The Grenada Boys' Secondary School and the Debate Over Secondary Education in Grenada, 1885-1946

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The Grenada Boys' Secondary School has played an important role in stimulating change on the island over the past 100 years. It has also produced a sizable number of professionals, businessmen, politicians, sportsmen, island scholars, and civic leaders of extraordinarily high caliber. Within the Caribbean and on the larger international scene, products of the G. B. S. S. have served with distinction. Locally, many Old Boys have served in the legislature and as government ministers; some have made names for themselves in business, while others have left their mark at various levels of the civil service or as physicians and lawyers in private practice. In addition, an impressively large number of the school's products have worked at regional and international agencies, have been advisors to governments, and generally made significant contributions to development and change in the countries they now call home. Despite this impressive array of successes, the school's early history remains largely unknown.

The G.B.S.S. today, view of new buildings (click on image to see larger view)

II

Grammar schools had been started in various parts of Britain's overseas empire as a means of providing for the sons of colonial administrators secondary education to facilitate their re-entry into British schools or their admittance into British universities. Meanwhile, many local whites also benefited from these institutions. On Grenada, which lacked a large local white population and boasted a sizeable brown-skinned elite, the colonial government remained lukewarm for some time in its attitude towards government supported secondary education. By the late nineteenth century, though, members of this local elite on Grenada, the seat of government for the Windward Islands, waged a relentless battle to start a secondary school for boys.

Efforts to establish a secondary school on Grenada had not started suddenly. The Convent School had antedated the St. George's Grammar School by some ten years. By 1876, the notion of starting a public secondary school for boys had been floated in various circles. Government's unwillingness, however, to provide support for such a venture had made the issue moot for a number of years thereafter.

Supporters of a publicly-financed Grammar School for boys were optimistic when the 1882 Education Ordinance made provision for the appointment of a Board of Education and an Inspector of Schools. During debate in the Legislative Council on the bill, discussion had centred on the lack of provision for secondary education. In response to Governor William Robinson's expressed interest in having government award about six scholarships to Harrison's College in Barbados, members of the island's Executive and Legislative Councils argued that the majority Roman Catholic population of Grenada would not send their children to non-Roman Catholic Barbadian schools. The scholarship proposal would constitute government support for only Protestants. Instead, government should provide a local non-sectarian Grammar School.[1]

Governor Robinson therefore recommended the establishment of a Grammar School "where a good sound education could be obtained and where pupil teachers for the primary schools could be trained." But his superiors were lukewarm to his suggestion. Colonial Secretary Lord Kimberley eventually authorized preliminary action on establishing a local grammar school while reiterating his earlier position that improving the island's primary education should take precedence.[2] Such decisions did not sit well with a vocal segment of Grenada's population.

The general feeling seems to have been that Grenadians deserved a better educational system and a government secondary school.

In January 1884 several persons interested in the well-being of the colony's youths decided to establish a Grammar School at St. George's. One writer hoped that such private initiatives on behalf of secondary education would spur the government into action.[3] No sooner had notice of the public meeting become general knowledge than Administrator E. D. LaBorde asked Inspector of Schools E. W. Begrie to ascertain "what number of boys would be sent to a Grammar School if one were established in St. George's, the fee that parents and guardians would be prepared to pay per annum for the education of each boy, and other particulars."[4] The results of the inquiries seemed promising.

It was now LaBorde's painful task to convince his superiors of the efficacy of his plan. Citing the island's sound financial standing and excellent prospects for the future, LaBorde reckoned that government could easily bear additional educational expenses for a grammar school. He provided cost estimates for converting the building which previously housed the hospital into a schoolroom and house for a master. LaBorde also proposed refurbishing Beaumont Lodge as residence for the Head Master. Brimming with enthusiasm, LaBorde naturally felt that his carefully laid-out plans merited Colonial Office support.[5]

Despite Grenada's sound financial position, 1884 was hardly the ideal time for requesting approbation for additional public expenditures. The British government had sent to the region in 1883 the Crossman Commission to initiate cost-saving measures in the administrative arena. William Galwey Donovan had presented to the commissioners on behalf of himself and 18 other signatories a memorial asking for the establishment of a grammar school in St. George's. The petitioners pointed out that as a result of public outcry in 1882, government had increased taxes with the expressed aim of establishing such a school. But, they lamented, "since then nothing has been done in the matter. At present, only the children of one or two opulent people are able to obtain a polite education. They are sent, at great cost to their parents, to the neighbouring Colony of Barbados." The commissioners' recommendation that "one grammar school should be at once started for the whole Colony" of the Windward Islands "and in each Island three scholarships of £20 each granted annually by open competition among scholars in the State schools" did not win the support of Colonial Office officials.[6]

Hardly different was the response to LaBorde's suggestions. In turning down his proposal, the Earl of Derby indicated his reservations about sanctioning such public expenditures for the benefit of residents mostly of one part of the colony. He was convinced that even if the proposed Grammar School proved to be "more successful than that of St. Vincent, it would be of no use to persons residing outside St. George's."[7]

Even before residents received official news of government's disinterest in a Grammar School, they decided to take action on their own to establish one. In November 1884, the idea occupied a prominent position in the deliberations of some individuals. The driving force behind this initiative was the Managing Committee of the Society for the Education of the Poor, a body established as early as the 1820s and which for a long time had been in control of the St. George's Central School.[8] The Society's action evidently stemmed from its dissatisfaction over government's reluctance to make a clear statement or commitment regarding its intentions for secondary education on the island. One individual had linked the absence of governmental support for secondary education to what he termed "the nonchalance of Crown Government." Moreover, he had reached the painful conclusion that "if we are to have a high-class school in Grenada we must cease to look to Government for the inauguratory step and make the first effort ourselves. This question of secondary education is becoming too important to be neglected much longer."[9] Given the prevailing indifference if not outright hostility towards public support for secondary education in official circles, in late 1884 twelve individuals "agreed to start a school of a higher grade than those then in existence, and to guarantee the salary of a master for the same."[10]

III

In December 1884, rules governing the proposed school's operation entered the public domain.[11] Called the St. George's Grammar School, it was to be a day school for boys only. However, the Head Master was free to take in boarders at his own risk but subject to the school's general regulations. The Governing Body was to consist of the Committee of the Central School, any subscriber who paid a minimum of £10 per annum and whom the committee elected at its first annual meeting, and any patron, president, or vice-president that the committee elected. It was the responsibility of the Governing Body to appoint a Head Master, whom it could dismiss with six month's notice.

