (1) The consolidation of schools in country areas (It seemed that McCoy considered the inclusion of secondary schools in this idea).
- (2) The introduction of teaching elementary agriculture, woodwork, domestic art in rural schools.
- (3) The erection of a secondary boarding school for both boys and girls on the Waite estate at Urrbrae to specifically teach agriculture.
- (4) Develop adolescent education by:
 - a) Supplementary classes on top of primary schools
 - b) Central schools
 - c) Evening continuation classes
 - d) Secondary correspondence courses for children in the country and attaching them to the local primary school.
- (5) Plan new school buildings to include
 - a) Staff rooms for the teachers
 - b) Assembly halls
 - c) Provision for woodwork and domestic science instruction.
- (6) Appointment of a supervisor in physical education.
- (7) Extend medical inspection of school children.
- (8) Make a survey in the largest schools to detect backward and mentally defective children and to appoint a psychologist to deal with the problem.
- (9) In Teacher Training
 - a) introduce elementary agriculture as an elective in the A course and seek a suitable piece of ground, perhaps in the Botanical Gardens, for practical instruction.
 - b) organize vacation courses for teachers to qualify as instructors in agriculture, woodwork and domestic science.
- (10) Review
 - a) the Course of Instruction to allow teachers more freedom in teaching and planning their work.
 - b) the roles of the inspectors and the purpose of the Qualifying Certificate. 22

McCoy was a realist and these reforms were in no way radical and had every chance of being adopted. He related improvements in the educational system to the nature of the South Australian community. Attention was given to education for the rural society; and technical education in the full sense was not really considered. Courses in nature study in the primary school were to be reorganized on the lines of elementary agriculture. McCoy re-affirmed the assumptions of the Conference that instruction in full-time day schools for children up to the age of fourteen years should be general and not subordinated to the needs of industry. Children should be stimulated with a sense of life and citizenship and be assisted to understand their local environment, and they should have practical experience to train their eyes and hands. McCoy's recommendations about extensions in school medical and psychological services repeated matters previously mentioned by the school medical officer in her annual reports.

On the 20 February, 1924 Barwell's Cabinet considered these recommendations and immediately approved items 2, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10.²³ On the matter of the consolidation of schools the Director was to confer with the Minister before action "in the way of propaganda is undertaken". The item was shelved, not rejected.²⁴ The building of an Agricultural High School at Urrbrae was approved in principle, but was deferred until finances permitted. Item number 5 was approved except in the inclusion of assembly halls which was "stood over for the present". The recommended extensions of school medical inspection were also postponed. The implementation of these reforms was left to the Labour Government, but credit must go to McCoy for suggesting a practical group of measures which had some chance of being attained, and also to the Liberal Government for so quickly approving most of them. In fact basically only items 3 and 5 (b) were not attempted when McCoy left for his second tour in 1927.

It would be worthwhile to refer to some of the judgements about South Australia interpolated by McCoy in his descriptions of features and systems of education in other countries. The comments reviewed his thoughts on current, local educational practices compared with similar aspects he witnessed abroad.

In the training of teachers he found nothing to compare, even favourably, with the scale of student allowances and the form of practical teaching experience.

In no country did I find anything approaching the liberal financial arrangements made by the South Australian Education Department for persons who desire to be trained as teachers.... It (practical teaching) did not appear to me to be so thorough as similar work conducted in our specially staffed practice schools. 25

However, he believed that a system of "electives" to prevent over-loading could be adopted in all Teachers' College courses, except the A course, and that the holiday courses organized in Britain, Ontario and Europe so that teachers could gain qualifications should be emulated.

Although South Australian teachers were not obliged to conform to any particular method of teaching, except in writing, McCoy realized that his teachers were too rigid in their methods.

"We must grant more freedom to our teachers and make our organization more mobile".

and later

"Our system has too many restrictions, and our methods of inspection are not calculated to encourage a competent headmaster to use such methods as described above" (i.e. the Dalton Plan.) 26

Did the system create this conformity and rigidity in teaching methods, or were the majority of teachers themselves incapable, unwilling or frightened to use their initiative and enterprise and thus remain secure by following methods that they had observed in their own training period? The key to open the door to new methods was in the hands of the head teachers, but even here McCoy limited the turning of the key to the competent ones.

McCoy admitted that the course of instruction restricted the freedom of a good teacher, but that it was framed to assist the large number of untrained teachers, and "the plodding, earnest but second rate teachers who require help and guidance".

After seeing schemes in operation, which claim to give scope to the teacher's individuality and inventiveness and having regard to the difference in Australian conditions, especially the fact that the teacher is promoted as the result of the inspector's estimate of the value of his work, it seems to be still necessary for the Department to publish a syllabus of work sufficiently explicit in detail to guide the untrained or weak teacher.²⁷

McCoy had participated in discussions on other systems of inspection and means of promotion during the conference, and saw them in operation during his travels, but he was still convinced that the traditional Australian system should continue, only with very slight modifications. Even conceding this it was a pretty serious indictment that the freedom of choice of the teachers in syllabus matter selecting should be restrained because of the many weak teachers. McCoy even admitted that trained teachers were not always competent, and inferred that weak teachers would always be in the schools and they would not improve with experience despite the guidance that head teachers and inspectors were supposed to give. He promised to make arrangements to allow the more expert teachers greater freedom of choice in syllabus selection, but this created another dilemma: how were these teachers to be sorted from the others? McCoy placed limitations on the type of teacher who would be allowed more free choice in syllabus matters, but he seemed to be willing to allow all teachers freedom in their methodology. Finally commenting on physical education and organized sport McCoy favoured a combination of organized games and formal exercises in gymnasia, rather than only the latter.

Although children in Northern Europe certainly lose something of the moral benefit derived from participation in properly supervised sports, their systematic course in the gymnasium produces physical results which are reflected in strong, well set-up and healthy people.²⁸

IV.

At the general elections on 5 April, 1924, the Labour Party gained the majority of seats in the House of Assembly.²⁹ Mr. John Gunn became Premier and Mr. Lionel Laughton Hill became Minister of Education. During this Government's term some aspects of the Labour's policy of state socialism were put into the statute books. In conjunction with the State Bank a State housing scheme was inaugurated in the metropolitan area to build one thousand homes to overcome the housing shortage. The State Bank Act was amended to co-ordinate the various lending activities of the Government, and the power of the State Bank was extended, to enable it to operate as a general trading bank. The Government also extensively expanded the afforestation projects in the south east of the State. Because education itself was a most significant social service it received careful attention, in fact, the next three years were not only politically opportune, but also economically favourable from the aspect of State finances for the realization of most of McCoy's recommendations made in his report after his 1923 tour abroad.

The expenditure on education was considerably increased in Labour's period of office.³⁰ Qualifying Certificate Exhibitions were increased from sixty to one hundred, grants to school committees to carry out minor repairs were increased, and larger subsidies were paid towards the purchase of school material, and equipment for teaching woodwork, elementary agriculture and domestic arts. Payment of a locum tenens for a head teacher, and re-imburement of removal expenses for teachers were also made.³¹

V.

The Government drew up a definite building programme to provide for new schools. In places of population expansion overcrowded, temporary buildings were to be replaced, and much needed repairs were to be made to existing buildings in established localities. When commenting upon the comprehensive building policy announced by the Government McCoy warned



THE CHILDREN OF THE COMMUNITY CENTER ARE LEARNING TO MAKE BASKETS FROM WILLOW BARK. THE PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN BY THE COMMUNITY CENTER PHOTOGRAPHER.

that "the expenditure of a large sum will be necessary to overtake arrears of work in these respects".³² In the 1925 Minister's report new works were named at Colonel Light Gardens Primary School, Adelaide Technical College for Apprentices and Adelaide Teachers College, but remodelling of older classrooms was controlled by "the limits of the funds provided for the purpose".³³ It was also stated that the complete replacement of backless forms and long desks by dual desks in all schools would take some years. In 1926 the Superintendent of Primary Education expressed pleasure about the improvement in school buildings and he hoped that finances would continue to be available to bring all school buildings up to acceptable modern standards. He complained however, about the serious lack of teacher's residences particularly in the country districts.³⁴ In the same year the Superintendent of Secondary Education was complaining that "in practically all the larger centres, the High School accommodation is insufficient, and the schools are overcrowded".³⁵

During his 1923 tour McCoy had studied school architecture and he was keenly interested in what he described as "open air schools".³⁶ In England such schools were designed to cater for delicate children who were brought daily to these schools and given specially prepared meals besides an educational programme that catered for their particular needs. The schools which were adapted in South Australia from these English plans would be more accurately described as fresh air schools. The principle was to erect classrooms open to as much air and light as possible, and to have classrooms opening on to a verandah which in turn was open to the air or an open space or garden. Such buildings required more grounds than the former old fashioned, enclosed, fortress-like edifices constructed to last forever in confined areas and surrounded by dark, hard asphalt. The provision of new and brighter school buildings, the remodelling of old buildings and the supplying of proper school furniture were continuous problems and the back lag was never really reduced in McCoy's time.³⁷ Although much money was expended there was little to show because long overdue renovations were very costly and the price of labour and material continued to increase during the 1920's.

VI.

In his report of his 1923 tour abroad McCoy proposed an extension of the school medical services, the Liberal Government postponed this recommendation, but the Gunn Government decided to act on it. In 1925 the Medical Branch was re-organized and a comprehensive programme of work was devised.³⁸ The staff was increased to create a principal medical officer, five school medical inspectors, one psychologist, three dentists, four nurses, two dental assistants and a disinfecting officer.

It was planned to examine all children at least twice during their primary school career. One doctor was allotted to two school inspectors in country districts, in addition, these doctors had to work in the city inspectorates. The doctors examined the children, but they did not carry out, or recommend any special treatment. They simply advised the parents to consult their own doctors. In the metropolitan areas and large country centres the school nurses followed up parents who neglected to seek medical attention for their children when this was recommended. After the medical examinations, wherever possible, the doctors held meetings of the parents to explain the reasons for medical inspections and to talk generally about health matters.

Dr. Halley was at last able to systematically plan medical inspections with this staff increase. The whole of the medical inspection of schools was no longer the sole responsibility of one doctor. In 1924 she visited eighteen schools and medically examined 2,812 children,³⁹ but during 1925 506 schools were visited and 38,715 children examined.⁴⁰ In 1926 twenty-two denominational schools made application to have their pupils medically and dentally examined.⁴¹

In 1925 school dental services which were begun in 1922 were extended.⁴² The plan was to employ five dentists, but only three dentists were appointed because of the lack of suitable applicants even from the other states. Because lack of staff curtailed the proper operation of the scheme, McCoy suggested

that some scheme for the training of dental nurses, who could undertake the schoolwork, is the best solution of the difficulty that at present confronts the Department. 43

Nothing came from this suggestion. A Metropolitan Dental Clinic was established to treat all children under ten years of age, and all school children in the country were to receive attention from itinerant school dentists. The dentist's work was largely educational, because on the whole parents were generally apathetic toward the dental health of their children. The dentist talked to the children and parents on the care and value of good teeth. The medical officers informed parents whose children needed dental treatment, and if nothing had been done when the dentist visited the school he sent the parents a notice which the parents signed if they wanted their children treated.

A recurring theme in Dr. Halley's annual reports to the Minister had been the urgency and far reaching problem of coping with mental defectives.⁴⁴ The previous Liberal Government had approved of McCoy's recommendation that a psychologist should be appointed to the Education Department.⁴⁵ In 1924 Dr. Constance Davey was given this new position. After a brilliant career at the University of Adelaide she had studied and travelled abroad for two years as the Catherine Helen Spence Scholar. She attended London University and studied under Spearman and Cyril Burt. After receiving her Ph.D. at London she visited Boston and Toronto.⁴⁶ She was destined to be the founder of all psychological services for children in the State making South Australia the first in Australia to provide these facilities.

On Dr. Davey's appointment a scheme of work was drawn up to meet the present requirements and future developments. The scheme smacked of McCoy's respect for definition of function. Broadly Dr. Davey was -

1. To examine and recommend to teachers the treatment of
 - i) Children retarded educationally
 - ii) Problem children
 - iii) Delinquent children
2. To organize Special Classes in the schools for
 - i) Supernormal children
 - ii) Subnormal children.
3. To supervise the additional training in the schools of classified teachers for these special classes.

4. To organize short courses of lectures to teachers and students in training.
 - i) To enable them to recognise subnormal children
 - ii) To learn the aim and methods of mental testing.
5. To give Vocational Guidance to children leaving Primary School for High School and Central Schools.
6. To organize and supervise the work of After-Care Committees.
7. To carry on experimental work.

This was a gigantic work schedule for one psychologist to implement, but Dr. Davey eventually extended her work to the Children's Welfare Department, the Juvenile Court and the Children's Hospital, and she became foundation member of the board which planned and set up the first course of study in Social Science in Adelaide University.

In 1925 the first opportunity classes each catering for sixteen to twenty children were established in five metropolitan schools for three subnormal types - the dull and backward, the moron, and the feeble-minded.⁴⁷ This was not an ideal arrangement but a preliminary measure, because as Dr. Davey kept stressing in her later reports morons and feeble-minded children should be catered for in separate, special schools.⁴⁸

During 1928 some children over twelve years of age from opportunity classes attended the various woodwork and domestic arts centres for one session per week.⁴⁹ By 1929 there were sixteen opportunity classes in city schools catering for 318 retarded children.⁵⁰ During 1928 the Education Department of South Australia assisted the Commonwealth Government in making a general survey in order to ascertain the number of mental defectives in Australia.⁵¹ Dr. Halley drew tentative conclusions from the statistics collected in the State which showed that 2.89 per cent of the school population was reported as subnormal, that the number of subnormal boys was nearly doubled that of the number of girls, and that there were twice as many subnormal children in country schools as there were in the metropolitan area. No opportunity classes had been organized in the country, and there was a desperate need for establishing a Special Training School with a hostel for country children. The opportunity classes had too

many children over the age of twelve, and as these could not be satisfactorily catered for elsewhere they keep out many younger children who badly needed help.

In 1927 and 1928⁵² all entrants to the high schools were given a group test of intelligence to ascertain the relative value of such tests and the Qualifying Certificate Examination as basic indicators for starting high school courses.

In the education of exceptional children South Australia was sorting out the problems. A faint start had been made but there was much expense and detailed organization involved before a satisfactory system could be established. In 1921 McCoy had hoped that suitable methods of determining mental age would be developed.⁵³ Although the passage of time and the revelations of research had established methods of indicating mental age, children were still being placed in school grades according to their chronological age, and backward children were not receiving the necessary, special attention to assist them in their progress through life.

VII.

The teaching of elementary agriculture, woodwork and domestic science in rural schools was extended in 1924.⁵⁴ Schools of instruction were organised during school vacations or on Saturday mornings to help teachers gain the necessary qualifications, and a bonus of £10 per year was paid to teachers who taught these courses satisfactorily in their schools. In teaching agriculture the Department of Agriculture co-operated by providing specialists for advice and guidance, and the supervisor, Mr. A.G. Edquist, believed that the course was not aimed at "making every child a prospective agriculturist, but for the greater purpose of rendering him capable of more accurately appreciating the importance of primary production in the State".⁵⁵

VIII.

After World War I there was increasing community concern about the stage in a child's education between the ages of twelve and fourteen years, the interim between the completion of a child's elementary education and the statutory age to which a child was compelled to attend school. A resolution of the Advisory Council of Education on the 15 July, 1924 expressed this concern.

That in the opinion of this Council provision should be made for the further instruction of pupils who have completed the Primary School Course, and who do not desire the full High School Course, but intend to enter either commercial, industrial or domestic pursuits at the age of fifteen years; such provision to include:-

- a) Central Schools in the metropolitan area with a commercial, technical, or home-making bias
- b) Supplementary classes in rural schools with a special curriculum including practical and experimental work
- c) Evening classes for those who cannot attend day school.⁵⁶

McCoy had always been fully aware of this need, and in a memorandum to the Minister on the 11 August, 1924, he referred to their "many conversations" about this requirement and the Minister's "expressed intention of establishing Central Schools" McCoy recommended

1. That Schools with a Junior Technical bias be established in connection with the existing Primary Schools at Le Fevre's Peninsula, Port Adelaide, Croydon and Nailsworth.
2. That Schools with a Commercial bias be established in connection with the Primary Schools at Hindmarsh, Goodwood, Norwood, Unley and Thebarton.
3. That Schools with a Home-making bias controlled by Head Mistresses be established in connection with the Primary Schools at Unley, Goodwood, Thebarton, Norwood, Nailsworth, Hindmarsh, Port Adelaide, and Le Fevre's Peninsula. 57

In order to clinch the case McCoy referred to the budget estimates and the comparatively small increases in expenditure involved. Ministerial approval was given quickly on the 15 August, indicating that matter had probably pondered and planned for some time. In a circular to teachers McCoy set

out the opportunities for education beyond the primary stage.

Home-making Schools were to be organised for girls. The Course of Study will extend over two years and will aim at qualifying girls for the skilful performance of home duties, whilst continuing their general education. It will also provide a suitable training for those who wish to become shop assistants, dressmakers, milliners, etc., besides giving them some preparation for their future duties as wives and mothers.

Junior Technical Schools would be established

for the benefit of boys who desire to enter into a skilled occupation at the age of fifteen or sixteen years. Besides general literature, composition, geography, history, music and physical culture, the Course of Study, which will extend over two years, will include instruction in sheet-metal work, woodwork, geometry, geometrical development, and mechanical drawing. This course is designed to improve the general education of, and to give the necessary vocational bias to a boy who desires to become a skilled mechanic. It provides for the development of activities of a definitely practical kind which hitherto have been generally regarded as lying exclusively within the scope of the Technical School ... If a boy desires to become a mechanical engineer, a carpenter, a pattern-maker, or an efficient tradesman of any kind, especially one that requires a period of apprenticeship, he cannot do better than begin his preparation for his life's work in one of these schools.

Commercial Schools were proposed for boys only:

The Course of Study, which will extend over two years, is designed to prepare pupils to enter the lower walks in commerce, but is not suitable for those who desire a full commercial course or to become stenographers. In addition to English, geography, history, music, and physical culture, it includes instruction in commercial geography, elementary book-keeping, business practice and correspondence. After satisfactorily completing the course, a boy should be qualified for entry into the Railway or Post Office service, or for a junior position in an insurance, or a commercial office or a mercantile house. 58

Pupils who satisfactorily completed the two year courses in junior technical and commercial schools could transfer to the third year of similar courses at Thebarton Technical School or to the commercial course in a high school.

In January, 1925 nine central schools for boys and nine for girls enrolled 601 boys and 767 girls respectively. Five hundred and fifty four pupils (231 boys, and 323 girls) 40 per cent of the original enrolment completed the first year of the course, and indicated their intention of

continuing into the second year.⁵⁹ The enrolment in the first year and the prospective enrolment for the second year must have satisfied the Minister because on these figures he concluded "the popularity of these schools seems to indicate that they are fulfilling a long-felt want".⁶⁰ The number of central schools never increased during McCoy's directorship, but the numbers of pupils did.⁶¹ Young people whose post primary education was not previously catered for were attracted to these schools, and the work of these schools, especially that demonstrated at exhibitions, attracted the interest of the public generally and impressed parents and employers.

IX.

Until 1926 there were two separate departments concerned with the administration of education in South Australia, the Minister's Department and the Director's Department. Early in 1921 McCoy had criticised the inconvenience and unnecessary duplication of work created by this division and his proposals for improvements were met with a hostile rebuff from the Minister.⁶² However, early in 1926, the two distinct departments were amalgamated.⁶³ This eliminated duplications and delays and lessened the likelihood of errors and irregularities and as the Minister reported "the business of the Department was more expeditiously and efficiently performed".⁶⁴

X

In order to provide convenient opportunities for qualified teachers to study subjects at the Adelaide University, night lectures in some arts and science subjects were begun in 1926. This indicated the increasing demand for more highly qualified teachers and the desire on the part of teachers themselves to improve their qualifications. In 1926 the Minister of Education referred to the record number of teachers who received degrees at the last University Commemoration in 1925.⁶⁵

XI.

There was a continuous problem of finding suitable accommodation for children who had to live away from home to attend high schools and for country students who attended the Teachers' College. Parents were harassed by the lack of suitable boarding houses and since 1923 Adey⁶⁶ had been pressing for hostels for high school students and in 1925 Schulz stated⁶⁷ that the corporate life of the College would benefit greatly by the establishment of halls of residence. In 1926 the Government made inquiries in the eastern states into how children were accommodated when they had to live away from home to attend secondary schools.⁶⁸ Adey also made a careful survey of high school pupils who had to board with relatives or with strangers in order to attend high schools.⁶⁹ With all interested parties activated - the public, the Government and the secondary schools, McCoy requested the Minister to ask the Architect-in-Chief, A.E. Simpson, to draw plans for hostels to accommodate twenty four students and that they be located in centres selected by the Minister.⁷⁰ When the plans were made and the costs calculated McCoy asked that £20,000 be placed on the Loan Estimates to cover the cost of two hostels. This was approved.⁷¹

The Minister's report for 1926 stated that a hostel would be erected in a country district to serve as a model for others, and that a recently acquired property at Norwood would be remodelled as a hostel for domestic arts students at the Teachers' College.⁷² Unfortunately, neither plan was ever completed. The Government changed in April, 1927. The Liberals had never showed any interest in the idea of hostels during their previous periods of office; now enforced economics caused the abandonment of the proposals.

XII.

In 1926 the first consolidated rural school at Thevenard was almost completed.⁷³ Although approval had been given for the formation of similar schools at Oakbank and Echunga "various difficulties",⁷⁴ to use the

Minister's evasive words, had not been resolved so the schools could not be started. The first recommendation in McCoy's report of his tour abroad in 1923 suggested the amalgamation of small rural schools.⁷⁵ On January 25, 1924, McCoy asked the inspectors to furnish him with preliminary reports indicating the portions of their districts which might be suitable for the consolidation of schools.⁷⁶ The scheme was to close small country schools and to convey the children to a convenient central place and there establish a school where the children could be taught in larger classes in their own age groups. A larger number of teachers would provide a variety of skills and a greater variety of subjects could be more competently taught, particularly nature study, woodwork and domestic arts. Appreciable economics would also be made in savings on salaries, rents and maintenance grants. As preliminary plans were being laid difficulties immediately arose because of parochial sentiment and the prejudices of parents against the closing of their local schools, and the problems associated with transporting children over bad roads in all kinds of weather which would cause bodily fatigue and impair mental energy. Parents had to be convinced that one consolidated school was as sound, educationally, as a number of small schools, so the Government was anxious to have at least one established to prove the point.⁷⁷

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER FOUR.

1. S.A.A. E.D. 2703/1922
2. Ibid., McCoy to Pascoe 12 Dec. 1922
3. S.A.A. E.D. 443/1923 McCoy to Pascoe 27 Feb. 1923
4. Ibid.
5. S.A.A. E.D. 2707/1923 McCoy to Pascoe 24 May, 1923
6. Ibid., McCoy to Charlton 6 June, 1923
7. S.A.A. E.D. 443/1923 Approval given 18 Dec. 1923
8. S.A.A. E.D. 1651/1926 Nominal roll and details about these 66 teachers.
9. a) Mr. Daniel David to the author
b) Register 25 March, 1926 p.8 e
The Deputy Director reported that the Education Department had every reason to be thoroughly satisfied with the services of these young men.
10. S.A.A. E.D. 2703/1922 passim
11. Times 3 July, 1923 p.19 e-f
12. Times Educational Supplement 7 July, 1923 p.317 b
13. Details of the programme and agenda for the Imperial Education Conference published in the Times Educational Supplement 23 June, 1923 p.298 c showed that McCoy was named to introduce the discussion on the organization and maintenance of the Imperial Bureau of Education on 4 July, at 2.30 p.m.
14. Times 5 July, 1923 p.9 e
15. Times 9 July, 1923 p.13 c
16. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.67 McCoy's Report of His Tour Abroad. p.5
17. Pamphlet, including two appendices signed by L.A. Selby-Bigge (Chairman) and W. MacLean (Secretary) in S.A.A. E.D. 2703/22
18. Ibid., p.1
19. S.A.A. M.E. 42/1923 and E.D. 272/1923.
On 5 Feb. 1923 McCoy asked the Minister of Education if the Government would approve of an invitation being sent on its behalf for the next Imperial Education Conference to be held in Adelaide with the possibility of sharing sessions with Melbourne and Sydney. The Premier gave his approval on the same day, but there is no trace of what happened to this invitation.

20. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.67 p.8
21. Ibid., p.6
22. Ibid., pp.37-38
23. S.A.A. M.E. 31/23
24. McCoy and his inspectors began to survey the inspectorates to decide centres suitable for consolidated schools. S.A.A. E.D.138/24
25. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.67 p.33
26. Ibid., p.35
27. Ibid., p.33
28. Ibid., p.30
29. Combe, G.D. Responsible Government in South Australia (Adelaide 1957) p.155
30. See below Table 12
31. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.17
32. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.16
33. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p. 9
34. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.13
35. Ibid., p.17
36. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.67 pp.27-28
37. In 1928 the Superintendent of Secondary Schools could see no relief from the overcrowding in some high schools and the serious lack of science laboratories and reading rooms in even large schools.
S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.19
38. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.24
39. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.36
40. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.24
41. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.26
42. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p. 6
43. Ibid., p.6
44. See S.A.P.P. No.44 1920 p.32; 1921 p.38; 1922 p.39; 1923 p.37; 1924 p.26; 1925 p.36
45. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.67 pp.37-38 Item 8
46. See
 - a) S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.16
 - b) S.A.A. D.E. 143/24 for background about the appointment
 - c) Register 7 Oct. 1924 p.4 d-f
 - d) E.G. Dec. 1924 p.286

47. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.26
48. See S.A.P.P. No.44 1927 p.27; 1928 p.29; 1929 p.32; 1930 p.31
49. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 p.31
50. S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p.30
51. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 pp.31-32
52. S.A.P.P. No.44 1928 p.29; 1929 p.30
53. S.A.P.P. 1922 No.44 pp.21-22
54. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.16
55. Ibid., p.25
The separate report of the Supervisor of Elementary Agriculture ceased in the Minister's annual report in 1920 and it became part of the report of the Superintendent of Primary Education, but in 1925 it again appeared as a separate report.
56. See S.A.A. M.E. 184/1924
57. S.A.A. E.D. 1862/1924 McCoy to Hill 11 Aug. 1924
58. E.G. Oct. 1924 pp.244-245
59. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.4
60. Ibid.
61. See below Figure 3
62. S.A.A. M.E. 33/1921 Ritchie to McCoy 7 February, 1921
63. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.3
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. S.A.P.P.No.44 1924 p.19; 1925 p.28; 1926 p.17; 1927 p.18;
67. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.23
68. S.A.A. E.D. 683/1926
69. See S.A.A. E.D. 1376/1926 for details
70. S.A.A. E.D. 683/1926 McCoy to Hill 6 April, 1926
71. Ibid., Approved on 3 Nov. 1926
72. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.3
73. S.A.A. E.D. 138/1924 The school was actually opened on 12 May,1927
74. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.3
75. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.67 p.37
76. S.A.A. E.D. 138/1924
77. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.3

CHAPTER FIVE.

THE 1927 IMPERIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

AND MCCOY'S LAST YEARS.

- I. The conference.
- II. McCoy's report.
- III. The adoption of McCoy's recommendations on agricultural education and vocational guidance.
- IV. Commonwealth Bureau of Education.
- V. Economic depression and necessary economies.
- VI. McCoy's sudden death.

I.

In 1925 McCoy agreed with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee of the Imperial Conferences on Education that at the 1927 conference it would be desirable to divide the conference into a number of concurrent sessions. He complained that "at the last Conference I felt it my duty to sit through some wearying discussions on matters in which I was not interested".¹ McCoy was a very practical man and he always wanted to give his full attention to matters directly connected with his directorship.

On 31 December, 1926 McCoy wrote a memorandum to the Minister explaining why he should be sent again. Arguments about the value of personal contact and visits to educational institutions in his 1922 submission re-appeared couched almost in the same words, apparently McCoy was a user of carbon copies for future reference. To stress the value of a second visit he stated that "the successful educational work achieved in New South Wales and Victoria is undoubtedly to be attributed to the fact that both Messrs. Tate and Board have been sent abroad three separate times each, in order to enrich their experience". But he did not proceed to prove the claim. He continued:

As a direct result of the Conference (1923) and of my experience abroad, the present Government introduced Central Schools, the teaching of woodwork, elementary agriculture and domestic arts in the country schools, a complete system of medical inspection and dental inspection and treatment, a scheme for dealing with mentally deficient and backward children in the early stages, modifications in the scheme of training teachers, in the course of instruction and in the construction of school buildings. 2

It could be argued that some of the features named here, such as teaching elementary agriculture, "a complete system of medical inspection", and the modifications in teacher training and in the courses of instruction were not a direct result of his visit abroad, but rather an extension of processes already at work, the report of his observations however might have precipitated their adoption.

McCoy selected topics from the agenda which would be of direct interest to South Australia, such as the differentiation of curricula between the sexes, the place of, and extent of, industrial and agricultural work in the curricula, vocational guidance, school architecture based on simpler buildings and open air schools. Then he stressed that South Australia should publicize its own accomplishments, notably the education of isolated children, apprenticeship training and the relationships between the Teachers' College and the University, "which in South Australia are unique".

When the former South Australian Governor, Sir Archibald Weigall, cabled the Premier on 6 January suggesting that a responsible representative with agricultural interest attend the Imperial Education Conference Cabinet directed that the Agent General should represent the State and furnish the Government with a report of the proceedings.³ McCoy had already submitted his written case and it appeared that the decision was irrevocable. Evidently the decision was not made public because during March the Minister received a number of pertinent letters which proposed that McCoy should be sent abroad again to proudly relate the recent educational achievements in the State, and to meet leaders in education and by discussion and observation formulate future improvements for South Australia. Was it intentional or merely co-incidental that all these letters came from associations and clubs connected with state schools? On 26 March Cabinet revised its decision and McCoy was instructed to attend the Imperial Conference on Education in London and the International Conference of the New Education Fellowship at Locarno, as the representative of the South Australian Government. The final selection of McCoy was attained partly by pressure from the ranks of his respectful cohorts.⁴

McCoy had three separate commissions for his 1927 tour. Firstly to represent the South Australian Government at the Imperial Education Conference in London, from 20 June, to 8 July, secondly to attend the Fourth International Conference of the New Education Fellowship at Locarno between 3 and 15 August, and thirdly to enquire into educational matters abroad in England, on the Continent and the United States of America.

Because of the wide range of educational matters the proceedings of the 1927 Imperial Education Conference were systematised in the agenda under definite topics:

Group A: Education in relation to the pupil's after career, with special reference to problems of post primary and vocational education.

Group B: Problems peculiar to tropical or sub-tropical countries where the population is of more than one race.

Group C: Rural education.

Group D: New ideas and developments.

Group E: Problems of administration.⁵

The conference was formally opened at the Board of Education offices by the Prince of Wales on 22 June, 1927, and delegates from forty five countries within the Empire attended. An editorial in the Times indicated that unlike the general Imperial Conferences the Imperial Education Conference had no intention of passing formal resolutions but it endeavoured "to promote informal discussions with a view to sharing experience and promoting efficiency".⁶ McCoy sat at the centre table between Tate and Smith for the penary sessions, and he read papers at group discussions on "Apprentice Training" and "Methods of providing for children in sparsely populated areas".⁷ After three weeks of deliberations the conference members went on a fortnight's tour of educational establishments in England. The tone of another leader in the Times on the antiquity of some of England's schools reflected McCoy's own concept about tradition and progress: "though tradition has its dangers, and in other spheres may be a mere obstacle to progress, in education it is, under intelligent direction, mainly beneficent".⁸

McCoy was always more interested in the practical aspects of education than in speculation on theories of education. In a letter published in the South Australian Teachers' Journal he declared his stand: "...the whole swing of the Conference is towards the practical contemplation of methods rather than of visionary theories which might not justify themselves".⁹ This opinion plus the fact that the time of the Conference had

been extended made him decide not to attend the Locarno Conference which he regarded as more speculative than practical.

II.

McCoy had been specifically asked to make enquiries in England, Europe and America about agricultural education at the secondary school level and about vocational guidance and placement, and his report naturally stressed these topics.¹⁰

The teaching of elementary agriculture in English primary schools was reported in some detail so that South Australian teachers could read and discuss this and perhaps modify their local programmes if they so desired.¹¹ It was the United States of America however that showed the way in agricultural education in secondary schools. The success of the American system depended on the quality of the teachers and the attitude of the state. The state had to be willing to give these teachers a sound university or college education in agriculture and then allow them to have practical experience farming on the land. Only teachers who had the theoretical preparation as well as the practical experience could gain the respect of the farmers. McCoy observed that science teaching was closely related to agricultural knowledge, that practical agriculture was conducted through either supervised farm practice or the home project method, and that both Federal and State Governments in the United States of America spent large sums of money "on agricultural education in an endeavour to teach their young men how to make farming a profitable business, the conditions of life comfortable, and the country people themselves as well educated as their city brethren".¹² A practice that appealed to McCoy perhaps as strongly as an economy measure as an educational principle was that great stress was laid on the theoretical side of agriculture, and that little or no practical farm work was carried out in the school. Only two states organised high schools in which practical agriculture was taught on school farms. The majority of states used the home project method, or the supervised farm practice system, by which practical experiments were

carried out under supervision on the boy's home farm. This gave opportunity for the boy to earn as well as learn, and the experiments engaged the interest of his father and often neighbouring farmers.

McCoy visited vocational guidance and placement bureaux in England, Scotland and the United States of America,¹³ and he became convinced that the very best systems were those which were organized within the post-primary schools where the interests and influence of the teachers could guide school leavers to obtain positions according to their wishes and their school standards. Many of the bureaux he saw tended to deal only with primary school leavers, who were ill-qualified for employment and consequently often placed in dead-end occupations; McCoy was not anxious to have similar bureaux established in South Australia outside the Education Department because he believed that they would tend to encourage children to leave school early and swell the already-large groups of unskilled workers.

McCoy appended twenty-two recommendations to his report.¹⁴ Eleven of these dealt with agricultural education and most of them were approved by Cabinet.¹⁵ Although the Government deferred his first recommendation which suggested that approaches be made to the Federal Government to subsidize vocational education in agricultural, trade and industrial subjects and home economics, it immediately approved that for the next five years five qualified students should attend courses in agriculture to be established in the university, that an organizing inspector of agriculture should be appointed to secondary schools, that where ten or more pupils in a high school elected to study an agricultural course such a course should be provided, and that teachers appointed to take charge of such courses should receive an annual bonus of £20. The Government approved of the plan to erect a boarding school on the land donated by the late Mr. Peter Waite at Urrbrae, and to organize a course of study suitable as a preparation for boys to enter the agriculture course at the university.

More variety was to be given in the teaching of elementary agriculture in primary schools by increasing the number of simple projects, by visiting

well-managed farms in order to see in practice work already referred to in school, and by making the woodwork course more practical. The Supervisor of Agriculture was to be promoted to the rank and status of an Inspector. Two or three teachers in each inspectorate who showed aptitude for teaching agriculture were to be given a special course and then act as consultants in their area for one half day per week.

A scheme of guidance and placement involving one or more teachers and the head teacher in each high school, higher primary school and central school was to be organized to advise children and parents about school courses and employment prospects. An employment officer was to be appointed to co-ordinate this work for the whole State and to secure and maintain close liaison with employers.

Among the miscellaneous suggestions these were approved. The organizing teacher of domestic arts was to be raised to an inspector with a salary limit of £450. Teachers' College staff engaged in training teachers for small country school work were to spend a week every alternate year in such schools. The Architect-in-Chief was to consider incorporating McCoy's ideas in future plans and specifications of school buildings.¹⁶ Items involving increased expenditure - provision of assembly halls in all new schools built to accommodate more than four hundred pupils, an additional inspector for infant schools, a science inspector for all types of schools, and opportunities for senior officers to visit other countries in order to (quoting McCoy's favourite words) "enrich their experience" were deferred.

III.

Although McCoy admitted to a reporter from the Register on his return to Adelaide that elementary schools in Great Britain and the United States of America were ahead in teaching general science, elementary agriculture, drawing, music, physical culture, woodwork and domestic science, he claimed that "in all other respects South Australian primary schools can more than hold their own".¹⁷ These "other respects" must have been extremely limited, almost to the basic three R's, but in his report he actually named only

four subjects, and elementary science, drawing, physical culture and woodwork, which were not comparable with overseas standards.¹⁸ He was positive to the press about the outstanding work in the South Australian infant schools, and in his report he recorded:

I cannot refrain from remarking on the excellence of the work done in our Infants' Schools, and the need for extending it to the lower sections of the Fourth and Fifth Class Schools in the country districts of South Australia. There is no better work done in any part of the world ..."19

Press comments made on and after McCoy's return in December, 1928 focussed on the imperfection in agricultural education in post-primary schools and McCoy spoke about it at every opportunity. In January at the Adelaide Rotary Club he complained that studies in agriculture were handicapped because they did not have the same status as other courses, and that there was insufficient money expended on them.²⁰ At the opening of the annual conference of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union in August, he spoke with the Director of the Waite Institute, Dr. A.E.V. Richardson, who addressed the gathering on "Objectives and Methods of Agricultural Education".²¹ When McCoy's report of his tour was printed in 1928 the Advertiser carried a didactic article entitled "A Lucrative Branch of Learning"²² which boosted the rewards of toil, showed how the home project idea, described by McCoy, could fit young men for farming and withdraw them from the crowded city. It claimed that special knowledge learned and then re-inforced by hard work could open up ways to fortunes. These were optimistic platitudes for many young men who possessed neither the necessary land nor essential equipment to start projects even if they had the knowledge or inspiration.

The Labour Government sent McCoy abroad early in 1927, but because the Labour Government was defeated in the 1927 elections, the Liberals now accepted the responsibility of implementing many of his recommendations. Extensions in the teaching of agriculture in South Australian post-primary schools were significant during 1928 and 1929. By the Agricultural Education Act 1928, the university had re-organized its

courses in this area, and during 1928 three teachers' college students were studying for the B. Sc. in Agriculture in order to qualify as teachers in high schools, and five students were studying for the diploma at Roseworthy College.²³ In 1929 Agricultural Science was included as a subject in the Intermediate and Leaving Public Examinations.²⁴ Two high schools, Murray Bridge and Clare, taught agriculture in 1928, and two others, Balaklava and Renmark, in 1929. A portion of the Urrbrae estate of the late Mr. Peter Waite had been leased to the university and to the Department of Agriculture for research and experimental purposes, and plans for the erection of an Agricultural High School were still under consideration at the end of 1929. No inspector of agriculture was appointed to the secondary schools, but the headmaster of Murray Bridge High School was sent off to the United States of America in January, 1929 to study agricultural teaching, especially the home project method and supervised farm practice in American High Schools.²⁵ The Supervisor of Elementary Agriculture was raised to the rank of Inspector.²⁶ This was late recognition for the notable work Edquist was already doing in organizing, directing and developing the teaching of elementary agriculture in the primary schools and the training of primary teachers. Since 1925 the home project system in the primary schools had been steadily increasing because of Edquist's stimulation, and the enthusiasm of the parents, teachers, pupils and interested groups in the community. Edquist's achievements in the primary schools had shown the way for the more detailed and advanced pattern that McCoy recommended for the post-primary schools.²⁷

During 1928 foundations were laid for a scheme of Vocational Guidance and Placement in all post-primary schools.²⁸ A committee of four head teachers from high schools, four head teachers from central schools and the heads of the Art School and the Technical High School, under the chairmanship of Fenner worked during the year to advise McCoy about the details. It was significant that Fenner was chairman because he had always been aware that vocational guidance was essential for assisting apprentices to choose the most suitable trade.²⁹ The committee recommended that any

scheme would be practically inoperative unless a liaison officer was appointed, and some doubts were cast on the feasibility of teaching staffs performing the duties of guidance counsellors in addition to their teaching programme. Item No.12 in McCoy's report of his tour abroad in 1927 recommended that teachers should act as guidance officers and this had already been approved by Cabinet, probably because it involved no expense and merely added another weight to the load on the teachers. As it was McCoy's recommendation he made no comment, but in order to allay the likely resentment of the teachers he probed Cabinet to have a liaison officer appointed which was his recommendation No.13, and had been deferred. Fenner did not think that even one man could carry out the work of collecting information regarding vocations, allotting positions to the pupils available, and carefully distributing the advertised vacancies among all the schools. The task was difficult and complex and he recommended that two people be employed, one to deal with shop and office type positions and the other to deal with factory and workshop positions, and he added that the present Recorder of Apprentices would be an ideal candidate for the latter task.³⁰ The investigation officer of the Public Service reported favourably on the proposition, but the Minister was not prepared to consider the appointment of two officers from the Public Service, and what was more he believed that the salaries proposed were considerably in excess of the value of their work, and consequently he proposed that two teachers be made available for these tasks at a salary in the region of £400 per annum.³¹ The advertised vacancies appeared in the June Education Gazette. Fifteen applicants were received from teachers and the four most promising were interviewed by Adey and Fenner, but in their opinion none of the applicants possessed either the temperament or the qualifications required.³² At McCoy's request the Public Service Commissioner advertised the post of Employment Officer, Third Division, Clerical Section because it was believed that the position could be filled by the transfer of a redundant officer. On 9 November, 1929 after an appeal, Mr. W.J. Young was confirmed in the

position of Employment Officer. The irony of this story was that the officer commenced duty at a time which corresponded with the disastrous economic slump, and it became useless to retain his services when there were no opportunities for the employment of youth. When the matter was raised again in 1938 and a permanent appointment was made the appointee enlisted in the R.A.A.F. and the war economy upset the real duties of the officer.³³

IV.

The conference of the directors of education in 1924 resolved that a Commonwealth Bureau of Education be established³⁴ and this resolution was supported by the Australian State School Teachers' Federation. The Federation urged that each state should approach its minister of education so that he would make appeals to the Commonwealth Government, perhaps through the Premiers' Conference and press for its establishment. The bureau was not to have administrative or executive functions. Its main work was to collect, systematise and disseminate information on educational activities and developments in the various states. Nothing really came out of these moves until 1929 when plans were made to establish an institution for objective educational research. The Carnegie Corporation offered a sum of over £7,000 per year for ten years if a Federal Institute of Education were established, and in order to start this state branches had to be formed, consequently the South Australian Institute of Educational Research was inaugurated. McCoy's advocacy in 1923 of an Imperial Bureau of Education showed his interest in the compilation of educational information, but he did not display any deep appreciation for objective educational research. The only people in his own team who made real use of the detailed statistics collected each year were Fenner, Halley and Davey. McCoy planned intuitively, he had the capacity and experience to act successfully by intuitive guesses.

V.

In 1928 signs of the world economic depression were looming largely in South Australia. The Minister reported that new buildings were being erected and old buildings were being remodelled and efforts were being made to reduce the cost of buildings without interfering with the efficient functioning of the buildings which required natural light and properly ventilated rooms. Overall expenditure on buildings, however, was reduced.³⁵ In 1928 the period of probationary studentship was reduced to one year and this made a saving of £11,650 per year, but in 1929 the supply of fully qualified candidates for the Teachers' College more than fully met the demand so that no further probationary studentships were offered. The saving here was estimated at £16,000 per year.³⁶ Since their establishment in 1920 the pupil attendance at the practising schools which were in the city area, had diminished and the classes had become smaller, on the other hand the Teachers' College had doubled the number of students in training. In 1929 the practising schools were re-organized to increase their usefulness and most particularly to save money.³⁷ By re-organization in the compulsory branch, medical branch, and the education store other economies were effected, but the greatest economies came in cutting costs in teacher training and eventually by reducing the salaries of the teachers themselves. The unenviable legacy of attempting to administer an economically unproductive department in the face of a grave, national crisis was left to McCoy's successor.

VI.

After his return from abroad McCoy continued to throw himself unsparingly into all his work. Routine duties as well as developmental work received his careful attention. In May 1928 he organized the seventh biennial conference of the Directors of Education in Adelaide.³⁸ The discussions gathered around the modern developments in education which he, Tate and Smith had observed overseas and some of which were being adapted to the South Australian situation. During this time however, McCoy was being constantly pressed by increasing economic crises

and he found difficulty in keeping all the educational facilities functioning.

In July 1929 he accompanied the Minister and the Architect-in-Chief on a visit to Agricultural High Schools in New South Wales to gain first hand information about the designs of these schools in order to draw up the plans and specifications for the class rooms and boarding accommodation of the proposed agricultural school at Urrbrae.³⁹

In late July McCoy's exceptional physical energy and robust enthusiasm were showing signs of flagging but despite medical advice that he should rest he continued doggedly at his office as busy as ever. On 7 August he presided over the Soldiers' Children Education Board and his colleagues were well aware from his slow, laborious actions that he was a sick man. This tenacity was typical of his indomitable spirit, and this incident was significant of his dedication to the service of children whose deceased fathers he so firmly admired when they served in the armed forces during World War I. This was McCoy's last official act. The next day he was taken to hospital and during the following day his condition improved slightly but he then suffered a relapse and died on the evening of 12 August, within two months of his sixty third birthday. On 14 August McCoy was buried in the North Road Cemetery near the graves of J.A. Hartley, L.S. Stanton, and A. Williams, three former heads of the South Australian Education Department. The funeral service was conducted by the Reverend K.J.F. Bickersteth, Headmaster of St. Peter's College, and a member of the Advisory Council of Education over which McCoy presided.⁴⁰

The title of the editorial in the Advertiser on the morning after McCoy's death acknowledged: "The State loses a Great Educationist", and the writer predicted:

He will be remembered with respect, affection and gratitude as a public servant who had a high conception of duty, and lived up to it with undying credit to himself and inestimable benefit to the rising generation. 41

The South Australian Public Teachers' Union made the first move to perpetuate his memory by opening a fund to which £762 was eventually subscribed.⁴² This was a fine achievement on the part of the teachers, departmental officers and interested citizens during those very lean years; it was a significant material mark of the respect that they had for their late "chief".

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SECTION II.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF

McCoy'S WORK IN EDUCATION.

INTRODUCTORY COMMENT.

This second section aims to evaluate McCoy's contribution to education in South Australia. It is divided into two parts. The first part, consisting of Chapters six to twelve, surveys the foundations and operation of the organization of education that McCoy was appointed to direct. This is necessary in order that he can be appraised as an educational administrator. The second part, consisting of Chapters thirteen to nineteen, deals with the theory and practice of education in the state schools before and during McCoy's directorship. This is necessary in order that developments in education can be determined and comments made about their origin and the part McCoy played as an innovator and how much can be attributed to his predecessors and his contemporaries.

CHAPTER SIX.

EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

- I. The Terms - Education and Administration.
- II. Bureaucracy.
- III. The tasks and procedures of the administrator.

I.

Before starting an examination of the foundations and workings of the education system in South Australia, the meanings of the key terms should be determined. Definitions will not be given in depth. It is only necessary to provide a summary of their use in the text.

The term "education" can best be defined within the concept of McCoy's own use of the word. In his references to education he spoke of it as a process of socialization as well as the cultivation of individuality. This polarity which was expressed by McCoy was stated by Sir Percy Nunn in 1921.

"The idea that the main function of the school is to socialize its pupils in no wise contradicts the view that its true aim is to cultivate individuality".¹

McCoy believed that the aims of education were achieved by individual teachers interacting with individual pupils.

The process of running an organization is usually called administration. Administration defines the central aims of the organization and contributes to their achievement, whereas management merely directs and guides the operation of an organization. Administration assumes a power hierarchy with clear rankings in which higher ranks have power over lower ranks. The main function of educational administration is to provide an organization in which individual teachers can interact with individual pupils for the best advantage of the latter.

An organization is generally conceived as a social unit or a group of people deliberately constructed to seek specific goals. Etzioni² stated that modern organizations were characterized by three features:

1. Divisions of labour, power and communication planned to achieve specific goals.
2. One or more power centres which control the whole organization, review its performances and restructure its pattern to increase its efficiency.
3. People in the organization can be substituted. i.e. unsatisfactory people can be removed and others changed by transfer and promotion.

The basic function of the administration in McCoy's day was to provide an organization for the operation of schools for the education of children. The organization itself was the Education Department as defined by the 1915 Education Act, consisting of the Minister of Education, the Director of Education, the Superintendents and the Inspectors.

The specific purposes of educational administration in the 1920's can be summarized as:

1. The effective facilitation of sound relationships between the pupils and teachers in the schools so that children might achieve their maximum educational potential.
2. The provision of an adequate supply of well prepared, well paid and dedicated teachers.
3. The planning of suitable curricula in the schools relevant to the needs of the local environment and the changing needs of society.
4. The maintenance of overall efficiency by setting suitable standards of pupil achievement and providing adequate supervision of teachers.
5. The provision and planning of adequate school buildings.
6. The encouragement and promotion of educationally desirable changes.
7. The establishment of equality of educational opportunity over the state and between local groups. 3

II.

Australian state education systems were organized and administered as centralized systems in that decision making was done by professional officers in a central office. Centralized systems of educational control tend to be associated with bureaucracy, a word with sinister connotations. Weber, the sociologist, first defined bureaucracy and predicted its triumph. As a result of an examination of organizations in European society last century he defined bureaucracy as a rational system of human organization with strict divisions of labour categorized into a hierarchy of positions. Bureaucracy was characterized by rules and regulations and by a single minded concern with its own internal activity. It was rigid,

impersonal and virtually unchangeable. Weber neglected the interplay of people in his concept and his model has been modified this century particularly on the work of social psychologists.

Bennis⁴ recently examined bureaucracy in 20th century organizations. Although he did not anticipate the demise of bureaucracy he foresaw a different kind of bureaucracy slowly emerging from changing concepts and values in society. For example, a new concept of man is arising, based on increased knowledge about his complex psychology. There is a new concept of power based on collaboration rather than constraint and coercion. Finally a new system of organization values based on humane ideals is replacing the former system bound to institutional role expectation.

In a discussion about bureaucracy in general and organizational behaviour in particular, Walker in his most recent work stated three assumptions about educational organization in relation to bureaucracy.⁵

1. The prime measure of the effectiveness of an educational organization is the effectiveness of its impact upon the behaviour of individual pupils.
2. The educational organization has its impact upon individual students largely through the interaction of those students with individual teachers.
3. The behaviour of individual teachers - the product of the personal and institutional role expectations - is largely determined by the organizational climates produced in the system and subsystem by educational administrators.

These statements are theoretical propositions because research is still investigating how organizational climate created by the administrators in a central office is causally related to pupil teacher interaction and learning in the far-off class. However the organizational climate created by administrators to attain the best interaction between teacher and pupil to facilitate the learning processes is the main concern of modern educational organization.

McCoy worked in a bureaucracy which was changing very slowly. The individual was no longer a simple person organized entirely according to

the will of the organization. There was no longer complete reliance on coercive power and the rule of the hierarchy. There was evidence that adaptation to the needs of the changing environment was occurring. A review of his work in the organization will reveal these changes, and it will also endeavour to assess the type of administrative climate he created.

III.

The tasks of the administrator have been examined by numerous theorists. One theorist has reduced the tasks to four major ones.⁶ Firstly the administrator must fulfil the goals of the organization. Secondly he must be able to use the initiative and creativity of other people in the organization in fulfilling these goals. Thirdly he must be humane and create happiness amongst his workers and make working conditions suitable. Fourthly the administrator must make provisions in the organization for innovation and steady development. Although questions could be raised about the over simplification and concentration of this list it can serve as a model for assessing McCoy as an administrator. So much for the "what" of administration, the "how" is much more complex. A real difficulty arises when experts try to tabulate procedures about administration.

There do not appear to be golden rules for administrators or standards of leadership qualities applicable to all sections of an organization in all circumstances, because tasks are continually changing. Research in administration has set out administrative styles in leaders and these have considerable impact on an organization. For example, Hemphill set out eight styles.⁷

1. High communication style - stress on communicating with others.
2. High relationship style - great concern with maintaining social and organizational relations, especially with superiors.
3. Personal organization style - emphasis on scheduling on his own work.
4. High direction style - stress on giving orders to others.

5. High discussion style - high emphasis on face to face contact.
6. High compliance - follows suggestions made by others.
7. High analysis - much time spent in analysing all factors and problems.
8. High outside orientation - perceives problems in terms of what they represent to groups outside the educational organization.

McCoy displayed the first four of these styles significantly, numbers six and seven to a degree, number eight not greatly, and number five seldom with teachers. Two things need to be mentioned in relation to this. Firstly, the good administrator selects the correct style for each situation for which he is able to predict and to evaluate the consequences of various courses of action. McCoy did not have the assistance of modern research and he acted intuitively. Like all administrators in the past he had no systematic training in administration. His administrative behaviour skills were innate and developed from intelligence tempered by experience. Secondly, combinations of these styles are often necessary and although research on interaction analysis is gaining significance it is still difficult to show what combinations of styles would be most successful in a particular situation.

As well as examining some of the main concepts about educational administration this chapter has referred cursorily to recent theories and research about administration and set up a frame of reference by which the administration of McCoy can be assessed.

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It is interesting to compare this list with the Karmel Committee's statement on the main purposes of educational administration in 1971. Education in South Australia (Adelaide 1971) p.459. The idea of equality of opportunity is still respected, but there is an increasing emphasis on public interest and participation in the purposes and processes of education.
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CHAPTER SEVEN.

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

- I. The foundations of the system.
- II. The education system in 1919.

I.

Australian school systems are a product of Australia's social and economic history. In the early settlements characteristically English patterns were imposed on the few schools that were established, mainly by the churches. Local colonial influences in the first part of the 19th century disturbed this initial imposition. Such notions as equality of opportunity and the preference for cheap, brief, practical education for all children alienated the English concept of education for the elite. Although strong sections of non-conformists in South Australia vehemently opposed state interference in the establishment and running of schools and subsidising of education it became apparent to the politicians by the 1870's that a system of state education was needed to cater for the changing times. The provision of elementary schools under a voluntary system with some financial assistance from the state was uneven, inadequate and unfair. With the coming of universal suffrage the politicians believed that universal education was essential for all classes within the Australian community.

Geographical factors were amongst the most significant elements which led to the formation of centralized systems of State Schools in Australia. The vastness of the country, long distances and isolation, and the small, dispersed population made the establishment of a variety of schools uneconomic. Australian society never had a tradition of local government and there were no dangers in the hinterland to compel the early settlers to live closely together for protection. Most of the early settlers were too busy establishing themselves to show real interest in schools for their children, in fact most of them had little or no experience in schools and parental indifference to education was the natural consequence. Indeed reliance on the state for the establishment of essential social welfare services made centralization of administration in a far off capital city a significant feature of the Australian tradition.

The 1875 Education Act in South Australia, like its counterparts in the other states, made the state fully responsible for the establishment and conduct of public schools. It set the pattern of educational organization which was to last until the present day. A highly centralized

system was established which controlled finance, educational planning and the training and employment of teachers. Elementary state schools were made secular, free and compulsory until the child reached the age of thirteen years. Uniform education was considered as synonymous with equal education and efficient education.

The work of J.A. Hartley till 1896 and A.N. Williams till 1913, the two most prominent permanent heads who administered the 1875 Act, has already been examined in other research.¹ Despite the apparent uniformity and rigidity of the system their personalities had a pronounced influence on education. Both Hartley and Williams were reluctant to delegate authority so through their own sheer dedicated, detailed hard work, they exerted great influence on all parts of the educational system. By writing regulations, issuing directives in the Education Gazette, and by a detailed inspection and examination scheme Hartley welded an extensive mixture of elementary schools into a uniform pattern. Under the influence of the New Education Williams introduced changes into the content of the elementary school curriculum and encouraged and extended infant and post primary education. The system did not appear to dampen the enthusiasm of people in it from the director downwards who were able and prepared to seize the initiative. Williams appointments of young men like A.J. Schulz to the Teachers College and W.J. Adey, B.J. Gates, R. Barbour and G.A. West to the headship of high schools, and Miss L. Longmore to infant education eventually had a profound impact on education in the State.

Prior to World War I short comings in the functions of the Education Act were apparent. Equality of provision of schools was not being attained because primary schools did not exist in many remote districts. Although high schools were free they were not established on a state-wide basis, and their educational programme was very academic and entirely unrelated to the local community. The Boards of Advice had not been successful in influencing the course of education, in fact some of them had never assembled because of parental apathy. However the active ones did assist in enforcing school attendance and repairing school buildings. Teacher training was

plagued by too many short courses and on the whole the teachers themselves seemed to miss the excitement of the New Education and were content to accept courses devised and planned on it from the central office. Community and teachers' participation in education decision making was infinitesimal.

After forty years in operation the 1875 Education Act was amended in 1915. The 1915 Act refined some of the procedures of the former Act, but it did not initiate radical changes. In fact it re-affirmed the basic organizational pattern of South Australian education and helped to perpetuate the power of central control until the present. The Director was now assisted in his work by three groups in the central office - an Advisory Council, the Teachers Classification Board and an Advisory Curriculum Board. His work load, but not his responsibility, was lightened by delegation to superintendents of divisions. At the base of the hierarchy school committees replaced the unsatisfactory Boards of Advice.

As McCoy worked under the 1915 Education Act a brief resume of its chief features at the time of his appointment would be rational. The Education Department came under the control of the Minister of Education,² and the Director was responsible under the Minister for the general administration of the Department and for the carrying out of the regulations.³ Only two superintendents had been appointed when McCoy arrived - the Superintendent of Primary Education and the Superintendent of Technical Education. They were responsible to the Director for their divisions. Specified schools or schools in a specified district were assigned to each inspector and the inspectors were expected to reside in a locality conveniently situated for visiting their schools. There were nine inspectors and one assistant inspector in 1919. All these executive officers were appointed by the Governor-in-Council and came under the control of the Public Service Act of 1916, but all the teachers served under the conditions of the Education Act.

An Advisory Council of Education of twenty one members was elected triennially to report annually to the Minister on any educational matters.⁴ It was hoped that this council would be an all-seeing eye and keep

educational practice and modern developments closely attached to modern theory. The Director was also assisted in his detailed administration by two other statutory boards - the Teachers' Classification Board⁵ and an Advisory Curriculum Board.⁶

Provision was also made to stimulate local interest in education. In each primary school parents elected a school committee of seven members, and in each high school and technical school a school council was appointed by the Governor-in-Council.⁷

The entire expenses of the schools controlled by the state were defrayed by funds allocated from the general revenue.⁸

There were no kindergarten schools as such, within the control of the Education Department, but there were several private institutions under a Kindergarten Union which received an annual subsidy from parliament. The infant schools of the Education Department, however, were part of the primary schools. Children in state schools did not pay fees but parents were expected to buy the necessary books and requisites.⁹ Primary education was compulsory between the ages of six and fourteen years. Children of school age were required to attend every week day except Saturdays and public school holidays, unless the parent could show a sufficient reason for the absence of his child.¹⁰ Schools were established in any locality where the Minister was satisfied that an annual average attendance of six children could be maintained.¹¹ In small schools parents were required to provide a suitable school room as well as board and lodging at a fair tariff for the teacher. The Minister could make a grant towards the erection of a building by the local residents. When the annual average attendance at a school reached twenty or over, the Department erected and furnished the building.

The subjects of instruction in the primary schools included English, writing, mathematics, citizenship and history, nature knowledge, drawing, music, needlework, physical training and manual work. In the larger centres in both the city and the country girls, twelve years of age and upwards, received instruction in domestic arts. Some boys in the metropolitan area

attended woodwork classes at seven woodwork centres. There were eight grades in each primary school. In November of each year the Qualifying Certificate Examination was held in various centres of the State and the candidates were pupils in the highest grade of the primary school. Success in this examination entitled the pupil to free tuition in a secondary or technical school. Each year an inspector made two visits to each school to indicate the merits or defects of the work, and to discuss them with the teachers.

High schools could be established in localities where an annual average attendance of forty children was likely to be maintained.¹² No fees were charged. The course of study extended over four years, and included the usual academic type subjects of a secondary school curriculum together with a commercial or business course. To assist deserving pupils to obtain a secondary education, the State provided sixty exhibitions for competition at the Qualifying Certificate Examinations. An exhibition was worth £10 per annum, tenable for two years at either a high school, or an approved secondary school not controlled by the Education Department. If it was necessary for the exhibitor to board away from home an additional allowance of twenty pounds was paid. There were twenty three exhibitions awarded to pupils who, at the end of the second year's course at high school, or other secondary school, secured the highest results at the University Intermediate Examination. Eight of these exhibitions were reserved for country students. These exhibitions were worth £20 per annum and were tenable for three years at a high or approved secondary school, and a boarding allowance of £20 per annum was added, when necessary. At the conclusion of their high school career pupils could compete for twelve bursaries tenable at the University or the Adelaide School of Mines, or the Roseworthy Agricultural College. These bursaries exempted the holders from all fees, entitled them to a cash payment of £20 per annum, which could be increased to £40 per annum if such an increase was necessary to meet expenses of boarding away from home.

Country technical schools were established under the Education Department in five centres of the State.¹³ They conducted both day and evening classes. The Education of Apprentices Act was administered by the Education Department, and both day and evening classes were in operation at the different technical centres. The South Australian School of Arts and Craft was also controlled by the Education Department and gave training in drawing, painting, design and the various artistic crafts.

School medical services were controlled by a medical practitioner.¹⁴ The doctor's chief duties were to examine children attending the primary schools, to deliver courses in hygiene at the Teachers' Training College, and to deal with infectious diseases in schools.

Candidates for teaching appointments had to be trained for their work before entering the service. Some had received their only training under the pupil teacher scheme, some had been pupil teachers before entering the Teachers' College. Student teachers had to supply sufficient evidence of good moral character and physical fitness, and show a general aptitude for the career of a teacher. The College provided courses of training from which a student made a selection according to his academic attainment and suitability. The curriculum at the Teachers' College was determined by the departmental examinations for the teachers' certificate, and by the ordinary examinations in the degree of arts and science at the university. All students received instruction in music, drawing, school hygiene, nature study, needlework and education,¹⁵

This system was bureaucratic in Weber's sense in that it had strict divisions of labour, a hierarchy of positions and an increasing mass of rules and regulations. On the other hand, it was not entirely impersonal, absolutely rigid and divorced from the needs of the changing society.

H. Beare in his unpublished thesis "The Influence of Alfred Williams and the Price Ministry on Public Education in South Australia" explained the origins of this system and gave a great deal of credit in the structuring of it to Williams and to the acumen of his evidence before the Royal Commission in 1911.¹⁶ Although the findings of the Commission were published after Williams' death his influence was apparent in the features of the system adopted in the 1915 Education Act. Beare claimed that

McCoy's control was made easier because Williams had paved the way. Without disagreeing with this claim it is only reasonable to state that no system by itself can generate change and achieve progress in education. Much depends on the leader and how he works in the system. By October, 1919 the system had been in existence for almost four years but education was becalmed perhaps because of the war, but on the evidence of informed opinion already examined the system needed a competent pilot. Maughan had been too sick to be effective and there was just no local man to seize the helm.

The following four chapters review McCoy's relations with his ministers, his work with the statutory boards and his departmental officers and his leadership of the teachers. The material examined indicates how McCoy administered the educational system, and how he modified its inherent bureaucratic features of rule by hierarchy and coercion by his own humane, clear-headed leadership.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER SEVEN.

1. Saunders, G.E. "Public Education in South Australia and Some Factors Affecting it" (Unpublished M.A. Thesis. Adelaide University 1965)
- Beare, H. "The Influence of Alfred Williams and the Price Ministry on Public Education in South Australia" (Unpublished M.Ed. Thesis. University of Melbourne 1964)
2. 1915 Act Hereafter the page references to this act are in accordance with South Australian Statutes 1837-1936 Vol.2 (Adelaide 1937) Part II Div. I Clauses 6-14 pp.529-530.
3. Ibid.,Part II Div. II Clause 15 (1) p.531
4. Ibid.,Part II Div. III Clauses 19-23 pp.533-535
5. Ibid.,Part II Div. II Clauses 16-18 pp.531-532
6. Ibid.,Part II Div. V Clause 28 p. 536
7. Ibid.,Part II Div. IV Clauses 24-27 pp.535-536
8. Ibid.,Part VIII Clause 82 p.561
9. Ibid.,Part VIII Clause 63 (1) p.556
10. Ibid.,Part V Clauses 41-51 pp.539-549
11. Ibid.,Part III Clause 30 p.586
12. Ibid.,Part III Clause 32 (b) p.537
13. Ibid.,Part III Clause 34 p.538
14. Ibid.,Part VII Clause 60 pp.553-555
15. Ibid.,Part IV Clauses 39-40 p.539
16. Beare, H. op.cit.

CHAPTER EIGHT.

McCOY AND HIS MINISTERS.

- I. The Liberal Premiers - Peake and Barwell.
- II. The Labour Government.
- III. A Liberal Government again.

I.

The First Progress Report of the Education Enquiry Committee reviewing education in South Australia in 1945 stated

that the main outlines of departmental policy have been and are shaped by the Directors subject to financial limits imposed by Parliament. 1

Apart from financial restrictions development in education could also be limited by the character and ability of the Director himself.

During his directorship McCoy encountered the regular rhythmical swing of the political pendulum. He was selected by the coalition government of the Liberal and National parties lead by Peake who had been in office since July, 1917. Until the Liberals were defeated in the 1924 elections McCoy served three Ministers of Education, W.H. Harvey, G. Ritchie and T. Pascoe. During the Labour Government between 1924 and 1927 he served under one Minister of Education, L.L. Hill, who was also Premier and Treasurer for the last eight months of Labour's office. At the time of McCoy's death in 1929 M. McIntosh was the Minister of Education. During his ten years of office McCoy served five Premiers and five Ministers of Education.

These ministerial changes made continuity and stability of policy difficult for the politicians, and frequent changes could have upset a weak permanent head of department, or even given him a pretext to remain passive and ineffective, but changing ministers and ministries gave McCoy the opportunity to use his natural potential for strong leadership. McCoy had inherited a system of education with which he was familiar by previous experience in New South Wales and Tasmania, but the system needed to be developed with the changing times. McCoy was not dependent on legislation to begin his reforms, but he needed the support of the Minister for approving his reforms and for having the necessary money allocated. McCoy's directorship was cramped at the beginning and at the end by national financial difficulties, but in his middle period, times were more propitious both financially and politically.

MINISTRIES in the SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT and MINISTERS of EDUCATION. 1917-1930.

MINISTRY	Period of Office	Party	Minister of Education	Dates	Other Portfolios	Dates
Hon. Mr. Archibald Henry PEAKE (M.H.A.)	July 14, 1917- April 8, 1920	Coalition Liberal National Parties.	David John GORDON (M.L.C.) Alfred William STYLES (M.L.C.) William Humphrey HARVEY (M.L.C.)	July 14- Aug. 27, 1917 Aug. 27, 1917- Jan. 7, 1918 Feb. 15, 1918- Apr. 8, 1920	Minister of Repatriation - Minister for Mines Minister of Agriculture	July 14, 1917 - Aug. 27, 1917. - Dec. 19, 1918 - Apr. 8, 1920. July 24, 1919 - Apr. 8, 1920.
Mr. Henry NEWMAN BARWELL (M.H.A.)	April 8, 1920 April 16, 1924	Liberal	George RITCHIE (M.H.A.) Thomas PASCOE (M.L.C.)	Apr. 8, 1920 Nov. 3, 1922 Nov. 3, 1922 Apr. 16, 1924	Treasurer Commissioner of Public Works Minister of Mines Chief Secretary	Apr. 8, 1920 Nov. 3, 1922. Nov. 3, 1922 - Nov. 14, 1923. Nov. 3, 1922 - Apr. 16, 1924. Nov. 14, 1923 - Apr. 16, 1924.
Mr. John GUNN (M.H.A.)	April 16, 1924 Aug. 28 1926	Labour	Lionel Laughton Hill (M.H.A.)	Apr. 16, 1924- Aug. 28, 1926	Commissioner of Public Works. Minister of Industry.	Apr. 16, 1924 - Aug. 28, 1926. Apr. 16, 1924 - Aug. 28, 1926.

Ministry	Period of office	Party	Minister of Education	Dates	Other Portfolios	Dates
Mr. Lionel Laughton HILL (M.H.A.)	Aug.28, 1926 Apr. 8, 1927	Labour	Lionel Laughton HILL (M.H.A.)	Aug.28, 1926 Apr. 8, 1927	Treasurer	Aug.28, 1926 Apr. 8, 1927.
Hon. Mr. Richard Layton BUTLER	Apr. 8, 1927 Apr.17, 1930	Liberal	Malcolm McIntosh (M.H.A.)	Apr. 8, 1927 Apr.17, 1930	Commissioner of Public Works	Apr. 8, 1927 Apr.17 1930.

Peake was Premier for the third time between 1917 and 1920, and he had a record as an astute political tacticism since his election to parliament in 1897. He had been a member of the 1911-1913 Royal Commission on Education, and in 1913, during his second period of premiership, 1912-1915, he refused to sign the final report of the Commission because he believed that by doing so he would have automatically committed his government to accept all its recommendations.²

It was the Labour Government under Crawford Vaughan that passed the 1915 Education Act, which was based on the findings of the Royal Commission and the ideas of Williams. The Commission had recommended the retention of the office of Director of Education, and on 19 August, 1913 Peake's government confirmed the appointment of Maughan. Beare suggested that the government "would have done better had it questioned what kind of a man was needed as Director before appointing Maughan".³ Maughan's health was indifferent when he was appointed, and his directorship was hindered by the suspension of the proposed Education Act until late in 1915, and then by the difficulties created by the war years. When ill health eventually forced Maughan to resign in 1919, it seemed that Peake was again about to make a swift appointment. Pressure from groups in the community forced the Government to halt and to think about the type of man needed to guide the State education system.

McCoy served under Harvey for seven months, and during this settling in period McCoy encountered little interference. Harvey, a former Labour man, had been a member of the Legislative Council since 1915, and secretary of the Moonta Miners Association for eighteen years. With E.A. Anstey he was the National Party representative in the Peake Ministry.⁴ McCoy however, did have at least one slight altercation with Peake, but he stood his ground in unruffled fashion.

In March 1920 Peake objected to remarks made by McCoy at Roseworthy Agriculture College on the grounds that they purported to show how ministers and members of parliament should manage the financial affairs of the State.⁵ McCoy defended himself in a characteristically courteous, but forthright statement. He admitted that the newspaper report was a "fair statement

but like all press reports it omits a great deal that was said and fails to reproduce the atmosphere in which it was said". McCoy was convinced that:

the public generally was fully seized with the importance of education and would be willing to sanction any expense thereon but that public men, members of Parliament, and Ministers generally throughout Australia did not treat the question as one of vital importance. 6

McCoy did not apologize for this contention, he assured the Premier that his remarks were general and did not reflect upon any particular members of the present ministry. McCoy's idea that the general public was so enthusiastic about education that it would be prepared to spend limitless money was probably a deliberate exaggeration to emphasize the parsimony of politicians. Peake read McCoy's minute and made no further written comment. McCoy probably modified his opinion when later Labour Party politicians, who believed in liberal expenditure for education, put their beliefs into practice when they sat on the government benches.

Peake died suddenly on 6 April, 1920, and H.N. Barwell, who had been Attorney-General and Minister for Industry in Peake's Cabinet became Premier and retained the portfolio of Attorney General. Ritchie who had been the Member for Alexandra since 1902 and who had previous cabinet experience became Treasurer and Minister of Education.⁷ Ritchie's father was a Murray River steamer captain, and Ritchie himself traded for many years on the river. He was a hard-headed businessman and had little sympathy for the new-fangled notions being discussed to break formalities in schools. In 1908 he clashed with Williams over establishing a rural school in a developing irrigation area on the Murray; Williams favoured the larger type country schools constructed in towns, whereas Ritchie and other members of parliament wanted little schools close to the homes of the children.⁸

Ritchie was Minister of Education for two years, seven months - the longest term of any Minister under whom McCoy served continuously. Hill was in office for almost three years, but during his ministry McCoy was absent abroad for eight months. Ritchie, with his stolid beliefs that school activities should be confined to basic necessities, and his previous

experience with Williams, was on his guard as soon as he took over the education portfolio.

At the close of 1919 McCoy wrote a report reviewing as much of the year as he felt competent to discuss.⁹ In addition he made a number of suggestions which he considered should be implemented "in order to bring", to use his own words, and criterion for development "the education system in this State into line with those of the other States". These suggestions included the classification and methods of the promotion of teachers, school inspections and examinations, the appointment of a Superintendent of Secondary Education, the training of teachers, proposals for co-ordinating and extending educational activities, and the necessity for providing well lighted, properly ventilated school rooms and comfortable school furniture. When this report was considered for publication Ritchie, who had been in office for only eight days, pointed out that it contained matters of policy which the Government had not considered, and that only the portion reviewing the proceedings of the previous year should be published.¹⁰

McCoy objected on the grounds that in his previous directorship he was accustomed to embody such suggestions for improvements in his annual reports to parliament, and that he preferred either the whole or none of his report to be published. McCoy was not to be intimidated by Ritchie. The Minister however decided to publish the annual Report of the Minister without the new Director's report.

For some years "Education Notes" under the nom de plume "Unlocke" had been appearing in the Saturday edition of the Register. These provocative notes contained comments about many aspects of education. They made reference to developments overseas and interstate, especially to New South Wales as being the leader in the Commonwealth in educational matters, and suggested lines of development for South Australia. Ritchie believed that these notes were inspired by someone closely connected with the Education Department, and he asked McCoy to make inquiries as to how the information was gained, and who was the person responsible. McCoy replied in his usual crisp way:

"I do not know who writes these notes. I have never seen anything in them that is not well known to prominent town teachers. The chief officers of this Department are ignorant of the identity of the writer. 11

Ritchie perversely construed this to mean that all the plans and decisions in the education office were known to "prominent town teachers", but as McCoy explained all the information which appeared in "Unlocke's" notes was already known to teachers in the course of their duties, and was not conveyed to him by unknown persons from head office. Ritchie was suspicious and obviously conscious of criticisms, particularly from the press.

In the Education Gazette for April, 1922 in the section on advice to teachers for Empire Day activities, appeared the suggestion that the book, A Straight Deal by Owen Wister could provide useful background material.¹² On 28 April The Southern Cross published a leader entitled "Anti Irish Propaganda in State Schools" condemning the fact that five hundred copies of Wister's book had been given by an anonymous donor to the Education Department for school libraries, and that Chapter XVI entitled, "An International Imposture", was most disgraceful, and made an insulting and outrageous attack on the Catholic majority in Ireland, in fact it was "a slanderous piece of anti-Irish propaganda".¹³ When Ritchie called for a report from the Director McCoy naturally was on the defensive, but his comments left no doubt as to where his sympathies rested.¹⁴ McCoy argued that the book had distinct literary merit and that Owen Wister was a distinguished American writer, and that one of his books, The Virginian, was a recognised classic. A Straight Deal was written to vindicate British efforts against the reproaches of some Americans. "This book", McCoy commented,

is certainly one of the most eloquent defences of English policy and ways of thinking ever penned by a writer owing no allegiance to Great Britain. The book may contain statements that are offensive to non-admirers of the British, though such critics will not notice that Wister makes frank allusions to English failures.

The more significant part of McCoy's case was his defence of the integrity of his teachers. He stressed that the hints given were "merely incidental",

and that "the advice to teachers was suggestive only. It is not compulsory that they should even read the book". Teachers "who use this book as a source for an Empire lesson can be trusted to use such information as the book provides in a discreet and proper manner".

A further article in the Southern Cross¹⁵ stated that the Catholic Federation and Irish Societies in South Australia had been considering what action should be taken about the circulation of the book in the schools. The writer acknowledged the prudence of teachers who would apparently refrain from referring to "the slanderous and poisonous stuff" in Chapter XVI. The matter simmered until October when Barwell directed that "Chapter XVI to be deleted from each copy in the school libraries".¹⁶ The Government apparently did not hold the views of McCoy and the Southern Cross journalist on the discretion of teachers. The innocent suggestion in the April Education Gazette had created a furore in some circles, and the Government compromised by resorting to an almost medieval practice of having the apparently offensive portion of the book destroyed by fire. However, instead of using the common hangman, the teachers were ordered to tear out and destroy the offending chapter in the five hundred copies of the book that had found their way into the schools.

In 1921 the Advisory Council of Education resolved that educational facilities should be provided for children who were mentally subnormal but educable. McCoy wrote a full explanatory report to the Minister suggesting that a medical survey should be made to discover these children, and that selected teachers should be sent to Melbourne for special training.¹⁷ McCoy was actually reflecting public concern with this problem, but Ritchie replied to the Council, through his secretary, by stating that other parts of the educational system required extensions before this activity could be considered, and that finances restricted developments. His secretary, obviously a confirmed environmentalist, naively concluded:

He (Ritchie) ventures to express the opinion (ofcourse with his limited knowledge) that the proportion of children would in Australia be very small indeed compared with other countries, the environment here being more favourable.¹⁸

Ritchie's effectiveness as a Minister of Education was curbed by three factors, firstly his lack of real understanding of the new needs of schools, secondly he held the onerous portfolio of the treasury besides that of education, and thirdly he was faced with a general economic recession. It was the role of treasurer that dominated his attention and determined his actions.

In his speech at the opening of Balaklava High School on the 26 May, 1922 Ritchie gloried in his Scotch lineage and prided himself on his accomplishments in money saving by close supervision of finances of the Education Department.¹⁹ This was no vain boast. With hawk-like eye he watched every line of expenditure. In January, 1922 he directed McCoy to keep a careful watch on subsidies in case some zealous school committees caused excess expenditure of the annual amount voted. He directed that approval should be given only for items which were really necessary in the schools.

I think that where there are Local Institutes (which are subsidized by the Government) books can be obtained for school children, and that equipment for games should be provided by parents. 20

Apparently books seemed to be necessary for schools, but sharing facilities for their provision was the important point. Games were obviously something extra and beyond the basic necessities of the school.

In 1892 fees were abolished in all South Australian schools, but the practice of supplying free text books to children in necessitous circumstances continued in the primary schools. If these children transferred to high schools they continued to receive free books until the age of fourteen years. Ritchie discovered that children over the age of fourteen sometimes received free books, and he wanted to sight the authority for granting free books to pupils attending high schools. Investigations revealed that the authority was merely a verbal instruction given by the Director of Education in 1913 to the Supervisor of the Compulsory Branch. As the practice was growing McCoy moved first and recommended that it should cease at the end of 1922 except in very special cases. Ritchie with his instinct for economy readily agreed.²¹

Ritchie persistently aimed to budget for a surplus while the Labour opposition criticised the Government for not spending all the revenue and loan money voted for education.²² With the increasing interest and enrolments in high schools moves were made, particularly in the metropolitan area, to relieve over-crowding, by erecting separate new high school buildings. Ritchie believed that local residents should assist the Government in erecting buildings for high schools. He had new regulations drafted so that parents would guarantee an average annual attendance of forty pupils, that local people would provide at least five acres of land for the site of the new high school, and contribute at least £1,000 towards the cost of the building.²³ These regulations were tabled in Parliament on 27 July, 1922, and in the House of Assembly on 23 August, 1922 J.L. Price (Labour) moved to have them disallowed. The ensuing debate indicated some basic concepts of the two major political parties towards the financing of education.²⁴

Price argued that the regulations were "a positive danger to the accepted free education system" for high schools which had been established in South Australia in 1908 during his father's premiership. People already paid taxes and these regulations created another unjust, direct tax on people in certain districts and discriminated between rich and poor. The rich would be able to meet the provisions of the regulations and thus gain high schools, the poor would be unable to raise the money or find the land and thus would have to do without the schools. This was the line of argument in the opposition's case, except that S.R. Whitford (Labour) added that it was iniquitous to tax one section of the community when other sections already had the same facilities provided beforehand. In defence the Minister replied that the regulations merely dealt with buildings, and not with the establishment of schools or free education. If a district wanted a separate high school, that is high school buildings away from, or as he defined separate, "apart from the primary school", then it should assist the Government in paying for it. Although M.E. Anthony (Liberal) urged the Minister to withdraw the regulations he supported the Minister in the

need for careful budgeting. A state must be run with "business acumen" and all Governments had many financial commitments besides education. J. McLachlan (Liberal) reflected 19th Century Liberalism in arguing that parents should pay part of the cost.

"There are thousands of people who want free everything... I think when a child has passed up to the standard of primary education if the parents of that child wish some further tuition it is only reasonable that they should be prepared to pay a certain amount for it".²⁵

Finally, on the 20 September, 1922 the Minister withdrew the regulations, but the debate had provided some significant comments on contemporary education in the State.

It was generally agreed that proper primary education was the State's first need. The Minister explained that because a great number of schools had not been renovated for several years the work going on at present was very expensive because it was long overdue. Teachers' salaries had been gladly increased and scholarships had been extended and liberal allowances given to teacher trainees. In fact, the Minister used the debate to publicize the Government's efforts in education. Anthony complained about the lack of repair in some schools in the metropolitan area, and urged the Minister to provide equipment for primary schools because a great deal of this equipment was supplied by enthusiastic teachers and this was most unfair. Although the Minister had praised the high school curriculum with its inclusion of languages and comparability with independent colleges,²⁶ Anthony stated that it was "unwise for the department to insist on a flat curriculum for every high school. A certain bias should be given to the curriculum according to the local conditions..."²⁷ He also believed that a Qualifying Certificate was an inadequate qualification for high school entry, and he was not satisfied with the higher primary schools, because they were not properly staffed and teachers were expected to teach both primary and secondary courses with inadequate equipment.²⁸

The most perspicacious and penetrating speaker in the debate was the Member for North Adelaide, S.R. Whitford. Amongst other things he believed that education should be removed from party politics. He advocated

the adoption of the New Zealand method whereby the Minister was guided by a council elected from nine districts in the Dominion, and these districts had representatives from local committees. Although he was not absolutely clear in describing this system it seemed that responsibility of expenditure for education rested with this council whose members were direct representatives of the parents of the pupils. He also believed that in order to get out of "the rut"

The educational system of South Australia ought to be placed in the hands of a sound educationist, who would be chairman of a council of men elected because of their knowledge of education and their interest in our educational system.

In these two ideas he was hinting at some measure of decentralization of control. McCoy's work in the Education Department however was not even mentioned. Whitford said that the Minister of Education was "a victim of economic circumstances".

I think that it is a calamity to the State to allow the same honourable gentleman to hold dual portfolios of Treasurer and Minister of Education...his duty as Treasurer makes him desire to see that no money is wasted and it also makes him cut down the educational expenditure. 29

In the Council, although he moved the disallowance of the Regulations, J. Cowan, (Liberal) praised Ritchie's record as an administrator. He claimed that "his administration of the Education Department has been most meritorious, and compares well with that of any of his predecessors".³⁰ Hannaford and Harvey praised the Minister and his keen interest in his work. However at the commencement of the debate in the Council Cowan was surprised to learn about a complaint from T. McCallum (Liberal) about the treatment he had received from some of the staff of the Education Office including the Director of Education; he had always "received the greatest possible courtesy and attention from the present Director and his predecessors and from the staff".³¹

Most speakers acknowledged the immense benefits obtained for society from increased educational facilities. The Government claimed that it was doing all it could in the face of embarrassing financial difficulties.

Price stressed the necessity of education for all. "Education is needed in the interests of both democracy and humanity". Whitford illustrated from contemporary books that a nation's economic superiority rested on her education system, and he deplored Geddes axing the planned growth of education in England embodied in the 1918 Act. Regardless of the economic position educational facilities should be advanced. Primary schools needed more teachers and smaller classes with children grouped according to their ability. Secondary schools lacked sufficient equipment. Keen students should be given "the opportunity to rise to the highest rungs in the ladders of fame and education". In the Council J. Jelley (Labour) quoted from Meredith Atkinson's book The New Social Order which stressed the all embracing importance of education in the era of reconstruction

Wealth and welfare, body and soul, individual and State, secular and sacred, science and humanities, find their true blend and unity through education. 32

This parliamentary commentary on education in the middle of 1922 revealed that all political parties acknowledged the importance of education in modern society, but their opinions varied about its degree of importance. The Labour Party revealed supreme optimism in the influence of education. It believed that the future depended on the present provision of proper educational facilities, and that all types of schools, at all stages, should be free to all pupils and unfettered by the current national economic conditions. The Liberal Party believed that the extent of facilities for education depended on the economic resources of the State, and that parents should be prepared to contribute something towards the cost of education particularly beyond the primary stage.

McCoy's work of consolidation within the system was not acknowledged by either party. Some aspects of the system, particularly the qualifying certificate, the higher primary school, the high school curriculum and the state of school buildings came in for criticism. Ritchie received credit as a sound administrator, McCoy's administrative abilities were not mentioned. Indeed there were some allusions about honourable members not receiving proper respect from the Director and his departmental officers.

Furthermore, Peake's reference to South Australian education being "in the groove" in 1919 was re-designated "the rut" by Whitford in these debates when he was commenting on the structure of the system. Peake accepted the system and believed that the right Director would get it out of the groove, but Whitford was doubtful about the system itself. To date McCoy's work and reforms were obviously not conspicuous in the eyes of the politicians; within his own department however there was evidence that things were out of the groove. Ritchie received adulations as an administrator and endeavoured to contain McCoy in uneasy thraldom, by the restraints of economy.

On the 3 November, 1922 Thomas Pascoe, M.L.C. became Minister of Education. He had been a member of the upper house since 1900 and his interests were confined to farming. He had had previous ministerial experience as Minister of Agriculture before he again became Minister for Agriculture, as well as Minister of Irrigation and Minister of Mines in Barwell's Cabinet in April, 1920.³³ Pascoe was not conversant with the Education Department nor was he directly connected with, or plagued by, financial problems. McCoy was abroad for about nine months of Pascoe's seventeen months in the ministership, but McCoy seemed to have more latitude with Pascoe. It was Pascoe who got approval for McCoy's tour for 1923 and who gave sympathetic consideration to the recommendations McCoy made on his return.

II.

At the general elections on 5 April, 1924 Labour won twenty-six of the forty-six seats in the House of Assembly; the other seats were secured by seventeen Liberals and three Country Party members.³⁴ John Gunn, the Member for Adelaide since 1915, became Premier and Lionel Laughton Hill became Minister of Education. As was usual both Gunn and Hill had been closely associated with the trade union movement, Gunn as President and Secretary of the Drivers' Union, and Hill as State Secretary and later Federal President of the Tramway Employees Association.³⁵

When Gunn resigned from the Premiership in August, 1926 to become a member of the Federal Development and Migration Commission, Hill succeeded him in the office, and he retained the education portfolio. Hill was vitally interested in the educational welfare of the State, he believed that continuity of office established stability, and he was interested in the developments generated by McCoy.

McCoy's initial period of consolidation now turned into a period of progress and innovation. Broad lines of policy had been set down in his report on his tour abroad in 1923, which rationally blended overseas ideas with local requirements. There was now a party in office which was prepared to spend money to put his plans into effect. In opposition the Labour members had charged the Liberals of starving the Education Department, and they argued that expenditure on education should be the foremost charge on the community.³⁶ In his policy speech Gunn stated that education should be free from primary school to the university, and he promised to make all necessary facilities available in both the city and the country.³⁷ The fact that one man was retained in the portfolio of education for the whole of Labour's office was significant of the importance given by Labour to education. McCoy apparently worked very amiably and closely with Hill because official correspondence does not record evidence of clashes of the type that McCoy had with Ritchie, and at McCoy's death Hill claimed him as a personal friend.³⁸

In its first year of office the Gunn Government had undertaken some of the major recommendations in McCoy's report. Eighteen central schools were organized, a progressive and expansive building policy was initiated, including the Liberals' postponed plan to erect a much needed Teachers' College. The staff of the medical branch was increased and a psychologist was appointed to advise on the education of defective children. Liberal members in both houses speaking in the debates on the Address in Reply in 1924 and 1926 claimed that the Labour Government was merely carrying out the reforms which the former Liberal Government had already approved.³⁹

TABLE 7

EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION

(Expressed £.s.d.)

Net Expenditure (Excluding Cost of Buildings, Additions, Repairs).							Cost per head of mean population (Excluding cost of buildings, additions, repairs).						Expenditure on buildings, additions, repairs.					
	Primary	Secondary	Technical	University	* Other	TOTAL	Primary	Secondary	Technical	University	* Other	TOTAL	Primary	Secondary	Technical	University	* Other	TOTAL
1924	475414	63330	56140	40014	29932	664830	18.0	2.5	2.1	1.6	1.1	15.1	95095	12371	5811	15892	1378	130547
1925	531231	66729	56821	43809	31048	729638	19.6	2.6	2.1	1.7	1.2	1.6.10	125836	12296	9760	19708	2145	169745
1926	629643	80856	66397	44768	31824	853488	1.2.6	2.10	2.5	1.7	1.2	1.10.6	218409	12798	15397	11504	1215	259323
1927	655345	87929	70792	48840	32882	895788	1.2.11	3.1	2.6	1.8	1.2	1.11.4	147864	8656	10726	388	1650	169284
1928	684954	93761	72639	49601	35318	936273	1.3.9	3.3	2.6	1.8	1.3	1.12.5	84058	18419	3398	60	939	106875
1929	710919	102566	73897	49726	39109	976217	1.4.6	3.6	2.7	1.9	1.4	1.13.8	100267	10870	358	-	700	112195

* Included expenditure on Observatory, Public Library and Art Gallery; also Pension under Superannuation Act 1926.