The core curriculum was to include Arithmetic, Mathematics, English Language, Elementary Latin, French Language, and Geography and History.[12] Responsibility for selecting the textbooks rested with the Head Master. Yet a

statement stated clearly that for the most part books would be similar to what obtained at Harrison's College in Barbados. The obvious hope was that Harrison's would be a model for the St. G. G. S.

Boys could enrol only after they had reached age eight and passed examinations in reading simple narrative, writing text-hand, and "working easy sums in addition and subtraction." Although generally the Head Master had control over disciplinary and curricular matters, he needed approval from a majority of the Governing Board if he wished to expel any boy.

Once per year, the school was to be examined and inspected by individuals appointed by the Governing Body, to whom a report would be made. For the first few years the external examiner came from overseas. It was the Head Master's responsibility to provide at the end of each of the three terms a report to the Governing Body and ultimately the public at large on the number, progress, and condition of the pupils.

Because the school initially lacked government support, its operational budget was then dependent exclusively on student fees, annual donations, and any grant the Committee of the Central School might make. Subscribers who paid a minimum of £5 per annum could nominate a pupil for the school. The same held true for any funds the Committee of the Central School might contribute to the St. G. G. S. Although it was still necessary for the student to take and pass the preliminary test, we can only speculate as to whether or not some parents were able to obtain preferential treatment for their children's admission through generous financial contributions.

Initial plans called for the school to open its doors in early January, 1885. However, unforeseen delays prompted management to push the date backwards.[13] Eventually, classes started with ten boys on February 2, 1885 "at Mrs. Gray's premises in Hospital Street."[14] The first benefactors pledged more than £80 per annum for the school's operation.

enrolment grew slowly but steadily. In March 1885, one month after the initial 10 students had met at the school for the first time, 28 boys were on the books.[15] They also reflected considerable parochial diversity of the student body. Further, the avowed nonsectarian nature of the school's thrust and admission policy was "testified to by the ready manner in which it is being patronized by the various religious bodies; members of all the communions in the island occupy seats in the Governing Body."[16] Later, enrolment increased to 45. By 1888, however, it had fallen precipitously to 25 before rebounding the following year to 37. In 1890, enrolment stood at 46.[17]

The school's lethargic early growth stemmed in part from the mistaken belief that it was sectarian. To rectify this erroneous impression, about nine months after the school's founding the Governing Body belatedly though deliberately embraced a policy of broadening its base by inviting all ministers of religion to become members.[18] It is also true, however, that religion and social class were also contributory factors in stymieing the school's growth. Roman Catholics never considered the Grammar School to be the ideal place for their children to receive an education. Because the school lacked boarding facilities, it would have been necessary for potentially capable students to expend additional monies in housing in St. George's if they wished to attend the St. G. G. S.

There were, however, other early growing pains with which to contend. The Governing Body had considered itself fortunate in recruiting as the school's first Head Master Mr. Hallam Massiah, who was then a second master at Combermere School in Barbados.[19] This appointment of an impressively credentialed individual had won for the Body high praise from the school's first examiner.[20] At the same time, though, it evoked considerable negative publicity locally and started a process of largely expatriate appointments at the helm of the school and its successor, the Grenada Boys' Secondary School.

For a while Massiah was apparently the only paid person on staff. Recognizing the limits of his ability and the need for additional help, in May 1885 he recommended the hiring of "a competent assistant at a salary of £200 per annum."[21] Although we are unable to determine the precise date of his initial appointment, by January 1889 Ambrose G. Hughes held the post of Second Master at the St. G. G. S. He may well have been on the staff as early as 1886.[22]

Staffing, however, was not the only challenge Massiah and the Governing Body were to face. Despite his creative efforts to combine the students in classes according to their ability and in a manner that optimized his time, Massiah bemoaned his inability to provide them with more personalized supervision. He saw the solution as being the acquisition of "a more suitable School-room" with more adequate space in which to conduct classes.[23]

Massiah's request for an assistant master and additional space entailed additional expenditures. How was the Governing Body to attack this twin-headed hydra? The answer lay in approaching government once more for some

form of assistance. In April 1885 the Governing Body had decided to petition the local government for an annual grant towards the school's maintenance. They also requested the use of "Beaumont Lodge and the lands attached to it for school-house and play-ground." Although these premises were "at present untenanted and are falling into ruins," the hope was that "a little patching would make them quite suitable for the purpose for which they are desired and save them from imminent dilapidation."[24]

The Governing Body had reason to be optimistic. The geographic distribution of the student body served to blunt partially oft-repeated charges that the school constituted an effort to get the entire community to finance education of a few urban individuals. With statistics clearly showing that almost fifty per cent of the student body came from outside St. George's parish, the school's supporters felt vindicated in their efforts and convinced they would eventually obtain governmental support.

Aid was slow in coming. Administrator Edward LaBorde had done little to enhance the cause of secondary education. Considerable local excitement and optimism had attended the assumption to office in June 1885 of Governor Walter Sendall, whom many immediately perceived as being supportive of matters educational in general and of a Grammar School in particular.

For a while, Sendall refused to commit government expenditure to support the Grammar School. He draw on the experience of St. Vincent where public support for secondary education "proved a conspicuous and humiliating failure" to bolster his initial case against governmental support.[25] According to his reasoning, government should not expend public funds for a secondary school because of the elite nature of the limited clientele it was likely to attract.

Undeterred, supporters of the school redoubled their efforts to secure public financing. In early August 1885, the school's Governing Body presented a memorial to the Legislative Council. On the basis of this memorial, at Council's meeting on August 5, 1885, Hon. C. Macauley Browne moved "[t]hat in the opinion of this Council it is desirable that some pecuniary assistance should be given by the Government towards the cause of Secondary Education in this colony."[26] Although this motion met with unanimous approval, the legislature's almost immediate adjournment left the determination of the specific amount to the governor.