Mean Population;South Australia

1924	-	529,691
1925	-	543,987
1926	-	558,883
1927	-	571,097
1928	-	577,300
1929	-	579,502 (approximately)
1930	-	580,751
1931	-	583,500.

TABLE 2

EXPENDITURE on BUILDINGS

Stated to nearest £

	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
New Buildings - Expended by Architect-in-Chief's Department from Loan Account.	31,836	50,504	46,512	69,544	75,749	100,342	203,023	130,298	74,446	83,849
Repairs and Structural Alterations - Expended by Architect-in-Chief's Department from Revenue Account.	7,380	12,140	20,710	11,687	24,842	31,343	29,970	21,268	19,145	17,405
Minor Repairs - Allowances to School Committees.	1,773	2,233	1,976	2,454	3,054	5,249	5,220	6,004	4,529	4,988
School Furniture.	740	3,126	1,336	1,209	3,409	8,810	7,532	5,534	3,954	4,116
Grants Towards Erection of Buildings.	250	725	650	150	510	-	801	200	456	855
Teachers' College Furniture and Equipment.								2,880	131	-
Hostel for Students - Furniture and Equipment.								45	338	71
TOTAL :	41,979	68,728	71,184	85,044	107,564	145,744	246,546	167,242	105,718	111,336

Excluding the University, Observatory, Public Library and Art Gallery.

This was true to a point; the Liberals had, for example, approved of most of McCoy's recommendations appended to his report of his 1923 tour, but credit must go to the Government that actually put them into effect. The immense increase of expenditure on public works during the Labour's office gave the opposition ammunition to upset the Government. Labour was defeated at the 1927 general elections mainly on the grounds that the State was bankrupt.

Nominal expenditure certainly did increase after 1924 as Tables 1 and 2 show. But nominal expenditure is not a reliable indication of a Government's effectiveness. When comparing expenditure on education allowances should be made for changing economic conditions and increasing population. In order to obtain a more accurate estimate of expenditure on education in South Australia between 1913 and 1945 W.R.N. Jolly converted nominal expenditure into real expenditure by using the Retail Index, Series C, for Adelaide.⁴⁰ He converted revenue expenditure and loan expenditure as shown in the annual reports of the Minister of Education into real expenditure and expressed these in shillings per head of total population and plotted them graphically against the relevant years. The graph showed that the Liberal Governments between 1919 and 1923 increased loan expenditure and revenue expenditure to an amount far greater than these had ever been before. The Liberal Government between 1927 and 1930 cut loan expenditure because of the economic depression and because Labour's vigorous building programme had removed the necessity for a continued high loan expenditure.

III.

The general elections on 26 March, 1927 brought defeat to the Hill Labour Government. In the new parliament the strength of the combined Liberal and Country Parties lay in twenty eight seats; Labour held sixteen seats and the Independents two. A "Pact Ministry", under the leadership of R.L. Butler,⁴¹ was established by the Country Party joining the Liberals

in the House of Assembly and a Country Party member gaining a seat in the Cabinet. M. McIntosh, the member for Albert since 1921, was the Country Party nominee in the Cabinet and he became Minister of Education and Commissioner of Public Works.⁴² Butler himself was the son of Sir Richard Butler, a former Premier and Speaker, and he came from a farming and grazing background. He had been member for Wooroora between 1915 and 1918 and since 1921. His force of personality, capacity for work and commanding presence made him an obvious successor to Barwell as leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party.

The State was on the brink on another financial depression. Unemployment was increasing and drought was common over many parts of Australia. By the Drought Relief Act the State Bank was organized to assist farmers in supplying seed wheat and making advances to fruit growers whose crops had been damaged by frost.

Prior to McCoy's return from abroad late in 1927 members of parliament had been questioning the expenditure on education. In July D.H. Young, (Liberal) thought that a parliamentary committee should investigate expenditure in the Education Department,⁴³ and in August Butler himself thought that conventional school buildings were too costly and that by modifying specifications costs could be reduced.⁴⁴ Although the major portion of McCoy's recommendations after his 1927 tour was concerned with the improvement of agricultural education he did give attention to modern and less expensive school designs.

In February, 1928 McIntosh instructed McCoy to carefully watch the expenditure of money granted for educational purposes, and he warned that the Treasurer had definitely stated that no further excesses would be granted to any State departments.⁴⁵ McCoy listed the "drastic economies" that had already been effected in his department. No temporary or supplementary teachers were to be engaged in the future, the Superintendent of Primary Education and the Chief Inspector were to revise staffs of schools and to give notice to non-permanent teachers and monitors whenever opportunity arose. There was to be no intake into the Teachers Colleges in May, 1928.

In the provision of facilities subsidies for woodwork and domestic arts rooms were discontinued and supplies of apparatus ceased. All building other than necessary repairs and cleaning was stopped. There were no further grants for free books and the Kuitpo Forest Camp Schools were abandoned.

Mc Coy also presented a detailed statement of expenditure to 31st January, 1928 and the estimated expenditure to 30th June, 1928, and he claimed that an excess of £9,053 was required to enable the schools to be maintained. Among unforeseen circumstances causing increases in salary expenditure was the fact that resignations had not reduced expenditure to the extent anticipated. In addition teachers' efficiency and attainment had increased at a higher rate than estimated, and these had to be rewarded by salary increments. Rents for premises housing high schools had increased and cleaning costs had increased because the total number of schools had increased.⁴⁶

There is no evidence that McIntosh pried and probed into expenditure details in the manner Ritchie had done, but the parliament continued to be concerned about the high costs in education. In May, 1928, W.G.J. Mills (Liberal) argued that too much could be spent on education and T. McCallum (Liberal) said that the education vote was too large and that it was wasteful to keep a child at school for two years after he had gained his Qualifying Certificate, such a child would be far better off working on the land.⁴⁷

In August, 1928 McCoy presented evidence to the Federal Disabilities Commission on the increase of expenditure in South Australia for education during the past ten years.⁴⁸ From all the interstate directors, except Tasmania, he gathered figures showing the total cost of education for the years 1917 to 1927 inclusive of the grants to the universities and other educational institutions and of the cost of buildings. He calculated the cost per capita on primary, secondary and technical education on the estimated population of each state as shown in the 1918 Official Year Book and the Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics published by the Commonwealth Statistician. The calculations showed that in 1917 the cost per capita was lower in South Australia than in any other mainland state.

South Australia	14/5	per capita
Victoria	14/7	" "
New South Wales	18/10	" "
Queensland	20/8	" "
Western Australia	22/1	" "

During the next ten years, for various reasons, chiefly economic, the cost per capita increased in all the states, and for special reasons South Australia advanced one place in the order.

Victoria	26/-	per capita
South Australia	28/3	" "
New South Wales	32/11	" "
Western Australia	33/5	" "
Queensland	34/-	" "

Since 1917 South Australia had "made serious attempts to bring the work of the Education Department into line with that of the other mainland states", and McCoy then listed the factors, mainly new developments, which contributed to the increase in expenditure. He stated that the number of schools had increased by 23 per cent, the number of children enrolled by 22 per cent, the number of teachers employed by 26 per cent and the population by 32 per cent. He went on to illustrate that the relative cost of running small schools was very much greater than the cost of running larger schools. One-teacher schools were 79.5 per cent of all the primary schools in the State, and 510 or 50.7 per cent of the one-teacher schools had an average attendance of less than twenty children each. Also South Australia had a greater percentage of one-teacher schools than any other state.⁴⁹ McCoy showed that improvements were still needed, in the State system but these were now handicapped by lack of funds. He claimed that some aspects of the South Australian system were equal to the best in other states, but he did not believe that South Australia could fairly claim that general educational advantages were equal to those offered in the more advanced states. He concluded by suggesting that the Commonwealth Government should subsidize agricultural and industrial education as was the case in Canada and United States of America where the national government was also not responsible for education.

This evidence formed a valuable review of McCoy's own directorship. Activities which he had introduced together with the increasing population

of the State, and the consequent increase in the school population had certainly increased the cost of education. Further improvements in school buildings, the education of mentally deficient children, the expansion of medical and dental services and the introduction of agricultural courses in high schools still had to be attained to make education in South Australia comparable with the other states. McCoy was quite positive that South Australia lagged behind the other states, but except on his per capita expenditure tables he was not very explicit about the criterion for comparison between South Australia and the other states. Even in this submission he did not enumerate the aspects of South Australian education which were equal to the best in the other states, and he did not state the educational disadvantages of South Australia compared with those of the other states. In the face of economic recession he seemed to suggest that South Australia could still better its position in the order of per capita cost for education in each state. Although he suggested that the Commonwealth should subsidize agricultural and industrial education it could have been justly argued that until South Australian expenditure on education per head of population was at least as high as the average for all states in Australia no appeal for aid could be made.

By 1929 Parliament was becoming less interested in education. The Governor in his opening speech made only brief references to the erection of Urrbrae Agricultural High School, the introduction of vocational guidance and the proposed reduction in the cost of school buildings.⁵⁰ There were no bills relative to education introduced during the session, and no lengthy debates on motions on educational matters. The economic depression was forcing checks on expenditure in education and the press, as well as parliament, re-inforced the case for economy.⁵¹ A leader in the Advertiser during May entitled "Progress in Education" summarized the position by showing that the present forced savings on buildings and equipment would only increase expenditure on these things in the future and that no matter what savings were made education was still a costly business. However, it warned that unlimited spending was now impossible and that the Government had "to cut its coat according to the cloth available".⁵²

On McCoy's sudden death on 12 August, 1929 McIntosh made these genuine comments about his Director.

By his firm and just manner he commanded the respectful admiration of the teachers and the administrative staff, and by his genial, robust enthusiasm he won their affectionate co-operation. The speed of progress and the driving force which he inculcated into the Education Department would carry it along. 53

The Minister acknowledged McCoy's personal qualities of leadership and credited him as the generator of change in the Schools, but lack of finance was curtailing his progressive plans before the time of his death, and Adey, his successor, had to bear the heavy burden of administering a costly department pestered by all round financial restrictions.

In relationship with his ministers McCoy experienced the same patterns as Hartley and Williams. Firstly, although the control of the education system was constitutionally vested in the Minister of Education and the director was by the Act the controller of the system the actual administration was in the hands of the permanent head. Secondly, most ministers held other portfolios beside education and changing political situations in South Australia caused ministers to continually shift, particularly in Liberal circles, and the permanent head continued to accumulate power. This gave the enterprising Director the opportunity to use his initiative. Thirdly, finance was always a restraining factor in educational development, and in times of national economic crises education was amongst the first of the State departments to receive restrictions. On the whole the politicians showed little concern for the qualitative aspects of education such as education theory, curriculum content and education standards. They adopted a utilitarian approach and supported the doctrine of educational opportunity, and hoped that schools would be conducted with a minimum cost and in the minimum of time.

McCoy was never brow beaten by members of parliament and the evidence shows that he was prepared to argue his cause firmly and conscientiously.

His firmness and bluntness gained him respect. He did not shelter behind the decent anonymity of the public servant to criticise his niggardly masters.

In propitious economic times in the mid 1920's and with the moral and monetary support of the sympathetic Labour Party he made the best of these opportunities in getting some of these major plans established.

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28. In the Legislative Council W. Hannaford complained about the high school curricula not being sufficiently utilitarian. They (high schools) should give education along lines which will help the pupils to provide the ordinary necessities of life. In the metropolitan area the subjects should be more along strictly educational lines, but in the country they should have more to do with agriculture and grazing.
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CHAPTER NINE.

McCOY'S WORK AT THE CENTRAL OFFICE.

- I. Introduction.
- II. The Advisory Council of Education and the
Classification and Advisory Curriculum Boards.
- III. Administration in head office.
- IV. Superintendents and inspectors.
- V. Headmasters and headmistresses.
- VI. School Committees.

I.

At the 1899 Royal Commission on Technical Education in Victoria, under the chairmanship of Theodore Fink, the point was firmly made that it was valueless to recommend improvements in education if they were then left to incompetent administrators to implement. The Commission stressed that the educational head of the department should be familiar with the work in the schools by past experience and present observations. As well as being "the intellectual centre of the system" he

must be a man of vigorous mind. A great department cannot administer itself. The most cunningly devised scheme of regulations cannot dispense with some intelligent personal administration. 1

Again in 1945 in discussing the existing administrative system the South Australian Education Inquiry Committee re-affirmed that great responsibility was given to the administrators for leadership in education.

"The creation and growth of the system is the work of administrators, rather than legislators. All the important problems as to what is to be taught in the schools, how it is to be taught, the objectives to be pursued, the types of schools, and the training and qualifications of teachers are decided by the administrators. For this reason the educational administrator holds a position of considerable power and importance".²

This chapter aims to examine how McCoy fulfilled his tasks as an administrator.

The system of education in South Australia was set by the previous Education Acts, but the organization wanted direction and until McCoy's appointment it lacked a synthesizer and leader. McCoy once confided to Adey:

I find there is much good work being done in this State which could be improved immensely by further systematizing it and linking up the work of one branch with the other. 3

McCoy's energetic and tactful administration gave unity as well as breath and life to the system. McCoy seized the opportunities caused by changing ministers and ministries to control and administer the system. He pursued the four main tasks of the administrator which have already been mentioned. Firstly, he aimed to fulfil the goals of the organization of providing schools for the children of the State by making quick, methodical appraisals followed by decisions with which he tenaciously stayed. Secondly, he had

capacity to inspire others in the organization to work towards the fulfilment of desired goals. He had the ability to make his plans understood. He issued simple, clear directions, and liked nothing better than to explain his directions at interviews in head office, or at meetings in various places in the State. Thirdly, he created interest in education within and outside the Education Department, and tried to make his teachers content by providing suitable working conditions. Fourthly, he made provisions for innovations when he considered that these were necessary.

II.

The 1915 Education Act established three boards to assist in the development and administration of education. An Advisory Council of Education chaired by the Director of Education consisted of twenty-one members, representing the Education Department itself, independent schools, the university, the technical schools, the Board of Agriculture, the Chamber of Manufacturers, the Employers' Federation, the Trades and Labour Council, the South Australian Public Teachers' Union and musical education groups. The council members had their expenses paid and they were re-nominated every three years. They were expected to report, and to make representations to the Minister on any educational matters. The conception of such a council as a custodian for the advancement of education was sound enough, but its size, if not the diversity of talents and interests of its members caused it to become ineffectual. It reported regularly until 1924 and then only once more in McCoy's time, in 1926, did its resolutions appear in the Parliamentary Papers.

Whether the council kept minutes is not known; its foresight can be judged only by the resolutions it passed. McCoy was its chairman and he obviously dominated its deliberations, in fact its resolutions reflected his own intentions. In 1920 it supported his plea for a proper building for the Teachers' College and the need to increase teachers' salaries. In 1923 it deplored the likely ill effects of cinema shows which accentuated crime and depravity, and in 1924 it definitely re-endorsed five of the ten recommendations that McCoy made in his report of his tour abroad in 1923.⁴

Instead of being a sentry watching for advance guards in modern developments in educational practice it was inclined to be a pedler of McCoy's wares. It was not independent of the Education Department with its own permanent secretariate with power to undertake inquiries on educational problems so that useful and sound information would be available for decision making. Perhaps the whole concept was too advanced for the times and even responsible members of the South Australian public could not see any use in such a body receiving and revising educational policy and establishing long term planning. Any group of intelligent people would naturally become disinterested and finally frustrated if their recommendations only ended up as publications in Parliamentary Papers, and they knew that their work was only advisory and had no statutory significance.⁵ Perhaps the whole concept of such a council would have been far more relevant if its members had been fewer and entirely nominated from people outside the Education Department. McCoy would then have been the judged and the assessed instead of being the apparent stimulator and leader. Not that this was necessary, but it would have been a more exciting and effective exercise to have a real, inspector-adviser group with statutory powers, than a heterogeneous group which was too gentlemanly to make penetrating criticisms in case some of its members took umbrage. Perhaps McCoy as chairman can be blamed for not calling regular meetings of this Council in the latter part of his directorship. McCoy was most conversant with the corridors of command and too shrewd to be way laid in some corner with matters that did not create effective action. When he saw the Council as a medium for the publicising of his own ideas he made use of it, but he was well aware of its general ineffectiveness, and he was more anxious to get on with the main task of gaining the support of the minister.

Two other boards, constituted by the 1915 Education Act, relieved the Director of Education of much detailed, burdensome routine work. The Teachers' Classification Board, consisting of the Superintendent of Primary Education and two nominees of the Governor, one from the inspectors

and one from the senior headmasters, who could be changed after three years, attended to all the details of classification and promotion of teachers. Appeals by teachers against the decisions of the board could be heard by the Public Service Commissioner. McCoy desired to give each and every teacher a fair deal in promotions and higher salaries, and the chance to transfer to a more desirable locality, which was very important in a developing state. He had set out the details of classification and promotion, and no matter what criticisms can be levelled at his system as it extended into the present day it proved itself in practice in his time. It quietened the dissidence amongst the teachers which was evident when McCoy arrived in South Australia. It was regarded as objective and fair and placed teachers beyond political or departmental patronage. It functioned smoothly and successfully because during McCoy's time it was never necessary for the Public Service Commissioner to hear an appeal from a dissatisfied teacher. A firmer criticism of the system was that it has remained too long and that it has engendered competition between teachers. It was and still is, inclined to stultify initiative and to produce uniformity among teachers, and the too frequent transfers of staff cause constant disturbance of work in the schools. Some credit must be given to the creators of this board in the 1915 Education Act, but between then and McCoy's arrival in 1919 no satisfactory form of promotion had been organized. It was McCoy's detailed, objective scheme that restored order, and permitted the board to operate effectively in routine fashion without constantly having to establish precedents.

The second board, the Advisory Curriculum Board of five members with the Superintendent of Primary Schools as chairman together with two inspectors and two teachers, advised the Director about details of curriculum revision. Although its continuous function relieved the Director's work load McCoy headed the general reformation of curricula revision in primary and post primary schools early in his career in South Australia. He often got his successful and promising teachers on sub-committees to revise and amplify subjects in the courses of instruction. He encouraged enlightened team-work where centralized administration was generally regarded as bureaucratic and essentially dictatorial. In 1924 he employed eighteen head

teachers and teachers to compile the subjects for the courses of study in the central schools. In the same year, during the revision of the course of instruction for primary schools, he called on the services of twenty-six head teachers and teachers.⁶ McCoy organized course planning for his schools by using the Advisory Curriculum Board as the co-ordinator of details determined by delegated committees consisting of inspectors, head teachers, and teachers.

III.

Taking control of a government department with permanent civil servants did not mean that a new Director could apply the proverbial broom to inefficient staff, but by careful organization he infused vitality and efficiency into his department. He was meticulous in setting out duty schedules for both his professional and clerical staff. On 30 October, 1919, one month after his appointment, he set out a tentative but detailed scheme of routine duties.⁷ All the clerical personnel - Chief Clerk, Supervisor of Compulsory Branch, Correspondence Clerk, Comptroller of Stores, Storekeeper, Paymaster, Accountant, Officer of Examinations, Leaves Clerk, Records Clerk, Nurse and Disinfecting Officer were given definite tasks. McCoy ordered them to have their lists of duties "mounted on millboard and placed over their desks in a permanent form, so that they may be referred to by the officers concerned or by myself".⁸ This was not a theoretical exercise of work allocation because McCoy personally supervised its functioning. Harmony and efficiency were established because each officer knew exactly his sphere of responsibility. McCoy was formal but humane, aloof but fair. He knew the names of most of the people who worked in the education office, and he was solicitous of their welfare. He was an astute man manager; most of his staff aimed to please him but he did not constantly reciprocate with praise.⁹ He was a lover of cricket and when the Test series were being played in Adelaide in the summer of 1921 he had half a day's leave arranged according to a roster so that the clerical staff could watch the match.¹⁰

Until the end of 1925 there were two departments connected with the administration of education in the State - the Minister's Department and the Education Department. This duality caused unnecessary work, frequent delays, confusion and error, and it was an anathema to the tidy mind of McCoy.

In answering a questionnaire in 1921 from the Royal Commission on the Public Service of South Australia, which was seeking to effect improvements in the system and its methods, McCoy referred to the cumbersome duplication caused by the two separate departments of education. When questioned about the sufficiency and convenience of office accommodation, his storekeeper modestly commented:

The store accommodation is not modern there being thirteen doors to open for the receiving and despatching of goods. 11

The Commission made no report on the administration of the Education Department itself.¹²

In February, 1922 McCoy wrote a memorandum to the Minister on the matter of the two departments.

The Minister has ruled that all correspondence addressed to him should be filed in his office, exception being made in regard to applications for the establishment of schools. If he would extend this ruling to apply to all ordinary correspondence that should obviously be sent to the Education Department it would save a great deal of unnecessary friction and duplication of work...Could not all of these and similar applications be filed here so that the Chief Inspector, Accountant and other officers who are continually dealing with these matters might have easy access to them, and so that all business of the same kind could be found in one set of files?

Recently it was ruled that a complaint against a teacher addressed inside to the Director but on the envelope to the Minister should be filed in the Minister's office, and more recently a letter addressed inside to the Minister and the envelope to the Director was also docketed in the Minister's office. The basis of the address appears to be unsound, and I beg to ask that in future all ordinary correspondence connected with the business of the Education Department be docketed in this Department, without regard to the address...

The business properly belonging to the Education Department is being gradually taken from the control of the officer appointed under the Education Act and passed to an officer not recognised by that Act. This makes the work of administration exceedingly difficult, and the position is becoming almost intolerable.... 13

Large sections of this memorandum are quoted to indicate McCoy's line of argument and more particularly to show his growing passion against this inefficiency. There was no hint of hiding facts from the Minister as he would eventually see all correspondence because it had to be sent to him for a decision or approval.

Ritchie had long thoughts on this submission, or else he merely wanted to delay the decision because he did not reply until ten weeks later. He conceded that applications for subsidies from school committees should not be docketed in his office, but he re-affirmed that letters and envelopes addressed to the Minister would be dealt with by the Secretary to the Minister together with all ordinary correspondence. Pencil notes by the Minister in the margin of McCoy's memorandum alongside the words "ordinary correspondence" asked, "Who is to decide this"? A pertinent point perhaps, but not beyond the ability of a capable correspondence or registry clerk. He capped the case by concluding, "I hope this will be the last of many unpleasant experiences that I have had in this regard".¹⁴ This administrative duplication continued until the end of 1925 when the Gunn Labour Government abolished the Minister's department and amalgamated all educational administration, which accelerated departmental business and made it more efficient.

The Labour Government was sympathetic to reforms and improvements in many aspects of education, and McCoy took advantage of this attitude wherever and whenever he saw that advancement could be made. In order to expedite administrative procedures, and to obtain quick decisions McCoy requested the Minister on 2 February, 1926 to grant approval for the Director to authorize action on seventy-six separate items connected with the Education Act and the associated Regulations.¹⁵ Hill erased forty-two items but authorized the Director, and in his absence the Deputy Director, to deal with the thirty-four remaining matters. However, when the Auditor-General ruled out ten others and reported that practically all the matters sanctioned by the Minister contravened the Audit and Education Regulations Cabinet returned the request to the Director for further consideration.

McCoy subsequently reported that thirty-eight items were either matters of policy or of sufficient importance to require the direct approval of the Minister, but that all the other thirty-eight items were matters of routine whose policy had been already determined by the Minister and that in dealing with these items the Director would be creating no new precedents. He then proceeded to comment upon them in turn. It seemed odd that originally McCoy listed seventy-six items and then admitted that half of them were not exactly routine matters. He was obviously following the usual course in public administration by initially asking for as much as possible on the basis that the number of requests can be reduced but seldom increased. Finally Cabinet allowed twelve very minor matters to be dealt with directly by the Director. Again in 1928 McCoy endeavoured to extend this list, and five other additions were made after his death. McCoy's successors endeavoured to make additions to this insignificant list without much success.¹⁶

The administrative machinery was slowing down even in McCoy's time partly because of the inbuilt checks. The Crown Solicitor's comment in 1932 emphasized this:

As a matter of strict law there is no power to delegate to the Director of Education the power to deal with the matters referred to. However, the matters are comparatively unimportant and of a routine nature, and it does not seem at all likely that any legal difficulty or embarrassment to the Government will result if the present practice is continued.¹⁷

The detailed work of the Education Department was increasing and the increase included a multitude of very minor matters that vexed the labours of the Minister and the Director of Education.¹⁸ There were a number of experienced and very capable officers in high positions in the Department on whose judgement the greatest reliance could be placed, but the Act just did not permit these officers to use their own discretion in discharging responsibilities. Maximum efficiency in administration was beginning to be impeded by regulations in the system itself, and in the future, efficient activity depended on the readiness to re-organize. McCoy had initially organized the department within the framework of the 1915 Education Act, but at the end of his directorship the framework itself required modification and revision.

IV.

McCoy's predecessors, Hartley and Williams, did not delegate responsibilities. The 1915 Education Act gave the Director of Education some relief by official delegation of duties to superintendents, to the Minister of Education, but the Director was finally responsible for the whole department.

McCoy relied on the creative ability of his expert advisors, and he expected and got their support and loyalty. Two of his superintendents, Charlton and Fenner, were in office on his arrival. Charlton was the State's first Superintendent of Primary Education and he had been a candidate for the directorship with McCoy, but on McCoy's appointment he swallowed his pride, became intensely loyal to "the chief", and enthusiastically involved himself in the educational developments under McCoy. Fenner was the State's first Superintendent of Technical Education and McCoy accepted the advice of Fenner who was the expert in the area in which McCoy himself had no practical experience. Adey, McCoy's own appointee, became the State's first Superintendent of Secondary Education after a distinguished career as a teacher of exhibitioners at Sturt Street Primary School and head of Adelaide High School since 1908. McCoy delegated responsibility to his superintendents, but he maintained constant communication with them. The tentative plan and official duties that he suggested on his arrival seemed to become constant practice during his term of office.¹⁹

Besides composing memoranda to the Minister on all questions of policy and new regulations McCoy met his senior officers personally and regularly; the principal of the Teachers' Training College, Schulz, and the officer controlling High Schools, Adey, he met by arrangement, but the Superintendent of Technical Schools was to meet him daily at 2.15 p.m. as was the Superintendent of Primary Schools at 11 a.m., and the Chief Inspector at 12 noon. The Medical Inspector of Schools had to report to the Superintendent of Primary Education on all matters connected with primary schools, and deal with general correspondence connected with the work of the Medical Branch.

McCoy gave constant attention to details. This was evident for example in the instructions to Charlton contained in his letters written from England during 1923 when he was busily interviewing prospective teachers who had just completed their courses in English teachers colleges.²⁰ In four separate, very formal letters he repeated the procedures he wanted carried out when these young men arrived in Adelaide. This was McCoy's own experiment, so he obviously wanted it to be successful. He did not want the young English teachers to be treated as migrants, he hoped that they would be settled into their new posts as smoothly and as comfortably as possible. Perhaps his reiteration of procedures to be adopted reflected his anxiety because he was giving instructions to his deputy who always seemed to follow meticulously his director's instructions; anyhow McCoy left nothing to chance, he was always categorical, and his staff knew exactly what he wanted.

When McCoy arrived in 1919 there were nine inspectors and one assistant inspector plus Miss L. Longmore. By January, 1920 there were eleven district inspectors besides Miss Longmore and Adey, who, as principal of Adelaide High School, carried out the inspection of all the other high schools.²¹ In 1929 the inspectorate had increased by the addition of five others - a chief inspector, a staff inspector, and inspectors of elementary agriculture, domestic arts and central schools for girls. An assistant inspector had been appointed to assist Fenner on the technical side.²² As far as the primary schools were concerned there was a 15.9 per cent increase in the number of schools and a 13.4 per cent increase in the number of children attending them between 1919 and 1929, and the number of teachers had increased by 16.4 per cent.²³ This, together with the fact that the number of post-primary schools and their attendance had increased, did not lighten the work of the inspectors because they were also called upon to assist in the inspection of secondary schools.

McCoy never re-assessed the roles of the inspectors in the organization of education. His comments to the Third Imperial Education Conference in London in 1923 about the need for formal inspection in Australian schools



A.H. Pitt H.C. Mackay J.R. Williams J.C. Deak W.H. Harris E. Allen L.H. Jefferson

J. H. ...	C.H. ...	C.C. ...	A.E.H. ...	G.L. ...
...
...

remained constant. The inspectors' main task was the assessment of the effectiveness of teachers to maintain satisfactory standards throughout the service. Their subsidiary tasks made them the chief connections in the lines of communication from head office to the schools and they were expected to stimulate new developments in education in their districts and to act as counsellors for teachers with problems.

Once in 1924 while praising the zeal and the enthusiasm of the nominated headmistresses of the proposed central schools and their chief assistants he finished by writing to the Minister:

It will not be possible to secure a maximum of efficiency or to maintain this zeal and enthusiasm unless a capable woman is appointed to lead, direct, and subsequently inspect the work. ²⁴

To McCoy inspectors were indispensable. Actually he had been persisting all that year for an appointment of a woman inspector, and by the end of the year Miss A.L. Miethke was selected as the first woman inspector of central schools for girls.²⁵ Pavia was able to concentrate on the particular inspection of the central schools for boys.

By 1926 with the rapid increase of technical and junior technical work, an appointment of an inspector in the technical branch became necessary. Specialist teachers of manual work in the central schools needed personal guidance and assistance in the classroom because they had often been recruited directly from industry. There was some difficulty in filling this post. It was advertised outside the State because such courses were still in their infancy and it was unlikely that a local person would be available. The first nominee from interstate withdrew, and it was finally decided that a South Australian teacher should be appointed as an assistant inspector.²⁶

McCoy expected absolute loyalty and unquestioning obedience from his inspectors. In 1928 he had occasion to suspend Mr. A.W. Pitt.²⁷ During an interview with some inspectors on the morning of 3 February, about the use of motor cars by inspectors McCoy objected to words spoken by Pitt. The words and the manner in which they were uttered McCoy regarded as offensive and derogatory. He demanded that the words be withdrawn or

that Pitt leave the room. Pitt moved to leave, but before he reached the door McCoy suspended him. On the same day McCoy wrote to Pitt confirming the verbal suspension on the charges of insubordination and conducting himself in an improper and unbecoming manner, and he asked Pitt to reply in writing. In the meantime, five of the inspectors present at the interview wrote to McCoy stating that they believed that no discourtesy was intended in Pitt's remarks. Four days later McCoy answered the inspectors in his usual brief, but in this case, bristling manner, as these selections from his letter showed.

Your opinion as to what a suspended officer intended to convey by his remarks is gratuitous...He is probably able to make an explanation without the assistance of his fellow officers... Various circumstances connected with the interview created an unfavourable impression regarding the respect of some of the junior Inspectors towards the high office of Director. 28

McCoy disdained the apparent collusion between his inspectors and the final words reflected the arrogance of an autocrat. When Pitt wrote expressing sorrow that his interjection had been misunderstood, and that he had no intention of being insubordinate, the suspension was removed. The incident probably occurred because of misunderstanding and frayed tempers all round, but finally no doubt was left about who was the master.

V.

When McCoy re-introduced the position of infant mistress in 1920 and created headmistresses in the central schools in 1925 he fabricated a situation which sometimes generated friction between head masters and head mistresses. Difficulties and differences arose when official correspondence to the Department was not forwarded through the headmaster, and when head masters interviewed teachers in the infant section or girls' schools without consulting the infant mistress or the headmistresses. In fact, according to the headmasters, some headmistresses by emphasizing their own status were belittling the position of the headmaster; McCoy was quite adamant about the actual position of the headmaster as being

the person in sole authority in a school, but he wanted both parties to approach any problem with sound common sense so that friction would cease and amicable relationships prevail.

There is evidence that McCoy talked to some of the headmistresses about this matter because there are notes in his own handwriting on the subject. He wrote that the actual differences considered separately were petty points, but when put all together they constituted a serious defect in the organization of schools and a grave charge against the common sense of headmistresses. He made no mention of the possibility that the headmasters themselves could sometimes be at fault, their position, not their personality apparently put them beyond reproach. He went on, "I ask you to see that the defects be remedied without further delay". He expected that this would be done "in a generous spirit". He concluded with a forthright directive, of threat and cajolery.

The Headmistress who is unable to effect a permanent remedy, is not fit for her position, and that view will be taken by the Department and necessary action will follow. I cannot say too plainly:

- i) That I appreciate to the full the splendid work that has been done by the Mistresses up to the present;
- ii) That unless this work is done within the limits presented by the Department as laid down in the Circular, we must find some other method to carry out the work, and this method will certainly not be one that will sacrifice the dignity of the Headmasters. 29

The circular mentioned was entitled "Duties of Headmasters; Headmistresses and Infant Mistresses". It was a clear statement of the relevant Regulations and emphasized that the headmaster was the head of the whole school. Although his authority was extensive it too was circumscribed by conditions in the circular. The conclusion of the circular admitted that:

It is difficult to lay down definite rules which will differentiate between the duties of the Headmaster and the Mistress. Such matters should form the subject of a conference between the Headmasters and the Mistresses and if a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached, they should be referred to the Inspector. It is considered, however, that the exercise of tact and common sense will, as a rule, obviate the need for referring the matter to a third party. 30

McCoy fully realized that regulations alone cannot reduce friction between people, but that it could be reduced appreciably by the ordinary give and take of social and official life. He expected all his staff and teachers to exercise tact and consideration so that the departmental business could be transacted harmoniously and effectively for the benefit of the children. The caprices of human nature were such that this circular was last distributed on the 29 February, 1938 almost in its original form.

VI.

By 1915 the Boards of Advice which previously had general oversight of all schools in a district had become defunct, and to stimulate local interest in education the 1915 Education Act constituted a committee responsible for each school. Parents connected with a primary school elected a school committee of seven members to exercise a general oversight of the buildings and grounds, and to assist the improvement of school buildings and the decoration of school rooms. The committee could make suggestions to the teachers, but it could not give them direct orders. It was expected that school committees would assist in enforcing the compulsory attendance clauses of the Act. In the cases of high schools and technical schools the Government appointed a school council to exercise a general oversight of the school, and technical school councils maintained a close link between the work of the school and the local industries, and nominated part-time instructors for final appointment by the Director of Education.

The committees and councils have made a significant contribution to the development of education in South Australia. As well as raising money for material improvements in the school, such as providing playground equipment, maintaining school gardens, and establishing and extending libraries, they got the local communities involved in school activities by stimulating co-operation with the teachers and developing an understanding of what the schools were doing. They also provided a real link between the home and the school. The detailed story of their overall influence on

education in South Australia has still to be told, but McCoy during his directorship acknowledged the State's debt to them.

McCoy was particularly interested in the Mothers' Clubs associated with infant schools. These clubs were educative and practical as well as social. Regular meetings were held to discuss child welfare and development, and their money raising efforts provided much of the special furniture, apparatus and equipment in the classrooms. Miss Longmore had made it one of the prescribed duties of an infant mistress to be president of the Mothers' Club so that she could guide the club according to the needs of the children in her school. These clubs helped to close the gap between the school and the home. By 1926 Miss Longmore had fostered the spirit of these Mothers' Clubs to such an extent that a State association was constituted - Infant Schools Mothers' Clubs Association.³¹

In 1924 the Superintendent of Primary Education commented on "the awakened interest shown by parents in the educational welfare of their children".³² He attributed this to the realization of parents about the advantages of education and this was reflected in the almost total disappearance of truancy. Other relevant factors were the increasing attractiveness of school work and "the more humane administration of the teacher". He also referred to the ever increasing activities of school committees in raising money which was subsidized by the Government for school equipment. All this gave parents "a sense of proprietorship in the school".

The Minister commented in 1926 on the increasing value of school committees and the improved relationships between committees and teachers.³³ The fact that the Department more than doubled payments in subsidies over the previous four years indicated the fund raising zeal of school committees even in small rural districts. By 1928 Charlton claimed. "At no time during the history of Education in South Australia has there been such living contact between the school and the home".³⁴ He associated this with two factors, firstly the work of voluntary organizations such as school committees, and secondly the increasing interest in schools where new projects in home-crafts, domestic arts, woodwork, and elementary agriculture were arousing co-operation between the teacher, children and parents.

McCoy urged his teachers to enlist the interests of parents through school committees because co-operation would lessen their difficulties.³⁵ He believed that teachers should identify themselves as much as possible with community affairs, particularly in the country, because this association would help to draw the school closer to the society in which it functioned. In most of his annual reports McCoy referred to the development of sound co-operation between the school committees and the school, but he sometimes qualified this condition. When travelling with the Minister in the Murray area in 1928 he gave an address at a social evening after the opening of Renmark North Primary School and the laying of the foundation stone of the Renmark High School in which he reminded the local people that the Education Department and the teachers had done much for the South Australian community, and he warned them that although parents' co-operation had been secured in most cases, school committees should know that the headmaster was "the boss of the school" and that committees could not give orders to the teachers.³⁶

In a centralized system of educational administration teachers can rely on the Department for protection from parental vindictiveness and local bigotry. During 1924 the school committee of North Adelaide School objected to the picture of the "Madonna and Child" being hung in the infant school.³⁷ They claimed that it had a distinctly religious correlation and that a mother's love could be more suitably illustrated by other pictures. After the infant mistress had initially rejected their directive as was her right, the committee felt so strongly about the matter that they sent a deputation to the Minister asking to have the picture taken down. McCoy told the Minister that this classic picture hung on the walls of many infant schools, and that the Education Department would be held up to ridicule if it were removed. McCoy protected the teacher and condemned the attitude of the school committee.

Sometimes the school committees raised awkward problems which required careful replies. In 1921 McCoy received a letter from the secretary

of a country school committee. It is recorded as it was written, hopefully as a poor example of the effectiveness of elementary education, but particularly to indicate the official response to its context.

I am instructed by my committee to ask you What height of tempture the Barometer is to rise before it is to hot for the children to be keep in school as it has al ready reached 112 Degree by Dinner time trusting you will give me an early reply

I am
Yours abdtly³⁸

McCoy telegraphed his fellow directors in New South Wales and Western Australia to discover what regulations, if any, they had written about school attendances on days of high temperatures. He courteously replied to the school committee's enquiry that there could be no fixed rules, or hard and fast regulations, about dismissing children from school on excessively hot days, and that, in fact, the children would be as well off at school as at home in such conditions.

McCoy distinctly displayed four of the eight administrative styles of Hemphill which have already been mentioned and which have definite impact on organizations. McCoy continuously stressed the need for clear communications; he constantly maintained organizational relations with his officers, particularly with his ministers; he carefully scheduled his own work and he expected his officers and his teachers to do the same, and finally he used a high direction style which accentuated the issuing of orders.

Although the nature of the regulations sometimes hampered the efficiency of administration at head office McCoy was always on the alert for improvements to establish clear, smooth lines of control and communication. He got the teachers involved in curriculum making, but centralized decision making and the hierarchical organization still created lack of initiative on the part of most teachers. Inspectors were regarded as the servants of the system and the purveyors of approved policy, and their main task of assessing teachers established efficiency but promoted conformity. Inspectors were respected for sound performance of assigned routine duties. They had little opportunity for using their initiative and for acquiring exper-

ience and insight all of which were basic requirements in training for the successful administration of education in changing times.

Because of the growing interest in education in the 1920's school committees and school councils developed as fund raising and fund allocating bodies but the public still remained ignorant of educational practices. McCoy encouraged parental interest in schools particularly as this began the creation of a link between the school and the home, but he was most adamant about his teachers being their own masters in the class rooms. He regarded the curriculum and the teaching methods as the sole prerogatives of the professionals.

McCoy's own inclination of spending time on minute routine matters and the minor details stipulated by the Education Act and the regulations that required the attention of the Minister and the Director left little time for the top administrators to make thorough, thoughtful analysis of educational problems arising with the changing times. Much of McCoy's time was spent in mere management, little time was available for scientific innovation. He could, however, quickly sort out complex administrative issues into succinct written reports, make appraisals and recommend effective action. He expected tact and sound common sense to prevail amongst his superintendents, inspectors and headmasters. He realized fully that man management cannot rest solely on regulations and that discussions on difficulties encountered helped in reaching practical solutions. As the organization was becoming more complex no one knew better than McCoy himself that he had to depend on the expert advice of his superintendents, but all departmental officers knew their exact function and place in the hierarchical structure and who was the Director.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER NINE.

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2. S.A.P.P. No. 15 1945 p.28
3. S.A.T.J. Oct. 1929 p.209
4. See S.A.P.P. No. 45 1921, 1924 and 1925
5. A comment in the teachers' journal referred to this imperfection
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6. See S.A.A. E.D. 141/1924
7. S.A.A. E.D. 2604/1919
8. Ibid., instruction 16 Jan. 1920
9. Mr. W.F.T. Harris, formerly Secretary of S.A. Education Department,
to the author.
10. See S.A.A. E.D. 84/1921
11. S.A.A. E.D. 1994/1921
12. See S.A.P.P. 1922 Numbers 55 and 56 for Commission's report
13. S.A.A. M.E. 377/1921 McCoy to Ritchie 7 Feb. 1922
14. Ibid., Ritchie to McCoy 26 April, 1922
15. S.A.A. E.D. 210/1926
16. Ibid., Adey to Minister 27 May, 1932; Fenner to Minister 1 June, 1944
17. Ibid., 18 July, 1932
18. The increasing official correspondence was becoming crowded with
local matters about such things as blinds for school windows, the
condition of blackboards and tanks, requesting permission to put
a cow in a school ground, which were not trivial in their locality
but which cluttered the work in head office.
19. S.A.A. E.D. 2604/1919 Plan 30 Oct. 1919
20. S.A.A. E.D. 2707/1923
21. E.G. Jan. 1920 p.1 - Official Directory
22. Ibid., Jan. 1929 p.1 - Official Directory
23. See Tables 4, 5 and 10 and Figure 3.
24. S.A.A. E.D. 1862/1924 McCoy to Hill 2 Oct. 1924
25. S.A.A. E.D. 667/1924

26. S.A.A. E.D. 845/1926. G.S. McDonald remained as an assistant inspector for nine years until he completed his arts degree.
27. S.A.A. E.D. 213/1928
28. Ibid., letter 7 Feb. 1928
29. Notes in S.A.A. E.D. 1504/1925
30. Ibid., Circular 16 July, 1925
31. S.A.P.P. No. 44 1925 p.18, 1928 p.7
32. S.A.P.P. 1925 No. 44 p.24
33. S.A.P.P. 1927 No. 44 p.7
34. S.A.P.P. 1929 No. 44 p.14
35. S.A.T.J. Sept. 1928 pp.19 -194 McCoy's address to the Teachers' Conference
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37. S.A.A. M.E. 18/1924
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CHAPTER TEN.

MCCOY AND HIS TEACHERS.

- I. The aims of teaching.
- II. Salary problems.
- III. Uncertificated teachers.
- IV. Further education opportunities for teachers.
- V. Mobility of teachers.

I.

In an address to the annual conference of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union in 1920 McCoy stressed that teachers were not merely rote workers, and he urged them to be professional people. He went on to outline the aims of teaching:

It is his duty to mould the character of the child, to train him to the right habits of thought, speech and conduct; to facilitate normal learning processes, and to help him meet the needs of life carefully guiding and directing his activities, and using that mass of experience and knowledge that the child brings to school, and thus to make him a characterful, intelligent and efficient citizen. 1

Character training was named first, but it was not clear what this meant exactly or how it was to be achieved, except perhaps by the precept and example of the teachers. Learning processes were mentioned but they actually seemed to be connected with procedures rather than a knowledge and understanding of learning theories. The last point about guiding the child to meet the needs of life and making him a good citizen was indeterminate and ephemeral. Over all then McCoy regarded teachers as the main agent in the education of the child. The influence of the home was not mentioned.

As John Dewey indicated at the turn of the century, genius amongst teachers is as rare as genius in other human activities, and education, especially national education is and forever will be in the hands of ordinary men and women. McCoy expected these ordinary men and women who formed his teaching service to possess at least basic qualifications, and he wanted them to continue to gain further qualifications and develop as better teachers with these additional qualifications plus the assumed benefits of experience. In order to determine the status of a teacher for salary purposes, McCoy adopted the common national formula where qualifications plus experience determined position on the salary scale. This assumed that effective teaching followed naturally and it was left to the inspector to assess this enigmatic aspect and have it transposed into "a skill mark".

II.

McCoy knew that contented teachers were essential for the smooth functioning of any system of education. Australian traditions placed people socially, according to their income. Teachers could not gain general respect purely by the nature of their role in the community, nor by their qualifications or practical ability; remuneration was a decisive factor. He was continually anxious that teachers should be rewarded according to their qualifications, ability and experience, and that salaries of teachers in South Australia should be comparable with the salaries paid in the other states. He was helpful in assisting teachers with salary claims, but he had to keep expenditure within the estimates of his department. He was required to act as mediator between the claims of teachers and the restraints of his Minister. Unlike Peter Board, McCoy was always concerned with salaries and allowances, not in any radical manner, but from the point of view of just rewards for services rendered. On 20 May, 1921 he requested the Public Service Commissioner to review his own salary in the light of the marginal difference between his salary and that of the Director of Education in Western Australia.² Why he selected the salary of the Western Australian Director of Education was not explained. He referred to the salary increases of the Directors of Education in New South Wales and Victoria and to the recent increase in Western Australia. He did not expect to be paid the same amount as his colleagues in Victoria and New South Wales, but he expected to be paid more than the Director in Western Australia. His request was re-submitted at least on four subsequent occasions and was still under consideration in January, 1924.

Teachers salaries in South Australia were determined by direct negotiation between the teachers and the Minister of Education until 1924 and then the Arbitration Court took control. In 1920 the South Australian Public Teachers' Union prepared a case for an increase of teachers' salaries. This was sympathetically supported by McCoy who

marshalled the facts in his usual careful manner, by seeking information from other states, and by preparing three tables showing the present salaries of teachers in South Australia, salary proposals of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union, and a salary scale which he proposed. McCoy's scale did not differ greatly from that of the union, which however, did not include the salaries of fifteen special teachers, nor did it allow for increasing the allowances of probationary students and student teachers in training. McCoy's scheme which was adopted in July, 1920 was more comprehensive and fair, and its net cost was £66,675 against the union's proposals totalling £68,415.³

By the middle of 1921, salary increases in the other states had again placed South Australian teachers' salaries far below those in other parts of Australia. On 1 August, 1921 the executive of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union requested the Minister to increase classification quotas varying from £10 per year on the bottom range to £60 per year at the top range. This offered a salary increase, and created greater inducements for teachers to move up the classification ladder.⁴ When the Minister referred this request to McCoy three months later, he supported it and prepared tables to substantiate his case recommending salary increases. Table 1 showed the details of salaries in each state. Table 2 showed the existing salary regulations in South Australia with the union's amendment included in ink, together with marginal differences for special teachers which the union had again omitted. Table 3 showed the annual increased cost entailed by these proposals including the Secondary Branch, which the union had not considered, but which McCoy included because he always insisted that all teachers should benefit and not just the majority. On the 12 December, 1921 the curt reply from the Minister, "that no further increase can be granted at present", closed the case. McCoy was willing to fight for just rewards for his qualified teachers on the grounds of establishing a profession of skilled men and women, and when teachers salaries in South Australia were falling behind those in other states he became particularly active. Although teachers' salaries

were determined by Arbitration Court awards, from December, 1924 McCoy maintained a keen interest in salary matters.⁵

McCoy was willing to recommend amendments when anomalies in the practical application of regulations proved detrimental to the majority of teachers. In 1926 it was found that the regulations governing payments to headmasters, headmistresses and chief assistants for additional work in the central schools were quite unrealistic. In fact, only four teachers had satisfied the pupil enrolment and attendance requirements at their schools.⁶ McCoy was keen to reward these teachers who were working strenuously in these schools which he so strongly supported. The regulations were altered so that these teachers could gain justified salary increases on the basis of their work, and not merely on the number of pupils constantly in attendance. By 1927 it was becoming clear that teachers in charge of Class VI schools were under a great disadvantage when competing with chief assistants for promotion to Class V schools.⁷ The South Australian Public Teachers' Union pointed to the anomaly, and on his return from abroad McCoy recommended alterations to the regulations to rectify matters. In 1928 he had the regulations amended to grant concessions to older teachers who were efficient on the floor of the schoolroom, but whose educational qualifications gained some years previously were not equal to those currently required for promotion,⁸

III.

Whilst generally giving sympathetic attention to the cases of teachers' salaries, McCoy gave scant consideration to uncertificated teachers whose numbers, as Table 3 shows, remained embarrassingly high during his directorship. Although it is not possible to determine accurately from the returns, which came in at various times during the year, the exact number of primary schools controlled by uncertificated teachers must have been high if Column F in this table is compared with Column B in Table 4. The reasons for this high number of uncertified teachers can be attributed to by at least two factors. Firstly, the figures probably included people under the age of twenty one years

TABLE 3

UNCERTIFICATED TEACHERS in PRIMARY SCHOOLS1919 -- 1929

A	B	C	D	E	F
Year		Total Number of Teachers. Monitors and Junior Tehrs. excepted.	Number of Uncertificated Teachers.	Percentage of Uncertificated Teachers.	Number of Uncertificated Teachers in Charge of Schools.
1919	Men	457	26	5.6	Not shown
	Women	1,172	248	21.1	
1920	Men	468	28	5.9	Not shown
	Women	1,241	255	20.5	
1921	Men	464	107	22.8	81
	Women	1,222	644	50.2	473
1922	Men	527	110	20.7	98
	Women	1,162	553	40.7	420.
1923	Men	583	118	20.0	107
	Women	1,110	490	44.1	381
1924	Men	507	125	24.6	119
	Women	1,091	425	38.9	338
1925	Men	648	130	21.6	124
	Women	1,085	385	30.5	313
1926	Men	666	120	18.0	120
	Women	1,097	361	32.1	300
1927	Men	799	148	18.5	143
	Women	1,160	349	30.0	284
1928	Men	852	167	19.7	164
	Women	1,152	335	29.0	289
1929	Men	931	224	24.0	214
	Women	1,189	341	28.6	306

who would not qualify for adult wages and who were not sure about their future careers but who were prepared to take charge of the numerous small schools in isolated country areas near their own homes. Secondly, political motives to encourage country settlers had small one-teacher country schools officially adopted in the 1915 Education Act. South Australia had a higher proportion than any other state of these small rural schools with between six and twenty pupils. Often it was difficult to staff these schools except by local residents. The South Australian Public Teachers' Union itself supported McCoy's policy of encouraging and rewarding teachers who gained higher academic qualifications, but while he considered uncertificated teachers to be an embarrassment to the profession the union was sympathetic to these people when their salaries fell below the wages of unskilled labourers. In August, 1921 the union asked the Minister that special consideration be given to unclassified women teachers because similar teachers received higher rates of pay in the other states, and their minimum wage in South Australia was less than the minimum wage generally awarded by the Industrial Court to factory workers.⁹ The union claimed that these women often accepted teaching and living conditions in the back blocks which others refused, and they had to maintain teacher's status in living and dress and had, in addition, continual outlay in books and expenses in correspondence lessons in order to obtain classification. Every uncertificated woman doing work which would otherwise be done by a man saved the Department between £75 and £85 per year. McCoy made no comments on this case, but with his suggested revision of all teachers' salaries in November, 1921, their salary was also increased, not because of their particular plight, but because the whole teaching service, except monitors and junior teachers, was recommended for increments which the Minister ultimately refused.

McCoy's attitude to uncertificated teachers was expressed very positively in 1924 when the union asked the Minister that salaries of uncertificated male teachers be adjusted from time to time with the minimum wage for adult unskilled labour.¹⁰ McCoy stated that this was undesirable

because the minimum qualification for a certificated teacher was low, too low in fact, because it was similar to the standard of a high school child of fifteen years of age. An increase in the salary of the 88 uncertificated male teachers over twenty one years of age would lead to extra expenditure of £572 per annum, furthermore, if their salaries were increased, there should be a corresponding increase in the salaries of certificated teachers. It was his basic premise that initially, salary increases should always flow to certificated teachers and that uncertificated teachers would consequently become residual beneficiaries.

With signs of the impending economic recession in 1928 the Minister decreed that the services of temporary and supplementary teachers and monitors should be terminated.¹¹ After dismissal notices had been sent out some cases of hardship, particularly amongst married women caring for invalid husbands, came to McCoy's notice. Although he was never willing to increase the salaries of unqualified teachers he was not prepared to cut off meagre means of livelihood in necessitous circumstances, so he had some of these women reinstated.

IV.

On the matter of teachers' qualifications McCoy knew that teachers' performances were sometimes handicapped by their lack of qualifications, and he also knew that better qualified teachers would help raise the status of the teaching service in the eyes of the community. When a deputation from the University Council waited on the Premier in 1926 to ask for an extra grant to conduct night lectures between 7 and 10 p.m. at the university McCoy strongly supported the plan.¹² He was undoubtedly influenced by reflecting on his own early career when he had the chance to study at Sydney University by night lectures. University evening lectures held between 4 and 6 p.m. could only be attended by teachers from schools in the city and the nearer suburbs, and the time was inappropriate because teachers were too tired to profit from lectures directly after the day's work in school. McCoy continued by explaining to the Premier:

The activities of schools have multiplied, and teachers have many duties to perform, particularly in regard to sport after school hours. Moreover, the scheme that suited Adelaide twenty years ago does not suit it today, because of the great expansion of the city.

In 1927 the plan was adopted and fourteen art subjects, some at second year level, were made available without cost as night lectures to teachers in the Education Department.

V.

McCoy supported the practice common in all the Australian states that movement of teachers between the states should not be free. As a state spent money on the training of teachers that state should not be deprived of their services when they were properly qualified. Teachers' career opportunities were confined to the state of their training. In January, 1926 the New South Wales Education Department asked the South Australian Public Teachers' Union to publish, under the positions vacant section of its journal, an announcement that the Department of Public Instruction of New South Wales had vacancies for 200 teachers.¹³ In December, 1925 T. Mutch, the Minister of Education, addressed the New South Wales Public School Teachers' Federation about their grievances over the teacher shortage. He claimed that teachers in New South Wales were on the whole, better paid than those in any other part of the world, but because of the teacher shortage they were overworked. He would welcome well qualified teachers from any other state.

I do not care where the teachers come from, so long as they are well qualified, and if Victoria does not like to pay her teachers adequately, or South Australia or any of the other States, then I am not going to stop any of them coming over to New South Wales because we want them, and we will welcome them. They won't dispossess any of our own teachers. They won't rob any of our own teachers of their rights of seniority. They won't in any way take the places of any of our own teachers, because they will come here to fill vacancies, and it will be a good thing for those who are overworked in the schools, that they shall have the assistance they need, because the position is unfair to the children more so than to the teacher, that they should not have the advantage of a teacher for themselves, in a class small enough so that everyone can understand what the teacher has to give him. 14

The advertisement sent for publication was signed by Mutch, Minister of Education, and not the Under Secretary. It was probable that S.M. Smith, the Under Secretary, did not approve of the campaign because it contravened the gentlemen's agreement between the directors of education about accepting interstate teachers into their own service without consultation. The South Australian Public Teachers' Union Secretary refused to publish the advertisement on the grounds that South Australia could not afford an exodus of qualified teachers. In accordance with his usual practice McCoy immediately wrote to all the other state directors of education, except New South Wales, to re-inforce his own contention and to re-affirm the gentlemen's agreement.

The course proposed by New South Wales creates a most undesirable precedent, and that hitherto the practice has been not to advertise for teachers in another State, and not to employ a teacher until a suitable communication has been received from the Director of that State. 15

The replies from all the directors supported his stand. McCoy wanted to conserve the intrastate structure of teacher classification and promotion. The infrequent case for transfer he would have judged on its merits. He himself had moved interstate for his own advantage, and he had very carefully planned the importation of qualified English teachers to relieve South Australia's serious teacher shortage in 1923, but he was not prepared to permit the overall, free movement of teachers between state and state.

Although he had worked in three states and had even made the organization of teacher exchange services a reason for his tour abroad in 1923, McCoy never really was enthusiastic about allowing teachers to acquire the benefits of travel. Arrangements existed with the League of Empire for exchanges with British and Canadian teachers, but in 1925 when the Appointments Secretary of Stanford University, California, wrote about exchange positions between South Australia and the United States of America, McCoy was not prepared to recommend exchange with the United States of America. However, he was prepared to accept one or two teachers per year from the United States of America if they were suitably qualified.¹⁶ His intuitive impressions on this matter of travel and overseas experience were disclosed in notes to the Minister in 1925.

Speaking generally, the teachers who leave here and return do not show any marked improvement in skill, though the experience of travel improved them considerably as women of the world, hitherto they have all been women. 17

In a letter to his colleague, B. McKenna, in Queensland in 1925 on the teacher exchange scheme organized by the League of Empire McCoy expressed doubts about it, but he wanted it to continue.

It is difficult to express an opinion regarding the advantages that accrue to the Department through this system...My private opinion (not for publication) is that English teachers who come to us are merely "trippers". So far as I can gather none of them have brought to the state any ideals which have benefited our teachers.... As regards our teachers who have visited England, I should say that outside the benefits of travel, and the consequent advantages to them as teachers, the advantage to the schools is negligible. 18

Although he was dubious about inspectors travelling interstate for their guild conferences during school time and suspicious when the teachers' union asked that teachers representatives at Federation meetings be allowed to extend their time or change the time of their annual national meetings to observe interstate schools at work, he finally conceded that overseas visits by senior departmental officers would, to quote his familiar expression "enrich their experience" and assist them to perform their tasks in a more enlightened fashion.¹⁹ Much of this was inconsistent with McCoy's own career. He supported the contention of all the other Australian Directors of Education that the State should employ only teachers who qualified within it. Teachers had much mobility within the state but the whole of the Commonwealth's teachers were not available to the whole of the Commonwealth's children. In fact the state teaching service continued to be seriously inbred and curiously self satisfied.

McCoy made himself responsible for the welfare of his teachers; he was interested in their salaries and moderated the effects of the regulations so that everything would be fair and equitable. In return he expected his teachers to gain adequate qualifications, and he hoped that the more enterprising ones would study university subjects in their own time. He presumed that his teachers would have his own unflinching energy in their classrooms, a keen interest in the local community, and high standards of

conduct as examples to assist the moral development of their charges. He expected them to accept obediently the system so that the elaborate and regulated control of teachers was tending to make the system dominate. Efficiency was being obtained, but it was inclined to be the uniform efficiency of a machine which determined the progress of education.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER TEN.

1. S.A.T.J. July, 1920 p.4
2. S.A.A. E.D. 1267/1921 In 1928 McCoy's salary was £1,250
See S.A.A. E.D. 280/1928
3. S.A.A. E.D. 1657/1920
4. S.A.A. M.E. 218/1921
5. See for example, S.A.A. E.D. 395/1925
6. S.A.A. E.D. 1879/1926
7. S.A.A. E.D. 956/1927
8. S.A.A. E.D. 285/1928
9. S.A.A. M.E. 217/1921
10. S.A.A. M.E. 233/1923
11. S.A.A. E.D. 503/1928
12. S.A.A. E.D. 1054/1926
13. S.A.A. E.D. 158/1926 Letter dated 27 Jan. 1926
14. Education - Journal of N.S.W. Teachers' Federation. Jan. 1926 p.67
15. S.A.A. E.D. 158/1926
16. S.A.A. E.D. 223/1925
17. Ibid., McCoy to Hill 22 Dec. 1925
18. S.A.A. E.D. 1351/1925 McCoy to McKenna 4 Aug. 1925
19. Report of Tour Abroad 1927 p.57 Recommendation No.22

CHAPTER ELEVEN.

McCOY AND THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN

PUBLIC TEACHERS' UNION.

- I. McCoy establishes sound relationships.
- II. Teachers and civil liberties.
- III. Teachers and the law.
- IV. Allowances and rents.
- V. Board of Appeal.
- VI. The Public Service Board and the Education Department.
- VII. The Australian Teachers Federation.

I.

When McCoy, an appointee from outside South Australia, took office he was naturally regarded with some suspicion amongst all ranks of the service. Suspicion was inclined to be greatest amongst those who had little personal contact with him. An editorial in the South Australian Teachers' Journal in October, 1919 significantly headed "Our New Director", reported most favourably on the first informal meeting that the members of the executive had with McCoy. They were already claiming him as their own, and they were: "much impressed by his candour, knowledge and resourcefulness, and it soon became evident that no inexperienced novice occupied the Director's chair". The editorial advised Festina lente with the emplification, "Hasten slowly, certainly, but hasten".¹ People's expectation of his plan of action varied. Some expected little action until he assessed the situation, some expected immediate activity for reforming the languishing education system. His directorship in Tasmania gave him the experience, and his natural propensity for prospectiveness gave him the ability to take effective, immediate action.

Change and innovation produce critics and the dissemination of dissatisfaction in some quarters. In December, 1919 an article signed "Unus ex iuvenibus" appeared in the South Australian Teachers' Journal entitled "Young Teachers and the New Regulations".² In a report to the Minister McCoy carefully examined the inaccuracies as they appeared in the article and concluded:

The article is a series of mischievous misrepresentations and cheap sneers evidently written by some teacher who either has not sufficient intelligence to grasp the liberal terms offered, or who has been wilfully negligent in his reading. I am sure that neither the South Australian Teachers' Union nor the Editor of its organ the South Australian Teachers' Journal would wish the article to remain uncorrected. ³

McCoy reprehended deliberate misrepresentation, and he wanted the matter repudiated in a most authoritarian manner. He demanded that the Editor and Business Manager be sent for, and by prevailing on their own good sense he hoped that a refutation would be inserted in the journal.

Apparently the gentlemen were sent for because McCoy reported to the Minister that "both gentlemen practically repudiated the sentiments expressed in the article".⁴ A direct refutation in the manner McCoy seemed to want could hardly appear in print; but an editorial in the next issue of the journal under the heading "Anonymous Contributions" resolved the situation by condoning freedom of expression, but explaining that the journal did not identify itself with opinions expressed in letters to the editor.⁵

On Monday, 28 March, 1921, the Daily Herald carried a report of the Easter conference of South Australia Public Teachers' Union on the previous Saturday when a motion was unanimously carried asking for some modification in the method of allotting skill marks. Mr. C. Maley participated in the debate and was reported as saying:

There was no teacher in Tasmania who did not hate the system of skill marks. As it stood, the only word to describe it was 'grotesque'. It was ridiculous on the face of it. The proper name for that mark was the 'mystery' mark, because there was nothing to show how it was arrived at. It certainly was not a skill mark. It was a position mark. 6

The Daily Herald, being an anti-Liberal paper, published anything to embarrass the Government. In commenting to the Minister about this motion, McCoy tersely stated that skill marks were "not understood by some teachers who are so obsessed by former methods that they do not read the new conditions". He concluded that there was "no body in the complaint".⁷ The incident illustrated how distrust of the new was connected with a lack of willingness to understand implications of new regulations.

II.

The continuing problem of teachers and their civil liberties came under discussion during McCoy's directorship. He wanted to maintain some restrictions on the political statements teachers uttered and their political activities, but the union wanted the restrictive regulations cancelled. It claimed they deprived teachers of their rights as citizens,

and reflected adversely on their loyalty and good sense, and on the capacity of teachers to make sane judgements on social matters. The Union claimed that teachers should be free to comment on inadequacies in political institutions and on their own grievances as a group in the community. Furthermore, the union believed that teachers would make their comments in moderate, unoffensive language because they would naturally exercise the restraints demanded by professional integrity.⁸

The offending Regulations were XXV 10 and 11 and their origin dated back a number of years.⁹ On 5 January 1885, Regulation 83 was formed and it read:

Teachers are enjoined not to take part in political affairs, otherwise than by the exercise of the franchise, and are requested to refrain from any interference with local questions which might bring them into collision with the residents in the neighbourhood.

This regulation distinctively restricted teachers' participation in political activities, and teachers were expected to be neutral in local affairs. On 5 December 1900 this regulation was renumbered 105 and restated with less restrictive implications:

Teachers are enjoined not to take part in political affairs while on duty, otherwise than by the exercise of the franchise.

On McCoy's revision of the regulations in November, 1920 Regulation 105 was slightly reworded and became XXV 10:

Teachers are required to refrain from taking part in political affairs while on duty otherwise than by the exercise of the franchise.

On 5 December, 1900 Regulation 106 was framed:

Any teacher who uses for political purposes information gained by him in the course of duty will be summarily dismissed.

On 18 November, 1920 Regulation 106 was numbered XXV 11 and recast:

Teachers shall not publicly comment upon the administration of the Education Department, or use for any purpose other than for the discharge of their official duties information gained by, or conveyed to them, through their connection with the Department, or take part in newspaper correspondence in regard to Departmental matters. 10

In January, 1921 the Department found that Regulation XXV, as it then stood, was insufficient to deal with a teacher who adversely commented upon the defence policy of the Federal Government from a soap box on the banks of the Torrens on a Sunday afternoon. Therefore on 14 April, 1921 parts 10 and 11 of Regulation XXV were rewritten:

10. Teachers while on duty are required to refrain from taking part in Political affairs, otherwise than by the exercise of the franchise. They must refrain from all actions in public matters that, in the opinion of the Minister, will interfere with the welfare of the schools in which they are employed, or with their usefulness as teachers.
11. Teachers shall not publicly comment upon or take part in any newspaper correspondence concerning the administration or policy of any State or Federal Department or use for any purpose other than for the discharge of their official duties, information gained by, or conveyed to them through their connection with the Education Department.

This revision restored restrictions similar to those of the original regulation, and McCoy's persistent insistence on the retention of this form indicated how thoroughly he believed in restrictions on the political activities of his teachers.

The union did not delay for very long in raising complaints about Regulation XXV 10 and 11. After conversation with the Premier, the Corresponding Secretary requested that a deputation wait on the Premier and the Minister of Education. This was arranged by the Minister of Education for 20 August, but the Premier stated that this was a case for the Minister's own decision. The matter was referred by the Minister of Education to the Director and the latter's comments of 1 September, 1921 were conveyed directly and unaltered to the union.¹¹ Regarding Regulation XXV 10 the deputation asked for a definition of the words "while on duty" and a clearer definition of the second sentence. To the first question McCoy replied:

It seems to me that no definition is required; the words mean that no teacher is to take part in Political affairs whilst on duty, i.e. between say, 9 a.m. and 4.30 or 5 p.m. on schooldays.

And on the meaning of the second sentence McCoy wrote:

It is not possible to accurately define in a Regulation what is intended. The good sense of the teacher can surely discriminate between actions in public matters that will interfere with the welfare of the schools or with their usefulness as teachers and those that will not.

The implications of McCoy's first sentence would upset the concepts of jurisprudence, and his second sentence swings to question begging. The comment by the deputation that "the interpretation of the regulation rested wholly with the Minister of the day, and that teachers therefore, were liable to suffer from variations of political policy or view" was ignored by McCoy. He did concede that actions taken by teachers, in the words of the deputation, "to mould public opinion on educational matters, to awaken interest, to counteract parental apathy or to create a desire for better and healthier conditions" were not detrimental to "the welfare of the schools", or their "usefulness as teachers" provided Regulation XXV 11 was not infringed.

The deputation asked that the Regulation "be reconsidered and recast in much less drastic and less far reaching terms". It offered amendments which encouraged proper behaviour and advised teachers not to use confidential information gained from the Department for personal or political purposes. McCoy remained adamant and concluded his comments:

It is my fixed opinion that teachers should not be permitted to criticise the Government of the day, or to discuss the administration or the existing policy of the Department, and I cannot recommend any alteration in the content of the Regulation.

The battle however, continued. A resolution of the Annual Conference of the South Australian Public Teachers' Union in July, 1923 requesting the cancellation of the offensive regulation was sent to the Minister on the 6 August, 1923 in a letter written by T.N. Smeaton, the General Secretary. Smeaton finished the letter thus:

... a due sense of what is right in these regards can be better induced by an honourable understanding than by the imposition of restrictions which are harsh in their terms, and entirely unwarranted in their incidence. 12

Five months later after his return from overseas McCoy informed the Minister about the history of the Regulation and stated that there was no reason for altering the 1921 decisions. On 5 June, 1924 Smeaton submitted the case to the new Labour Minister of Education, L. Hill in the hope that it would received more favourable consideration. The next day it was passed to McCoy for a report. McCoy again recalled the history of the Regulation, and claimed that the union had not advanced any new reasons for altering it. He, however sensed that the Government was inclined to amend this Regulation so he recommended that Regulation XXV 10 stand and Regulation XXV 11 be repealed and be replaced by Regulation XXV of November, 1920. After conversations with Hill, McCoy made a further amendment to Regulation XXV on 21 July, 1921 by the omission of the last sentence. On 28 July, 1924 Cabinet approved the amendment to Regulation XXV 10 and the repeal of Regulation XXV 11.

McCoy was obviously unhappy about this decision. On 13 August, 1924 he drew the Minister's attention to the distinction now existing between teachers and public servants. A public servant was expressly forbidden by Section 53 VI and VII of the Public Service Act of 1916 - "to disclose information acquired in the course of his duty", or to communicate with the newspapers. McCoy believed that teachers should be placed on the same footing as public servants, and he recommended that Regulation XXV 11 recently repealed, should be re-enacted. In Cabinet on 18 August Premier Gunn wrote, "Not approved". This decision signalled the capitulation of McCoy's determined last stand.¹³

Did McCoy who was himself subject to Public Service Regulations, resent teachers having apparently less restraint in political activities than public servants, or did he really believe that both groups should be subject to similar regulations? Did he have doubts about the discretion and integrity of his teachers in such matters? Perhaps the melee which engulfed Neale in Tasmania had made an indelible mark on McCoy's mind? Initially, he took his usual action by writing to his fellow directors asking for their relevant regulations about state school teachers making public criticisms on the actions of governments.¹⁴ Without exception,

they followed the two courses of not allowing public comment on the administration, and not permitting the disclosure, in any form, of information conveyed to them by their departments. Perhaps he did not want South Australian teachers to get out of step in these matters with teachers in other states. Whatever the reason, he showed dogged resolution in fighting Cabinet to retain something in which he whole-heartedly believed.

III.

McCoy considered that teachers should be subject to the ordinary processes of law as were all other citizens; they should not receive different treatment because of the nature of their positions. On 24 May, 1924 both the Advertiser and the Register published a letter from Smeaton concerning the unfortunate experience of a teacher.¹⁵ This man had been charged in the Supreme Court with indecent assault. In his summary remarks the judge referred to the baseless, uncorroborated evidence of a female minor and the teacher was acquitted. Smeaton argued that as school life created close relationships between teachers and pupils which could produce misunderstood motives, teachers were unprotected from the possibilities of persecution from slander and innuendo. On 26 May 1924 Smeaton, seemingly on his own initiative, wrote a long, rambling and confused letter to the Minister of Education, advocating some form of protection for teachers facing such charges, and a change in departmental procedures in such cases.¹⁶ McCoy's comments to the Minister on this matter were clear and precise as Smeaton's were involved and diffuse. McCoy believed that it would be "improper" for the Department to make preliminary investigations on its own account to determine the guilt or innocence of a teacher while a case was sub judice. The public could come to believe that the Department was more concerned with the honour of the teacher than with the interest of the child, "the chief party in the case", and "for whose safety during school hours the Department is morally responsible". He could not envisage

any other procedure except the usual one of placing a teacher under suspension when a charge was laid, await the results of the trial and act on the verdict of the court. In fact all citizens were unprotected against the malice and wickedness of people who made false charges and nothing could be done but let the processes of the law take their tedious course.¹⁷

IV.

It has already been shown that McCoy was sympathetic towards reasonable requests for salary increases from teachers, and he showed consideration for their submissions about payments of maintenance allowances and rents. In May 1921, the union executive requested that the Minister alter the basis on which the payment of maintenance allowances were made.¹⁸ The new Regulations of 1920 did not alter the amount payable in the annual maintenance allowance to head teachers.¹⁹ The union claimed that this allowance had never been set on a satisfactory basis, and that the Department should pay all legitimate out-of-pocket expenses incurred. In view of the increased cost of labour, fuel, postage stamps and material McCoy believed that the allowances paid to small schools with an average attendance under 175 pupils were inadequate. Larger schools had their actual costs paid by the Department so that head teachers there did not incur any loss. Although the union asked for a fifty per cent increase in the allowance McCoy suggested to the Minister that twenty per cent increase "would give satisfaction, and would at the same time remove what appears to be a real grievance". In his usual methodical manner McCoy prepared a table showing eight different categories of schools with average attendances between 174 children and less than 12 children and the sliding scale of their present and proposed allowances and the total increase cost per year to the Department.²⁰ Ritchie complained in his own handwriting on this memorandum that he could not understand why additional alterations should be suggested in the amounts presented in the very recent Regulations particularly since they were prepared and recommended by McCoy himself.²¹

McCoy answered this by stating that teachers previously made no request for increases of maintenance allowances, so in the revised Regulations the allowances stood as formerly, but this present recommendation was made in response to a definite request from the teachers' union.²² Ritchie pointed to the additional expenditure involved and that as "economy in every line is absolutely necessary" Cabinet did not approve of McCoy's scheme.²³

The union also raised the question of rents. Rents had been raised in November, 1920 with the revised Regulations. The union raised ten specific points about rents which McCoy answered systematically for the Minister. McCoy argued that the increase in rents has lessened the value of the recent increases in salaries and he agreed that most teachers in South Australia were the worst paid in the whole of Australia. However, as far as rents were concerned he believed that they had been assessed much lower than local valuation and that no reduction was justified.²⁴

V.

Early in the term of the Labour Government the secretaries of the organisations of the public officers of the State, the Teachers' Union, the Public Service Association and the Railway Officers Association met the Premier to discuss the establishment of boards for passing regulations, setting out classifications and hearing appeals in connection with proposed amendments of the 1920 Industrial Code Act.²⁵ The Premier believed that the inclusion of such boards in current amendments might prejudice their passage in Parliament, and suggested that the proposals for the establishment of such boards should be left to a more suitable occasion. In 1926 the South Australian Public Teachers' Union asked the Minister, to consider amendments to the 1915 Education Act by setting up a board of five members, two from the Department and two from the teachers' union to perform three functions, firstly, to make regulations, secondly to classify teachers and thirdly to act as a Board of Appeal.²⁶ McCoy commented to the Minister on this proposal in his usual, blunt, forthright manner. "In all English speaking countries the Education of the State was controlled by the Government through the Minister". If power to make

regulations were to be shared with any board the future policy of the Education Department would be framed by such a board and the Director would become redundant. McCoy dismissed this proposition for surrendering power as "preposterous".

Section 16 of the 1915 Education Act provided for a Teachers' Classification Board consisting of three people, the superintendent of the appropriate branch, the headmaster of one of the highest grade schools, and an inspector selected by the Minister. McCoy claimed that the work of this board was routine and mechanical because conditions of classification were quite clearly governed by Regulation XV. In fact the work had proceeded quite smoothly since 1919 and there had never been an appeal from its decisions, although Section 17 of the Education Act allowed for appeals to be heard by the Public Service Commissioner. McCoy stressed that teachers already had one representative on the board, and "that the addition of one teacher or of twenty one teachers" would not expedite the work or alter the board's decisions.²⁷

On the proposed Board of Appeal McCoy did not make any definite recommendations, he stated that if the present system of having the Public Service Commissioner act as the Board of Appeal were altered teachers should have representatives on a board. However, he did not show any intense interest in the matter, but when Cabinet decided that a bill would be drafted to give the teachers a Board of Appeal he telegraphed Western Australia and Tasmania for details about their boards. He also assisted the parliamentary draftsman by commenting upon his draft of the clauses of the bill. In his usual prudent manner he ascertained from the parliamentary draftsman that regulations could be made to prevent teachers from appearing before the board with worthless appeals concerning transfers, promotions and classifications, and that the South Australian Public Teachers' Union representative should live within a reasonable distance of the G.P.O.²⁸

The bill was rushed into the House of Assembly late in the session in 1926. The Minister made a brief explanatory statement during the second reading, on the reasons for establishing the board, but the bill was not

intensely debated and passed to the Legislative Council where it was briefly explained by the Chief Secretary, but lapsed when Parliament concluded its business on 8 December, 1926.²⁹

On 16 July, 1927 the new Minister of Education, McIntosh, who had voted for the bill in the second reading, received a deputation from the union on the matter. The Public Service Commissioner, General Price Weir, saw no real reason for such a board, and Cabinet finally decided not to proceed with its establishment.³⁰

VI.

During the office of the Labour Government, another matter arose concerning the structure of the Education Department and its relation to the Public Service. This point is relevant to contemporary Australian administration of education.³¹ Among a number of questions discussed by the South Australian Public Teachers' Union with the Director was an amendment to the 1916 Public Service Act to exclude from its operation the Director of Education and his chief officers. On appointment these officers, if former teachers, were transferred to a section of the Public Service in which there was no other transfer or promotion open to them, accordingly they were at a disadvantage compared with the officers of the Public Service. Likewise under the 1916 Public Service Act these senior positions in the Education Department could conceivably be filled by transfer and promotion of public servants generally not trained or possessing the experience for such duties. Although these circumstances were substantially correct, practically all the professional officers, such as doctors and magistrates in the Public Service were in the same position. The 1915 Education Act aimed to vest the control of state education under the Minister, but the homogeneity of the Education Department was destroyed by the intrusion of another authority not provided for in the Education Act itself. The anomaly was that while all appointments, classifications, promotions and transfers of teachers were effected under the operation of the Education Act the appointments and classifications of Inspectors, Superintendents, Deputy Director

and Director were in the hands of the Public Service Commissioner.

A further anomaly now existed in the matter of payment of salaries. Inspectors' and teachers' salaries were fixed by awards of the Industrial Courts and the salaries of the Director of Education and his executive officers, except the inspectors, were determined by the Government on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner. It was considered that the Public Service Commissioner was the best source for fixing public service salaries because he acted as one central authority which avoided conflicting awards and determinations. On appointment as administrative officers, former teachers lost accumulative sick leave and the usual long school vacations, but they gained the privilege of long service leave, which was not then available to teachers.

McCoy had talks with the union about the problems connected with this lack of uniformity,³² and in a communication to the Minister he stated that he agreed in principle with the union's criticism.³³ Beyond that there are no extant records of his detailed reasons or evidence that he made concrete recommendations to alter the anomalies. In fact when McCoy was abroad in 1927 the union again broached the matter with the Minister and Charlton was not able to quote any supporting facts for McCoy's stand on the question.³⁴

VII.

McCoy established good relationships with the South Australian Public Teachers' Union. From time to time evidence of this appeared in his sympathetic deliberation on their problems.

On writing to the Minister during July, 1926, about current discussions between the union and the Education Department on various matters - the Appeals Board, unexpended sick leave to be used as recreational leave on retirement, rents for inspectors and head teachers, collection of union subscriptions by Education Department from fortnightly salary cheques, the Secretary of the South Australian Teachers' Union commented:

"Matters dealt with have an important significance in regard to the teachers and the State Department which employs them, and it is the earnest desire of the Union that they shall be determined in a way that will further secure the happy relations which at present exist between them". 35

"The happy relations" were due in no small way to McCoy's foresight and fairness. These good relationships must have been prominent. At the Annual Conference of the Australian Teachers' Federation in Perth on January, 1928 a resolution was carried that the state education department be approached to promote schemes of co-operation between the administration officers and the teachers, but the South Australian Public Teachers' Union unsolicitiously acknowledged in a letter to McCoy himself that "the most cordial co-operation does exist between the administration officers and the teachers" and that "they highly appreciate the existing state of affairs, a condition which apparently does not obtain in some of the other states".³⁶ McCoy wrote no effusive comments in reply, he followed the prescribed procedure by simply asking his secretary to acknowledge the communication.³⁷

McCoy often expressed doubts about the motives behind the resolutions of the Australian Teachers' Federation. He felt that representatives from the largest states dominated its conferences, and that as local conditions were not properly known in this federation it was undesirable that such a body should have influence in local affairs. He was far more disposed to consider requests emanating from the state conference. When he was asked to comment upon resolutions of the Second Australian Teachers' Federation held in Sydney in 1923, McCoy advised the Minister that the Minister's reply to the South Australian Branch could form a precedent for future guidance:

"In view of the facts that a Federal Association of teachers might easily embarrass the Minister with resolutions of a particular character, and that it is undesirable that such a body should have a voice in matters affecting local policy, I recommend that the practice be established of acknowledging the communication received from this body, and of informing the Association that the questions raised by the resolutions will receive considerations as occasion requires." 38

McCoy wished to maintain a united front with his fellow directors, hence his suggestion of shelving contentious matters by polite formalities.

McCoy's comment on the Federation's resolution advocating employment of clerk in high schools showed how inappropriate this was for South Australia.

Some of the high schools in South Australia are much smaller than those in New South Wales and Victoria, where they require a minimum attendance of about one hundred. It would be ridiculous to appoint a clerk to the Quorn High School when there is an attendance of but forty pupils with two teachers. 39

His comment on the resolution that a qualified clerk be appointed to larger primary schools illustrated how orthodox he was in expecting teachers, even head teachers in large schools, to perform many non-teaching duties. Modern notions of teachers' aides and clerical assistants were not in his concept, and he used past practices to prove his point.

"From time immemorial it has been part of the duty of the teacher to keep school records, and to compile official returns, and I see no reason for departing from this custom!" 40

A resolution from the annual meeting in Melbourne of the Australian State Teachers Federation in January, 1925 asking for leave for the state delegates to attend the annual conference in school time so that they would also be able to see schools at work brought curt criticism from McCoy.⁴¹ At a recent conference of the Directors of Education in Perth it had been resolved that if the inspectors decided to hold interstate conferences at a time other than during school vacations, the interval between such conferences should be three years, and the number granted leave should not exceed three in the larger states and two in the smaller states.

If such restrictions were placed on inspectors McCoy argued "that more stringent restrictions should be placed on teachers in as much as their absence entails the neglect of a number of children". He saw no reasons why such interstate teachers conferences should not be held in the school vacations. He grudgingly conceded that visits to schools by teachers "might have some value", but "a more profitable use of the time could be spent in making a definite enquiry into some particular phase of school work". He was right in hinting that profitable enquiry required

definite aims and plans, but he took a specific official line in stating that teachers who wanted to conduct such investigations should be selected by the Education Department.

Amongst the resolutions forwarded to the various ministers of education after the 1926 Federal Conference, was the request to grant leave to delegates to attend conferences at times other than during holidays. McCoy used similar arguments as previously about children being neglected "whilst teachers sit in conference during school hours". He added his own opinion about the Federation as a whole.

A perusal of the resolutions submitted herein to the Minister will show that the business of the Australian Teachers' Federation Conference is not of a very important character. 42

McCoy checked again with his fellow directors about such leave, and although no other state granted it, the Minister decided that two delegates should be allowed to attend from South Australia for no more than six school days. 43

In May, 1928 the Secretary of the Australian Teachers' Federation forwarded a resolution to the Minister of Education, from the Annual Conference held in Perth during January, urging that in preparing annual estimates state governments should give priority to adequate accommodation in schools to avoid the evil effects of overcrowding. McCoy's declamation at the bottom of the letter left no doubt about his attitude towards the national group.

"I suggest that this Federation be told to mind their own business and that the Government is well able to manage its affairs without gratuitous advice from the Federation". 44

Regardless of McCoy's hostility to the apparent interference in local affairs, it is relevant to comment that the Australian Teachers' Federation did raise points, not necessarily original, which augured modern movements in Federal and state relations in education. In 1926 the General Secretary stated that at the last five interstate conferences the Federation had advocated the formation of a Commonwealth Bureau of Education as "one way that the Federal Government can make a useful and efficient contribution

to the Education of its people, without in any way encroaching upon the realm of the State Departments".⁴⁵ The Federation was urging the states to give support in getting the bureau established. McCoy dismissed the scheme with disdain by scribbling in the margin of the letter "Already suggested by Conference of Directors".

In 1928 conference in Perth urged the states to press for a Federal subsidy to assist progress in the post primary work in the state departments. It was also considered that the Federal Government should subsidize teachers' colleges so that every child could be taught by a trained teacher. The official document contained no comments by McCoy on these proposals; he simply asked if the Minister wanted to approve of the states asking for united action on this matter at the next Premier's Conference, but the Minister declined to take any action.

The South Australian Public Teachers' Union was not an agent for radical opinion, its dealings with the Education Department were models of moderation and restraint. Its chief activity was associated with the general welfare of teachers. Butts' comments on teacher organizations in Australia in 1955 were certainly applicable to South Australia in the 1920's. Teachers tended to be over organized in matters of salary and tenure and under organized with respect to professional stimulation and exchange of educational ideas. Teachers as a body wanted classification schemes, a guarantee for fair treatment and a protection against patronage. In fact much systematization in the organization of education was due to teachers' unions who demanded detailed regulations to protect their rights.

The initial optimism which McCoy created in the union on his arrival was sustained throughout his directorship. Naturally there was a divergence of opinion on occasions, but McCoy was definite and forthright so that the union knew exactly where it stood and that his word was his bond.⁴⁶ The union quickly appreciated his readiness to listen to all sorts of requests and the prompt and courteous manner in which he acknowledged correspondence.⁴⁷ It respected his decisions which were quickly given.⁴⁸

He gained the confidence of all sections of teachers and they appreciated his clear vision and counted him among the foremost educationists in Australia with Tate and Board.⁴⁹ At his death it was significant that the union itself launched an appeal for a memorial and that by December 1929 over 1200 members had forwarded donations. £762 was ultimately raised and the union administered the fund to establish two annual scholarships valued at £25 for deserving boys and girls wanting to better their education.⁵⁰ There could not have been a more appropriate memorial to McCoy; a man who had grown up in a humble home with limited financial resources; a man who was always most sympathetic towards children whose progress was handicapped by family circumstances.

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2. Ibid., Dec. 1919 p.92
3. S.A.A. M.E. 135/1919 McCoy to Harvey 22 Dec. 1919
4. S.A.A. M.E. 135/1919 McCoy to Harvey 27 Jan. 1920
5. S.A.T.J. Feb. 1920 p.107
6. Daily Herald 28 March, 1921 p.4 d
7. S.A.A. M.E. 219/1921 McCoy to Ritchie 4 April 1921
8. Ibid., Deputation from S.A.P.T.U. to Minister 20 Aug. 1921
9. The history of these regulations is set out in S.A.A. M.E.217/1923
10. This regulation was an exact copy of Regulation No.152 of the Tasmanian Education Department. See S.A.A. E.D. 293/1921
11. S.A.A. M.E. 219/1921 Ritchie to S.A.P.T.U. 7 Sept. 1921
12. S.A.A. M.E. 217/1923 Smeaton to Pascoe 6 Aug. 1923
13. S.A.A. M.E. 217/1923 contains all these details
14. S.A.A. E.D. 293/1921 McCoy to interstate directors 29 Jan.1921
15. Advertiser 24 May 1924 p.15 f
Register 24 May 1924 p. 3 g
16. S.A.A. M.E. 127/1924
17. Ibid., McCoy to Hill 30 May 1924
18. S.A.A. M.E. 192/1921 S.A.P.T.U. to Ritchie 12 May 1921
19. Ed. Regs. 1920 "Maintenance Allowance" (21) and (22) p.35
20. S.A.A. M.E. 192/1921 McCoy to Ritchie 15 July 1921
21. Ibid., Ritchie to McCoy 19 July 1921
22. Ibid., McCoy to Ritchie 22 July 1921
23. Ibid., decision 25 July 1921
24. S.A.A. M.E. 192/1921 also contains case on rents
25. S.A.A. E.D. 801/1926
26. Ibid., S.A.P.T.U. to Hill 22 April 1926
27. Ibid., McCoy to Hill 3 May, 1926

28. Ibid., McCoy to Parlt. Draftsman 12 Nov. 1926
29. Deb.S.A.P. Assembly p.1889; p.2143; p.2213
1926 Council p.2197
30. S.A.A. E.D. 801/1926 Cabinet's decision 21 Feb. 1928
31. For example see Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia 1969-1970 (Adelaide 1971) pp.482-486 for a summary of the present situation.
32. Ibid., discussions on 9 July 1926
33. Ibid., McCoy to Hill 13 Aug. 1926
34. See S.A.A. E.D. 1969/1927
35. S.A.A. E.D. 801/1926 Smeaton to Hill 9 July 1926
36. S.A.A. E.D. 1419/1928 Letter 19 June, 1928
37. Ibid., letter 25 June, 1928
38. S.A.A. M.E. 275/1923 McCoy to Pascoe 24 Dec. 1923
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. S.A.A. M.E. 91/1925 McCoy to Hill 13 June 1925
42. Ibid., McCoy to Hill 5 Jan. 1926
43. Ibid., decision 14 June, 1926
44. Ibid., note 19 May, 1928
45. Ibid., General Sec.Australia Teachers Federation to Hill 23 April,1926
46. S.A.T.J. Jan. 1923 p.381
47. Ibid., May 1921 p.136
48. Ibid., Aug. 1920 p.20
49. Ibid., March, 1925 p.999
50. Ibid., Dec. 1929 p.261

CHAPTER TWELVE.