By late 1885, however, Sendall was clearly warming up to the idea of public support for the St. G. G. S. Quite frankly, public clamour for governmental assistance had by then made his initial position untenable. Newspapers were at the forefront of this campaign. In addition, public meetings and the debates of both the St. George's Parochial Board and the island's Legislative Council provided useful forums for advocates to articulate their arguments. At the Parochial Board level and in his newspaper columns, for instance, anti-government firebrand and political activist William Galwey Donovan effectively used government's failure to assist the secondary school to support his strident pleas for greater local participation in the island's affairs. As chairman of the school's Governing Body, Comissiong had also written directly to the governor requesting financial support.[27] Once Sendall obtained a better grasp of the issues and their political implications, in mid August 1885 he went on record as being supportive of initiatives in which "the extension of the Grant Scheme to schools of the higher class was recognized as a measure which circumstances might render expedient."[28] Thereafter, the school's financial situation stabilized for a while.

IV

Part of the reason for the school's enhanced financial situation stemmed from the generous grant it received from government. Sendall had made a fixed grant of £250 to the school as long as it was "efficiently taught and contained not less than twenty (20) boys," and a "result" grant based on its performance. The administration, however, was to take charge of the examination, appointing "competent examiners" for the purpose.[29]

In addition to the subsidy, government had also decided in 1888 to award five scholarships of £5 a year each, for up to two years, to students entering the St. G. G. S. from the island's primary schools. In 1890, the newly arrived Governor Walter Hely-Hutchinson made a commitment for government to increase the number of scholarships to seven.[30] Not to be outdone, the Governing Body had also initiated in 1889 the practice of awarding five scholarships for individuals entering from primary schools. These from the Governing Body were for three years' duration.[31]

While exhorting the youngsters to appreciate the importance of education to their future development, Governor Hely-Hutchinson in 1890 pointedly informs us of some of the difficulties under which the school laboured during these early years. The age-old problem of facilities raised its ugly head for all to see. Housed even then in a building that was clearly unsuitable for carrying out its mission, the school also lacked a library.

The Head Master also identified two other problems. In an effort to develop well-rounded personalities, Johnson had attempted to start a cricket club connected with the school. But, he lamented, the parents and guardians had demonstrated a marked disinclination to permit the boys to become members for fear of accident or injury. Johnson's other complaint hinged on his firm conviction that boys should enrol at a more tender age if they were to take full advantage of the educational opportunities. He believed the optimum age for enrolment was between ten and eleven years of age. Because many students were coming to the St. G. G. S. at a later age, by the time most enroled "they come too late to do anything."[32]

Ever looking forward to achieving greater heights, the school's Governing Body sought to obtain for its graduates scholarships for further study in Great Britain. In 1890, for example, the Body had passed a resolution calling on government to "establish a comparative scholarship to be held at some university in the United Kingdom." They also asked the governor to carry the matter before the Legislative Council at his earliest convenience.[33] While government claimed it could not afford to bear the cost of such a scholarship, it made representations to the secretary of state for the colonies to ascertain if Grenadians could be beneficiaries of a scholarship through the Gilchrist Memorial Trust. If this was the case, they also wished to know if any British university would we willing to permit examinations to be held locally for such an award. The request proved fruitless. By 1890 the Trust had already decided to reorient its scholarship program away from the British Caribbean colonies of Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad in favour of schools in India and Ceylon.[34] Under the circumstances, it was impossible to include requests from Grenada until the new scheme had been in operation for a reasonable time. One year later, Governor Hutchinson reported that he had redoubled efforts to establish linkage with British universities that might award scholarships to students of the St. G. G. S. who might take external exams for those universities.[35] Neither of these initiatives bore fruit. Nevertheless, the efforts of the school's Governing Body to obtain these scholarships reflect the seriousness with which members viewed their role as leaders in providing secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities for Grenada's emerging middle class at the end of the nineteenth century.

V

The School was at a critical stage in its development by the early 1890s. At a time when government was attempting to restructure the Board of Education that handled all aspects of primary education, the question of religious bodies' representation on it assumed added importance. The fragile religious accommodation that had prevailed from the 1830s onwards, when Roman Catholics were admitted to equal civil rights as Anglicans, disintegrated in the charged atmosphere that accompanied educational reform. Roman Catholics, who in 1891 constituted 55 percent of the island's population, understandably demanded a number of seats on the Education Board that would at least place them on parity with Anglicans.[36] Their demands seem in hindsight to be quite reasonable inasmuch as in 1888 there were 9 elementary schools under the control of Roman Catholics, Anglicans accounted for 7, Presbyterians controlled 5, and Government ran 8. That same year, enrolment at the various schools stood at 1,386, 1,219, 757, and 1,078, respectively.[37] The debates surrounding the Roman Catholics' demand re-opened the question of the extraordinarily close relationship between the Anglican Church and the St. G. G. S. and ultimately led to enrolment decline from 1891 onwards. By December 1892, when enrolment stood at 38, the school's management took additional steps to clear up the impression once and for all. Prayers were discontinued on the school's daily openings and closings. Even so, continued one individual, "the surest and only means . . . of removing the impression completely was by handing the school over to the Government, and [Comissiong] embraced the occasion to ask His Honour the Administrator to afford his assistance toward that end."[38]

Enrolment decline and "want of interest in the school" had led to the departure in December 1891, after three years at the helm, of the school's second Head Master, C. H. Johnson. Obviously committed to the task he had undertaken, Johnson's disappointment at the apathy and apparent indifference parents had exhibited towards their children's education and the school's well being had led to his resignation. This is not to suggest, however, that the students did not appreciate Johnson's contributions to their education and the school. Their farewell address accompanying the plate they presented him clearly reveals the high esteem in which they held this individual whom they felt had shaped their lives in immeasurable ways. They also saw his departure as a great loss for the school.[39]

VI

Johnson's resignation brought to the scene in January 1892 Mr. H. C. Saville, a South African-born and Cambridge-educated man who had previously served as Head Master at Antigua's Grammar School. Saville was destined to remain at the St. G. G. S. as Head Master until 1902. Far from solving the deep-seated problems with

which his predecessors had to contend, Saville's long tenure exposed further the serious problems then facing secondary education on the island. By questioning the lack of progress the St. G. G. S. had made since its inception and the status of secondary education as a whole, it posed severe distractions and additional tensions for the St. G. G. S. though contributing in the long run to the school's reorganization and enhancement.