McCOY'S ADMINISTRATION OF THE SYSTEM.

McCoy worked in the New South Wales and the Tasmanian centralized education systems before he was appointed to South Australia, and he never considered that this type of system needed modification. Even the Education Inquiry Committee in South Australia in 1945¹ which was planning for a post war reconstruction in education re-iterated the assumptions that had been in existence since the establishment of public education. It assumed that the administration of public educational services was better conducted by a central authority than by local agencies, that a central authority should control the schools and the preparation and employment of teachers, and that overall uniformity was preferable to diversity. If concepts about centralized control were still generally accepted in South Australia in 1945, despite the increasing criticisms, particularly from overseas experts about conformity, rigidity, mediocrity and lack of adaptability in education, it is reasonable to assess McCoy on how he worked and what he achieved within this type of system in the 1920's.

While visiting Australia for the New Education Fellowship Conference in 1937, I.L. Kandel commented:

"Those who are prone to criticize the centralization of control in education are apt to ignore its strong points and to fail to suggest alternatives that are compatible with and feasible under Australian conditions of political organization". 2

Kandel went on to suggest that instead of condemning the system, consideration should be given to studying the appropriate functions of the central authority. Then appraisal should be made of the ways and means used to bring these functions into line with sound principles of educational progress.

As far as educational administration in Australia is concerned, at least two major comments can be made about the bureaucratic nature of the organization. One refers to efficiency, the other refers to the lack of alert and active public interest and participation in education. If efficiency means economical action or economy of effort a modern bureaucracy can become inefficient because communication is difficult and often slow, particularly up the lines of authority. Also the many checks and balances

involved in such procedures as in the making and circulation of correspondence files to the various officers in the hierarchy in order to get decisions to initiate the appropriate actions create error, confusion and delays. Despite the tardiness of some of his ministers on a number of occasions McCoy himself always aimed at promptness in dealing with his immediate associates and teachers. Inflexibility also causes inefficiency. Change is hampered by "specialized and trained incapacity", that is the more things are done in a specific way in the past the less likely will the response be seen as appropriate and successful in the future. Again there is a tendency to allow institutional means to become personal ends where criticism is regarded as a personal affront on responsible officers. McCoy resented criticism and the evidence suggested that any comments which were made about the administration were brushed aside on the pretext that they were uninformed or irrational. Both the inspectors and the teachers were charmed by this notion of efficiency. The inspectors had the doubly difficult role of being assessors and advisers and it was the first role that consumed most of their time. The inspectors rewarded teachers who taught effectively according to the curriculum. Inspectors were given no clerical assistance in writing their numerous reports, and in the country travelling long distances was also a problem. Little time was left for their role as local educational leaders. The teachers also were content to work to rules and regulations and to abide by detailed work schedules with full explanatory notes.

Writing in 1930 W.K. Hancock,³ the Professor of Modern History in the University of Adelaide, compared Tocqueville's comments on the Americans and their content with "middling standards" last century with the Australians in the 1920's. Hancock noted the general public apathy in Australia and showed that public opinion was moulded mainly by political parties because there were practically no effective groups or societies dedicated to arouse public spirit. The past social legislation in the Australian states had reduced voluntary, local interest to a minimum. The organization of public education was a clear example of this.

It has already been noted that at the top of the administrative hierarchy in the central office the advisory Council was a mere appendage of the Education Department. It was not an agent for constructive criticism nor a stimulator of educational reform. Amongst the schools themselves the school committees began to show interest as fund raising bodies, and McCoy kept repeating to both teachers and to parents that school committees acted as an important link between the school and the home. He did not visualize them as advisers and guides for local procedures in education. In fact in accordance with other state social organizations the time was not ripe for them to assume responsibilities for local control of state social instrumentalities.

A popular pictorial representation of bureaucratic organization in Australian public administration is the pyramid of power with the Minister of the Crown as its apex. In the complete divisions of work the horizontal plane indicated the level of responsibility while the vertical plane from the top to the broad base where the teachers worked ran, what Spann called, "a scalar chain of formal authority running from the top to the bottom of the organization".⁴ In a definite authoritarian situation the administrators and the teachers would be in complete competitive positions in terms of power. In McCoy's time the pyramid was somewhat flattened. Although the Minister controlled the purse it was the Director who initiated action sometimes with the aid of his superintendents. Teachers were also granted some decision making power in curriculum construction committees and their comments were at last heard through the South Australian Public Teachers' Union which had direct access to the Minister and the Director. On the other hand McCoy's administration was not compatible with democratic processes where authority is delegated and vigorous social interaction and exchange of ideas comes to a solution satisfactory to both the individual and the organization. Most decisions were made without a vote, in fact many were directives. Teachers were directed from above but they were encouraged to use their own initiative in teaching the matter in the curriculum. Teachers were prepared to submit to this authoritative administrative situation. It gave them security and did not plague them with Fromm's

"fear of freedom". It tended to make them shadows of "The Organization Man" with built in co-operativeness.

As an administrator McCoy endeavoured to achieve his goals as far as budget conditions allowed by planning, forming policy and making decisions for the benefit of the children in the schools. The nature of an organization is determined by the personalities of the people in it and particularly by those who wield authority. McCoy, like most of Australian educational administrators, was recruited from the teaching ranks and he was well aware that human relations were his most important concern. To take Weber's position and assume that complex educational bureaucracies cannot be changed is not valid. In fact if the modern tendency to give more attention to human needs of the participants continues new organization patterns could be developed to allow each individual to attain his highest level of growth. McCoy was not an administrator in the very modern sense where all concerned are fully involved in decision making. He was a director, a commander, a good organizer and a sound co-ordinator. He certainly used other people in operating the organization but their use was limited to his discretion.

In modern terminology McCoy developed a satisfactory organizational climate. He was open and authentic, definite and persuasive. He was humane and developed good relations in all sections of the organization. He established good personal relationships with people and he possessed the power to make everyone feel worthwhile and happy in their careers. He stimulated his teachers by setting goals within the reach of aspiring teachers and thus encouraged them towards higher achievements and hopefully better professional status. He recognized and praised worthwhile things being done within the organization and he was ever anxious to adopt outside practices which were likely to benefit education in the State.

The leader in a developing organization must be an effective agent for change and there can be no doubt about McCoy's activity in this respect.

Change is often resented by people within the organization and the leader must be prepared to spend a great deal of time in communicating the advantage of change. McCoy spent a lot of his time trying to convince his ministers that despite expense, change was necessary, and at the other end he held meetings and talked to his teachers and the parents to convince them that innovations approved officially would be actually beneficial to the children in the schools.

In summary then McCoy inherited an educational system which showed many of the characteristics of Weber's bureaucracy, but under McCoy's directorship the evolution of a more liberal system began. McCoy's system with its dual characteristics of centrality and limited democracy benefitted the State in three ways, which were closely allied to the purposes of educational administration - in the 1920's which have already been listed in Chapter 6. Firstly, all children of primary school age were given the opportunity to reach a uniform standard of achievement. Special services, such as the correspondence school, the medical branch and the psychology section were begun. Secondly, definite state wide pay scales gave teachers co-hesion and incentive for promotion. The organization itself protected teachers from the vagaries of local groups. The maintenance of reasonable standards of teaching and pupil achievement were controlled by a set curriculum and supervised by inspectors. Thirdly, the educational needs of the whole State were reasonably met by the effective deployment of limited financial resources. The design and general conditions of school buildings and pupil accommodation continued to improve.

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(Melbourne 1938) p.654
 3. Hancock, W.K. Australia (London 1945) pp.223-229
 4. Spann, R.N. (ed) Public Administration in Australia
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- See also Urwick, L.F. The Elements of Administration (London 1961)
pp.63-64 on levels of organization.

SECTION TWO.

PART 2.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

McCoy'S PREDECESSORS
AND THE NEW EDUCATION.

- I. Introduction.
- II. McCoy's predecessors in South Australia.
- III. The New Education.

I.

This part of Section 11 aims to review the theory and practice of education in state schools during the 1920's so that the influences of McCoy, his associates and his predecessors can be discerned, and an overall assessment can be made about the significance of changes in education in these years..

II.

At this point some general comments on McCoy's predecessors in South Australia, his own influence in translating educational practices from New South Wales and the New Education movement should add clarity to the theme.

The lines of communicating change in education in South Australia in the 1920's were quite definite. One line was the resurrection by McCoy and his associates of the lost spirit which had been engendered by Williams' work in the State. Another line was McCoy's successful translation of New South Wales ideas and practices to Tasmania and thence to South Australia when these seemed necessary and expedient. The third line was developed when McCoy had the opportunity of visiting other countries and observing educational practices personally instead of having to rely entirely on his own Australian experience or the advice of other interstate Directors of Education.

Previous research has shown that by the end of last century Hartley had, through sheer hard work, thoroughly organized a system of primary education in South Australia. He established a Teachers College and assisted with its lectures. By publishing text books and by assiduously writing in the Education Gazette and the Children's Hour, both of which he edited, he explained the operations of the system and directed its detailed functions. For the last three years of his life he also filled the office of Vice-Chancellor of Adelaide University. In fact he placed

South Australia in the fore front of educational development in Australia.

At the turn of the century South Australia suffered a series of droughts and economic depressions and money for education was very hard to find. It was not until Williams' appointment in 1906 that the fervour of educational reform in New South Wales and Victoria affected South Australia. Williams had been a close friend of Hartley and he possessed Hartley's vigour and vision. By dedicated hard work he changed the whole spirit of the education system by introducing features of the New Education into the school curriculum. After Williams' untimely death in 1913 M.M. Maughan was made acting director until 1915 and during the war years little was done to maintain the reforming surge of the Williams' era. Maughan's illness and resignation caused the Government of the day to look for a man outside the State to resuscitate the vigour of the Williams' era and to holster the system in accordance with the optimism of the post war period. The features of education that McCoy inherited were on the whole lifeless and he had to rejuvenate the system. McCoy had the tremendous advantage of his own varied experience and the promising assistance of young people who had formally been given their preferment by Williams, but who had not had the opportunity to demonstrate their capacities to their fullest extent.

McCoy gathered ideas and adopted practices from his own experience in New South Wales. He began his inspectorial duties in the aurora of the educational renaissance under Peter Board. In 1904 he helped to establish in the schools of his own district a new primary school curriculum which put stress on humane studies in English, history and geography and introduced manual work and nature study. He also helped the re-organization of the primary school where pupils were graded and spent one year in each class. In the remote areas he helped to establish subsidized schools and travelling schools and to substitute small half time schools in rural districts for central schools. From 1905 he saw the establishment of District Schools in the larger towns which were primary schools with

higher classes attached to them and which offered secondary education mainly with a vocational bias. He witnessed the reforms in teacher training, particularly the abolition of the iniquitous pupil teacher system and the introduction of teachers' colleges. He was able to compare and contrast young teachers turned out under the old pupil teacher system with those trained in the new way. The new way must have been the better in his own mind because this was the practice he endeavoured to adopt when he was in control in Tasmania and South Australia.

McCoy's successful transplant of these and other features from New South Wales to Tasmania has already been noted.¹ McCoy's debt to Board must be recognized, but credit must also be given to McCoy for successfully adapting these practices in a new environment. McCoy was an extremely practical man, confident, clear headed, far sighted and a good man manager, just the sort of man Tasmania needed to get it out of its difficulties. There is no evidence that he made deep penetrating analyses of the theories behind the educational practices that he adopted. His intuitive, educated guesses paid off.

III.

The origin of changes in education in Australia was associated with the New Education movement overseas. This was a complex movement consisting of many facets which make it difficult to describe and almost impossible to summarize. In England some of the New Education was based on educational theories imported from translations of Continental philosophies and this caused a strife of ideas. Also there was a perpetual clash of interest between its supporters and a continual conflict between theory and practice. New Education however was based on two tenuous tenets. Firstly it was opposed to the old, formal instrumentary education of the late 19th century and its system of payment by results, and secondly it was connected by various ways to the needs of society.

R.J.W. Selleck² recently examined the New Education and its English background (1870-1914) and listed six constituent parts which were sometimes interrelated and sometimes confusing even within themselves. The first part consisted of the practical educationists who wished to introduce practical subjects, and subjects related to real life into the curriculum. They wanted to change the methods of teaching from the concept of passivity of pupils to participation by pupils. Groups in this part such as the manual training supporters were not always sure whether their approach was utilitarian or educational. Other teachers were confused about the precise nature of their tasks and vague about where they were going and for what they were teaching. The second part consisted of the social reformers who wished to create a new world. For the most part they began as advocates outside the classroom and they regarded education as a means of social change. The third part consisted of the naturalists who demanded that the child be respected as a human being. Irrespective of his social class a child should be given the opportunity to develop fully by a very broad school curriculum and with the minimum interference from his teachers. Lack of absolute goals and the fact that the naturalists were connected with a whole range of general social reformers created vagueness and frustration. The naturalist who probably had the most influence in Australian education was Madame Montessori. The fourth part consisted of the Herbartians who offered teachers a definite method of teaching based on the psychology of association. Such precise methodology was a consolation to many teachers when they were surrounded by the vagaries of theory and change. The fifth part consisted of the scientific educationists who believed that the methods of science with its findings from experimental data and the empirical testing of conclusions could be applied to education. These people were enthusiastic, and if not initially successful or really scientific they now have assumed a most prominent role in process of education. The sixth and final part consisted of the moral educationists. The English home had been unable to care for the child's health and his elementary education so the state healed the breach. As the churches with their

many differences were ineffectual in helping the moral instruction of the young the schools were expected to provide it. Again the dilemma remained about how this was to be done. Should the schools organize direct, systematic lessons in morals or should only incidental references be made in school subjects and games?

The following chapters deal with educational theory and practice in the various parts of the education system in South Australia in the 1920's. The matter rather reflects the tendency of the decade where more emphasis was given to implementing practice than to deep analytical discussion of theory.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

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and Chapter two.
2. Sellick, R.J.W. The New Education. The English Background.
(Melbourne 1968) passim.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN.

PRIMARY EDUCATION. 1.

- I. Some statistics.
- II. Infant schools.
- III. The Primary School Curriculum.
- IV. Some particular subjects closely connected with
New Education.

Nature Study.
Domestic Arts.
Woodwork.

I.

McCoy's own teaching experience had been confined to primary schools, but his experience as an inspector of schools in New South Wales and his work as Director of Education in Tasmania put him on an unusual vantage point on his arrival in South Australia to view the whole panorama of education from kindergarten to the university. Most politicians in South Australia agreed that primary education had to be firmly established before reforms and developments were made in post-primary schools. McCoy was expected to consolidate primary education and this expectation assisted him in achieving so swiftly these early reforms which have already been mentioned. McCoy continuously compared the local educational situation with conditions in the other states, and he often based his case for local changes on the proposition, expressed in his own words, of bringing South Australia "into line with the other States". The other States in his determination were New South Wales and Victoria, and of course Tasmania from which he had recently come.

During McCoy's directorship there was a steady increase in the number of primary school enrolments and a consequent increase in the number of schools and the number of teachers.

Table 4 shows that during the period 1919 to 1929 there was an overall 13.4 per cent increase in primary school enrolments (Column D), a 16.4 per cent increase in the number of teachers (Column C) and a 15.9 per cent increase in the number of schools. These steady increases were undisturbed by sudden fluctuations, but the most pressing problems of the decade were associated with the steadily increasing cost of education shown in Columns E and F. Table 5, which sets out McCoy's system of classifying schools according to the average daily attendance of pupils, reveals the proportionately large and increasing number of Class VII schools which were relatively expensive to maintain and operate.

TABLE 4

STATISTICS on PRIMARY EDUCATION.1919 - 1929

A	B	C	D	E	F
YEAR	NUMBER of SCHOOLS	NUMBER of TEACHERS	NUMBER of CHILDREN INSTRUCTED	TOTAL COST	COST per CHILD on AVERAGE ATTENDANCE.
1919	903	2,160	72,575	305,478	5. 6. 9
1920	950	2,170	73,163	358,355	6. 0.10
1921	961	1,999	76,702	403,620	6.11. 9
1922	969	1,968	77,266	393,109	6. 5. 7
1923	969	2,065	78,397	433,128	6.16. 4
1924	1,014	2,162	79,347	475,414	7. 5. 9
1925	990	2,291	80,152	531,231	8. 0. 9
1926	988	2,387	80,507	629,643	9. 4. 7
1927	1,004	2,483	81,908	655,445	9. 9. 5
1928	1,018	2,578	82,722	684,954	9.13. 0
1929	1,047	2,586	82,333	710,919	9.19. 1

TABLE 5

CLASSIFICATION of PRIMARY SCHOOLS1921 - 1929.

CLASS: PUPILS:	Class I 900 and over	Class II 675-900	Class III 475-675	Class IV 275-475	Class V 65-275	Class VI 20 and under 65	Class VII 6 and under 20
1921	10	5	12	17	117	276	490
1922	11	5	13	19	100	282	454
1923	11	3	16	18	98	281	446
1924	10	8	12	18	103	296	480
1925	2	8	11	21	98	306	461
1926	2	8	13	20	100	307	484
1927	1	12	11	21	103	301	499
1928	2	12	12	20	103	287	526
1929	2	14	11	21	100	282	552

II.

Philosophers from Bacon to Rousseau had urged the need for inductive as opposed to deductive methods of learning, but it was the German Froebel and the Italian Madame Montessori who began to convert the English. English pedagogy had always believed in the tabula rasa theory which insisted that the main duty of the teacher was to fill the vacuum in the child's mind. The MacMillan sisters in their Deptford Nurseries indicated the way to better infant schools where education was not primarily intellectual, but inextricably bound up with the impulses, emotions and general experiences of the child. This was the spirit from the naturalist groups in the New Education movement which influenced the Australian scene.

From World War I work in South Australian infant schools was influenced by direct contact with progressive infant schools in New South Wales, and then by contact with Tasmanian infant schools which had in turn been influenced by New South Wales. Aspects of the Montessori system of infant education were introduced into South Australian schools from New South Wales.¹ In June, 1915 two infant teachers, Miss L. Longmore and Miss J.I. Davidson, were sent to Blackfriars, New South Wales, for two months to observe Montessorian work.² In January, 1915 a room was furnished at Norwood Primary School and a small Montessori class commenced under Miss Longmore. In June, 1917 Miss Davidson took over the class and Miss Longmore returned to Sydney for a further seven months to study Montessori methods. In September, 1917 the method was started at the Currie Street Observation School, and progressively introduced so that by 1919 it had extended over the whole infant section of the school.³ On 1 July, 1919 the old title of Infant Mistress was revived with the appointment of twelve women who held the Infant Teachers Certificate.

Soon after his appointment McCoy continued to stoke the fire of interest in infant education. He set about reviving the separate training of teachers for infant schools. In order to stimulate interest among infant teachers themselves he recommended to the Minister that two younger teachers be borrowed from Tasmania⁴ on an exchange basis with two South

Australians. In letters to the two South Australian nominees McCoy stated that the purposes of the exchange were "to bring fresh ideas into our infant school work and to afford teachers an opportunity of enriching their experiences".⁵ In correspondence with the Tasmanian Director of Education about this exchange McCoy conceded that "the art work in this State is not comparable with the Tasmanian work and the atmosphere is quite different".⁶ The exchange could have hardly proved anything but advantageous to South Australia. It got the better deal with two experienced Tasmanian teachers disseminating their ideas and demonstrating their methods to others for twelve months, and two little experienced, but keen young teachers gaining insights in Tasmania and then sharing and spreading their new knowledge on their return. In his letters of thanks to the Tasmanian teachers at Gilles Street Practising School prior to their return in December, 1920 McCoy wrote: "Amongst the many things for which you may claim a fair share of credit are the beautiful atmosphere, the art work and blackboard work of the staff and the high standard of work set in the various grades".⁷

By separating the infant departments in large primary schools, setting up a special course in the Teachers' College and organizing two practising schools, McCoy provided the necessary instruments for improvements. He encouraged the development of Montessori methods begun by Miss Longmore and he also imported some Tasmanian ideas. He showed skill and adriotness in selecting people and encouraging them to work with him and for him; he was a master at delegating. Miss Longmore had been selected as an inspector in 1917 to assist the district inspectors by inspecting the work in the lower grades of the primary school. In 1920 McCoy appointed her to the position of Inspector of Infant Schools - the first ever in the Commonwealth. She took full advantage of McCoy's encouragement and in turn she stimulated infant teachers to develop progressive ways and methods. These were often successfully achieved in over crowded conditions, but gradually new buildings were erected and old buildings with their tiered floors were remodelled, and heavy screw-down desks were replaced by light

chairs and tables. In 1920 the Infant Mistresses Club was formed by Miss Longmore and this met monthly in the evenings. The first of the very successful Mothers' Club was started at Norwood by the Infant Mistress, Miss M.V. Edwards. In 1921 McCoy gave high praise to the infant mistresses and their staff, and most particularly to the 'scheme of work' in the infant schools which developed a "child's individuality and self expression and his sense of responsibility".⁸ By 1924 there were twenty-five mothers' clubs in infant schools, and McCoy acclaimed their influence in the life of the school, commended the funds they raised for the purchase of materials in the school, and acknowledged their power in making a significant alliance between the home and the school.⁹

McCoy never believed that South Australia nor any other state had pure Montessori schools.¹⁰ This was an expensive method of education with respect to buildings, equipment and teachers, but the basic principles underlying Montessorian teaching had been incorporated in the infant teaching as far as practicable, and much didactic material for training and developing the senses of the children was in use. McCoy acknowledged that most of the material was constructed by enthusiastic teachers without cost to the department. This time honoured practice gained praises for the teacher from the inspectorate and advantage in assessment, but very little real recognition from society generally. McCoy became very proud of the infant schools. When attempting to get another inspector appointed to assist Miss Longmore in 1927 he wrote to the Minister: "There is no need to enlarge on the work of the infant schools which I consider equal to the best anywhere".¹¹ This was a case of question begging but characteristic of McCoy's blunt brevity and, in this instance, genuine praise. Educationally the children in the infant school benefitted by having especially trained teachers and the services of an infant mistress who, being free from a definite class, could move around and give her whole attention to teaching problems and to children beginning their school careers. On the other hand this separation of the infant section from

the primary school, which was also common in other large Australian schools, sometimes led to organizational difficulties and to misunderstanding between the infant mistress and the head of the school. The infant teachers often developed into a closely knit group separated physically and often mentally from the primary school whose head teacher was also their administrative head. The infant department was also inclined to be a seraglio of female teachers educating pupils of both sexes. The assumption that young children should be taught only by female teachers was not questioned, and a male was never admitted into the infant course at the Teachers' College.

III.

"The aim of the Primary School", McCoy wrote in the preface to his Course of Instruction in 1920, "is to provide a sound moral, physical and intellectual training for the pupil - to lay solid foundations upon which the superstructure of the child's education can be reared".¹² At least three points in this statement require comment. Firstly, the stated order of the aims were in inverse proportion to the time spent on the subjects taught to achieve these aims. Intellectual training was named last, but it was actually given the greatest emphasis in the school timetable. The suggested analysis of lesson loading¹³ to assist the teachers in the construction of their time tables left no doubt that the various elements that constituted English and mathematical studies were to be the essential school subjects. Following Herbartian ideas McCoy claimed that good class room and subject organization had a direct connection with character formation in that it accustomed "both teachers and pupils to work regularly and methodically".¹⁴ In theory moral training was to be developed in all lessons and on all possible occasions, but in practice specific, direct moral lessons were conducted for only 15 minutes once per week in all grades. Direct moral teaching was to be based on examples from nature and history rather than from fiction. Memorising short poems, proverbs and quotations was expected to assist moral development by giving the child precepts of the accepted virtues. Abstract moral teaching was to be avoided

because " it fails to excite interest in the minds of the children".¹⁵

Secondly, McCoy named the provision of sound physical training as the second necessity of the primary school. Actually this was never provided because the syllabus was based only on the "Swedish system which consisted of the rigid techniques of squad drill and regimental exercises."¹⁶ Again hope prevailed that the children would thoroughly enjoy these gyrations if the teacher knew the detailed routine of the exercises and got the children alert and quickly responsive to his commands. No provision was made for any other forms of physical education when programmes were planned and adapted for the physical development of individual children. The controversy amongst the social reformers of the New Education in England about the type of physical education needed to produce a nation of physically fit people did not disturb Australian education.¹⁷ McCoy accepted the contemporary Australian practice of equating physical education with military drill as it was practised in the Junior Cadet Training Scheme under the Commonwealth Government. Teachers attended schools of instruction conducted by military personnel, and subsequently carried out the exercises they learned with their pupils. In 1922 as a mark from Geddes' axe the Commonwealth abandoned the system of Junior Cadets. McCoy reported the need "to appoint a competent instructor in physical culture, a specialist capable of moving forward with the times and of studying new developments in the subject".¹⁸ He was obviously aware that something more than mere routine drill was necessary to assist the development of children's physique. His tour abroad in 1923 re-enforced this awareness, and he recommended the appointment of a supervisor of physical education. In 1924 however, the Commonwealth Government saw fit to resuscitate the system of Junior Cadet Training. McCoy re-accepted the traditional system of physical training based on military drill, because this saved the State money and physical education was not high on his list of priorities for reform.¹⁹

Playing games was an incidental rather than a component part of a school programme. The inspectors and McCoy recommended the "self-sacrificing

work of teachers (especially the assistants in the large schools) in organizing and supervising the cricket, football, basketball, hockey and other field games".²⁰ By 1925 eurythmics and folk-dancing were spreading over the State through the influence of ex-students of the Teachers' College. Miss Mary Clegett of the College staff was stimulating the students to practise harmony of bodily movement with the aid of music in order to develop both muscular and mental perception. Also South Australian Public Schools Amateur Sports Association was successfully organizing inter-district contests in cricket and football for boys and basketball for girls.²¹

Both the practical educationists and the social reforms of the New Education movement in England agreed on the necessity for improving the physical well being of the nation's children. South Australia was far behind the practices of some European countries with their gymnastics which substituted individual graded exercises for group drill, and overseas movements which stressed the necessity for school meals and thorough medical inspections and careful follow up checks as important adjuncts for the sound physical development of school children.²²

Thirdly, in McCoy's statement of aims of the primary school he assumed that all children would proceed to some full time secondary education. He believed that specialised studies should be postponed until sound ground work had been established. In a memorandum to Harvey in 1920 he expressed definite views about the age of cessation of primary education, and the purposes of post-primary education.

"In my opinion primary education of both boys and girls should cease at the age of twelve to thirteen, and a great part of the remaining portion of the child's school life should be devoted as far as practicable to preparing him for his future work".²³

McCoy used the chronological age factor to determine the time of transition. This was part of the traditional thinking which is still dying hard. Primary and secondary schools were cast in separate moulds and it is only recently that curriculum makers are attempting to correlate primary and secondary school curricula.

An over view of McCoy's Course of Instruction reveals other significant factors in relation to the New Education.

He re-iterated the Herbartian proposition about correlation of subjects.

"The various subjects should be related to one another. The principle of correlation is indicated by grouping subjects which are closely interrelated, e.g., the subject of English includes reading, writing, language, grammar, spelling and poetry; nature knowledge includes geography, nature studies, elementary science, etc. This principle should be extended as far as practicable, e.g., history and geography should be correlated; both should furnish material for language lessons; drawing, nature study, and language should be made mutually helpful". 24

The principle of correlation was a distinct relief from the regimentation of learning the three R's and other disconnected factors, but it assumed that teachers had a sound general knowledge themselves to interrelate intelligently the material in the various subjects for the different age levels.

Teachers were encouraged to use teaching methods which aroused children's interests and provided their self activity.²⁵ This advice followed the naturalist's concept in the New Education, but in fact practices in the South Australian school rooms were a poor imitation of this concept. The teachers dominated the situation and the child was not free to develop actively his own character with a minimum of interference from the teacher.

The Course of Instruction advised teachers to be clear about their aims in teaching subjects, but they were free to use any teaching method they considered appropriate. The Course of Instruction showed the general work to be covered by each grade in one year and the teacher was required to divide this into weekly portions and to arrange his weekly programmes two weeks in advance.²⁶ The head teacher had to initial every weekly programme and the matter set out in the programme formed the material for the annual examinations. This programme of work was a mixture of the old 19th Century formalism and the Herbartian part of the New Education. Teachers were expected to use teaching methods according to their own aptitudes and the needs of their pupils, but the full notes

on the subjects which accompanied the Course of Instruction and which were intended for guidance only tended to make teaching imitative rather than creative. Teachers sometimes showed inclinations of extreme conservatism and definite hostility to change. McCoy's efforts to change the writing style in the primary school was a case in point.

During his tour abroad in 1923 McCoy's attention was caught by script writing and he endeavoured to have this style adopted in primary schools. He argued that script writing had the advantage of being less confusing to the children than written letters. He claimed that it was prettier and neater, and that it took up less room. In order to illustrate his point he reported that he had conducted a speed test in the top grade of a school in England where printing had been taught for three or more years. The teacher dictated a passage of prose and as he wrote it down the boys printed it. The results showed the speed to be about equal, but the boys produced ten lines of prettier and more legible script than his fourteen lines of writing. McCoy did not claim that this was convincing evidence, although it smacked of naivety appearing in an official document.²⁷ However, he observed that public offices in London and many business houses accepted script writing.

In order to supercede the current cursive style of writing based on the Adelaide Copy Books originally devised by Hartley McCoy gathered evidence for his case. He asked the South Australian Chamber of Manufacturers for its opinion, but its Council hesitated to make a definite statement beyond saying it was "in favour of any system of writing which will tend to clearness and neatness, provided that the average speed of the writer is maintained and that the new style will not take any more of the child's time to acquire".²⁸ This was not substantial support for McCoy's cause, but the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce came out definitely on his side. It commented in reply to McCoy's inquiry: "This Chamber is of the opinion that the script form of writing is admirably suitable for commercial purposes, and that generally, it is desirable to give increased attention to the teaching of neat and legible writing".²⁹ McCoy was anxious to give

his teachers as much freedom as possible, and he tried to avoid impositions from above. By careful persuasion he was able to have script writing started as an experiment in six infant schools. As a result of this experiment script writing spread and became very popular in infant schools. The children learnt it more quickly than cursive writing and the time saved was allotted to other subjects. Cursive writing remained prominent in primary schools and the problem arose as to where, at what stage, the change from script to cursive writing should take place. Late in 1926 McCoy tried to get six primary schools to introduce script writing into their lower grades as an experiment, but by 1928 the head teachers of four of these schools reported to the Director in elegant and decorative cursive handwriting that they had decided to discontinue script writing.

The battle of writing styles continued beyond the McCoy era, but the important point was that in order to start an experiment and initiate change he had to marshall his facts to convince teachers particularly senior teachers, that change was desirable. Originally McCoy thought that script writing should be taught right through the primary school hence the problems created by the change in writing types when pupils transferred from infant to primary sections would not have occurred.³⁰

A set curriculum was common in all state schools in Australia. In theory it was assumed that city and country children would have equality of opportunity because of the similarity of the curriculum. Set standards of achievement were liable to be expected from pupils irrespective of their home background, emotional maturity and inherent ability. McCoy was a practical man, and he saw that if the State had to employ partly-trained teachers some guide lines and standards were absolutely necessary. On the other hand he kept stressing that the course of instructions made provision for teachers with vision and ability to experiment. Most teachers seemed gratified and indeed expected that the curriculum should be prepared for them. The comments of the Superintendent of Primary Education in his report of 1921, that the teachers appreciated "the compact form" in which their instructions had been issued to them, that they could find what was required quite easily, and that they knew exactly where they were regarding any stage of the work, reflected this satisfaction.³¹

Despite modern reservations and misgivings about a prescribed curriculum from a central authority, McCoy's Course of Instruction for Primary Schools continued to be well received throughout the State. During McCoy's absence abroad in 1923 Charlton reported:

The Course of Instruction, printed in September, 1920 continues to be an invaluable boom to all teachers, but more particularly to those young teachers whose practical experience is somewhat limited, and whose duties called them to distant parts of the state. 32

As a direct result of McCoy's overseas tour his conscience was pricked by the obvious rigidity of the South Australian school curriculum and the State wide similarity of teaching methods, consequently the Course of Instruction was revised in 1924. The revision included courses for the higher primary and central schools. In his annual report for 1924 McCoy mentioned that in the revision teachers were given greater freedom in planning their courses and he thanked the twenty selected teachers and members of the Education Department who co-operated in the work.³³ Courses of instruction were revised, but not radically changed. However McCoy was continually anxious to encourage incentive in his teachers, and the inspectors' reports indicated that many teachers were responding with enthusiasm in effecting better school organization and trying various methods of teaching. The matter in the school curriculum was arranged by the central body, and it was expected that the average child would develop intellectually on this nourishment presented to him in a variety of ways by enterprising teachers. As in the other Australian states tight curricula controls had brought a high level of efficiency in the state schools and had assisted many pupils to attain a good minimum standard. Weak teachers also had been able to achieve beyond their accustomed levels of performance, but such strict control was inclined to reduce the initiative of the truly able teachers, and to make the teaching task technical rather than professional.

The conclusion of the primary school course was marked by an examination for the Qualifying Certificate. This was an external type of examination conducted by the Education Department. The children sat for it

in the familiar surroundings of their own school, but they were supervised by teachers from other schools to discourage any chance for fraudulent practices. The organization in setting and distributing papers, and invigilating the sessions and assessing the scripts was most elaborate. The examination itself was aimed to test the ability of the child and to indicate the success of the teaching. In 1921 McCoy re-organized this examination and included subjects not previously examined. "The examination", he wrote in his 1921 report,

now performs a triple function. It decides the award of the sixty Qualifying Exhibitions; it determines whether or not children are qualified for admission to High Schools; and it serves to show teachers the weak points in their work. 34

McCoy did not alter the elaborate organization. He had the observations of the examiners and the relevant statistics published in the Education Gazette, and all teachers were supplied with the marks gained in each subject by each individual candidate from their schools. On the face of it McCoy seemed to encourage the spirit of competition engendered by examinations, particularly amongst schools and teachers, but in one of his few extant letters, written while he was abroad in 1923, to Charlton, he disclosed his real attitudes to "these terrible exams" as he called them.

I trust that by the time I return you will be able to suggest something in place of these terrible exams, which we all hate. I confess that I have given thought to this question for years, but as I have not been able to suggest a practicable substitute I have refrained from destructive criticism. Any fool, even (indistinct word), can talk about the unfairness of exams, especially the Qualifying Certificate, but no critic has yet suggested how the boy from Oodnaddatta is to get a secondary education at the cost of the state without exams except by the manifestly unfair and uneconomic suggestion of letting any old thing attend a high school irrespective of his fitness or otherwise. 35

The Qualifying Certificate Examination remained during the whole of McCoy's directorship and his last report in 1928 still referred to its "three fold purpose".³⁶ The creation of a reasonable and practical design for a sorting gate for drafting pupils after primary school eluded him. Despite his misgivings he discovered no "practicable substitute" to separate children into

elite group of high school entrants, and the ordinary groups for other types of post primary schools. McCoy was an elitist at heart. He persisted with his belief that places in high schools should be reserved for the academically able.

IV.

Special mention should be made of three subjects which were associated with the practical educationists of the New Education movement. These subjects aimed to stimulate the child to observe and to make him a doer rather than a passive receiver of facts and information. McCoy inherited these three subjects - nature study, woodwork and domestic arts in the South Australian primary school curriculum, but he was not unfamiliar with them from his previous experience.

The aims of nature study in England and United States of America had both educational and utilitarian origins. Nature study was based on the facts and laws of nature - things which in themselves were exciting to children so educationally children needed very little stimulation to get their interest and curiosity aroused to start the learning processes. The utilitarian purposes were based on the premise that rural industries would ultimately benefit by having primary school children taught some nature knowledge and secondary school children some basic agricultural knowledge. In fact such studies were considered as advantageous to country children in helping them to understand and appreciate the environment in which they were living and from which they were destined to make their livings as adults.

In 1908 A.G. Edquist had been appointed supervisor of nature study. He travelled among the primary schools of the State stimulating interest in the improvement of school grounds and gardens. He also lectured at the Teachers' College in the art of conducting nature studies with children.

By 1920 nature study was strongly entrenched in South Australian primary schools. Teachers' College students covered a wide and varied range of investigations of still life, animal life and natural phenomena

interesting to children. Articles and informative notes were published frequently in the Education Gazette for practising teachers, and special notes on elementary science describing the construction of effective, inexpensive apparatus and experimental gardening were also available. Edquist visited the schools and advised the teachers. He held summer schools, conducted excursions and demonstrations to widen interest and deepen knowledge in nature study. He insisted that nature could not be studied without specimens and that children must observe, examine and be encouraged to inquire. He believed that the primary school should encourage the child to develop early interest and bias towards the land and its products. In fact he was quite critical of the developing activity in woodwork which was tending to replace gardening in some schools.³⁷

In 1921 Edquist was advocating on utilitarian grounds, that the theory and practice of agriculture should be taught much more widely because primary production was the chief source of wealth to the State, and that trade and manufacturing flourished and stagnated according to the effects of the season on the land.³⁸ In his report on his travels in 1923 McCoy recommended that elementary agriculture should be introduced into rural schools. Edquist's previous advocacy of this policy was now officially confirmed. He diligently arranged two schools of instruction during 1924 when fifty teachers qualified and returned to their own schools and eventually earned the bonus of £10 offered by the Department for successfully teaching elementary agriculture. Edquist's own position received a change of title to Supervisor of Elementary Agriculture.³⁹ In 1925 Edquist's full report appeared again in the Minister's Report. Since 1920 only small extracts from his report appeared under the report of the Superintendent of Primary Education. The scope of his work was extensive, and time consuming, and he established excellent liaison with the Botanic Gardens, the Department of Agriculture, the university, the museum, and agricultural societies.

Edquist's 1925 report revealed the influence of McCoy's overseas observations on agricultural education.⁴⁰ Edquist visited many country

schools, talked to senior children and addressed meetings of parents on home projects and agricultural clubs; a successful start was made and the projects continued to increase.

By 1926 elementary agriculture was taught in primary schools wherever a suitable area of land was available for practical, experimental work and a qualified teacher was on the staff. Boys over the age of ten years and sometimes girls received lessons in the theory and practice of elementary agriculture; theory occupied one half hour per week and practical work one to one and a half hours per week. The pupils kept note books in which they recorded the theory of the practical work and their personal observations and experiences. The type of experimental work carried out under supervision in the school garden depended upon the water supply, rainfall and the primary industries of the district. The children tended individual plots in which they grew what they chose, and they were encouraged to seek knowledge and advice from sources outside the school. Certain areas of the school garden were worked as utility plots and the produce was sold to purchase new seed and manures. Bonuses were paid to teachers who taught the elements of the science of agriculture satisfactorily as determined by the Supervisor of Elementary Agriculture, and who carried out specified experimental work and assisted the children to conduct successfully remunerative home projects. In 1929 2,000 children were advised and helped to work a home project and about 250 schools taught elementary agriculture. Both pupils and ex-pupils between the ages of ten and twenty-one years were encouraged to conduct a home project bearing on local rural industries. The principal projects were poultry-keeping, bee-keeping, pig-raising, dairy calf rearing, weighing and testing milk for butterfat, lamb-raising, improving wheat by means of selection, vegetable growing, floriculture, fruit growing, bottling and canning of fruits, making jams, jellies, sauces and pickles. Teachers supervised or assisted in the organization of District Home Project Associations, where information was shared between Project workers and the public; teachers arranged visits to stud farms

and agricultural institutions and visited the homes of project workers to give advice and guidance. The children's enthusiasm was also sustained by the keen and practical interest of the Agricultural Bureau and the ready co-operation of Agricultural and Horticultural Societies, and Poultry and Kennel Clubs. At the close of each school year project workers were required to prepare and forward to the Director of Education a description of their projects, together with a statement of receipts and expenditure arising out of the conduct of their projects. These were printed each week in the Observer and Chronicle.⁴¹

In 1928 Edquist was at last given the rank of Inspector after twenty years of devoted, painstaking work. He had generated enthusiasm amongst teachers and the community for the teaching of nature study and elementary agriculture in primary schools.

For administrative convenience the Supervisor of Elementary Agriculture came under the control of the Superintendent of Primary Education, the Supervisor of Domestic Arts was responsible to the Superintendent of Secondary Education and woodwork was controlled by the Superintendent of Technical Education.

Domestic Arts Centres started in 1911 and in that year Miss E.M.Devitt was appointed Supervisor of the domestic arts training centre. The organization of the modern household was becoming complex and diversified, and therefore the future home-maker needed special training to meet the new situation, especially if high standards of health and comfort were to be achieved. By 1919 there were eleven centres, five in the metropolitan area, and six in the country. Twenty-seven schools sent girls to these centres. Girls in grades VII and VIII from primary schools practised cooking and laundry work, girls in first year high school did more advanced cookery and in their second year they studied infact care and personal hygiene.⁴² Early in McCoy's directorship the Advisory Council of Education and public bodies pressed for more facilities to extend the work in domestic arts. In 1919 three resolutions, the only three for the year in fact, of the Advisory Council of Education urged the extension of centres so that all girls in the last two grades of the primary schools could receive

instruction in domestic arts, and that at least one special school of domestic economy should be established in the metropolitan area for adolescent girls between the ages of thirteen and sixteen years.⁴³

After Harvey, the Minister of Education, received a deputation on 2 January, 1920 of about thirty women representing fifteen different women's societies seeking improvements in training young women in domestic arts McCoy wrote a number of comments about post-primary education for girls concluding:

...approximately one half of their school time during their thirteenth and fourteenth years should be devoted to cookery, laundry work, housewifery, the care of infants, needlework - inclusive of dressmaking and millinery. ⁴⁴

He saw post primary education partly as a preparation for one's life's work, and that improved home life could be effected only by girls receiving better domestic training. Members of this women's deputation criticised the current inadequacies in courses in domestic arts. One delegate criticised the fact that there were only eleven centres for domestic training in South Australia, and complained about the lack of facilities for training teachers for domestic economy. The situation of having needlework in primary schools inspected by the male inspector was absolutely ludicrous. She added the usual taunt about better facilities interstate by referring to Victoria's fine residential college and the resultant improvement there in the teaching of domestic arts. She concluded by advocating compulsory training of every girl in home service similar to compulsory training for boys under military service. Another delegate mentioned the desirability of raising the status of the domestic worker and opposed "the idea that the supply of domestic helpers can be increased or improve, by low wages in other callings".

The deputation leader, as did some of the delegates, confused the ideals of motherhood and efficient housekeeping with the increasing social difficulties of obtaining maids-of-all-work who formerly drudged for long hours on a small pittance. The Minister replied that finance was the limiting factor because such training required special buildings and equipment,

and he shelved the request by indicating that the new Director was very keen to establish sound training in domestic arts in the schools.

A leader in the Register entitled "Girls and Home Life" complained about the anomalous contemporary conditions which regarded domestic service as a low prestige occupation.⁴⁵ Young girls preferred positions as clerks and shop assistants with regular hours and attractive pay. "The unpopularity of household duties has caused such an extreme scarcity of workers that many husbands and fathers have sold up their homes, and, with their wives and other dependents, taken up their abodes permanently in hotels or coffee houses". It was suggested that the study of domestic arts in schools "would in the course of time correct wrong and injurious notions, and restore to the community sane and wholesome views, concerning the value of domestic training for girls". But this was not destined to lead to the resurrection of an abundant, cheap labour supply of domestic servants.

On 29 June, 1920 another deputation representing nineteen various women's organizations engaged in welfare work in Adelaide waited upon Ritchie and asked for extended facilities for the domestic education of girls.⁴⁶ Surprisingly this time the stated aims were directed solely towards future home-makers to improve bad cooking and indifferent household management.⁴⁷ In his reply the Minister acknowledged that McCoy had recommended a scheme for more adequate instruction of girls in a variety of domestic subjects, including cookery, laundry, needlework, home and personal hygiene, care of infants, and home decoration.⁴⁸ The Minister regretted that domestic arts schools could not be established in country schools because of lack of finance but lady instructors might be appointed to visit country schools. McCoy's plan was to concentrate on children who generally left school at the age of fourteen; ordinary school lessons would be curtailed at the age of twelve or thirteen and the girls would receive domestic instruction and the boys would receive instruction in commercial or junior technical subjects.

In a minute to the Director the Minister asked for details as to how McCoy's proposals could be carried out, the sort of staff needed, the

TABLE 6

EXPANSION of TEACHING in DOMESTIC ARTS

1919 - 1929

	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
Domestic Arts Centres	11	12	13	13	13	30	30	45	44	47	53
Number of Contributing Schools	27	32	37	32	30	56	58	71	70	72	98
Number of Primary School Pupils	602	697	1333	1111	1128	1877	797	1079	846	1441	1846
Number of Higher Primary School Pupils						230	281	185	313	299	122
Number of High School Pupils	555	441	622	753	707	824	1031	1005	1268	1313	1320
TOTAL :	1157	1138	1955	1864	1835	2931	2839	3194	3586	4141	4393

equipment required, and the cost. Not content with this mammoth order the Minister blithely asked in a note appended in his own handwriting, "Could a text book be used in the schools from which lessons could be given by our existing staff similar to the teaching of hygiene etc. and including it in the curriculum"?⁴⁹ There is no evidence of a report or comments from the educator to this mundane suggestion for learning practical things by reading a text book. The deputations mentioned and later deputations kept the designs for domestic training for girls in schools prominently in the public eye and helped to re-inforce McCoy's plans in this direction.

Although finance was restricted at the beginning of his directorship McCoy saw that a definite domestic arts syllabus was organized by 1921.⁵⁰ Girls who had satisfactorily completed a two years' course were given a certificate and the popularity of the course began to increase so that there were more pupils wishing to attend courses than could be accommodated. By 1923 approval was given for extending the work throughout the State and in 1924 seventeen new centres were established, mainly in the country, and it was anticipated that there would be a centre in every high school and in most higher primary schools during 1925.⁵¹ It was also intended to extend this work into rural schools and schools of instruction were organized to qualify teachers who taught in spaces equipped for the work in the small schools.⁵² The introduction of the home-making course in the central schools for girls increased the general interest taken in the study of domestic arts, and by 1926 the course had been revised and a students' text book had been prepared.⁵³ In 1928 it was arranged for all women trainees at the Teachers' College, except those in the C Course, to receive instruction in domestic arts,⁵⁴ and the status of the organizing teacher of domestic arts was raised to that of an inspector in the same year.⁵⁵

In the upper sections of the English primary schools courses manual work were linked theoretically with industrial training. Utilitarian aims suggested that boys would gain a taste for manual labour and a respect for good honest bodily labour. Although the manual training movement had no

clear policy in England its supporters generally agreed that it quickened the child's mental powers of observation, attention and accuracy, and developed moral faculties of order, neatness, perseverance and self reliance. As well as imparting manual skills the experience was considered to be an essential part of the whole concept of a liberal education.⁵⁶

All these purposes of manual work were translated to Australian schools, but there does not appear to be any substantial statement about the theory of manual training in relation to Australian education. The statement in the notes on manual training in McCoy's Course of Instruction reflected the English ideas of New Education.

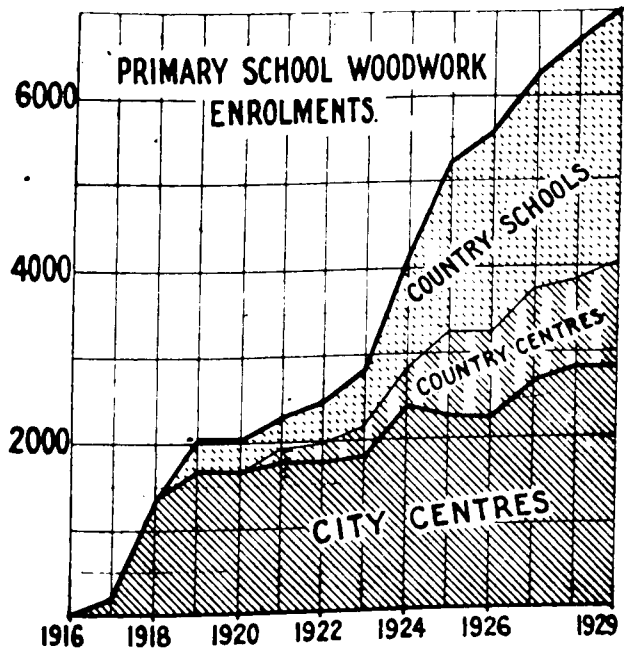
Modern educational methods provide for the exercise of the twin desires to do things and to make things.

Among the many advantages that will accrue to children who undergo a course of training in constructive handwork are increased power of attention and concentration, increased power of resource and initiation, the development of self-reliance, self-control, perseverance, patience, neatness and accuracy. These characteristics will be found to enter into all their school work. 57

These ideas were derived from Froebel's theory that constructive work was a means by which a child can express his creative impulse, and Pestalossi's theory that manual work was a means of training sense perception and that the training of the senses and muscular co-ordination developed the brain.

Instruction in woodwork was begun in 1916 in South Australia for boys in primary schools and by 1921 there were seven woodwork centres in the metropolitan area. In 1921 the Mount Gambier centre was opened and this was the first to accommodate pupils from a high school.⁵⁸ During this year special woodwork certificates were issued to boys who had satisfactorily completed a two year's course. Teachers of higher primary schools and primary schools could qualify themselves to teach the art by attending a summer school, of three weeks duration or by attending Saturday morning classes. When basic, standard equipment in the form of a carpenter's bench and essential tools had been purchased by smaller country schools, often by the school committees with the aid of a departmental subsidy, woodwork instruction could begin provided the teacher was qualified.

FIGURE 1



In 1923 all male student teachers were required to attend woodwork instruction for one half day per week. A special booklet was published giving syllabus details and advice on methods, this was supplemented by a series of blue prints illustrating the models, timber and tools.⁵⁹ By 1925 fourteen centres, six in the country, were functioning and to these were added the woodwork and sheet-metal work classes of the seven newly established central schools.⁶⁰ In 1929 there were ten centres in the country and ten in the metropolitan area and a new syllabus allowed for more originality.⁶¹ Primary school boys were also using the workshops in the central schools when these were available. Dr. Davey, the psychologist, also used the workshops with groups of boys from opportunity classes to observe Sequin's theory that manual training increased the abilities of mental defectives.

Figure 1 shows the progressive enrolments in woodwork classes in primary schools since its inception in 1916. The lower portion of the graph indicates the enrolment at fully equipped woodwork centres of the metropolitan area. Country woodwork centres were first established from 1921 mainly in association with high schools. From 1918 the teaching of woodwork with approved standard equipment in small country schools showed a significant expansion with the introduction of the bonus system in 1920. By 1929 the number of boys receiving instruction in woodwork was greater in the country than in the metropolitan area.

Manual work in South Australian schools developed as woodwork courses based on the techniques of the Swedish sloyd work which required boys to work through graded exercises by drawing and then making models. The Woodwork Handbook denied that woodwork classes in primary schools gave even basic training for carpenters. The basic distinction made between carpentry with its emphasis on the finished, saleable product and woodwork in schools with its major concern with the method of production was naive. The prime function of these classes revolved around the training associated with the making of the models rather than the finished models.

"It is not the product, but the method, that is essential. Good methods will produce good models, accurate and well-finished work, a delight in the eye and to the touch; but the method of training must not be sacrificed to the mere production of models".⁶²

The handbook mentioned but did not analyse how muscular co-ordination of hand and arm should be developed plus "resourcefulness, initiation, independence and methodical working".⁶³ The book also claimed that woodwork was mentally stimulating because "motor centres" in the brain were developed because "thoughts are translated into actions".

Discovering reasons why South Australia continued with this formal, rigid programme of using wood as the one and only medium of manual training makes interesting speculation. Lack of money besides the lack of capable teachers and necessary facilities might have reduced the wide range of activities normally associated with hand work and craft. Perhaps South Australia was following the general Australian practice of copying directly from other countries proven and successful educational practices. Perhaps as woodwork was under the administration control of Fenner in technical education there was an unconscious bias on its industrial aspect as a basis for trade training. Although this was definitely denied in theory the specific nature of the courses and the complete lack of pupil choice in selecting models and the complexity of the work, particularly in the post-primary syllabus, gave woodwork a decided trade bent.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

PRIMARY EDUCATION 2.

- I. Religious education.
- II. Education for citizenship.
- III. Sex education.
- IV. Innovation and experiment.
 - The Correspondence School
 - New teaching aides: Radio
 - Films.

I.

Actual material progress in education in the State could be gauged from the statistics carefully collected by the Education Department, but intrinsic values and the associated moral and civic ideals which the extension of education was supposed to inspire were difficult to confirm.

In the preface to the Course of Instruction for the Primary Schools (1920) McCoy named the virtues of promptness, neatness, patience and persistence and the ideals of patriotism, religious toleration, reverence for the old age and sympathy for the needy and the suffering, as things to be instilled into the children on all occasions. Besides the example set by the teachers themselves and the incidental reference to such things in lessons specific ways of actually inculcating them were difficult to determine.¹

McCoy had taught religious instruction in New South Wales and he had seen it working successfully in Tasmania. He believed in the potentialities of religious education as means of providing the necessary virtues and ideals for future citizens. Early in his directorship in South Australia when groups outside the schools made moves to have religious instruction introduced he gave them strong encouragement. He was however extremely sensitive to the traditional contentious sectarian strife in South Australia, and he handled these moves with caution.

Section 62 (3) of the 1915 Education Act stated:

Any primary public school may be open in the morning before the time fixed for commencing secular instruction for the purpose of reading portions of the Holy Scriptures in the Authorised or Revised or Douay version, or any other version approved by the Governor; provided that:

- a) The attendance of no child at such reading shall be compulsory
- and b) No sectarian or denominational religious teaching shall be allowed in any public school. 2

Regulation II, 4 and 5 stipulated that the reading of the Scriptures should not extend over more than half an hour before 9.15 a.m. and that if the parents of not less than ten children sent a written request to the Minister that the Bible be read the teacher shall, if directed by the Minister, comply with the request in accordance with the Act.³

The implication of these regulations absolutely restricted religious teaching. The simple act of the teacher reading the Bible to school

pupils in any school where the parents wanted this had to gain ministerial approval from the far-off central office. The inconvenient administration procedure involved was inclined to douse any flicker of interest in Bible reading by the teacher. South Australia did not officially accept the challenge of the major groups of the moral educationists of the New Education who believed in making the school specifically responsible for religious education. It took a nebulous approach hoping that proper attitudes and conduct would be inculcated in school children incidentally.

In the parliamentary session during Augst, 1921 H.B. Crosby prepared an amendment to Section 62 of the Education Act which proposed to make the reading of selected Bible lessons compulsory during school hours, and to allow ministers of religion access to the schools for half an hour each week for the purpose of giving religious instruction. Provisions were included for the exemption of any child whose parents did not want him to receive such instruction. To clarify the position within South Australia McCoy asked his district inspectors to name any schools where the Scriptures were read before school hours in accordance with the regulations. No inspector had any knowledge of a school in his district where the Scriptures were read before school commenced. In order to give the Minister a comprehensive picture of the position in the other states McCoy began to collect information in his usual methodic manner. He requested all Directors of Education in Australia, except those in New South Wales and Tasmania to supply information about religious instruction and Bible reading in their schools, and to make confidential comments on three points.

1. Does the Act work smoothly in regard to this question?
2. Is the instruction given effective, do the teachers perform the work with zeal, or is the work done perfunctorily?
3. Are complaints numerous or well founded? 4

The replies received from interstate, emphasised the stringent restrictions which prohibited any effective religious education in South Australian state schools.

In Victoria Section 21 of Education Act 1910 No.2644 stated that:

- (1) In every State school secular instruction only shall be given.
- (2) No teacher shall give any instruction other than secular in any State school building.5

However, under Regulation XX religious instruction was given by voluntary instructors (clergymen and others) for half an hour per week, either during the first half hour in the morning or the last half hour in the afternoon. No child was required to attend religious instruction unless his parents assented to this in writing. During religious instruction lessons no secular instruction was given to those children withdrawn from the religious lessons. If religious instruction were given in the first half hour of the day children not attending were formed into classes in the playground and school corridors, if it were given at the close of the day children not attending "must be dismissed in an orderly way and must be required to leave the playground". The material welfare for those without the pale was further provided for under Regulations XX 4.

On days of inclement weather, the religious instruction, unless it is given during the last half hour of the afternoon meeting, shall be omitted in schools in which there is no adequate outdoor shelter for the children, and the accommodation is not such as to admit of the assembling of the children who do not receive religious instruction in rooms other than those in which such instruction is being given. 6

Actually the regulations in Victoria did not provide for denominational religious instruction, the children were organized in classes under any volunteer instructor, regardless of creed, provided he or she had been proposed by the school committee and approved of by the Director. In his comments to McCoy Tate remarked:

The work of voluntary instruction goes on smoothly, and complaints are seldom made. It is not possible to give a pronouncement as to the effectiveness of the instruction because there is no provision for testing it ... On the whole, however, there is no reason to question the regular attendance and zeal of the voluntary teachers who take part in the work. 7

In New South Wales and Western Australia general religious instruction in state schools was compulsory, but subject to a conscience clause, and

it was given by departmental teachers.⁸ In New South Wales prescribed text books published by the Irish National Board of Education were used, and although no books were prescribed in Western Australia there was a set syllabus. However, in both states provision was made for children of any one religious persuasion to receive instruction by the clergyman or other religious teachers of that faith. Children who did not attend such classes received ordinary instruction organized by the teachers. Cecil Andrews, Director of Education in Western Australia, answered that the Act worked "quite smoothly", that "generally speaking, the instruction given is effective", and that complaints were "practically non-existent".⁹

In Tasmania instruction in Scripture history was compulsory, but subject to a conscience clause, and it was given by state school teachers for not more than one hour per week. The themes of this subject were carefully chosen and prescribed in a syllabus, but the teacher was permitted to use any version of the Bible to illustrate the matter of his lesson. Ministers of religion or teachers of a particular persuasion were also allowed to visit the schools, and to give religious instruction to the pupils of their particular denomination.

The Education Acts of Queensland provided instruction by teachers in selected Bible lessons from two specially prepared books, one for the lower school and one for the upper school. Both books contained extracts from the Old and New Testaments, selected by a committee of inspectors and teachers representing all creeds, including Roman Catholics. Furthermore, ministers of religion, and they only, were entitled to give religious instruction to children of their denomination during school hours preferably at the opening of the school day or immediately preceding the closing of the school. Children not receiving religious instruction were given ordinary instruction by their teachers. Parents had the right of withdrawing their children from all religious instructions if they so desired.

By arming the Minister with this detailed evidence McCoy hoped that Parliament would be convinced that religious education given generally by teachers, and specifically by the clergy of the various denominations,

would be a sure foundation for the making of future citizens. McCoy's concluding paragraphs in this submission revealed his own complete committal to the cause. He believed "that the school should give religious instruction, and that nothing less was worthy of a Christian State". He claimed that religious instruction had a specific educational value in teaching children about God and in confirming the Christian faith. It also had tangible benefits for the State.

"Religious education emphasises the virtues of honesty, cleanliness, chivalry and patriotism, the possession of which makes useful citizens of the State..."

He stated that England, Scotland and Ireland made provisions for the religious instruction of school children. He hinted that "the growth of infidelity and materialism and the destruction of the sense of reverence and religion" in France was in some way due to the exclusion of religious teaching from its schools. He stated that schools in the United States of America banned religious teaching, but he made no mention of any ill effect on American society. McCoy claimed that there was no other method of providing religious education for a large majority of children besides state schools. Sunday schools did not influence a large number of children of indifferent parents therefore it was essential for state schools, where attendance was compulsory, to teach religion. "The fact that in the Public Schools it will also reach a great majority of well brought-up and carefully nurtured children who already receive home and Sunday School instruction is no argument against its introduction". McCoy praised the work of Sunday Schools, but he criticised their teachers on educational grounds. Sunday School teachers had neither the training or experience "to adopt the subject matter of instruction to the intellectual capacity of the children". Finally, he proudly proclaimed that public school teachers were "well-qualified to give religious instruction, and when they understand the immense amount of good that such teaching will accomplish, they will cheerfully undertake the additional duty".¹⁰

McCoy's complaint that Sunday School teachers lacked pedagogical

experience could be logically made about the clergy who were to be given right of entry to the schools for denominational teaching. McCoy's confident assertion that his teachers were willing and able to give religious instruction and "would cheerfully undertake the additional duty" was useless. He misjudged the minds of the teachers and the Teachers' Union opposition to religious instruction was used in no slight way by Labour members in the debate.¹¹

The executive of the Teachers' Union issued a circular stating that Bible reading in State schools would tend to lessen respect for and interest in the book. The executive was unanimous in its objection to the proposed concession to give clergymen and their representatives the right to enter schools. It objected to any system which delineated sectarian differences among pupils. It contended that no-one should be allowed to enter a school as a teacher who was not directly under the authority and control of the head teacher. Lessons attempted by people quite unskilled in the instruction and control of children would interfere with the discipline and moral tone of a school and increase the teachers' difficulties. As there was no restriction on the clergyman's choice of a substitute, an ill-mannered and illiterate person might be sent into a school, and such a person, with imperfections of manner and speech, would pose before the children as an authority. No person should teach in schools without the approval and sanction of the Director of Education. The work and routine in the school would be dislocated by allowing all denominations an opportunity to visit a school indiscriminately during the week. As the majority of country schools had only one room the clergyman would most likely monopolize the classroom while the teacher taught non-attenders outside in the open air. In conclusion the circular claimed that these objections were "non merely theoretical", they were based on observation experience, and reliable expert evidence.¹²

Crosby's Education Act Further Amendment Bill was debated in the House of Assembly on party lines. Ritchie, who had formerly opposed the teaching of religious instruction in state schools, now used large sections of McCoy's

memorandum to support the amendment. The interruptions and comments, particularly from Labour members, made it abundantly clear that the Minister was relying on his Director for the main material of his speech. Eventually the amendment was defeated by five votes.¹³

Despite these convictions he had about the importance of religious education McCoy made no further forthright moves during his directorship to introduce Bible lessons conducted by visiting clergymen within the schools, or Bible readings from text books selected and prepared by a committee of teachers and clergy.

Although interstate state school systems had apparently successful religious education programmes, the parliamentary debates in 1921, and the statements from the Teachers' Union made in conjunction with these, showed McCoy that South Australia was not prepared to alter educational procedure in a manner which might stimulate sectarian strife. History illustrated that the connections between the church and state in South Australian education had not been advantageous to either. In the 1920's the church and the state were two distinct entities and it seemed best that this separation should continue. The existing Education Act provided Bible reading without comment by the teacher, but there was no evidence of parents wishing to use this opportunity. McCoy gauged the general will of the community. He squashed his convictions and refrained from disturbing the now tranquil surface of former deep, turbulent waters. Records connected with further moves within Parliament to introduce religious instruction and Bible reading in schools contained no new comments by McCoy; they simply repeated the theme set by him prior to the 1921 debates.

In 1924 Pascoe, McCoy's previous Minister of Education, introduced a private measure in the Legislative Council to establish religious education in state schools along the lines of Crosby's 1921 proposals.¹⁴ On 23 September, 1924 McCoy furnished some material for the debate to the Chief Secretary.¹⁵ This contained references to the Act and Regulations information about the position in regard to scriptural instruction in other states, and notes showing the attitude of teachers on the question, but it contained

no comments about his own notions on religious instruction. Labour M.L.C's were not sympathetic and when the Bill was passed to the House of Assembly it received a very poor reception. The second reading debate was peppered by interjections. The Liberals were divided about the matter, but the Labour members were definitely against the proposals and the Bill lapsed.

Again in 1927 a non-party debate went on in the House of Assembly over five days when Crosby again attempted to have the Act amended to permit religious instruction and Bible reading in State schools.¹⁶ He sincerely believed that these were the only real means to assist the moral development of children. The House was evenly divided on the issue 18 to 18, but the amendment was lost on the casting vote of the speaker.

The material prepared for the Minister of Education by the Deputy Director, Charlton, during McCoy's absence abroad, copied McCoy's original statement in 1921 about the Education Act, the position about scriptural instruction in schools in other states, and the necessity for state schools to give religious instruction. In addition Charlton claimed that however uneasy teachers would be about clergymen entering the schools they would welcome "the opportunity of giving scriptural instruction during school hours from properly compiled and duly authorized reading Books provided that all such lessons were conducted by themselves".¹⁷ Charlton was a very staunch Methodist, and his hopes were probably pinned on his religious favour rather than the actual willingness of teachers to give religious instruction. McCoy's conscience dictated that education required some religious base, and he was always impressed by the simple daily devotions of singing morning prayers that he saw interstate and witnessed overseas.¹⁸ He believed that these preliminary exercises were always impressive and influenced the spirit of the work and general atmosphere of the school, but he sensed the trends of the times, and he was too astute to become involved in wrangles on religion. Consequently he was most cautious to have his teachers observe the Act and regulations and give only secular instruction.

II.

In his preface to the Course of Instruction for the Primary Schools McCoy stated that correct conduct and desirable habits "should be inculcated at all seasonable times". The annual Empire Day celebration was regarded as one of these times. Since 1905 the Australian Commonwealth had agreed officially to join other overseas dominions in observing 24 May as Empire Day, and the South Australian Education Department had definite regulations specifying the form that the celebrations should take. Although directives and suggestions were published in each year's Education Gazette for April and in the Children's Hour, the April 1924 Education Gazette stated:

It is hardly necessary to print detailed instructions for making a success of the Empire Day celebrations ... But there are many teachers who desire to make a change in their usual programme of celebration, which will be more in accord with those modern methods of teaching that place the teacher apparently in the background, and allow the pupils to come forward to take the main parts in the function. 19

Sane patriotism and a sense of responsibility, duty, sympathy and self-sacrifice were to be stimulated not only by the ceremony of "Saluting the Flag" and listening to special lessons, but also by tableaux of past and present events arranged by the children under the watchful direction of the teacher.

In 1924 the United Trades and Labour Council of South Australia requested that the Minister of Education receive a deputation because the Council believed that anti-working class propaganda was being spread by the schools on Empire Day. The request was embellished with such statements as :

The Empire is built on the exploitation of the working class... As there are two opposing classes within the Empire there can be no such thing as unity between the opposing forces as long as one class lives by hereditary right, or by the exploitation of Labour... All the history of the Empire is one of brute force by the powers that be. 20

In his report to the Minister McCoy peremptorily dismissed the accusation that the schools were used for anti-working class propaganda "as a libel on the excellent work done by our teachers". He submitted to the Minister

copies of the circular published annually in the April Education Gazette, and the Regulations about Empire Day, and made no further comments besides:

These documents constitute the whole of the instructions or suggestions given to teachers in this connection. A perusal of them will indicate the type of lessons given. The Minister himself visited the Alberton and LeFevre's Peninsula Public School and saw for himself the character of the proceedings last Empire Day. 21

McCoy was never prone to expatiation, the inferences from the evidence McCoy left to the discretion of the Minister. McCoy protected his teachers and defended the matter they taught which in this instance stressed patriotic sentiments, pride of race and admiration for the deeds that won the Empire. His taciturnity probably consolidated support for the establishment, at least it did not involve him as an active partisan in the forces of either Liberal or Labour.

The Deputation actually waited on the Minister on 1 August, 1924 and the press reports in the morning paper on the next day were almost identical.²² The matters reported did not appear as belligerent as they sounded in the council's original letter. The deputation wanted to make the best use of Empire Day, and instead of lauding imperialism and Empire aggrandizement by war it pressed for the cultivation of an Australian sentiment and a spirit of internationalism. After inviting the delegates to make definite suggestions to the Government, the Minister stated he was not keen to interfere with speeches on Empire Day because this would be a breach of freedom of speech. In fact, according to the Leader of the Opposition, the Minister himself said not a word about the great characters of history or anything about Empire patriotism when he addressed the children at Le Fevre's Peninsula School on Empire Day 1924 but he urged them to emulate a prominent Port Adelaide footballer.²³ Probably examples of the human efforts of prominent local identities were more real to children than the ideals and aspirations of past heroes in far away places. Perhaps the Minister was employing a basic principle of teaching by using the concrete example before proceeding to an elaboration of the abstract.

III.

McCoy had some very modern notions about general health education, particularly when this influenced behavioural patterns. For instance he believed that ignorance of basic sex education would lead to increasing problems in the community. Victorian prudery in England and Australia had made the subject of sex indecent. In most cases parents, teachers, and the churches had nothing to say to the child about sex. McCoy was not content with this conspiracy of silence and he believed that there was a need to teach sex hygiene. No state school teachers in Australia gave lessons in sex education, but a travelling lecturer of the Australasian White Cross League lectured to school boys in South Australia in 1916, 1919 and 1922. The South Australian Government gave a grant of £100 to the League to subsidize this work and the lecturer was given a free all-lines railway pass. In August, 1922 the President of the League questioned the South Australian grant, and the Minister suggested to McCoy that the teachers should undertake this work. McCoy correctly judged the reticence of teachers about introducing this topic. The negative attitude of the teachers was reflected by the comments made by R.A. West, principal of Adelaide High School, to Adey in 1925. West wrote that the staff are

unanimously of the opinion that such matters are best not dealt with in a lecture to boys in a mass, that, especially in the case of younger boys, their thoughts are directed into doubtful channels, and much of it is beyond their comprehension, and that they (the staff) consider that the good done may be far outweighed by the evil. 24

Although the teachers condemned the lecture method in dealing with this topic they actually denied all responsibility towards it by not making any positive proposals for teaching it. McCoy was not prepared to ignore the problem and he pressed for the retention of the services of the lecturer. McCoy won his point because the lecturer visited South Australia again in 1925 and during 1927-1928.²⁵ The lecturer was most assiduous because during his half yearly sojourn in 1921 he visited 266 schools and 208 schools in 1927-1928. Although this method of sex education was open to question it was better under these circumstances than nothing at all.

McCoy firmly believed that education was concerned with the child's character development in order to make him a sound citizen. Although he believed that religious and moral education could be best developed by including definite subjects on these topics in the school curriculum he was too discriminating to press for such inclusions if they were likely to upset the community or the teachers themselves. He had to be content with the less vigorous non-direct instruction approach of some of the moralist groups in the New Education Movement, and hope that the intangibles of education would be instilled into the children by the character, attitude and behaviour of the teachers themselves.

IV.

McCoy accepted and followed the Australian assumption that educational facilities should be spread as evenly as possible over the whole State. Because of the vast areas in South Australia and the relatively small, scattered rural population there were many places where children lived long distances from the nearest school. So when a school room and a teacher were not provided correspondence tuition was made available.

New South Wales and Victoria commenced the first correspondence schools in Australia followed by Western Australia in 1918. McCoy had started a scheme of tuition by correspondence in Tasmania before he left in 1919. The correspondence school was established in South Australia in 1920 to meet the needs of children of seven years of age and upwards who resided more than four miles from a school and who were unable to reach a school by train or other conveyance.²⁶ When the children enrolled they were classified and provided, without charge, with all the necessary text books and work books by the Education Department, together with sheets of special instructions for parents or supervisors explaining details of working through the lessons. New work was sent out from the correspondence school in Adelaide every fortnight, and a double supply of work books with lessons was provided so that no time was lost by the pupils while

the books were going through the mail. Special envelopes were provided for the return of lesson books and these came through the post free of cost to the parents. In many cases the parents of the children were poorly educated so that lessons had to be sent out with the most meticulous care, nothing could be taken for granted, and nothing left to chance. Even when the educational attainments of the children's parents or supervisors were low the children made remarkable progress if they followed the directions of their teachers.

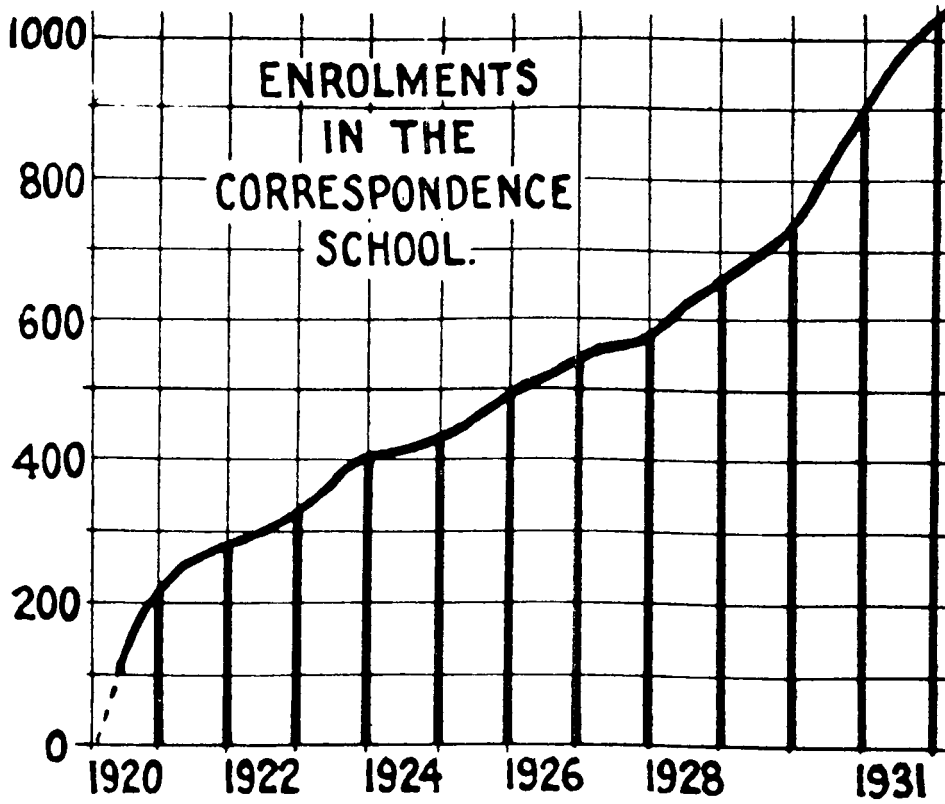
An article in the 1922 Christmas magazine of the correspondence school entitled "The Genesis of the School", acknowledged that McCoy established the school on the suggestion of the Chief Inspector, T.W. Cole.²⁷ The success of the correspondence school however, can be attributed to McCoy's initial and continuing interest, as well as to the devotion of the women teachers who had a thorough knowledge of country life and who understood the children's difficulties,

By 1923 eighteen children were prepared for the Qualifying Examination and ten of these passed.²⁸ The addition of a duplicating machine made work easier and more efficient than the old chromographic methods. A circulating library of 616 "small volumes" had also been established, and by 1925 parents of correspondence pupils were contributing donations towards increasing the library. In the same year the work was extended to include chronic in-patients in the Children's Hospital and volunteer women undergraduates acted as supervisors.²⁹

Although McCoy recommended the extension of correspondence tuition to post primary children in his report of his 1923 tour overseas this was not put into practice in his day although it had received Cabinet's approval. In 1929 provision was made for helping country girls, who had already obtained the Qualifying Certificate, to receive courses in literature, all branches of home needlework, drawing, and the arts and crafts employed in home decoration.³⁰

School in the mail for isolated country children at the primary level was soundly organized in McCoy's time and, as Figure 2 shows,

FIGURE 2



enrolment increased. Time and practice had perfected the operations and the courses of the correspondence school were ready to expand into the post primary areas as soon as more facilities were made available.

Finally in this chapter reference is made to two inventions, wireless and the cinema, which were being perfected in the 1920's, and which ultimately became useful aids to teaching at all levels. McCoy was sceptical about their usefulness and he was not willing to accept them. In fact he always preferred to accept teaching methods and educational devices after they had been proven by experts and used effectively in other places.

In the light of modern experience it is easy to criticize but McCoy was very dubious about the value of radio broadcasts to schools. On 6 January, 1925 Central Broadcasters Limited wrote to the Director asking for an interview to discuss broadcasting educational lectures similar to those being broadcast by the Education Departments of New South Wales and Victoria.³¹ The interview took place on 12 January, but apparently no record of its context was made. On 15 January Central Broadcasters wrote to the Minister of Education proposing to place their five kilowatt station at the disposal of the Education Department for one hour daily, and to undertake the technical and mechanical side of the transmission free of charge if the Education Department provided the lecturer or teacher. Naturally McCoy was asked to make a report on this offer, but he expressed doubts about the whole thing and showed very little enthusiasm.³² He referred to two "obvious shortcomings in the method of broadcasting school lessons". Firstly nothing was broadcast but the voice of the speaker and the method followed must necessarily be that of the lecturer, and secondly "young children cannot readily follow an address or lecture by a stranger even when they have the added stimulus of personal contact". McCoy did not appreciate the possibilities of radio stimulating the imagination by the variety of sounds and the interpolation of scenes and incidents

to enhance the narrative, and he underestimated the ability of even young children to listen, sometimes enthralled, to the voice on the radio. He continued that "there would certainly be great advantages to a rural school community in having a wireless installed at the local school". However he did not state, let alone discuss, these advantages, but categorically claimed "that the entire cost of such installation should, however, be borne by the local parents and citizens". This was a pretty tall order when he estimated the cost of a machine to be from £40 to £80. He also added that a broadcast officer would have to be appointed to select teachers and to organize lectures at an approximate cost of £800 per annum. McCoy based this estimate on the practice in New South Wales where a departmental inspector selected lecturers and planned lessons for school broadcasts to 102 schools between the hours of 3 and 3.30 p.m. on four days per week. McCoy recommended that if the Government was willing to incur the expense, an officer should be appointed to organize the lectures and that investigations should be made in order to discover the best receiving sets suitable for schools.

On 11 February, 1925, under the Minister's instruction, McCoy wrote to the Central Broadcasting Company saying that the whole matter was deferred "pending receipt of further information regarding the experiment which is being made by Farmer's Broadcasting for the New South Wales Education Department".³³ Next year another broadcasting station, 5DN, made offers, but as this was a "B" class station the Education Department would have to pay £100 per year for the services. A short reply was made by McCoy on the 9 June, apparently without reference to the Minister, stating "in view of the experience in New South Wales in educational broadcasting, I am not prepared to recommend any experiments whatever in connection with this Department".³⁴ There was no record about "experiences in New South Wales educational broadcasting" and even allowing for the financial problems concerned in the appointment of a broadcasting officer, and the expense that the local community was likely to incur in purchasing receiving sets, McCoy, at the outset, apparently did not appreciate the value of radio as a teaching aid.

In the report of his 1927 tour abroad, McCoy summarized his evaluation on the use of wirelasses in schools:

"Wireless is a delightful and entertaining method of extending the general knowledge of children, and it may contribute in some measure to the solution of the problem of supplying expert instruction in some subjects to the senior children of our one and two-teacher schools, but the difficulties of transmission, clear speaking, suitable instructors, and suitable material are amongst the many which render it but partially effective at the present time in the classroom".³⁵

He conceded that radio could have some use in the classroom, but he was not prepared to suggest investigations be made to discover how the present problems could be overcome.

Similarly with the cinema, McCoy believed that it was not useful in the classroom for specific teaching. In 1924 the Advisory Council of Education had informed the Minister that the cinematograph had high potential value as an educational instrument and that its introduction into the schools should be encouraged.³⁶ When McCoy was asked to comment on this he did not show the enthusiasm that his council colleagues apparently had.³⁷ He pointed out to the Minister that the Council had suggested that its introduction should only be encouraged. He believed that it was neither desirable nor practicable to place cinematographs in schools indiscriminately because the costs would be too great for the State to bear, but if teachers wanted machines installed they could be purchased with school committee funds subsidized by the Department. In his 1926 annual report he quoted a warning made in the House of Commons by the President of the Board of Education in England concerning the practical use of the cinematograph for educational purposes.³⁸ While acknowledging the value of the film in supplying general background for both children and adults, the President had no real evidence of its worth in the classroom, and much educational experimentation was necessary to establish if it had any use in the school in proportion to its cost. Whilst in England during 1927 McCoy attended demonstrations by the film industry, but he retained his point of view that films were an excellent means of spreading general knowledge, but for the classroom nothing could "supplant the stationary slide".³⁹

Except for medical and psychological services McCoy gave no space in his educational organization to research and experiment. In this respect he stood in direct contrast to the scientific educationists of the New Education.

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2. 1915 Act p.556
3. Ed. Regs. (1920) p.2
4. S.A.A. E.D. 1987/1921 Letter 1 August, 1921
5. Ibid., Tate in his reply to McCoy on 13 Aug.1921 quoted the Act and enclosed Instructions under Regulation XX - Religious Instruction in State Schools.
6. See note 5.
7. See note 5.
8. S.A.A. E.D. 1987/1921 contains the relevant sections of the Acts and Regulations concerning religious instruction in State schools in N.S.W., W.A., Tasmania and Queensland.
9. S.A.A. E.D. 1987/1921 Letter 8 Aug. 1921
10. Ibid., McCoy to Ritchie 30 Aug. 1921
11. Deb. S.A.P. 1921 pp.1414-1418
12. S.A.A. M.E. 1523/1921 Circular "Bible Reading in State Schools"
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22. Advertiser 2 Aug. 1924 p.16 a-b
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25. Ibid., records of the Lecturer's visits to schools.
26. E.G. May 1966 Supplement "The Work of the S.A. Correspondence School, the Radio School and the School of the Air".
27. Ibid.
28. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.44 p.15
29. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.5
30. S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p.4
31. S.A.A. E.D. 126/1925
32. Ibid., McCoy to the Minister 21 Jan. 1925
33. S.A.A. E.D. 126/1925 McCoy to Central Broadcasting Company 11 Feb.1925
34. Ibid., McCoy to Radio Station 5DN 9 June 1926
35. Report on Tour Abroad 1927 p.53
36. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.45 p.2
37. S.A.A. M.E. 101/1925 McCoy to the Minister 7 July 1925
38. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.7
39. Report on Tour Abroad 1927 p.52

CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

POST - PRIMARY EDUCATION.

- I. High schools.
- II. Higher primary schools.
- III. Central schools.
- IV. Thebarton Technical High School.
- V. Vocational guidance and placement.

I.

McCoy regarded high schools as the elite schools in post primary education, and he believed that only pupils with academic potential who could remain in them for a whole course should enrol. Unfortunately, as Table 7 shows, the majority of children who entered high schools remained only for two years, whereas McCoy believed that three years was the minimum time in which a beneficial course could be conducted. Table 8 shows a steady overall increase of 76.3 per cent in the enrolments in high schools during McCoy's directorship, except in 1920 during the economic recession. Increasing numbers caused accommodation difficulties and constant overcrowding and high schools continuously lacked basic facilities such as libraries and science laboratories. There was a 64.3 per cent increase in the number of teachers and the number of high schools increased from 21 to 25 by 1929 and of the 25 only four of these were in the metropolitan area. Small country high schools were expensive to maintain, and between 1919 and 1929 the cost per child on average attendance increased by 42.4 per cent.

On his appointment McCoy initiated sound organization by having the post of Superintendent of Secondary Education filled. Although there were other applicants for this position, McCoy had been impressed by Adey's work and he judged that Adey would be an efficient, intelligent and co-operative superintendent.¹ McCoy was a shrewd judge of character and he gathered about him subordinates on whom he could rely to initiate ideas and to carry out details of organization.

In his original case to the Minister about the appointment McCoy described the state of the high schools in South Australia and he aimed to show the necessity for appointing a full time superintendent.² There were twenty one high schools with about 120 teachers and an enrolment of 3036 children. The estimates indicated that the cost of maintaining these schools, exclusive of the interest on the cost of the land and buildings and the training of teachers, was £29,900 per year. McCoy made cutting comments about the curricula; there were no set courses of study, and

TABLE 7

NUMBER of STUDENTS IN EACH YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOLS1922 - 1929

YEAR	NUMBER of SCHOOLS	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR	THIRD YEAR	FOURTH YEAR	FIFTH YEAR	TOTAL
1922	22	2,169	863	320	159	11	3,522
1923	23	1,917	1,173	221	125	45	3,481
1924	23	2,228	1,113	288	150	31	3,810
1925	24	1,818	1,332	248	195	25	3,618
1926	24	2,059	1,245	361	171	36	3,872
1927	24	2,298	1,388	339	179	62	4,266
1928	25	2,010	1,548	563	282	72	4,475
1929	25	2,494	1,677	564	340	80	5,155

TABLE 8

STATISTICS on HIGH SCHOOLS1919 - 1929

A	B	C	D	E	F
YEAR	NUMBER of SCHOOLS	NUMBER of TEACHERS	NUMBER of CHILDREN INSTRUCTED	NET EXPENDITURE	COST per CHILD on AVERAGE ATTENDANCE.
1919	21.	129	3,106	37,429	14.19.11
1920	21	123	2,828	45,413	19. 7. 7
1921	22	124	3,067	48,743	18.19. 4
1922	22	133	3,813	51,263	15.14.11
1923	23	153	3,795	58,213	18. 6. 1
1924	23	155	4,136	63,330	18. 1. 2
1925	24	154	3,908	66,729	19.19. 8
1926	24	160	4,150	80,855	22. 8. 9
1927	24	182	4,605	87,929	22. 0. 7
1928	25	192	5,063	93,761	21. 0. 1
1929	25	212	5,477	102,566	21. 0. 2

teachers prepared pupils for the university examinations guided only:

by the scanty particulars furnished by the university publications... The examination dominated the work of the school instead of being the final logical test of well graded and properly organized courses of study.

McCoy criticised the unsatisfactory method of inspection where the principal of Adelaide High School, with the assistance of primary school inspectors, was required to inspect the high schools as well as run his own school. He did not deny that the high schools achieved some success despite the lack of system. Success was due to "the individuality and ability of the Headmaster and to the zeal of his staff". It was typical of McCoy to always give teachers their just due. McCoy was never very voluminous in his submissions and generally went straight to the point, but amongst his pertinent statements his ideas about high schools could be gauged. He believed that high schools should provide a suitable education

- i) for pupils who desire to prepare for a commercial, a teaching or a University career;
- ii) for pupils who desire to continue their education beyond the primary stage.

He conceded that the first aim was achieved only with varying success dependent on "the skill and enthusiasm of the staff". The second aim was sometimes frustrated because pupils were often taken away from school before any worthwhile standard had been achieved, especially in the new subjects studied for the first time in secondary school. Although he could not do much in the short run about this sociological factor, except perhaps by making secondary education more real and closer to practical life, which he definitely aimed to do in the central schools, he believed that by sound systematization of curricula and linkage of administration by sane, competent inspection the first aim of preparation for a career would be closer to fulfilment. McCoy claimed that teachers and pupils alike needed assistance, guidance and inspiration from time to time, and these could only be given by

some capable officer who was in close touch with their work and to whom they could look with confidence for advice and help in their difficulties.

In characteristic fashion McCoy compiled a list of duties for such an officer, and some of these were significant in that they specified remedies for the ills of secondary education in South Australia. The new superintendent was "to assist the Director to frame properly graded courses of study for High Schools". He was "to correlate the various activities of the High Schools, Domestic Arts, Evening Preparatory and Continuation Schools". Because of the lack of supervision and no interested, responsible officer the last two activities had almost disappeared. He was "to watch over the interest of pupils with a view to seeing that their subsequent careers were not sacrificed to the ambition of teachers in respect to the Public Examinations". He was also expected "to create interest in higher education and to meet High School Councils, parents and teachers, in order to further this object". In all this McCoy revealed a keen interest in the welfare of the pupils and he genuinely believed that development could proceed only by sound organization.

Section 33 of the 1915 Education Act stated that two years should be the minimum time for a high school course, but McCoy set about having courses organized with a minimum time of three years. He believed that courses of less length were not worthy of high schools and that other types of post primary schools should cater for children who, for various reasons, remained in school for less than four years after completing primary education. High school courses were to be organized for boys and girls who could remain at school for either three years to pursue a commercial course, or four or five years to study courses leading to banking or the public service, or to pre-university preparation for the professions. Cramming to pass examinations was to be abolished and the curriculum had similar aims to those in the primary school, to cater for the wide interests of the pupils, to indicate proper conduct and to stimulate civic responsibilities.

In his 1921 annual report McCoy explained the reasons for superseding the old system of instruction in the high schools which was tied to the requirements of Junior, Senior and Higher Public Examinations prescribed by the Adelaide University.