The Chronicle led the charge by noting the drop in the school's enrolment since its founding in 1885. This decline had taken place despite the fact that government scholarships were now available and fees were lower than at the school's inception. Bemoaning the frequent changes at the helm since 1885--in 1893 the school was then under its third Head Master--the editor regretted the "occasional temporary appointments and a school struggling [in enrolment] in the thirties. After eight years, alas! We do not want our Grammar School merely carried on. We require a permanent institution to do the same work as the two leading colleges in Trinidad, the leading schools in Barbados, and the Queen's College in Demerara." The surest way of ensuring such an institution would emerge was through governmental control.[40]

This editorial had been written in part to lend support to the Governing Body's recent actions. Faced with escalating operational costs and inadequate financial resources, the Body had decided to ask Government to take over the school's operation. This action would infuse much-needed financial resources for the school's expansion or instructional enhancement. It would simultaneously diffuse the religious factor in the school's status and facilitate its support by Roman Catholics.[41]

What occasioned the two-year delay in further action is uncertain. By 1895, however, the Body petitioned the legislature to take over the school's overall operations "and to conduct it as a public Institution at the charge of the General Revenue."[42] Part of the proposal for this new arrangement called for the teaching of religious instruction by salaried clergymen nominated or approved by the heads of the churches to which they belonged. Governor Sir Charles Bruce warmly supported the request for the school's restructuring. He may well have assured the school's managers of favourable government reaction to their request. Indeed, Donovan's remark some years later that through false and unmet promises government had tricked the Governing Body into turning over power would seem to indicate that there was some suspicion of government's motives.

The request for restructuring became more urgent because the Governing Body had also obviously overextended itself. In 1889, a campaign had gathered momentum for the establishment of a government secondary school for girls. Most of the members of the planning committee were already members of the School's Governing Body. By the time the St. George's Girls' High School had got off the ground, its Governing Body was almost indistinguishable from that of the St. G. G. S. The challenges in finding adequate resources for both schools must have induced management to increasingly turn to government for enhanced support.

By this time, too, the overall educational climate had become somewhat tense. With various constituencies seeking support from a government that had inadequate means of directly shaping curricular matters or determining which course secondary schools should take, government found itself in an almost impossible position. Religious tension over educational matters had become increasingly pronounced by this time when government's efforts to introduce a new Education Code for elementary schools evoked the suspicion and wrath of religious leaders. Further, gender issues were also becoming urgent. If all secondary schools were to be supported, at what level should this assistance be? The answer was to make scholarships available to students wishing to attend any of the three schools. In 1892, government finally agreed for the first time to provide financial support for secondary education for girls.[43]

Despite the lack of movement on its request for complete government takeover and the unfavourable press it received from some quarters, it appears that the St. G. G. S. was holding its own financially and academically by 1900. Saville remained at the helm until 1902 when the Governing Body invoked financial constraints as its reason for retrenching him. While this action might have been a sensible and fiscally sound management decision, it eventually proved somewhat detrimental to the school's health.

Fearing possible legal liability from indebtedness incurred in making much-needed capital improvement, and eager to place itself in a position where it could initiate suits against others, the Governing Body took steps toward incorporation. This action came about, however, because of matters affecting the St. G. G. H. S. rather than the St. G. G. S. In 1900, government had purchased and given over to the Governing Body the buildings known as Bachelor's Hall for the Girls' High School. However, authorities soon discovered that "the buildings were in a most dilapidated condition and had to be rebuilt at great cost." Responses to public appeals for financial contributions proved inadequate to the demand. Under the circumstances "credit had to be obtained for much of the materials and until they were incorporated, the Governing Body would not be in a position to negotiate a loan for the purpose of paying off the liabilities incurred in the renovation of the of the buildings." Through the ensuing Act of

1902, the Board was now a legal entity.[44]

VII

As has been pointed out earlier, the St. G. G. S. lost its third Head Master in 1902. Though Saville had held office since 1895, the school had mostly been stable rather than witnessing spectacular growth during his tenure of office. Virtually forced to adopt stringent measures, the Governing Body decided to terminate the appointment of Saville, who had been on medical leave of absence for quite some time.

Not everyone believed that Saville's departure was the result simply of sheer economic circumstances. Some felt strongly that his dismissal or resignation was the result of personal animus Governor Llewelyn bore towards him. Precisely what were the background causes of this ill will is unclear. According to one source, Llewelyn had used the worsening economic situation to induce the Governing Body to terminate Saville's appointment if they wished to obtain continued public support at this critical juncture.[45]

Llewelyn's plans for the school had made Saville a liability. Convinced that Grenada needed a College along the lines as the Royal College in Mauritius, Llewelyn saw Saville as standing between him and the achievement of his goals. In July 1902 he had already appointed a broad-based committee to investigate and report to him on the advisability of establishing a similar institution.[46] On the basis of that report, he had recommended to Colonial authorities the college's establishment "to provide for the youth of the Colony a superior course of classical and general education: to prepare them for matriculation and degrees in the Universities of the mother country..." This proposal, however, was not supported by officials in the Colonial Office who feared that such a system would be even more elitist than the one then in existence at the St. G. G. S. Further, Llewelyn had given no indication of what the fate of this and other government-aided secondary schools would be if the College were started.[47] By turning down Llewelyn's proposal, the Colonial Office provided the St. G. G. S. with a reprieve.

Efforts soon started anew to transfer both the St. G. G. S. and the St. G. G. H. S. to full governmental control. By mid 1905, the institutions were in dire need of funds, and the St. G. G. S. was under the supervision of an Acting Head Master. Its uncertain future had rendered unwise the hiring of a permanent replacement. Responding to the call of duty, Hughes labored in an acting capacity once more.[48] In almost a feeling of desperation, the Governing Body renewed its efforts to get government to overhaul and take over the school. By then, the building was unsatisfactory, equipment was inefficient, and staffing remained inadequate. The most unkindly cut of all was the continuous government hostility that the school faced.

By March 31, 1906, Llewelyn had committed government to assume control of the school. This offer, however, was of limited appeal to the Governing Body inasmuch as Llewelyn had refused to pledge government to hire existing staff. Nor was he willing to make a commitment of a sufficiently large expenditure to bring the Grammar School up to the standing of first class regional schools.[49] There might well be some merit to the rumour circulating in October 1905 that the Governing Body of both the St. G. G. S. and the St. G. G. H. S. had considered resigning as a block to protest government's tardiness in delivering on the promise for takeover. By November they had renewed their petition for government to assume control. Alternatively, they asked for the passage of an amending ordinance to reorganize the Governing Body and to increase the annual grant for the schools' maintenance.[50]

Belatedly, government once more sprung into action by referring the Body's request to a Legislative Committee. While as of June 30 the St. G. G. H. S. was "financially unsound and in fact insolvent," the Grammar School appeared to be financially sound despite having total assets of barely £183. The committee also reported that a mortgage of £550 existed on Bachelor's Hall for which the Governing Body of the St. G. G. H. S. was responsible, as well as other liabilities of £288 that included £106 owed to the Governing Body of the St. G. G. S. As a committee member later remarked, the Governing Body of the St. G. G. S. should accept responsibility for retarding the school's growth because it had spent money that rightly belonged to it on the St. G. G. H. S. Thus, the staff, especially Acting Head Master Hughes, had been overworked and inadequately compensated for their efforts. Although the official report was silent on this issue, DeFreitas later hoped that Hughes would be better compensated under the new system.[51]

Armed with such financial information that it viewed within the context of the schools' lagging enrolment, the committee recommended the dissolution of the two petitioning corporations. For the future, government should assume responsibility for and control of secondary education. To do this effectively, the administration should constitute a Board of Directors of Secondary Education to include at least three members of the Board of Education that then had responsibility for primary education. This new format would provide important and

meaningful linkages for primary and secondary education. Bachelor's Hall should be transferred to government for the colony's public use. Freed from the limiting provisions of a trust that had stipulated that Bachelor's Hall be used exclusively for secondary education for girls, the building would now be available for purposes benefiting other groups. All other assets of both boards should be turned over to the new Board of Directors for Secondary Education, whose twelve-person membership should reflect different constituencies. Left up to the proposed new Board was responsibility for determining whether or not for financial reasons the Girls' High School should cease operation and if Bachelor's Hall should be used as a school for boys. Once the new board became fully functional, it might be necessary "that there be set apart annual grants from public funds in order that at least one pupil in each year should be selected and sent home for collegiate training, and that the pupil so selected should receive a Scholarship not exceeding in value £175 per annum, the tenureship of which shall be three years."[52]

Whatever hopes optimists might have entertained of prompt action on these recommendations were quickly dashed by Llewelyn's sudden demitting office as governor and his replacement by Sir Ralph Williams. Rather than proceeding with proposals already in place, Williams reopened the entire debate by asking "members to tell him — he would prefer if they did not tell him now — if the colony needed Secondary Education or not." Although Williams was clearly leaning in favor of establishing a government secondary school for boys at Old Fort, he was hesitant to take action unless he felt he had full community support. Williams also had to consider additional costs associated with constructing a road to provide adequate access to Old Fort. What made that site particularly attractive, though, was the opportunity it afforded for games and sporting events.[53]

Williams again placed the matter before the Legislative Council at a June meeting. Government was now ready to construct a new school at a cost not to exceed £4,000 and pay up to £150 beyond its current commitment to the St. G. G. S. for its maintenance. One individual, however, bemoaned the lack of spontaneous support for this important issue from the unofficial members, one of whom criticized details that were not before him and who "mistook principle for details."[54]

Although movement was slow over the next year, winds of change in favour of the school's reorganization and relocation were definitely sweeping over the island. At a meeting of the Legislative Council held on August 6, 1908, the Colonial Secretary moved a resolution that one individual hoped would "cut the 'Gordian knot' in respect of the establishment of a Government Second Grade School for Boys." This resolution sought Council's approval for "the purchase of 'Jardine's Lot,' at present the property of Mr. John Franco, for the sum of £700." Williams' preference for this site over Old Fort or Woolwich Road stemmed from his belief that either of these latter two locations would have entailed "the expenditure of an additional £1,000 or in all £6,000." Seeking to steer a middle course amidst competing demands for the island's resources, Williams had opted for the Melville Street site. Now that the school would obtain adequate housing, Williams immediately contacted the secretary of state for the colonies with a view toward starting the recruitment process for a "University man as headmaster."[55] Apparently Hughes, who had served for a long time in an acting capacity, had been tried and found wanting. Whether or not his local heritage proved to be a major disqualification is an open question.

At its meeting on January 14, 1910, the new Board of Secondary Education agreed that school would reopen on January 24, 1910, "on a purely temporary footing, with the same staff of masters and at the same rate of school fees as hitherto; also to offer six scholarships for free tuition at the school. It was further decided that the Girls' School should remain closed, with a view to repairs and structural alteration of the buildings."[56]

VIII

On September 18, 1911, the reorganized school reopened at the renovated premises on Melville Street under the "happiest circumstances." Reinvigorated by its new location and other conditions, the school witnessed almost instantaneous growth. While at its reopening only twenty-three students had been on its rolls, by February 1912 enrolment had more than doubled to fifty-five. When enrolment reached seventy by year's end, the Board of Secondary Education was already giving serious thought to the idea of erecting another room. In February 1913, with enrolment at eighty-two and showing signs of continued growth, the Board instructed the Head Master not to admit any more students without its approval. By then, they had already ordered additional desks and were requesting the appointment of a mathematics teacher.[57]

The staffing situation was being stabilized. Hughes held the position of Senior Assistant Master on a five-year agreement while Edmund Charles Baptiste was Junior Assistant Master. Hughes had by then been a master at the school for about twenty-five years. He had also acted as Head Master on more than one occasion. The one disconcerting aspect of Baptiste's appointment was the remark that as enrolment grew "it will probably be necessary to get a better qualified officer, and to pay him at a higher rate, but Mr. Baptiste is thought sufficient at [58]

the commencement."