It is a matter of common knowledge that boys and girls can be prepared for examination by a careful consideration of previous tests and by coaching them accordingly in the various subjects; the educative value of such a practice is small, and the results are rarely of a permanent character. Moreover, it has been increasingly obvious that a three year course is not sufficient preparation for a boy who desires to enter the University. If our High Schools are to play an important part in the life of the community, they must do more for the pupils than prepare them for examination; they must create high standards of conduct and foster a sense of responsibility amongst the pupils. 3

He stated that a new course of study had been issued to cover a four year high school course to be started in 1923, first and third year were non-examination years and the second and fourth years were framed for the Intermediate and Leaving Examinations of the Adelaide University. A fifth year course was to be provided in the larger schools for High Public Examination work. The courses were organized by committees of teachers who were specialists in their subjects and Adey stated:

The curriculum is designed to furnish a good general education for children who will leave school at 15 or 16 years of age to proceed to positions in the public offices or in the commercial or industrial world, and it further provides a preliminary education for those who desire to enter the higher institutions of learning in order to train for the professions. 4

The first Intermediate Certificate Examination was held at the end of 1923. Adey explained that it was more difficult than the old Junior Certificate because the syllabus had been revised, more work was required and six subjects had to be passed including English.⁵ In 1925 and 1926 Adey was still questioning the comparative low percentage passes of this examination and he doubted whether the two year course from Qualifying to Intermediate Certificate was long enough for the average boy or girl to reach the required standard.⁶ He believed that syllabus revision was necessary, and by 1927 an optional third year was introduced for those finding difficulty with the work.⁷ In 1925 the Public Examinations Board revised the old system so that the Leaving Certificate Examination followed one year after the Intermediate Certificate. Neither the Director's report nor Adey's report gave reasons for this reversion, but it was contrary to McCoy's belief that a three year course was too short a preparation for university work.

In his 1922 Report Adey alluded to the necessity of introducing modern methods into secondary schools. "It is certain that the methods, when the teachers talk and the pupils preserve passivity, sometimes resentfully, must be replaced by 'a masterly inactivity on the part of the teacher'".⁸ He referred to the "repressive and levelling examination system". He urged teachers to keep "the spark of initiative" alive in children by adapting new methods, such as the Dalton Plan, the Mason Method, the Gary Scheme and the Play Way. "The Library", he said, "is no longer a luxury, but a necessary adjunct to the ordinary classroom if the teaching methods are to develop along modern lines".⁹

In his 1923 report Adey commenced a plea, which was to continue annually until 1928, for hostels to be set up in country towns.¹⁰ He advocated that hostels should be established in centres where children attending local high schools had to board, often paying adult tariffs, with poor study conditions. While visiting the eastern states early in 1926 the Minister had made enquiries into how children were housed when they had to live away from home to attend high school. He believed that the best scheme existed in New South Wales where four hostels in various country towns accommodated 24 girls, and another one accommodated boys who were supervised by officers appointed by the department.¹¹ The running expenses were almost met by the charge of 22/6 per week per student and as girls performed minor domestic duties, the cost of running these institutions was further curtailed. McCoy recommended to Hill that £10,000 be placed on the estimates to erect two hostels at centres selected by the Minister and that the Architect-in-Chief be asked to draw up plans.¹² In November, 1926 £20,000 was placed on the Estimates for the erection of two hostels,¹³ but because of the vicissitudes of time and politics these were never built.

In 1926 the Labour Government decided that children who attended post primary schools and travelled three miles or more daily could use the railways free of charge.¹⁴ Another recurring complaint in Adey's annual reports concerned overcrowding in the high schools in the larger country centres and in the metropolitan area.¹⁵ Hired premises met some of the needs temporarily but such buildings were never adequately equipped. In larger schools

single chemistry and physics rooms were considerably overtaxed and libraries were inadequate,¹⁶ but it was not until 1929 that all high schools were conducted in departmental buildings. The Labour Government's 1924 policy of a definite, comprehensive building programme helped to overcome overcrowding in high schools. This was a story common in Australian education - the supply of facilities lagged behind the increasing demands of a growing school population.

By 1927 staffing of high schools was becoming adequate but in the larger high schools first and second year classes were crowded with 30 to 50 students; overall Adey believed that an adequate staff of qualified high school teachers was being trained.¹⁷ Adey himself did not hold a university degree, but he was a believer in the English public school tradition with its emphasis on sound scholarship judged by success at formal examinations. In the light of Table 9 which shows that from 1927 only about 54 per cent of the total number of high school teachers held a degree it seems odd that Adey should claim that qualified staff was adequate. Perhaps the compensating factor rested in the situation where only a comparatively small portion of pupils remained at high school after two years, and it was in the senior work only that teachers with university degrees were necessary.

By 1927 the Government was inundated with applications to convert high schools into agricultural high schools. The Premier suggested that the State could be divided into districts with one central agricultural high school in each district to which students could travel, or in some cases they might have to board.¹⁸ On 31 August, 1927, Cabinet asked for an urgent report about the matter, and thirteen days later, Adey forwarded it because McCoy himself was abroad.¹⁹ He stated that there were 24 high schools in the State, 4 in the metropolitan area and 20 in widely spread country districts. The curriculum aimed at furnishing "a good, general education for the large number of children who leave school at the age of 15 or 16 years in order to take up positions in the commercial and industrial world". It also provided the preliminary education necessary for those who wished to enter the professions.

TABLE 9

HIGH SCHOOL STAFF HOLDING ANY TYPE of UNIVERSITY DEGREE1920 - 1929

YEAR	TOTAL STAFF	NUMBER HOLDING DEGREES	PERCENTAGE of STAFF HOLDING DEGREES .
1920	123	38	31.7
1921	124	39	31.4
1922	133	47	35.4
1923	153	56	36.6
1924	155	64	41.2
1925	154	81	52.5
1926	160	87	54.3
1927	182	100	54.4
1928	192	107	55.7
1929	212	115	54.2

In all the high schools the girls were taught cookery, laundry and housewifery, but, except at Gawler, Kapunda and Mount Gambier where wood-work centres were established, no form of handwork was taught. An agricultural course had been introduced at Murray Bridge High School and Clare High School, the latter having opened in January, 1927. The aims of this course were quite specific:

To develop in the pupils an interest in rural life, and to influence those with a natural talent towards agricultural pursuits. It is not intended to provide a course of training that will equip the students for farm life ...

It is further hoped that it will be the means of stemming the tide citywards, and of encouraging boys in country High Schools to seek their life's work in the development of our vast areas. 20

The curriculum for agricultural students was divided into three sections.

1. General studies - English, mathematics, history, and civics, geography and drawing - all as prescribed in the secondary course.
2. Scientific studies - chemistry, physics, botany as prescribed in the secondary course, with necessary modifications to bring them into relation with agriculture. Agriculture - study of the soil, tillage, water, manures, irrigation. Horticulture - planting, pruning, budding, grafting, spraying, storing. Animal knowledge - bird and insect life in relation to agriculture.
3. Practical work, Gardening, milk-testing, irrigation. Bench work, carpentry, blacksmithing, sheet metal work and saddling.

The boys who selected this course, which extended over two years, spent at least one day per week on agriculture, and the remainder of their time on general studies. Adey commented on the fact that many students who completed the agricultural course at Murray Bridge High School did brilliantly when they continued on to Roseworthy Agricultural College. He then stressed two major difficulties connected with the establishment of agricultural high schools.

The matter of fully qualified teachers is of first importance. It is essential that these teachers should have been trained first as teachers, and secondly as scientific agriculturalists. They must not only inspire the pupils with confidence in their abilities and experience, but they must gain the good will and co-operation of the residents of the district.

He believed that the rate of extension of agricultural education depended on the constant supply of highly qualified teachers. At the moment supply was limited, but in accordance with past practice there were two students from the Teachers' College undergoing training at Roseworthy College to become teachers of agriculture and their course would not be completed until March 1929. The second difficulty involved securing sufficient land for the functioning of the various sections of the course. Oddly enough he forgot to mention the expense incurred in securing specialized equipment and facilities necessary to teach such a programme. It seemed from the tone of his comments that he wanted decisions delayed until McCoy's return from abroad. He cautioned "it is better to hasten slowly than to risk the work being brought into disrepute for want of scientifically trained teachers". He did however comply with the Premier's wishes and provided a plan dividing the State into districts, and he recommended the addition of seven centres besides the two already established.²¹

During his tour in 1927, McCoy was most impressed with the methods of agricultural education at the secondary school level in the United States of America. In May, 1928 he arranged with Professor J.E. Russell of Columbia University, New York, who was visiting Australia, for a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, to enable an experienced teacher of the South Australian Education Department to spend twelve months studying the details of agricultural work in high schools with a view to adapting the American system to the requirements of South Australia.²²

In his request to Russell, McCoy made some very critical comments about agricultural education in South Australia.

South Australia is essentially an agricultural state, and there is a great demand for Agricultural Education, but unfortunately our Agricultural College (which is under the Minister of Agriculture and not under the Minister of Education) only reaches the stage reached by the American Agricultural Colleges of thirty years ago. It admits boys at the age of sixteen, and gives them a three years' course, one half of the time being spent on practical work on the farm acquiring skill which could be acquired on the home farm. (McCoy's underlining.) Your High Schools are doing more effective work than our College, and they are reaching many more boys relatively. They appear to give a good scientific education to those who undertake agriculture and to deal with the practical work most effectively by means of the project method or supervised farm practice.

Perhaps McCoy was critical of the local situation in order to make his case for assistance from the Carnegie Corporation more convincing. It was dubious to assume that because a college was not under the administrative control of the Minister of Education its educational effectiveness was limited. He gave no evidence of the manner in which Roseworthy was thirty years behind current American standards. McCoy's allusion to unnecessary, time consuming, expensive practical work done within the college revealed that he regarded the project method operating in the elementary agriculture courses in South Australian primary schools as an ideal model. Methods used in a course at the primary level did not mean that these methods would be suitable or satisfactory at the tertiary or even secondary stage. McCoy, however, was convinced that United States of America had the ideal system with its stress on theory of agriculture taught in the school and experience acquired by supervised practice on the home farms.

Evidence in the official documents points to the fact that on Adey's appointment most of the detailed work in the organization of high schools was done by Adey himself with McCoy ready to support submissions for Cabinet approval when necessary. Both McCoy and Adey endeavoured to follow the precepts of New Education by establishing a curriculum as comprehensive as possible to accommodate the varying interests and capacities of the pupils. They endeavoured rather than succeeded to lessen the emphasis on examinations and the traditional stress on academic courses arranged as a basis for later university studies.

II.

Before 1922 primary schools in the country sometimes organized IXth grades to cater for children who had completed the primary school at the eighth grade and who were waiting to reach the age of 14 years, the age to which they were legally compelled to attend school. In January, 1922 in accordance with Clause 29 of the 1915 Education Act, McCoy suggested to the Minister, general principles upon which higher primary schools should

be formed.²³ A higher primary school might be established where there were 15 or more pupils qualified for admission and when an average attendance of 28 pupils could be expected over two years, and he believed that an effective higher primary school would be a sound foundation and a pointer for the ultimate establishment of a high school. McCoy recommended that the salary of the head teacher of a higher primary school should be the same as that of a head teacher of a primary school of the same class designated by the total annual attendance of children, but that if certain conditions were fulfilled the school should be graded one class higher. The conditions were an average annual attendance of 20 pupils, and six pupils completing the second year satisfactorily. These conditions could not be fulfilled before 1924 so finance was not immediately involved, but McCoy characteristically offered enticement to secure the success of the scheme. "The prospect of promotion", he argued,

will not only be conducive to much better work, but will also be an incentive to our best young teachers to desire appointment to these schools".

During January, 1922 when he sent the appointment notices to the head of the selected schools he stressed that the success of these schools "will in the first instance undoubtedly depend upon the zeal and enthusiasm with which the head teachers carry out the additional work involved".²⁴

In order to create complete understanding McCoy used another of his devices of sound administration; direct communication by means of a meeting. He invited all the prospective head teachers to his office on 11 January, 1922 to describe and discuss the scheme. These teachers attended at their own expense because McCoy had no means of officially reimbursing them, and only one did not attend because he claimed he had not received the invitation in time.

Although the higher primary schools did not develop the syllabuses suggested by McCoy in 1920 their courses did provide an opportunity for country children in the less populated centres to gain Intermediate Certificate subjects. As Table 10 shows the number of higher primary schools

TABLE 10

TOTAL NUMBER of PUPILS ATTENDING HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOLS1922 - 1929

YEAR	NUMBER of HIGHER PRIMARY SCHOOLS	TOTAL NUMBER WHO ATTENDED AT ALL DURING YEAR.		
		BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
1922	16	175	121	296
1923	19	197	168	365
1924	18	212	156	368
1925	21	213	216	429
1926	19	218	211	429
1927	19	255	203	458
1928	18	218	180	398
1929	24	315	247	562

grew in McCoy's time as did the number of pupils, but the schools had their critics. They were sometimes considered as cheap, piece-meal instruments for providing country children with some secondary education. A great deal was also expected from their head teachers who were not only responsible for the courses in the primary department, but also for the secondary work in their schools. McCoy defended these schools, because he wanted similar schools developed in the metropolitan area. Writing to Charlton from Wales in 1923 McCoy was thinking of ear-marking some of his young English recruits for higher primary schools in order

to spike the guns of the stupid people who say that the Higher Primary Schools must go. The suggestion is unthinkable and we must deflect it in this way and by other means. 25

III.

Central schools, i.e. schools which formed the central part of the educational system between primary and secondary schools, were not unique to South Australia, they had been in existence in Western Australia, for example, since 1919. The important fact was that McCoy endeavoured to meet the educational needs of a State whose economy was based mainly on rural pursuits, but whose metropolitan population was tending to increase with the growth of small scale secondary industries and commercial occupations associated with primary production. In 1924 McCoy found large numbers of city children who were qualified for admission to high school, but who did not enrol because their parents were not prepared to allow them to remain there after the compulsory attendance age, and because the high school curriculum was not suited to their needs.²⁶

Central schools, like their country counterparts, the higher elementary schools, provided a bridge over the gap between school and work for most of the young people of the community. The higher primary school taught the subjects set by the Public Examination Board for the Intermediate Certificate, but the central schools followed courses designed by the Education Department in three strands, commercial, junior technical and home-making.²⁷ In the debate in parliament connected with the amendment of

of the Education Act to legalize central schools the Minister stated that these schools were not trade schools but schools which were to provide a liberal education with a technical or commercial bias.²⁸ Charlton explained that the central schools did not aim to turn out tradesmen or craftswomen, but "to give the pupil every opportunity of 'discovering' himself, or finding out for what vocation he is best fitted".²⁹ Pupils who satisfactorily completed the two year courses in the commercial schools and the junior technical schools could transfer to the third year of a commercial course in a high school or to Thebarton Technical School, but this was easier stated than done. McCoy set up curriculum committees of teachers to plan and co-ordinate courses in the central schools.³⁰ The courses combined more advanced studies in the cultural subjects with the practical training in wood and metal work for the boys and home-making, dressmaking, millinery, art and home decoration for the girls. Instructors were especially recruited for their ability and experience in these practical areas. By 1929 these teachers who had moved from the workshop bench to the floor of the classroom were receiving high commendation for their work.³¹ McCoy envisaged the work as whole courses rather than isolated subjects and the experimental curriculum was amended and developed and finally published in 1928. In 1926 a Central School Certificate was issued to those who satisfactorily completed the two years course,³² and by 1929 a third year of specialization was available for the child who elected to remain at school for another year.³³

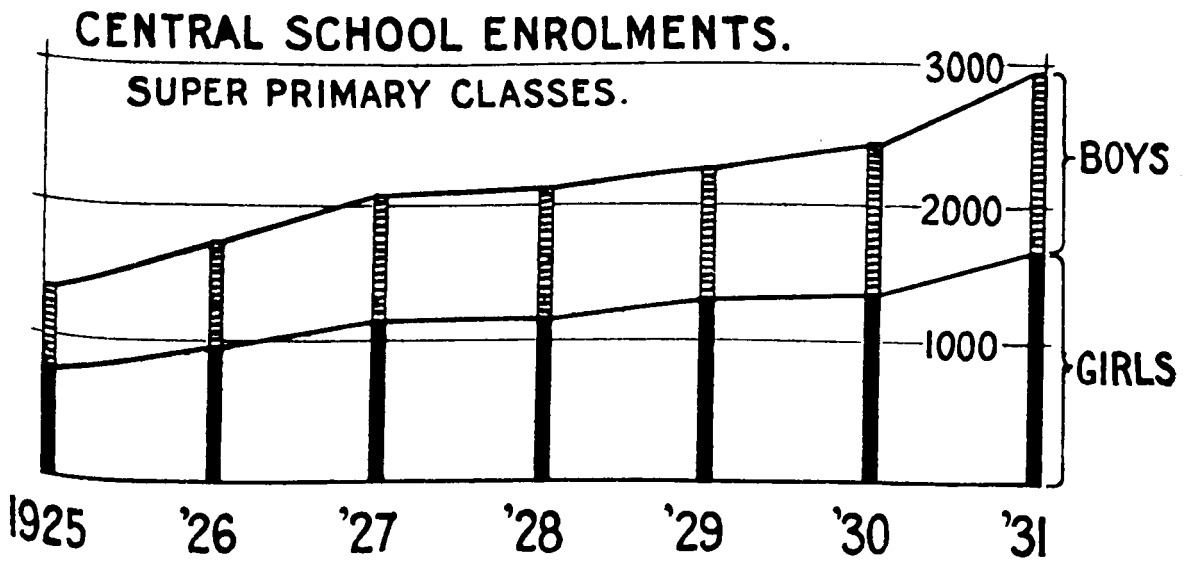
Central schools began work in 1925 with doubts, criticisms and physical handicaps.³⁴ Even members of parliament sitting with the Labour Government feared that by establishing central schools differentiation would develop between high school pupils, who could be destined for the professional classes, and central school pupils who would be receiving mere vocational training to join the working classes.³⁵ Disadvantageous conditions in inadequate buildings with congested accommodation created other problems, but central schools made distinct progress. Terminal exhibitions of work to which parents were invited became a feature of

these schools and these displays did much to establish the schools in popular favour and indicated the sound, attractive and practical character and thoroughness of their curriculum.

As Figure 3 shows the numbers of pupils attending central schools continued to increase in McCoy's time. The two commercial schools for boys at Hindmarsh and Thebarton languished and were finally closed in 1929 and 1931 respectively. The overall numbers increased, especially in the girls schools, even during the economic depression when the State's mean population showed no great increase, and when the cheaper labour of young people was more sought after than the labour of adults. Parents were obviously prepared to make sacrifices at home to keep their children at these schools. The children themselves benefitted because they had greater security in the difficult transitional period between school and work, and the teachers were able to guide them according to their ability, into likely vocations. Between 1925 and 1928, there was also a notable increase from 8 per cent to 26 per cent of boys selected into apprenticeship who had completed the two years course in a central school.³⁶ McCoy's compromise in establishing central schools rather than a system of junior technical schools on the Victorian pattern placated the treasury, and gave some children an opportunity to experience pre-vocational education, and assisted in convincing a generally uninterested society of the utility of post-primary education organized according to the aptitudes and interests of the majority of youth of the State.

Although the 1931 Committee of Inquiry into Education was looking at the economic resources of the State, it recommended the extension of the educational facilities of the central school type to cushion the effect of the recommended fifty per cent, reduction in the high school intake.³⁷ Adey, in his minority report, supported the principle of the central school type of course but he suggested that it should be included within the high schools which he foresaw would not always be separated from other types of post primary schools. The salient point in these divergent opinions was

FIGURE 3



that the central school type of curriculum was considered valuable, but the problem was where to place it in the system in the future. Central schools of the type established by McCoy remained as part of the system until 1939, and in the following year they re-opened as junior technical schools for boys and girls under the Superintendent of Technical Education - the form that Fenner had dreamed about in 1921 and Clark had advocated in 1916. But Adey's vision was the longest, he foresaw the actual modern concept of the comprehensive secondary school.

After 1931 the enrolments in the central schools decreased, but some of the reasons for the decline were latent in McCoy's time. Central schools were the upgrowths of large metropolitan primary schools and they often gloried in the title - "super primary 'tops'", and they had to share accommodation and facilities. They were under senior and generally conservative head teachers whose only teaching experience had been in primary schools, and who were seldom cognizant of modern trends in post primary education, and not always tolerant towards the enthusiastic, newly-appointed manual training teachers who came from the industrial world.³⁸ Problems connected with backgrounds and attitudes between teachers of general subjects and specialist, practical teachers had to be handled with tact and care.³⁹ Because accommodation was shared there were persistent psychological problems created by mixing young children in the primary school with adolescents in the central classes.⁴⁰ Although some additional buildings were erected for central schools in 1926 accommodation and grounds were never entirely satisfactory.⁴¹ Administratively the central schools were not under one branch; the Superintendent of Primary Education was the nominal head, but the Superintendent of Technical Education controlled the specialist teachers. Finally, the certificates of the Education Department issued in the central schools did not have the same status in the eyes of the community as the Public Examination Board Certificates.

It says much for McCoy's enthusiasm, control and tact that these malignances did not spread in his day. Although his scheme was not as ideal as the Victorian system of Junior Technical Schools, which were separate

and distinct schools in themselves, McCoy could hardly embark on an expensive plan when initially children and their parents in the metropolitan area had never experienced any form of full-time practical education in the years between gaining the Qualifying Certificate and the statutory attendance age.

From his knowledge of schools interstate and from his travels in England during 1923 McCoy was quite sure that in the local circumstances central schools were the best types of schools for a non-academic type of secondary education. Recommendation four in the report on this tour abroad in 1923 dealt with the development of adolescent education and specifically stated two ways of starting it, firstly by establishing supplementary classes on the top of primary schools, and secondly by building central schools.⁴² Economic expediency dictated the adoption of the first way and the passage of time stimulated the development of central schools into technical high schools. Like all Directors of Education in Australia, McCoy was plagued by expenses and compromise was often the only means of progress. Fenner acknowledged the potential of these schools even in 1925 :

They really form the first big step yet made in this state towards the foundation of a properly correlated system of technical education. ⁴³

The values, and perhaps the need of education beyond the primary stage had to be proved to society, particularly when many parents and children saw little or no value in the academic courses in the high schools. In periods of economic prosperity there was a constant call on youth to leave school as soon as possible so that industry could obtain satisfactory labour at a cheap price to keep production costs as low as possible. The combination of general and practical courses in the central schools themselves, and the frequent public exhibitions and demonstrations, which McCoy encouraged, were the instruments that persuaded the community that these schools were sincerely attempting to solve the difficult problems of pre-vocational education.

"The central schools may be said to have justified their establishment", the Minister wrote in his 1929 report, " and they will remain as a

a portion of our educational system that was specially due to the administrative effort of the late Director of Education".⁴⁴

IV.

In the development of post-primary education in McCoy's time Thebarton Technical High School needs separate and special mention. It was a secondary school with a distinctively progressive atmosphere - a prototype of the modern comprehensive secondary school. The school began in January, 1924 with 103 first year pupils⁴⁵ in a building which had been erected in 1919 for that purpose, but which had of necessity to accommodate apprentices classes. The school curriculum was planned on a four year pre-vocational course. The first portion of the course, which was of two years duration, was designed to prepare boys for entry into the skilled branches of industry, and it was based on the principle of the junior technical school described in Clark's 1916 report. In addition to the usual literary and mathematical subjects, experimental science, geometrical drawing, and modelling with manual training in sheet-metal work and woodwork, were included.

In his 1925 report McCoy used the name Thebarton Technical High School for the first time. Fenner praised the enthusiasm of both staff and pupils, who came from all over the metropolitan area, the high tone of the school, and the live and active interest shown by the school council.⁴⁶

By 1926 Junior Technical Certificates were issued to boys who had successfully completed the second year and it was arranged for Intermediate Technical Certificates to be issued in the third year.⁴⁷ In the fourth year it was possible for boys with ability to compete for Public Examination Board Leaving Certificates. By 1927 the last of the apprentices classes were removed; the range of manipulative educational work was extended, a house system and various school clubs developed and a school magazine was produced.⁴⁸ Examinations were internal except for boys who elected to sit for Public Examination Board Intermediate and Leaving Certificate Examinations, and experiments on individual work based on the Dalton Plan were begun. Graded assignments were written with enrichment programmes for more able pupils: pupils progressed individually and the freedom introduced

developed initiative, resourcefulness and independence of outlook. The school established subject rooms; French was taught and then in 1932, German.⁴⁹

This was something of an ideal type of technical school. It was expensive to build and equip, and very careful records had to be kept on each pupil's standard of achievement. Although its increasing popularity was indicated by the growth in enrolments from 103 in the first year in 1924 to 290 in the first year in 1929, its attractions, emphasizing individual development and varied curriculum could not stop the wastage of pupils throughout each year.⁵⁰ Only about fifty per cent of the first year boys continued into the second year, and less than twenty per cent into the third year, and only a small residuum remained in the fourth year.

V.

Finally, in these comments on post primary education, reference should be made to McCoy's beliefs on vocational guidance and placement, because the majority of children in these schools were receiving pre-vocational education and it was assumed that they were considering future occupations for which they would be most suited.

When McCoy came to South Australia he did not have any profound understanding of vocational guidance but he did believe, in a loose fashion, that post primary education should be concerned with vocational training. In 1921 the South Australian Branch of the British Science Guild, appointed a sub-committee to report upon the problem of vocational training during adolescence. As a starting point to the committee's deliberations three questions were directed to the Minister of Education, and as usual McCoy was called upon to provide the answers.⁵¹ The answers showed McCoy's uncertainty.

The first question asked about the "steps the Department of Education is taking to ascertain the vocational fitness of children for various occupations at the time of leaving school". McCoy's reply revealed the

currently haphazard and limited steps that were taken. Only children who entered the high schools were questioned by their teachers "to ascertain their personal inclination and their fitness for various occupations". McCoy stated "that parents were often consulted by the teachers", and that various courses of study were provided to qualify pupils "for the occupation for which they were most fitted". These were strange statements where fitness was apparently determined by the pupils' hunches and some vague connection between pupil and occupation which was decided after questioning by teachers. The "various courses of study" were very limited in the high schools and were geared to commercial and teaching careers and to preparation for entrance to the university for the professions, so the procedure involved the lesser task of putting the pupils into these boxes rather than the greater task of considering all the occupations included in these boxes. McCoy regretted that primary school pupils who did not enter high school did not have "the advantage of such vocational guidance". Surely an erroneous nomenclature for such ineffectual guessing. McCoy's reply to the second question about "ascertaining the vocational proclivities of adolescents" might not have been in line with the intention of the inquirer. McCoy referred to what should be done because in fact nothing really was done to assist young people in choosing careers. The operation of the Technical Education of Apprentices Act showed that many young men entered trades for which they were not suited and "that a large percentage of probationers did not continue at the trades which they entered, and that there were a number of dull and uninterested apprentices at present carrying on their indentures in various trades". Here McCoy was using Fenner's argument to demonstrate that vocational guidance during the early years of adolescence was the only means of decreasing the number of misfits in the trades.

The third question referred to the principles behind the methods used to discover the most gifted school children and to the assurances that these gifts would be fully developed with advantage to the community. McCoy replied that teachers recognised gifted children and advised their parents

about their future education. This answer assumed a great deal; it did not recognise any method of determining the degrees of giftedness, and it did not assure that parents of gifted children would be convinced that further education would benefit their children or the community. McCoy believed that the scholarships available at the various school stages were the means of nurturing talent, but this assumed that all gifted children always proceeded to their optimum intellectual level in the educational institutions of the State.

McCoy's early indeterminate notions about vocational guidance and psychological testing became more definite, through the advice and work of Fenner and Dr. Davey. During his 1927 tour he examined systems of vocational guidance and placement, but he was convinced that it was not necessary to adopt elaborate organizations as he saw in some parts of England, and he definitely rejected any scheme which gave advice to children at the end of their primary school course as he saw in the United States of America.⁵² In fact, he favoured the unsophisticated practice which was developing in South Australia where letters of advice giving brief descriptions of the various types of post primary schools and courses were sent to all parents of primary school leavers, and invariably these letters were supplemented by information from the teachers about the primary school record and conduct of the leavers to assist parents in choosing the most suitable type of school. McCoy believed that teachers were the most effective guidance officers that school leavers could have and the South Australian procedure was developed on that basic principle.⁵³

Although the facilities in post primary education had been extended by McCoy they were still not sufficiently various to warrant the appointment of special school counsellors to guide children in selecting courses. The emphasis was on fitting the child to the system, there was little flexibility in the system for adapting it to fit the child. South Australian society was comparatively uncomplicated by extensive secondary industries therefore elaborate overseas systems of vocational guidance during and at the conclusion of secondary education were unnecessary. Nevertheless it

was wrong to assume that teachers who had a thorough knowledge of their pupils and their abilities had sufficient knowledge of industry and commerce to offer sound advice in vocational guidance. The system adopted was rather an information and placement service which advised children about school courses and the prospects of the various types of employment open to them. The key person in the scheme was the Employment Officer who kept records, interviewed parents and employers and formed "an effective and harmonious means of communication between the Department and the commercial and industrial world".⁵⁴

Despite its shortcomings a scheme had been started and it was optimistically received,⁵⁵ but unfortunately it was to flounder when there were just no positions available for adolescents during the economic depression.

McCoy developed a system of post primary education to cater for a number of groups in South Australia in the most practical way permitted by the times. High schools programmes were organized for the academically able and central schools courses were planned for the majority of adolescents. He made valiant efforts to convert a disinterested society to realizing the advantages of post primary education, and he endeavoured to tie the school with adulthood careers by a form of vocational guidance and placement.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

1. See Beare, H. op. cit. pp.334-337 for Adey's previous career.
2. S.A.A. M.E. 132 (a)/1920 McCoy to Minister 1 Dec. 1919
3. S.A.P.P. 1922 No.44 p.24
4. Ibid., p.32
5. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.44 p.19
6. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.16; 1927 p.18
7. S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.18
8. S.A.P.P. 1923 No.44 p.32
9. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.27
10. S.A.P.P. No.44 1924 p.19; 1925 p.28; 1926 p.16; 1927 p.18;
1928 p.19; 1929 p.20
11. S.A.A. E.D. 1376/1926 Gives details of hostels in N.S.W. and Victoria. W.A., Qld., and Tas. made no provisions for hostels.
12. S.A.A. E.D. 683/1926 McCoy to Minister 6 April, 1926
13. Ibid., approved 3 Nov. 1926
14. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p.18
15. S.A.P.P. No.44 1925 p.28; 1927 p.17; 1928 p.18; 1929 p.19; 1930 p.18
16. Even in 1927 only two high schools had libraries, see S.A.P.P. 1928
No.44 p.14
17. S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.17; 1929 No.44 p.18
18. S.A.A. E.D. 1544/1927
19. Ibid. Adey to Deputy Director 13 Sept. 1927
20. These aims were stated in S.A.A. E.D. 1889/1926
21. The centres recommended were Gladstone, Balaklava, Riverton, Strathalbyn, Renmark, Port Lincoln and Mount Gambier.
22. S.A.A. E.D. 804/1928. McCoy to Russell 1 May, 1928. Besides gaining a grant to enable A.R. Hilton, Headmaster of Murray Bridge High School, to travel to the U.S.A., McCoy suggested that further assistance should be sought from the Carnegie Corporation to send Edquist to U.S.A. for six months.
23. S.A.A. E.D. 2565/1921 McCoy to Ritchie 5 Jan. 1922
24. Ibid.

25. S.A.A. E.D. 2707/1923 McCoy to Charlton 6 June, 1923
26. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.16
27. In a survey conducted in November, 1924 the majority of eligible children in the Goodwood, Unley and Norwood districts opted for a junior technical school type of course. The minority who wanted commercial studies were directed to Unley and Norwood High Schools, and only two commercial central schools were established at Thebarton and Hindmarsh.
S.A.A. E.D. 1862/1924 Report 26 November, 1924.
28. Deb. S.A.P. 1925 Assembly pp.862-865
29. S.A.P.P. 1926 No. 44 p.12
30. Details set out in S.A.A. E.D. 141/1924
31. S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p.22
32. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p. 5
33. S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p.22
34. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 pp.21-22
35. Deb. S.A.P. 1925 Assembly pp.478-481
36. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 p. 5
37. S.A.P.P. 1931 No. 69 passim
38. S.A.P.P. 1940 No.44 p. 8
39. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.20
40. S.A.P.P. 1938 No.44 p. 7
41. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p. 5
42. S.A.P.P. 1924 No.67 p.37
43. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.20
44. S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p. 6
45. See S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p.22 for enrolment in the school between 1924-1929.
46. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p. 8; p.18
47. S.A.P.P. 1927 No.44 p. 9
48. S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.21

49. In June, 1930 the experiments in individual methods conducted at this school were described by Fenner at the Australian Science Congress in Brisbane. An account of the experiments subsequently appeared as Bulletin No. 1 of the Research Series published by the Australian Council for Educational Research.
See S.A.P.P. 1931 No.44 p.22
50. See S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p.22 for a graph and an account of this wastage by Fenner.
51. S.A.A. M.E. 130/1921 Letter to Minister 14 May, 1924 and McCoy's report.
52. Report of Tour Abroad 1927 p.40
53. Ibid., p.34
54. S.A.P.P. 1930 No.44 p.4
55. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 p.14
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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

- I. Technical Schools
- II. Apprentice Trade Schools.

I.

In his 1931 annual report Fenner commented, "In the strict sense, technical education includes only the teaching and application of the principles of science or art connected with a profession or industry, and the practical application of those principles".¹ Within the South Australian Education Department then there were three types of schools which were strictly technical : the Apprentice Trade Schools, the South Australian School of Arts and Crafts and the Country Technical Schools. The other schools and classes already mentioned - Thebarton Technical High School, manual work classes in central schools and the woodwork centres connected with primary and secondary schools, although under the administrative control of the Superintendent of Technical Education were not strictly connected with technical education.

Prior to the 1915 Education Act the only technical school under the Education Department was the South Australian School of Arts and Crafts which had been taken over in 1909. All technical education in the State was controlled by the South Australian School of Mines and Industries which was constituted in 1892. This school also included five small country schools known as "School of Mines", which were taken over by the Education Department and re-named "technical schools" under section 34 (1) of the 1915 Education Act. The act also set up the technical branch of the Education Department, and on 5 November, 1916 Dr. C. Fenner, formerly Principal of the Ballarat School of Mines, was appointed Superintendent of Technical Education.²

During the latter years of the war and the early years of McCoy's directorship the growth of technical education was obstructed by severe financial restrictions. The growth showed, in the words of Fenner "no spectacular forward movement", but "definite and continued advance".³ In his first annual report in 1920 McCoy did not mention anything about technical education. Fenner himself declared that "there has been no extension of technical education during the year"⁴ so probably McCoy did

not mention anything because of this, and moreover McCoy himself had been extremely busy re-organizing many other aspects of the education system.

The context of McCoy's annual reports to the Minister from 1921 on Technical Education reiterated and summarized the same matter contained in Fenner's objective reports with their lucid commentaries which were often illustrated by graphs based on the statistics which had been gathered. This, together with the evidence in official documents, indicated that McCoy relied heavily on Fenner as the innovator, planner and organizer of technical education in South Australia. McCoy accepted the advice and guidance of his trusted consultants and the developments in technical education in the 1920's can be credited mainly to Fenner the expert, and the support of McCoy, his chief.

Fenner proved himself initially as a capable administrator in the control of Vocational Training for Returned Soldiers in South Australia from 1919 until 1922. More than twenty trades were involved in the rehabilitation scheme and everything was done not only efficiently but also most economically, a most significant accessory in those lean times. According to a report published by the Repatriation Commission in 1921, the average net cost per trainee in South Australia for the year was £18.4.0 and the average for the rest of Australia was £39.4.0 McCoy gave Fenner completely unqualified credit for the success of this work.⁵

Commenting on the severe effect of the industrial depression on country technical schools in the mining and smelting centres in 1921 Fenner stated that : "no further development can be expected in any of these schools until junior technical schools are established in each case as a link with the primary school system".⁶ In 1923 he used information based on the vocational training for returned soldiers and the new scheme of compulsory apprentice education to show that highly efficient craftsmen could be trained with a minimum waste of both time and cost if after leaving primary school, boys could attend junior technical schools until the age of sixteen. In these schools boys would receive proper full time

preliminary training and vocational guidance to ascertain aptitude and suitability for particular trades. The existing selection of boys for trade work was haphazard and wasteful, but Fenner admitted that this scheme, based on Donald Clark's plan, of time in junior technical schools followed by two years of intensive training in trades chosen by the boys, plus two to three years of apprentice training in the workshop was expensive and impossible to adopt for some time.⁷ Clark, the Chief Inspector of Technical Education in Victoria had been invited to South Australia in 1916 to report on technical education.⁸ Clark had suggested a system of junior technical schools for South Australia similar to that developing in Victoria, but he also realized that many years would have to elapse before a comprehensive system of technical education could be undertaken.⁹ His advice, which was adopted by Fenner, was an expression of the technicistic view which claimed that education was necessary as a national utility because of the growing secondary industries and the increasing complexity of arbitration and labour controls brought about by the growth of state and federal industrial codes.

A compromise of Fenner's ideal was McCoy's system of central schools, and by 1928 Fenner, in his characteristic scientific fashion, was examining evidence on the prevocational training of apprentices. He arranged interviews with 758 apprentices and he found that 185 had entered their apprenticeships during 1926, 332 during 1927 and 241 during 1928. Fifty two per cent of 1926 entrants came from high schools and eight per cent from central schools. Twenty seven per cent of 1927 entrants came from high schools and twenty one percent from central schools. Twenty six per cent of 1928 entrants came from high schools and twenty six per cent from central schools. He then listed the individual trades concerned and the grades attained by these apprentices from primary, central and high schools and deducted that although apprentices were often carelessly selected the position had greatly improved during the past three years. The improvement was due to the expansion of post primary education which was beginning to be appreciated by the employers. The boys themselves had time to think and get a better idea of the type of trade they wanted to enter.¹⁰

In the early years of his career in South Australia Fenner advocated the complete unification of technical education in the State. He believed that this would pave the way for improved technical education without incurring further public expense. In such a small State the overlapping between the two bodies controlling technical education, the School of Mines in the metropolitan area and the Education Department in the country centres caused inefficiency and was an impediment to progress. He believed that a conference between the two bodies would result in a decision on the means of unification, and in his 1919 report he stated that detailed recommendations had been made on this matter but financial problems had prevented further positive action.¹¹ Despite his passion for neat administration there is no evidence that McCoy supported or rejected this proposal. The five existing country technical schools languished after the war because of the mining depression and because of the lack of government funds.¹² During 1921 the courses in these schools were carefully re-organized, a move that gained the spontaneous approbation of McCoy. After the systematisation of syllabuses of the seventy four technical school subjects into two or more grades, and the introduction of departmental examinations the work in these schools gained an enhanced status. In his 1928 report Fenner admitted, that, although initially voluntary part time students were opposed to examinations, improved methods of teaching and encouragement from teachers for students to complete courses, and a proper examination system had caused the prestige of these courses to increase.¹³

Technical schools were controlled partly by councils, but mainly by the Education Department.¹⁴ In areas where a technical school was not justified, a technical class or classes could be established and these were supervised by a registrar and a local council of not more than eight members elected from a public meeting.¹⁵ The annual amounts allotted to each school depended on the progress of the school, the numbers of students and classes, the subjects taught, the efficiency of the teachers, and the general organization as reported by the Superintendent of Technical Education.¹⁶

Subsidized purchase of equipment and material could be made after departmental approval with the Department paying two thirds of the cost.¹⁷ The students paid nominal fees and a year's course consisted of forty weeks with sessions of at least two hours per week.¹⁸ Each subject had three grades each of which consisted of a year's work. As these schools increased so did the details of the regulations governing them, particularly on the store keeping and audit side.¹⁹ The official records indicate that Fenner did all the detailed work and that McCoy gave his signature of approval.

Voluntary attendance of adolescents at technical school classes had its draw backs. Using the 1923 returns showing enrolments, numbers attending for the whole year and the number of examination candidates and the results, Fenner showed that there was considerable wastage in all the three grades in these schools. Only seven per cent of the students entering completed a two year course and only two per cent completed a three year course. Because of the considerable amount of money and time involved in establishing classes, providing teachers and framing syllabuses and conducting examinations, Fenner advocated some form of compulsory part time education of two to four hours per week for adolescents up to the age of seventeen or eighteen. He compared the attendance records of compulsory part time education associated with apprenticeship training where about seventy per cent of the entrants completed the three year course. In fact voluntary systems of part time education for adolescents were difficult to administer, discouraging to the school authorities themselves and "relatively wasteful and ineffective".²⁰ In his 1924 report McCoy drew attention to Fenner's condemnation of voluntary part time education of adolescents, but he added no reservations or amplification.²¹ Perhaps McCoy agreed in principle because he re-iterated Fenner's observation but from his position he probably realized that any compulsory system would involve contentious debate in Parliament and legislation that would interfere with the liberty of the individual. Provision of adequate facilities and the passage of time were the only means, together with a link school in between the primary schools and technical schools, that could inflate the value of technical education in the estimation of the community.

The 1927 prospectus of the Gawler Technical School which offered twenty three subjects, some at grade III level, contained challenging comments for young people.²² It argued that opportunities were greater than that at any other time and exhorted young folk to seize these opportunities and to have a resolute ambition. The following statements were reminiscent of the Protestant ethic:

Society on the whole is just and fair. It does not reward inaction, but it does reward perseverance and kindred virtues...Young people should remember that labour is the parent of wealth. Industry creates the riches of the earth, and all the temporal blessings and sources of earthly happiness known to mankind ... Idleness is a curse. Under its sway the physical, mental and moral powers cannot grow; instead they become dormant ... The spread of schools will, it may be hoped, exercise a very great influence; do much to diminish poverty and suffering, so much of which is due to ignorance and the waste of interest and brightness in uneducated lives.

Such was the sermonizing used to persuade reluctant, apathetic adolescents on the eve of the great economic depression to improve their minds and perhaps their incomes by continuative education in technical schools.

II.

The training of apprentices in South Australia was governed by the Technical Training of Apprentices Act (No.1294) passed in November 1917.²³ S. Murray-Smith in an article "Technical Education in Australia 1788-1914 - A Select Bibliography" estimated that this act "was the most advanced legislation of its kind in Australia".²⁴ The act provided for the compulsory attendance of apprentices at trade classes for six hours per week for three years of their apprenticeship. The employer had to give the apprentice a half a day off a week for four hours, to attend classes and the apprentice had to attend evening classes for two hours per week in his own time. Provision was made through selected Trade Committees of employers and employees for the supervision of the general training received by the apprentices in a particular trade, and for the correlation of the work of the trade classes with the workshops and the factories. These Trade Committees

met during the year and supervised the examinations, awarded certificates and prizes, inspected the school workshops and classrooms, assisted in the selection of instructors, when required, and made recommendations regarding alterations of the syllabus. The general, overall supervisory body was the Apprentices Advisory Board with the Superintendent of Technical Education as chairman assisted by two representatives of the employers, two representatives of the employees and two persons nominated by the Government.

When McCoy was appointed in 1919 he inherited this progressive system of apprentice training and the superintendent who controlled it. During his directorship McCoy, the administrative head, gave support to Fenner, the executive officer, particularly when the Government was required to provide proper facilities for the smooth functioning of the system.

By 29 May 1919 the whole of the metropolitan area had been proclaimed a district over which the act should apply, but because of the great number of trades involved, accommodation could not be found for conducting all the necessary classes.²⁵ Originally the South Australian School of Mines had agreed to conduct apprentice classes in the ironmaking, woodworking and plumbing trades on the condition that all additional equipment and instructors would be provided by the Education Department. Apparently the School of Mines did not foresee the great increase in numbers caused by the compulsory apprentices' classes nor the increasing popularity of its own main work at the associateship and fellowship levels because in May 1920 the Council requested that the apprenticeship classes should be transferred elsewhere at the end of the year.²⁶

Fenner believed that this apparent impasse could be resolved by requesting the School of Mines to delay the transfer of first and second year classes for one year because of the insurmountable difficulties facing the Education Department in finding immediate accommodation. He suggested further, that the Education Department should negotiate to accommodate the third year apprentices in the Kintore Avenue Trade School which was already owned by the State and presently occupied by decreasing vocational classes of returned soldiers, and that the necessary wood and ironworking equipment should be transferred from the Commonwealth to the State at a reasonable cost. After presenting information about the likely costs of these solutions,

which he emphasized would be the most economical, Fenner concluded that the operation of these apprentices' classes :

in uplifting the standard of workmanship and ideals among the apprentices in the various trades in this State have been such as to amply justify the Act, and to warrant its continuance and extension to trades at present unprovided for. 27

McCoy, in forwarding Fenner's report to the Minister added his usual succinct summary of the whole problem, and stressed the potential of the apprentices' classes in eventually providing South Australia with efficient tradesmen.