The addition of the boarding facility to the new school presented new opportunities, fresh challenges, and additional insights into Grenadian society at the early twentieth century. The environment remained elitist, with race and class mutually reinforcing each other. Nowhere is this more evident than in the objections advanced in 1913 over the appointment of another master. Supporting Hedog-Jones's request for a European Assistant Master, Governor Sadler remarked that "there are reasons why it would not be advisable to appoint another coloured gentleman as assistant master in the Boys' Secondary School. The Assistant Master is required to live on school and be a good deal with the Boarders, and the Head Master insists and I think rightly that for every reason it would be desirable that the Resident Master should be a European."[59] If Hedog-Jones had accurately analysed the situation, racial undercurrents were understandably though regrettably very much a part of the school's daily existence. Donovan's 1888 assertion that the school was maintaining and promoting class divisions may well have been on target.

IX

Reorganization and government takeover of the Grammar School in 1911 constituted a significant milestone in the school's future. Thereafter, enrolment rose to new levels. There was, however, a growing perception that all was not well with secondary education, especially in the boys' school. T. A. Marryshow remarked that the monies spent on the Boys' Secondary School "is out of all proportion to the results entailed." While the cost of the school's operation had "gone up at aeroplane speed," Marryshow regretted that "the boys the school is turning out seem to be very much below the standard of the Old Grammar School which laid claim to less scholastic and scientific greatness." Despite the fact that the school had improved somewhat, Marryshow felt strongly that it could "be made to give far better results for the money spent." Equally chilling was his critique of the Girls' High School, which in 1914 had an enrolment of 23 and received a government grant of £290. Marryshow was baffled that "Government, so sparing, sometimes to the point of being niggardly, in providing funds even for the health of the people, are lavishly spending money upon an institution that is utterly incapable of giving satisfaction." He regarded "a great part of the huge salary and luxuries given to the Headmistress as absolutely a free gift from the ratepayers of Grenada . . . when it is considered that the school is made up of a handful of children." While the misgoverned Boys' School could be salvaged through corrective management techniques, he believed that "the Girls' School cannot justify its existence, and it is criminal folly to spend so much money on it in the future, and mainly to teach girls how to 'draw.'"[60]

Not all Marryshow's comments towards secondary education were negative. He heaped praise on the "Convent High School, under the able management of the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Grenada High School of which Miss Allen, whose powers are well-known is the head, and other Middle Class Schools in the colony for girls" which he felt offered "far more advantages than are needed." Government's recent vote of financial assistance to the Convent demonstrated its recognition of the good work that school was doing. If other denominations were willing to start similar schools, government should likewise provide financial support. For the moment, though, Marryshow seemed to have adopted the position that the G. B. S. and the Girls' High School were wasting taxpayers' monies.[61]

The shortcomings Marryshow identified in 1915 seem to have dissipated by 1919. Expressing pride at the "result of the Cambridge certificates obtained by our boys," he admitted that "our emergence from the educational backwash in which Grenada was placed for several years has been extremely profitable to the pupils of the day." To the school's teaching staff who had created an environment where the Cambridge Locals "have no terror for our children" was due immense praise. Marryshow singled out for special mention Head Master McCowan, upon whom he heaped kind words. During McCowan's "short term, he has done excellent work and it is to be hoped that he will receive every encouragement to continue." The greatest source of this encouragement obviously rested at the doorstep of government, whom Marryshow reminded "that their promise to place the school in more encouraging surroundings is long overdue."[62]

Curricular and staffing difficulties conspired with space limitations to induce McCowan to advocate moving the school from Melville Street. His public call may well have stemmed from frustration over what he perceived as intransigence on government's part on this important issue. He was undoubtedly aware of the fact that the Board of Secondary Education had "decided on the Villa as a convenient spot to be acquired for the purpose, and had recommended its purchase to the Secretary of State for the Colonies who had approved." But, lamented Governor Haddon-Smith, "as is always the case when the Government are intending purchases, excessive prices are demanded. This spirit was largely predominant in the colony, and it frequently happened that acquisition by force was bound to be pursued, a course which ended in litigation invariably in favour of the individual." If no settlement could be reached, Haddon-Smith had in mind "one or two other places just as suitable and convenient as the

Villa." McCowan clearly hoped to prod the government into sustained action on this important matter. Despite the deficit that the island was then experiencing, Haddon-Smith firmly believed that a new site would be acquired within the next two years.[63]

Haddon-Smith's optimism regarding the acquisition of the Villa property masked the reality of the difficulties he then faced. In response to approaches made by government, R. M. D. Charles had apparently agreed to sell all but a small portion of the 6-acre Villa Lands to government. The portion Charles had refused to sell had been earmarked for building a family residence. However, government had obviously viewed that precise lot as the location for building the school while leaving other surrounding lots as part of a campus. In addition, government claimed that the amount Charles had asked for the remaining portion was double the amount its professional advisors had recommended as its worth. The ensuing impasse led to the termination of negotiations and the initiation of proceedings for government's forcible purchase of the property. Intent on getting the entire parcel of land, government invoked the provisions of the Public Lands Acquisition Ordinance to acquire the property for public purposes. Despite the heated legislative debates this matter generated, government was able to prevail. It clearly felt that the lands' easy access to Tanteen afforded suitable recreational facilities for the boys.[64]

The acquisition of the Villa Lands raised hopes that construction of new and enhanced facilities would soon begin. Some persons expressed publicly their ideas as to what facilities the new school should have. In July, 1920, for example, an individual "walking along the Tanteen flat observed that concrete landmarks were fixed at intervals as if they were intended to mark out the area of the playground to be made there in the very near future. If the area marked out is really intended to be reserved for the use of the boys who will attend the school to be erected on the lands acquired for the school buildings," he concluded the plan was sadly lacking in scope. He regretted its failure to "provide room for a proper cricket field, nor will it be able to accommodate the boys in all the outdoor games in which they will necessarily engage." In his view, the decision to erect the school buildings on a hill ought to have included adequate surroundings as a vital part of the overall program. Government should be prepared to spend "quite a few thousand pounds from general revenue in order to have what is really in keeping with the requirements of an institution like a College or Grammar School. Apart from schoolrooms and dormitories, there should also be Masters' quarters. Then the College grounds and approaches thereto should be made beautiful and attractive." He advocated proper planning "to avoid extravagance on the one hand and the want of good taste on the other."[65]

Landscaping needs and aesthetic concerns received their share of consideration. The writer was convinced that once work started "the entire surroundings will take on a new appearance." To this end, he advocated a larger playground than the one then being planned. This would require "a decent front with rails from western end to the foot of the road leading up Lowther's Lane. Then the hill at the back of the Incinerator should be removed to a depth of say a 100 yards. This work would then leave a beautiful flat which, when joined with the present grounds, could be converted into the extensive playground we picture." The earth excavated from the hill "could be used in filling up that stretch of shallows running on to the foot of the Spout gap." Then, "attention could be directed towards the making of a Square from Queen's Wharf right on to somewhere near the lagoon or the old Botanic Gardens jetty." If carefully and tastefully done, this project "would enhance the beauty of the place and make it a centre of attraction to those persons who repair to that flat for afternoon walks. In the Square could be fixed benches where visitors may have a cool enjoyment of refreshing breezes."[66]

As anyone familiar with the school's history is aware, such carefully crafted plans failed to materialize. For a multiplicity of reasons, including the economic downturn the island experienced between 1920 and 1924 and subsequent indifference on the part of some governors, the school remained at its Melville Street location much longer than probably anyone anticipated. By the late 1930s, though, it was literally physically bursting at its seams.

Government finally took positive action in 1936 to relocate the school. In this, it was prodded by the intense public debates stimulated by the actions of politicians, publicists, and members of the Old Boys' Association over Grenada's educational system as a whole, including the state of the island's secondary schools. Amidst this, calls for relocating the G. B. S. S. assumed greater urgency than ever before.

The question of the school's location was brought into the public debates when Marryshow recommended the school as the ideal home for the covered market. Reminding his readers that both Governor Grier and the school's acting Head Master Grant had regarded the school buildings as "highly unsuited to the claims of today," he recommended that members of government and of the District Board "get together, if possible with prominent and useful 'Old Boys' of the school in order to see what can come out of my suggestion." Marryshow was convinced the time had finally come for moving the school.[67]

Members of the Old Boys' Association seized the opportunity to renew their calls. It turns out that even before Marryshow had made his sentiments known, others had been thinking along similar lines. J. Landreth Smith had used the occasion of the meeting a few weeks earlier of the Old Boys' Association to voice similar sentiments.[68] Not to be outdone, G. Guy Renwick, echoed similar sentiments. He elevated the level and nature of the discourse, however, by advocating public discussion of possible sites for the school. Apparently by then the Spout had emerged as the ideal site. Some persons, however, had reservations about that location, which they viewed as unhealthy for a school because of the existing swampy environment. In addition, they obviously viewed the presence of a school there as a possible interference with public access to the Spout and Tanteen for recreational purposes. Renwick noted that "there is no place so unhealthy that cannot be made healthy."[69]

The Rock and Cherry Hill were also suggested as possible sites.[70] Marryshow later separated the covered market issue from the need to relocate the school. In considering the Villa, the Spout, and the Rock as possible sites, he dismissed the Spout because of the heavy expenses to make it suitable for residential purposes. Of the two remaining options, he preferred the Villa partly because it had already been acquired by government. Moreover, the presence of the "two Government cottages there should not be allowed to block the scheme. One of them may even be used in the school scheme." Marryshow also called on the Old Boys' Association to redouble their efforts to influence government's decision and to provide financial support for the school's construction and the establishment of endowed "chairs" for what he fervently hoped would become a college.[71]

The Old Boy's Association considered three possible sites: the Spout, the Rock, and Tempe. On Thursday May 7, 1936, it resolved to "recommend to the Government that the school and all necessary buildings be erected at the Spout Lands, provided Government will undertake the drainage on the Belmont area simultaneously with such work; alternatively, that the Rock should be acquired, the school erected there, with the Headmaster's quarters on the Villa Land above it."[72]

Government's plans for the school's future were beginning to crystallize by the middle of May when Governor Grier included £9,500 in the scheme for a loan totalling £160,000 for which he would seek approval and funding from officials in England.[73] Grier easily gained legislative approval to pursue the raising of the entire £160,000 loan on the London market. During the debate, he indicated his preference of the Spout for the school's location.[74]

Grier had used the occasion of his three-month leave in England to lobby successfully for his proposal and to negotiate funding for the various components, including the building of the new school. On November 28, members of the Old Boys' Association excitedly congratulated Grier "on his success in obtaining provision for a new boys' secondary school." Grier remarked that for health considerations it was prudent to use a different site than the previously announced Spout location. He still believed that the school could be shortly built on the Villa Lands. Grier hoped that the Old Boys would help make it "a great institution worthy of the high traditions of the past." Convinced that construction would soon be underway, the Old Boys obtained a promise from Grier that he would present them with a photograph to be hung in the new school's library.[75]

Within a few weeks of those pronouncements it was decided to forego the Villa site and to locate the school on the hill adjoining the Spout. On February 23, 1937, an announcement was made that "preliminary clearing and excavation operation for the erection of the new Grenada Boys' Secondary School were begun at the Spout Lands this morning."[76] In anticipation of speedy and steady progress towards building the school, a movement gathered momentum locally to link permanently Grier's name with the proposed new school. After Grier announced in early 1937 his impending retirement as governor, the Old Boys' Association served as the nucleus of a movement advocating that the Board of Education approve the naming of the school "Grier College."[77]

While these efforts were being made in 1936 to move the school, education as a whole received considerable scrutiny from officials and the public at large. As Colonial Secretary in Trinidad, Grier had undoubtedly been aware of the recommendations of the Mayhew-Marriott Commission's Report on the Education System of the West Indies. Based on its findings, Trinidad had already enacted a new Education Ordinance. In Grenada, Grier set about the task of implementing some of these recommendations through an Education Bill. The most important provisions were for the establishment of a single undenominational Board of Education. Each denomination was also to have a Central Board of Management which would have control and management over all government-assisted schools. This measure gave the governor additional power and involvement in educational matters.[78]

Secondary education did not escape the piercing eyes of the public. The sub-standard showing of all but the St. Joseph's Convent students in the Cambridge Examinations that year was a cause of concern for many. Although some questioned the overall state of secondary education, most of the criticisms were aimed at the G. B. S. S. and the C. E. H. S. One writer's assertion that "the Boys' School can be pulled together by the effort of the staff,

and no doubt Mr. Grant has already taken steps towards that end" would seem to suggest that he attributed the school's declining examination results over the previous three years to a lack of leadership by Grant's predecessor.[79]