The new arrangement had to be complete by January, 1921 but the whole matter was neglected for over two months until on 6 September when the Minister himself visited the apprentice classes to consider the problem at first hand. Although he called for a report about the buildings from the Commissioner of Public Works on the next day the report was not made until 13 December, 1920. The report supported Fenner's proposals for the emergency by improving an existing building on Kintore Avenue for £250 and erecting a new two storey brick building as a workshop for £6,850. Meanwhile Fenner had arranged access to unoccupied buildings on this site from the Repatriation Department. Because cost was obviously a crucial problem, Fenner hopefully suggested that repatriation vocational classes could be used in helping the erection of the new building. "A considerable amount could probably be save by utilizing the services of twelve or more bricklayers who are at present in the Kintore Avenue Trade School engaged in building walls and pulling them down again".²⁸ This seemingly sensible suggestion was almost impracticable to consummate when two separate governments were concerned.

McCoy was apprehensive about the monetary problem involved in the proposals of the Commissioner of Public Works because when he recommended to the Minister that the buildings be proceeded with, he added in his own handwriting "Subject to money being available for the purpose".²⁹ No money had been provided in the estimates to cover this unforeseen expenditure.

Next day the file was returned by the Minister to the Director with the curt question, "Could not the Junior Technical Building at Thebarton be used for the above purpose?" On the 5 January, 1921, McCoy answered :

The Junior Technical School building at Thebarton consists of classrooms and science rooms which would be quite unsuitable as workshop accommodation for the Apprenticeship Classes. The workshop annexes at Thebarton are not yet completed.

In any case the magnitude and growing importance of Apprentices' Classes require that they should have a permanent home. Any temporary arrangement would prove unsatisfactory and finally more expensive than the arrangement proposed above. 30

There is no documentary evidence that McCoy solicited the aid of Fenner in drafting this reply, but its context showed that the Director was behind his superintendent in attempting to obtain the best solution educationally to a critical problem, in the face of economic hindrances. The Minister agreed to the immediate improvements of the lecture rooms at Kintore Avenue, but he decreed that the erection of new buildings should be stood over. The Thebarton building was to accommodate apprentices classes, not the post primary boys for which it was designed.

During 1921 a decision had to be reached about the first and second year apprentice classes which had remained by mutual consent at the School of Mines.³¹ Fenner was anxious to develop the Kintore Avenue site as a central apprentice trade school and he anticipated that the junior technical school building at Thebarton would be further encroached upon. In June 1921 he wrote a special report to McCoy stressing the unsuitability of this building for apprentices. The building was designed as a Junior Technical School on the lines suggested by Clark and its classrooms and workshops were planned for general education similar to high schools and not directed to industries and the technical professions. The ages of apprentices varied from fifteen to twenty years and they needed quite different workshops and equipment. The Thebarton site was not central and the time taken to reach the school made the requirements of the Act impossible for employees and apprentices.³² McCoy forwarded this report to the Minister in July without any comment. However on 12 August, 1921 Fenner's plans for the development of the Kintore Avenue site were definitely suspended when the Minister directed :

I wish the Superintendent of Technical Education to make arrangements for the Apprentices Classes now being taught at the School of Mines to be sent to the Thebarton Technical School as soon as it is ready for occupation. 33

Whether McCoy argued this matter with the Minister is not known, but on the evidence of his previous stand it could seem that he did not. The State's serious financial difficulties caused an increasing number of apprentices to be without accommodation and the buildings at Thebarton erected in 1919 were not occupied by post primary technical pupils until January, 1924.³⁴

It seems that legislators are not always aware of the problems involved in the future administration of their legislation. Provision of suitable accommodation for the education of apprentices embarrassed the government well after 1917. Although the Liberal Barwell Ministry took the Kintore Avenue area for the Barwell Boy's Scheme it approved of building a Central Apprentice School at Kintore Avenue in 1923 and placed it on the urgent list.³⁵ During 1924 with the numbers of classes increasing, more space was still needed, in fact over 600 registered apprentices were without accommodation. The Labour Government urged by the Trades and Labour Council and its own inherent beliefs in education, eventually approved of building a central apprentice school on the Kintore Avenue site.³⁶ Early in 1926 the foundation stone was laid and during 1927 the new buildings, called the Adelaide Technical College, were occupied, much to Fenner's satisfaction. Reference to Table 11 indicates that there was always a significant number of apprentices and probationers awaiting the opportunity to attend classes and a large number of indentures cancelled and probationers who were not eventually indentured.

Fenner adamantly believed that mechanization would not make the skilled tradesman superfluous, in fact the modern manufacturing community required capable, resourceful, adaptable and skilled workmen. Fenner believed further that foundations of the modern industrial state rested on an adequate system of apprenticeship and systematic technical training.³⁷ Unfortunately, many employees were prepared to give employment to any lad irrespective of his aptitude or ability and "the improver"³⁸ was becoming more common than the

TABLE 11

TABLE SHOWING the NUMBERS of APPRENTICES and
PROBATIONERS ATTENDING CLASSES or OTHERWISE.

1923 - 1929

YEAR	Attending Classes	Awaiting Classes	Completed Course	Completed Indentures before end of School Course	Indentures cancelled	Probationers not Indentured.	TOTAL
1923	446	715	215	93	501		1,970
1924	609	610	329	187	261	507	2,503
1925	645	854	425	225	305	586	3,040
1926	713	761	561	437	379	688	3,539
1927	748	762	793	568	445	841	4,157
1928	751	691	972	699	493	914	4,520
1929	683	594	1,159	818	533	1,036	4,823

apprentice. Also brighter boys were being directed away from the trades to clerical jobs and duller boys were diverted towards industrial work.

Table 12 showing the registrations of apprentices and probationers indicated that the numbers of boys entering apprenticeships from 1922 until 1925 was almost the same and that the losses were continually high. In his 1925 annual report Fenner blamed this constant entry and high loss on the unstable system of indentured apprenticeship, although allowance must always be made for some loss, too much was due "to ineptitude, lack of preliminary training and proper guidance and the restless spirit of early adolescence."³⁹ From 1928 the decrease in registrations was caused by the economic depression and the increasing numbers of "improvers."

Fenner was always anxious to improve the effectiveness and value of the apprenticeship system in South Australia. In 1926 after receiving instructions from the Minister of Education, consulting with the Apprentices Advisory Board, making careful comparisons of apprenticeship legislation overseas and in Queensland and Victoria, and visiting three eastern states, Fenner drew up a list of suggestions to amend the Technical Education of Apprentices Act, particularly Section 18.⁴⁰ Among his suggestions was the idea that all learners under the age of twenty one be indentured in order to stop the prevalence of "the improver", and he wanted all boys who had satisfactorily completed the two year technical course of education beyond the age of fourteen years, to be credited with the first year of apprenticeship. McCoy supported Fenner's proposals, but reform was not simple because apprenticeship had a two fold aspect, one industrial and the other educational. Apprenticeship was controlled by two Acts, firstly the Industrial Code and secondly the Technical Education of Apprentices Act, and there were conflicts of opinion between the Inspector of Factories and the Apprentices Advisory Board. McCoy's minute to the Minister supporting Fenner's proposals for further amendment of the Technical Education of Apprentices Act was precise, direct and accurate.⁴¹ After a conference between the Chief Inspector of Factories and Fenner, agreement was reached about the necessary legislative alterations to the Industrial Code and the Technical Education

TABLE 12

TABLE SHOWING the NUMBERS of APPRENTICES and PROBATIONERS
REGISTERED UNDER the TECHNICAL EDUCATION of APPRENTICES
ACT and the NUMBER WHO LEFT BEFORE the COMPLETION of
THEIR APPRENTICESHIP. 1919 - 1929

	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
Numbers Registered	173	193	323	526	531	533	537	499	618	363	303
Numbers who left	66	89	109	85	139	267	123	176	219	121	162

of Apprentices Act. McCoy forwarded the information to the Minister and he in turn passed it to the Attorney General.⁴² The next action occurred ten and a half months later after E.C. Vardon, (Labour) a member of the Apprentices Advisory Board, asked the Minister of Industry in the House of Assembly whether consideration would be given to certain amendments to the Apprentices Act recommended by the Apprentices Advisory Board.⁴³ Although the Minister of Education strongly urged the Chief Secretary to introduce a Bill for these amendments at the beginning of July, by the end of the month he was asking about costs of the present system and approximate extra cost and likely recurring cost if the existing Act were amended. After further delaying questions about the accommodation in the new Technical College for apprentices, the matter was deferred by the Premier until the return of McCoy from abroad.⁴⁴ In April the following year the Apprentices Advisory Board revived the question but McCoy was able to obtain a decision from the Minister, that the Government was not prepared to take any action in the matter.⁴⁵

The incident revealed McCoy's support of Fenner's faith in apprenticeship and the need for legislation to keep pace with changing industrial conditions. It was characteristic of McCoy's ability to pursue clearly a complex problem involving other government departments and various cabinet members.

At the Imperial Education Conference in London in June 1927 McCoy read a short paper on apprentice training in which he described concisely, but with pride, the South Australian system.⁴⁶ He claimed that the success of the system depended on the "close interlocking of the administration of the schools with the general workshop conditions" which was achieved by the supervision of the Trade Committees. He referred to the obligations of and benefits to the employer, the apprentice and the State. The benefit to the employer came from the "more rapid advancement in the skill and knowledge" of his apprentice, the apprentice himself received sound free education which made him a tradesman and a citizen, and the State, although obliged to provide the necessary organization and the school workshops received

in turn "the general benefit of an efficient body of craftsmen". He found the terminal reports on the apprentices an invaluable link between the school, the workshop and the home. The courses were devised for boys of average ability and covered three years of forty two weeks per year and six hours per week. As a general rule three hours was devoted to practical work and the remaining time to trade theory, English and elementary science. Practical sessions were conducted by tradesmen "with high credentials and long experience" and theoretical sessions were conducted by trained teachers preferably with some trade experience. McCoy suggested that the system should be compulsory to be effective. He mentioned three difficulties, firstly the ability and standard of education of the entrants was not as high as desirable, secondly the diversified standard of education and manual dexterity of the entrants made course planning difficult, and thirdly the prevalence of the improver tended to detract boys from indentures. He concluded by referring to the enthusiasm and co-operation of all concerned, particularly the employers and employees through the trade unions.

These comments by McCoy form a fitting conclusion to the state of apprentice education in his time. All technical education was Fenner's domain and McCoy supported his superintendent in every possible manner to establish as sound a system of technical education as the resources of the State allowed.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

1. S.A.P.P. 1932 No.44 p.21
2. See S.A.P.P. 1924 No.44 p.20 for a brief review of developments in technical education.
3. Ibid.
4. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p.35
5. S.A.P.P. 1922 No.44 p.25
6. Ibid., p.36
7. S.A.P.P. 1923 No.44 p.33
8. S.A.P.P. 1916 No.59 "Report on Technical Education in South Australia" Donald Clark.
9. Ibid., p.3 p.1
10. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 pp.21-22
11. S.A.P.P. 1920 No.44 p.36
12. Namely Port Pirie, Moonta, Gawler, Kapunda and Mt. Gambier.
13. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 p.23
14. Originally technical school councils consisted of twelve members, six nominated by the local member of parliament, two represented employers, two represented employees and two represented local municipal bodies. In 1924 and 1926 the methods of nomination were altered, see S.A.A. E.D. 1648/1924 and E.D. 1173/1926. By 1928 the methods of appointing technical school councils and their powers and duties were similar to the councils of high schools. See S.A.A. E.D. 1103/28
15. "Instructions Relating to Technical Schools" (1924) contained in S.A.A. E.D. 1648/1924; particularly Instruction No.4
16. Ibid., Instruction No.9
17. Ibid., Instruction No.11
18. Ibid., Instruction No.22
19. These instructions were revised in 1926. See S.A.A. E.D.1173/1926
20. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p. 29
21. Ibid., p.20
22. See S.A.A. E.D. 1046/1927
23. See South Australian Statutes 1837-1936 Vol. 8 pp.243 et seq.

24. Melbourne Studies in Education 1967 Selleck, R.J.W. ed.
(Melbourne 1968) p.239
25. S.A.P.P. 1920 No.44 p.36
26. S.A.A. M.E. 104/1920. Principal to Minister 15 May, 1920
27. Ibid., Fenner to McCoy 17 June, 1920
28. Ibid., Fenner to McCoy 22 Dec. 1920
29. Ibid., McCoy to Ritchie 22 Dec. 1920
30. Ibid., McCoy to Ritchie 5 Jan. 1920
31. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p.35
32. S.A.A. E.D. 1414/1921
33. S.A.A. M.E. 226/1921
34. The last apprentice classes were removed at the end of 1927.
See S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.21
35. S.A.A. E.D. 1261/1923
36. See S.A.A. M.E. 201/1924 and S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.19
37. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.19
38. A young trade worker who had not entered into any agreement with his employer and who was not bound by the Apprentices Act.
39. S.A.P.P. 1926 No.44 p.18
40. S.A.A. E.D. 909/1926 Fenner to McCoy 20 May, 1926
41. Ibid., McCoy to Hill 23 June, 1926
42. Ibid., McCoy to Hill 16 July, 1926. Minister of Education to Attorney General 20 July, 1926
43. Deb. S.A.P. 1926 Assembly p.1134
44. S.A.A. E.D. 909/1926 Premier's minute 15 Aug. 1927
45. Ibid., McIntosh's decisions 3 May, 1928
46. Notes of this speech are in S.A.A. E.D. 78/1927.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN.

TEACHER EDUCATION.

Beare, in his unpublished thesis, "The Influence of Alfred Williams and the Price Ministry on Public Education in South Australia",² implied that McCoy's reforms in teacher training were an extension of Williams' work, but an examination of the facts does not support this implication. Williams had died seven years previously and nothing had been done by the Education Department nor Williams' own appointee, Schulz, to make deliberate, extensive changes. McCoy's reforms in Adelaide bore the marks of his work in Hobart. A central training college was established, courses were devised according to the ultimate teaching post of the trainees, even similar letters were used to distinguish them, and a system of practising schools was organised with specially selected demonstration teachers.

Schulz, who had been principal of the college since 1909 and whose principalship was to continue for another 27 years regarded the year 1921 "as the most momentous in the history of the College",² His successor, Dr. H.H. Penny, who was a teachers' college student at the time, agreed that the year "was at least a watershed" and that the man behind the changes was McCoy.³ Penny summarized the 1921 innovations under five headings. Firstly, the intention was to end the pupil teachership system. The 1921 intake was the highest in the history of the college in fact, it was a double one, the junior teachers of 1920 and the group who entered directly from the high schools. Secondly, the previous independent arrangements of training teachers were abolished. The short course in the Currie Street Observation School, and the courses at Norwood in domestic arts and woodwork at Gilbert Street, were all placed under the direct control of the college. Thirdly, systematic courses were organized for different kinds of teaching posts. Fourthly, six practising schools were staffed with the best teachers available to supervise practice teaching. Fifthly, the unified college was able to develop a corporate life of its own, especially in sport and social life with associated student councils and clubs.

McCoy boldly broke tradition by waiving the junior teacher year and permitting qualified students to enter the college directly from high school.

TABLE 13

NUMBER of STUDENTS in TEACHERS COLLEGE1921 - 1929.

		1921	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
Remaining for further training and A1 Special Short Course	Men	19							
	Women	23							
Short Course A	Men	12	22	27	26	33	44	49	51
	Women	51	53	39	40	53	71	72	52
Primary Course B	Men	48	62	58	38	57	58	105	134
	Women	79	77	72	43	43	51	48	60
Infant Course C	Women	52	51	45	31	31	34	69	84
Secondary Course D	Men	1	8	15	18	17	14	16	22
	Women	1	3	6	14	15	13	13	15
Commercial Course E	Men		4	4	4	10	10	9	12
	Women	7	9	10	7	8	11	15	19
Domestic Arts Course F	Women	6	10	11	10	12	14	16	8
Woodwork Course G	Men	1	-	4	-	-	1	3	4
Technical (Art) Course H					1	1	1	M 2 W 5	2
		300	309	291	232	280	322	422	463

Ever since the foundation of the college in 1876, which incidentally was the oldest in Australia, only a minority of teachers passed through it. The majority of teachers had entered the service either through the pupil teacher system or through the various training schools. Consequently, most teachers in South Australia believed in a practical form of training and were suspicious of university studies. Even before 1900, the college had been under pressure from senior departmental officers to introduce more professional subjects and during the first decade of his principalship this pressure had embarrassed Schulz. Abandonment of the pupil teacher-ship system caused many hard-bitten practical teachers to raise their eyebrows, and created the suspicion that the teachers' college, and its distinguished principal, were too academic to produce satisfactory practitioners for managing the rough and tumble of primary school life.

McCoy's re-organization of courses and the lengthening of the Students' time within the teachers' college upset the supply of teachers into the schools in 1921 and 1922. Charlton anticipated this in his 1920 report, "The shortage due to this cause will be cheerfully borne by the heads of schools in view of the fact that it will be temporary only and that in two years it will automatically right itself".⁴ The consolation was the temporary nature of the shortage, not the possibility that head teachers might receive young beginning teachers who might be better equipped after a longer and more systematic course within the teachers' college.

The anticipated disappearance of junior teachers did not occur during McCoy's directorship because of the continuous short supply of teachers.⁵ The supply of an adequate number of teachers was aggravated by the shortage of men teachers required for small country schools, which were unsuitable for women, and the growing needs of super primary schools, plus the need for relieving teachers in a state controlled system of education which was pledged to staff all established schools. In 1924 and 1926 temporary teachers from ex-monitors and high school students were appointed after brief training.⁶

When McCoy came to South Australia, teacher training was conducted in separate places. Besides the Teachers' Training College itself short course

trainees were housed in the Observation School, and a Domestic Arts Training Centre had been established at Norwood in 1919. McCoy's reforms placed these separate pieces together directly under the control of the principal, and plans were made to conduct as many of these differentiated courses as possible in the one institution.

Schulz had been appointed principal of the college at the age of twenty five. His interests were academic and his standing was high with his university colleagues, consequently academic studies received more attention and status in the college course than professional subjects.⁷ Students studied university subjects in term time and crowded professional subjects and teaching practice into the weeks before and after university terms.

Schulz himself had no teaching experience and he was prepared to leave professional preparation to the practical men in the schools. Schulz was neither a revolutionary nor a reactionary; he was a man of integrity and a profound thinker. His 1910 annual report indicated his growing concern about the controversy between the "education" and "training" of student teachers. Academic studies alone were too limiting for the beginning teacher, the academic education of the student as a person had to proceed together with theoretical and practical training in the profession of teaching. Schulz in his 1916 annual report justified the long term value of university education as against more practical training.⁸ His 1917 annual report defended the concept of a University Training College as against a "radically separate training college".⁹ Schulz was too honest a scholar to succumb passively to pressure to establish a more practical type of course from departmental officers who never had the experience of a university education. He was prepared to accept change and indeed McCoy's reforms seemed to assist him in shaping the new decade of development in the teachers college.

The college was unique in Australia in that it was the only teachers' college where all matriculated students, excepted those in the "A" short course, took the whole of their general subjects at the university.¹⁰

Schulz's reports from 1921 referred to the problems of the suitability of university studies for some student teachers. In 1922 he gave explanations for the failure rate of thirty to fifty percent amongst first year teachers' college students who studied arts and science subjects at the university.¹¹ They had a familiarly modern ring.

The beginning standard actually expected at the University for certain subjects is considerably higher than the official matriculation standard.

This comment was followed by an explanation of the difficulties some students had in adjusting to tertiary studies. It took time for students to change from school methods of instruction with regular tasks, revision and drill, to habits of tertiary study based on maturity, self incentives and self planning. From 1923, no new teachers' college students, except those who passed the public examinations at a high standard, were permitted to attend the university. Although the academic standards of new students and their university examination results improved after 1924, Schulz was still observing in 1928 that success at public examinations was not an "infallible criterion" or indication of success in university work. Some college people were not "the student type" although they were interested in children and well suited for teaching.¹²

The variation of ability amongst the new students could have partially assisted in resolving the quandary about the relationship between university studies and professional subjects in a practical, if not idealistic fashion. Students not considered academically fit for university subjects could study comparable but less exacting college subjects separated from professional studies. When the college had an opportunity for amalgamating the numerous professional subjects and establishing sound cultural subjects, because everything was taught and examined internally, it merely retained the traditional division. In fact the general cultural subjects were given deference well above the many slight professional subjects. It was astonishing that during the 1920's and even for the next two decades, primary and infant teachers could have left the college as qualified teachers without ever

having passed a single general cultural subject. Likewise a secondary teacher's qualifications were based on the university subjects he passed and his degree, not on his professional subjects hurriedly skimmed at teachers' college.

When addressing the opening assembly of the teachers' college on 24 January, 1921 in the Elder Hall, McCoy set out four basic requirements for a teacher, namely: "adequate scholarship", "insight into the growth and development of a child's mind", a knowledge of methodology and teaching skills. Although he put scholarship in the first position he qualified it, and even explained it in a circumjacent way:

Personality and correct methods are highly important adjuncts to a teacher's success, but if they are to be of any value, they must have behind them that broadening and deepening influence which is known as scholarship. 13

He never really defined scholarship and in his opinion of the requirements for a teacher he emphasized professional preparation. McCoy was probably more concerned with the training of teachers than the fostering of scholars, because he did not revise the requirement which permitted teachers to become qualified without ever having to pass general academic college subjects.

McCoy placed all teacher preparation under the administrative control of Schulz who had direct access to the Director. McCoy pointed the way, but such tasks as synthesising the antithesis between "education" and "training", were left to the student to resolve.

In 1924 the standard primary teachers course in the college was reorganized in accordance with English practice and on the principle that general education should precede vocational specialization.¹⁴ The first year was devoted to academic studies mainly at the university and the college staff were expected to arrange tutorials to supplement university lectures. Professional and practical work was done in the second year. Conflict of interest between academic progress and professional experience was supposedly avoided by this "end-on" course, but it rather perpetuated the distinction between academic work and professional work, and tended to relegate professional studies to something less than tertiary level.

The practising schools which McCoy began in 1921, were not experimental schools, but model schools for the demonstration and practice of accepted modes of teaching. Schulz's statements about experiments in educational practice echoed McCoy's opinions.

Experiments involving radical changes of curriculum and methods are not advisable in "Training" colleges and "Practising" schools since both have usually to introduce inexperienced young teachers to normal and well-tried ways and means. Nevertheless, in both institutions the spirit of inquiry and openness of mind for current theories and experiments is a highly important aim ... 15

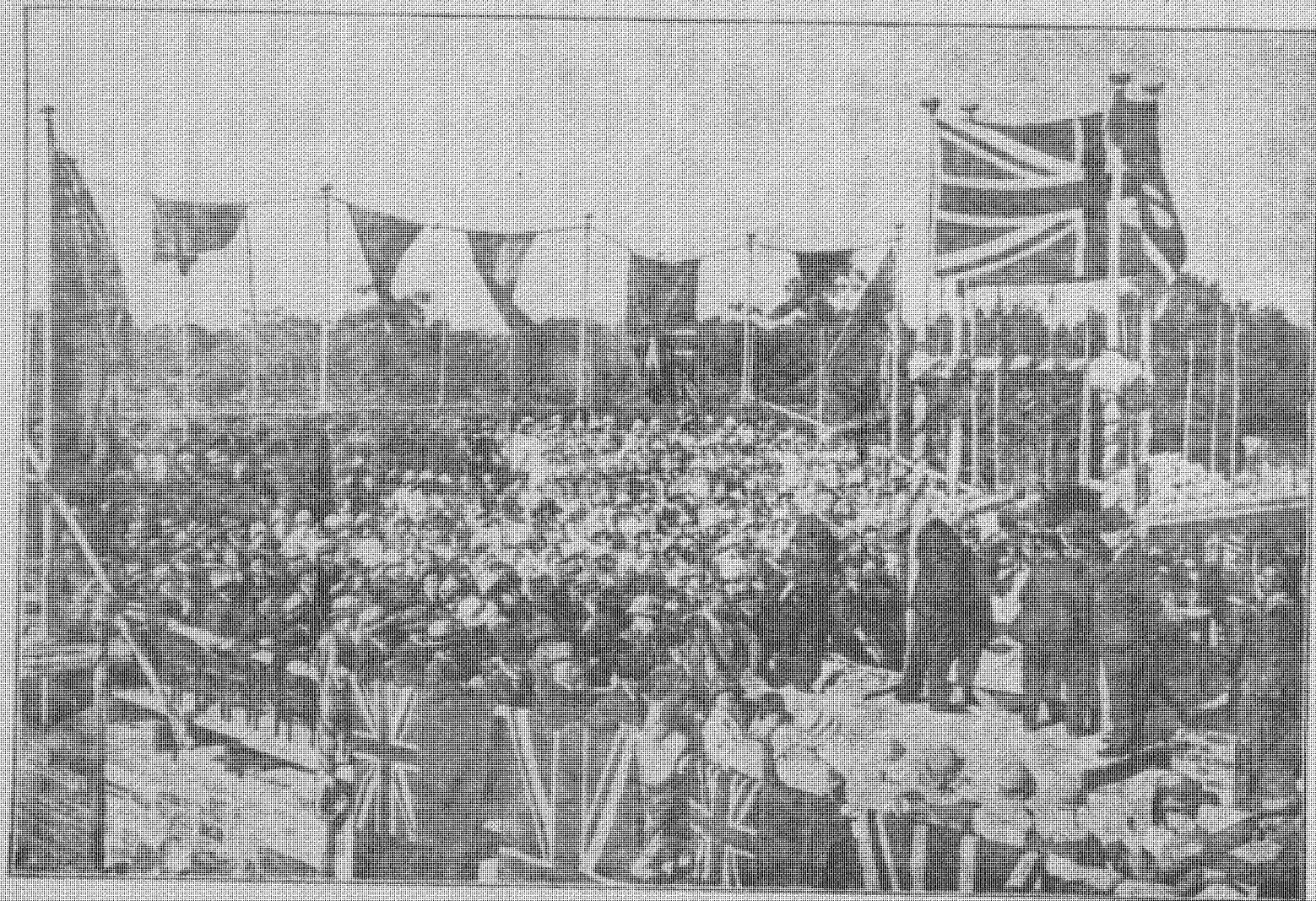
The emphasis was still on "training" and this training was divided between two domains - the college itself, for theoretical professional studies, and the practising schools, as their name implied, for practical experience. Although teacher training was placed directly under one head by McCoy, the division between the college and the practising schools was inclined to separate theory and practice if thorough liaison was not maintained. Teacher training was expected to have a "spirit of inquiry" but only on theoretical questions and innovations in educational practices in other places. There was no substantive, organized plan for experimentation in the college itself. Schulz unequivocally accepted the notion that the teachers' college was the servant of the State.

Training College courses in general constantly require re-adjustment in accordance with the changing aims, methods and policies determined upon by the Department with regard to the State educational system as a whole. 16

By 1928 Schulz seemed to be pleased with the movement away from what he called "ultra-freedom" in educational practice overseas, to the "tendency to re-acknowledge the positive function of the teacher in directing the pupils' work - with retention, however, of all the 'happiness in the school' and as much of 'the spirit of freedom' as is at all really feasible".¹⁷

During the 1920's Schulz often commented on the inadequate college facilities. In fact, in 1920 he and McCoy wanted to use the old Exhibition Building on North Terrace for a temporary college because the area there would have been large and suitable to bring all the students in the new

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE TEACHERS' COLLEGE.



scheme under one roof.¹⁸ However, the advice of the Architect-in-Chief, that the old police barracks would be more suitable was accepted by the Minister. This dowdy building was most unsuitable and most uncomfortable, it had few lecture rooms and very little space even for the most essential functions.

In his 1924 report, Schulz made bitter comments on the inadequate student and staff accommodation and the lack of facilities and amenities, and he concluded that "the South Australian Teachers' College is housed in dilapidated premises the most ill-equipped institution of its kind in the whole of Australia".¹⁹

Although McCoy had money set aside and the site declared for building a new college, its foundation stone was not laid until December, 1925. The Minister in his 1927 annual report was pleased to refer to : "the fine well-equipped building in Kintore Avenue"²⁰ which was occupied by the Teachers' College in May 1927, but Penny pointed out that although it had been planned to accommodate four hundred students, insufficient space had been left for essential services and its total capacity was in the region of three hundred.²¹

Another serious draw-back was the lack of playing fields and from 1922 various grounds were hired by the Department.²² In 1927 Schulz was pleading for adequate sporting facilities : "interest and skill in vigorous games may well be regarded as part - and an essential part - of a teacher's professional equipment!"²³ Although the old Jubilee Oval was hired for the College in 1927, it was not until 1930 that ten acres of the Deer Park in the north parklands were planned and planted as a sports ground by means of a generous gift from a then anonymous donor, who was in fact Sir George Murray, Chief Justice and Chancellor of the University.

In the late 1920's Schulz was recommending that hostels should be built for country students because the system of lodging houses inspected periodically by the Women's Warden was not really satisfactory.²⁴ The facts were that it was increasingly difficult to obtain suitable places, and study conditions were often very poor and the students actually lacked

proper supervision and control. McCoy was interested in the proposals, but the economic depression cut considerations, and hostels have never been part of the establishment of teachers colleges in South Australia.

Although prompted by McCoy and influenced by the increasing numbers of students much credit for the development of the corporate life of the college must go to Schulz who closely identified himself with all student activities. McCoy, the inaugurator, left the details of organization to his executive officer on the spot.

Although some consideration was given to help teachers enter for university subjects by a system of night lectures time spent at the teachers' college was regarded officially as the complete education of the teacher. No attention was given to inservice training for all practising teachers. Post teachers' college education was left to the individual teachers. The inspectors were expected to spread significant modern developments in educational practice amongst the schools in their districts. Efficiency was achieved by experience and practice but change and innovation were hampered by formalism engendered partly by regarding pre-service teacher training as the total of a teacher's education. The initial training itself did not encourage innovation; on the professional side it was based on the academic study of child development and curriculum study based on the contents of the official syllabus and not on curriculum making one development.

NOTES AND REFERENCES FOR CHAPTER EIGHTEEN.

1. Beare, op.cit. p.259
2. S.A.P.P. 1922 No.44 p.38
3. The complete report written by Dr. Penny in 1966 is in the library of Adelaide Teachers' College. A summary of this report entitled, "In Retrospect" appeared in South Australian Education Dec. 1968 and April 1969. See particularly Dec. 1968 issue pp.31-33 for comments on McCoy.
4. S.A.P.P. 1921 No.44 p.28
5. The annual reports of the Minister of Education show junior teachers employed as follows: 1926 -33; 1927 - 32; 1928 - 44; and 1929 -51.
6. There were 90 temporary teachers in 1924 and 79 in 1926. See S.A.P.P. No.44 1924 p.20; 1926 p.9.
7. In 1910 there were nine professional subjects :
Principles of education, school method, psychology, hygiene, nature study, drawing, singing, manualwork and physical education.
See S.A.P.P. 1911 No.44 p.56
8. S.A.P.P. 1917 No.44 p.38
9. S.A.P.P. 1918 No.44 p.29
10. Since the inception of the Diploma of Education in Adelaide University in 1920, Schulz himself was lecturer-in-charge on an honorary, part-time basis.
11. S.A.P.P. 1923 No.44 p.36
12. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 p.28
13. E.G. Feb. 1921 p. 50
14. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.34
15. S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.27
16. S.A.P.P. 1929 No.44 p.28
17. Ibid., p.29
18. S.A.A. E.D. 2631/1920 McCoy to Ritchie 2 Dec. 1920
19. S.A.P.P. 1925 No.44 p.35
20. S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.10
21. Handbook Adelaide Teachers' College 1962 (Adelaide 1962) p.15
22. Ibid.
23. S.A.P.P. 1928 No.44 p.27
24. S.A.P.P. No.44 1928 p.26; 1929 p.29

CHAPTER NINETEEN.

SUMMARY.

MCCOY AND EDUCATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

South Australian education had significant periods of progress in the past under Hartley and Williams. By the end of World War I the fact that education was languishing was widely recognised within the State and McCoy was appointed to stimulate progress. McCoy inherited the framework of a future education system in the 1915 Education Act, and what was probably more important he inherited a number of senior officers who were destined to assist him in establishing schools according to the needs of the State. The contributions of such people as Adey, Fenner, Edquist, Schulz and Miss Longmore were substantial, but credit must be given to McCoy who displayed qualities of leadership by encouraging and using the potential of his subordinates for the development of various parts of the education system.

Infant education in South Australia grew as a modification of the Montessori system. Much of the development was due to the work of Miss Longmore and her experiences in New South Wales and to McCoy's exchange teachers from Tasmania. McCoy did not make any detailed analysis of the principles of the Montessori methods and its adaptation to local conditions, but he gave the method all the support he could by getting funds for buildings, instituting special courses in the teachers' college and establishing infant departments as separate sections in large primary schools.

McCoy vitalized the primary school curriculum and encouraged the diversification of education. He adapted concepts of the New Education with which he was familiar by his experience in New South Wales, his work in Tasmania, and his observations during his travels overseas. He wanted all schools to have some practical work in their curricula. He wanted less emphasis on the subject matter of instruction and more upon the child as a person, therefore he encouraged freer methods and more pupil activity. He believed that the ultimate aim of all education was to inculcate moral and civic values and to stimulate love of country. He did not seek ways and means of encouraging the child to ask relevant questions, but he supported methods that assisted children to absorb traditional answers.

McCoy was doubtful about the value of the Qualifying Certificate Examination as a means of determining entry into the free high schools, but he never had it replaced. As a member of the Adelaide University Council he accepted the purpose of the Public Examination Board and its external examinations for the academically able in the high schools, and these examinations retained their prestige in the community. He endeavoured however to boost the status of the internal examinations of the central schools and the technical schools in the community's estimation by having them based on properly framed courses rather than on fragmentary subjects. In all this he was inclined to perpetuate the 19th Century tradition of "useful education" for the majority and "liberal education" for the few academically elite whose parents encouraged them to continue in school.

McCoy did endeavour to cater for the changing needs of South Australian society by establishing central schools in the metropolitan area and by introducing agricultural courses into country high schools. Central schools had two specific purposes, firstly, to convince an apathetic community of the value of post primary education, and secondly to cater for the needs of a large number of children who were either not inclined towards, or incapable of pursuing the academic course in the high schools. Central school did not provide detailed preparation for the trades, but they gave a general cultural and technical background for children who wanted to enter the various non-professional occupations. It is not clear to what extent McCoy regarded these schools as provisional, but both Fenner and Adey saw them as temporary expedients; Fenner for junior technical schools and Adey for comprehensive secondary schools. Despite criticisms about the shortcomings of the central schools and the narrow, utilitarian nature of their vocational training these schools were at least a start for future developments and vocational experience helped to satisfy an increasing want in many sections of the community.

Although the decade was not without its economic depressions McCoy worked continuously to consolidate foundations for the future development of education in the State. His achievements were not confined solely to the more prosperously economic years. His initial, swift practical changes

which steered education out of the doldrums were achieved in economically difficult times. During the mid 1920's he was assisted by more prosperous times and a progressive Labour Government. A definite school building policy was established, the school medical services were extended, a psychologist was appointed and plans were laid for the consolidation of rural schools. Even during his last years in the face of economic depression he convinced the Liberal Government to extend the teaching of agriculture in country high schools, and to establish a scheme in the post primary schools for vocational guidance and placement.

McCoy was not a researcher. He was never prepared to mount experiments in educational practices. He was even suspicious about the use of radio and cinema as teaching aides. However, he was an astute observer and a careful imitator of proven methods from interstate and overseas. His recommendations in improving local practices were always within the bounds of practicability, and he carried many of them to fruition by his own enthusiasm and his capacity for convincing Cabinet and for commanding the confidence of his subordinates.

McCoy took a pragmatic view. He was more concerned with getting a job done than with questioning and theorising. No one could claim that he was an educational thinker. He learned from examples and experience, not from books and journals. He was a practical man whose criterion in assessing any new idea in education was whether it would work in the classroom.

McCoy's directorship broke the continuous tradition set by J.S.Hartley in South Australian education. Direct, one man rule was now impossible because of the more complex structure and increasing size of the Education Department. McCoy was the driving force, a hard worker and a man with plenty of practical ideas, but unlike Maughan and Williams before him, he was not one of Hartley's proteges. He brought features of the early 20th Century reforms from New South Wales, and he adopted practices which

he observed on his overseas tours. He judged progress in South Australia by comparison with education in the eastern states, particularly New South Wales. In conference and by correspondence he constantly consulted his fellow directors interstate to gain comparative information and to assist him in making decisions.

Changes in primary education, post primary education, technical education and teacher education during the 1920's became significant features within the decade itself. The primary school curriculum was revitalized and school became more related to life and the child's environment. Special classes for handicapped children were begun. McCoy anticipated the Hadow Report by providing non selective secondary schools for children who remained in full time attendance at school only until the statutory attendance age. A progressive training system for apprentices was organized. Preservice teacher training was replacing the old pupil-teacher system. Further research is necessary to examine the continuing significance of these features, but even superficial observation indicates that these features formed the basis for future development of education in the State.

CHAPTER TWENTY.

CONCLUSION.

This study has aimed to examine two basic aspects of education. Firstly, how McCoy administered the state education system and how his administration influenced education in South Australia in the 1920's. Secondly, what McCoy thought about education and what he achieved for the children and the schools of the State.

The 1915 Education Act was a blue print for the future education system in South Australia, but there was no competent construction until McCoy was appointed. Since the 1870's all the interstate directors of education had to build within the framework of their education acts and McCoy had to do the same. The manner of their building determined their prestige. McCoy had always worked in a fairly static educational system, and he was confident that sound administration would benefit everyone within its influence - especially the children. He enumerated the purposes of the various parts of the system without theorizing. He assiduously organized, or supervised the organization of procedures that would be likely to achieve these purposes. It is sometimes said that systems are evolved rather than invented, but under McCoy's directorship the education systems in Tasmania and South Australia was deliberately modified and extended.

As an educational administrator McCoy focussed on continuity rather than transformation. Although he found that too many routine matters had to be referred to the Minister for decision his solution was that he himself should be empowered to handle these matters. He never considered a simpler, de-centralized scheme to starve the growing leviathan. As the system grew so did his work. He believed in liaison and consultation, and he kept clear lines of communication from himself to his superintendents, through inspectors to head teachers in the schools. He laid his plans, took his senior officers into his confidence, and fired everyone with his own contagious enthusiasm. McCoy visualised the Department as a catalyst, the resource centre for education throughout the State. He encouraged outstanding teachers to help in syllabus making, but he always expected his superintendents to take the initiative, and he limited policy decision making to head office.

McCoy's ideas on various aspects of education were very consistent, and comments that he had made in Tasmania kept recurring in South Australia. His addresses in South Australia contained similar material and sometimes identical expressions. McCoy did not possess the oratorical powers of Tate; what he said and wrote was plain and unadorned. On the other hand McCoy was an eminently forceful man with a commanding presence and a sound, logical mind. These attributes, together with a buoyant sense of humour gave him most adequate powers of persuasion.

Although he could be described as a benevolent autocrat McCoy won co-operation from his officers and teachers and established harmonious relations with them not simply by being right and logical, but by being able to put himself and actually feeling himself in their place. McCoy knew what he wanted, but he believed that personal contact helped the other person to want the same thing eventually. He avoided the usual procedure of circulating memos for establishing new practices because this was too routine and impersonal. He conveyed his directions verbally whenever possible. When he was not working in his office or consulting with the Minister he spent a great deal of time visiting schools and proudly telling the community what the schools were doing. His policy of personal contact did not extend to mixing socially with his administrative and teaching staffs. He held himself completely aloof. Although he was rather stout he carried himself in a most erect fashion, and by his physique and dress he created an aura of authority. He usually dressed in the English professional manner with bowler hat, morning coat, dark grey vest and striped trousers, sometimes he wore spats, and he invariably carried a silver mounted walking stick. By appearance, character and reputation he was a fit and proper person to be a member of the Adelaide Club, where in fact he regularly lunched. While he administered his department with intense pride and personal dignity he made most people, who conscientiously contributed to the welfare of the children, feel privileged to be working for him. He commanded confidence and trust by being forthright and positive while at heart he was generous and sympathetic.

Like Williams before him McCoy fought for satisfactory salaries for his qualified teachers and adequate and comfortable accommodation for their pupils. McCoy expected his teachers to be properly qualified both in academic and professional studies but the general shortage of teachers forced him to continue to employ people who were partially qualified professionally and who had some practical ability. In the courses of instruction he claimed that teachers could escape from the formalism of the imposed structure of the curriculum. He hoped that teachers would use their own capacities in an effort to combine and satisfy the needs of the curriculum and the pupils. He deliberately kept controversial issues out of the school curricula. He wanted his teachers to be neutral, and to conform to the mores of the times; supporting patriotism, respectable citizenship and conventional habits of conduct and dress. Right from the time of his appointment he established cordial relationships with the South Australian Public Teachers' Union, and it constantly acknowledged his readiness to listen to their requests. He was suspicious and sceptical however of the more aggressive national body the Australian Teachers' Federation.

The statistics of the 1920's showed steady increases in the numbers of pupils, teachers and schools in South Australia. Figures by themselves are not particularly significant and expanding school populations can create problems if they are not properly handled. The success in catering for the needs of an expanding school population is determined not by the changes made but by their immediate and continuing influence.

On his arrival in the State McCoy was faced with sensitive officers in the Education Department, a serious lack of finances, over-crowded schools and discontented teachers. By his tact and common sense McCoy quickly conquered any antipathy that might have been stored against a stranger to the Department. He was a sound organizer who was able to assess problems clearly and to suggest appropriate solutions. As well as being a sound manager he was capable of inspiring his officers in head office and his teachers in the schools. Although he could do nothing

in the short run about the lack of finance he did not allow this to impede reform. His initial reforms such as classifying the teachers and the schools, changing the role of the inspectors, separating infant departments in large primary schools, organizing super-primary educations, writing new Regulations and revising the curricula in all the schools and the teachers' college did not involve the treasury in great increases of expenditure. These reforms however, laid sound foundations for further developments.

In economically and politically propitious times he established features which proved to be advantageous to the immediate and future needs of education in South Australia. He organized central schools and made plans for the consolidation of rural schools. He established a school building policy, extended the school medical services and appointed a psychologist, who in turn placed the State in the fore-front of special education. In his last years in a period of economic recession he convinced Cabinet to extend the teaching of agriculture in country high schools and to establish a scheme of vocational guidance and placement in post primary schools.

Some credit for the progress in education in the 1920's has to go to McCoy's senior officers, such as Adey, Fenner, Miss Longmore and Dr. Halley. Some credit has to be attributed to the Labour Party's willingness to spend money on education in the more prosperous years of the decade, but most credit must go to McCoy as the leader, organizer and synthesizer. In the light of modern developments it is easy to criticise, and to conclude that McCoy, by transplanting practices from other places, contributed to the derivative nature of Australian education. McCoy should be judged against the context of the times. With his more successful predecessors and contemporaries in Australian education he was willing and able to adapt and develop educational practices which assisted the general progress of education in the nation. In fact it can be fairly argued that because of the provision of proven basic educational facilities in the 1920's and the pre World War II period more attention can be given today to the spirit of inquiring into education.

McCoy was not a researcher or an educational theorist and innovator. He was a practitioner who relied on his own experience and intuition. He was generally conventional and often dogmatic. Unlike many of the social reformers in the New Education he saw the school as a conserver of society and not as an instrument for social reform. He was a shrewd observer of mankind and a clear-headed assessor of the needs of the times. After inheriting an almost sterile system of education he quickly initiated reforms and won the loyal support and confidence of his senior officers. By sound administration, personal dedication and enthusiasm he was responsible for educational facilities which assisted the development of primary and post primary education in South Australia.

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- A. Primary Source Material.
 - a. In manuscript.
 - b. Interviews.
- B. Printed Material.
 - a. Official and Semi-official Documents.
 - b. Books and Pamphlets.
 - c. Articles.
 - d. Newspapers and Periodicals.
- C. Unpublished Theses.

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