The results for the C. E. H. S. were hardly impressive. The wholesale failure, one person opined, reflected badly on the students and the staff. Simply put, "the pupils had clearly not been working, and the staff has failed in its duty both of making the pupils work and of teaching them." In this writer's view, "the Girls' School is in a condition which calls for a thorough and ruthless examination by the Board of Education. The time has come when the question of a Government school for girls, properly staffed and equipped, must be faced by the community."[80]

The debate over the examination results and the state of the secondary schools continued for more than a month. Blame for the poor results was laid at the doorsteps of parents, teachers, administrators, students, and a host of "external influences prejudicial to sustained concentration by the pupils," namely, late dancing, the cinema, radio, and games. Arising from these debates, however, was a keen awareness of the need to re-evaluate the school's offerings, staffing situation, facilities, and a host of other policies that had a bearing on the nature of the results. One writer called for government to take over operation of the girls' school. As he openly queried, "Why can it not be admitted that the job of running the High School has become too big both for the Anglican body, and for the present staff?"[81] As 1936 drew to a close, there were increasing demands for closer scrutiny of the C. E. H. S and of secondary education generally. This was the context in which the news to relocate the G. B. S. S. was greeted.

X

The School's sound standing had been evident by at least 1930. Enrolment had reached an all-time high, and government's financial support could be counted upon. When enrolment increased to 153 in the 1936-37 school year, government promptly appointed another master to the staff. The school witnessed a 50 per cent pass rate in the School Certificate Examination, with two of the seven successful candidates gaining first class honours. The impressively high number of 19 out of 22 passes in the Cambridge Junior Examination was tempered by the fact that "a number of the successful candidates had attempted the examination the previous year."[82]

Extra-curricular activities also provided additional visibility for the school. In addition to the Cadet Corps then under the supervision of Captain Archer, a Boys' Scout Troop had been revived in 1937. Led by Scout Master King, this troop was undoubtedly the brainchild of Grant, who was then Island Commissioner of scouts. Competition in boxing and athletics remained keen. In football, the school fielded three teams in 1937. Cricket boasted two teams, one in the Shell Cup and the other in the Granby Cup Competition. The teams' performance was enhanced by the inclusion of Mr. McGuire and Head Master Grant in the eleven. Grant was undoubtedly the more accomplished batsman, having captained the West Indies team in 12 test matches between 1930 and 1935 and the Grenada team as late as 1937.[83]

The state of school's library was cause for concern. Its woefully inadequate condition and holdings in 1935 had prompted one individual to solicit financial assistance to help increase the holdings.[84] Grant begged for its improvement. In 1938, he reported that he had regularly received from an anonymous Old Boy financial donations specifically ear marked for the library. Old Boys and friends occasionally sent books to increase the Library's stock which, though small, contained "the nucleus of what will in time become an eminently suitable School Library."[85]

The firmly entrenched House system was evidenced through the intense athletic rivalry at the sports meetings and other athletic competition. Three houses, Hughes House, which would later emerge as a major powerhouse in athletics, School House, and New House had been in existence in 1930. As enrolment increased, a fourth house was later added and named Heape House after Colonial Secretary and later Administrator W. L. Heape. In 1946, as a token of appreciation to Senior Assistant Master E. de V. Archer who was leaving to assume the Head Mastership of a secondary school in Montserrat, New House was renamed Archer House. Inter-island athletic competition that had started in 1922 and had been halted by the war recommenced in April 1947.[86]

By this time, too, the Old Boys' Association had become an important feature of the school's landscape. In 1936, it contributed about thirty new books to the library. Members regularly donated prizes for academic and athletic achievement.[87] It showed its interest in the boys' well-being in other ways. In 1938, for example, it learned that three exhibitioners faced the prospect of leaving school because of their parents' inability to pay their boarding fees in St. George's. According to Head Master Grant, the three in question "were bright boys but their parents were too poor to pay for their boarding in town, although the figure for such board as they did manage to get was very low." A mother who had no assistance was supporting two of the boys. Her inability to pay the increased rates left her no other option but to remove her sons from school. After deploring the lack of boarding facilities for

needy boys, the Association started a fund to assist these three and others who might be similarly placed in the future.[88] It also later took the leadership in raising funds for the resuscitated Inter-Island Sports meet in 1947.

Jealously guarding the school's interests and serving as both watchdog and pressure group of sorts, the Association sought to influence government's attitude towards the school. When, for example, in early 1946 the school's long serving Senior Assistant Master, E. de Vere Archer received the tempting offer of the Head Mastership of a secondary school in Montserrat, the Old Boys' Association sprang into immediate action in a spirited though ultimately fruitless attempt to retain his services. The Association concluded that "it was most desirable that Mr. Archer's services should be retained and that this view should be brought to the attention of the Government." To this end, it deputed a delegation to seek an audience with the governor.[89]

The meeting failed to change the situation. The Head Mastership may very well have been the only realistic counter-offer that might have induced Archer to remain. This offer was not forthcoming. In light Archer's obvious involvement in divisive staff relationships that precipitated the resignation of Rev. Dr. Wilfrid Rankin as Head Master after a brief and stormy one-year tenure, government had determined in January 1946 to place the school's temporary fortunes in the capable hands of retired Inspector of Schools H. H. Pilgrim. They saw no reason to change that arrangement in March. It was deemed necessary to use Pilgrim's experience, savvy, and local standing to repair the frayed relationships that Rankin's personality and actions had occasioned for the school's affairs. When the school reopened for the Michaelmas term on September 23, 1946, its new Head Master was Rawle S. Jordan, a Barbadian who had been lured from his highly successful 21-year stint as Head Master of Bishop's High School in Tobago to accept the Grenada post.[90]

XI

Despite the optimism in many quarters, work on the new school building was slow in starting. Grant's remark in 1938 that "the site for the new school is slowly being prepared, and judging from the excavations now in progress, the new building will have one great blessing — it will be on a hill" had led many to believe that in another two years' time the school would move to Tanteen.[91] Clearing of the site had been completed in May 1939. However, the severe cost over run that this phase experienced left only £5,000 of the original loan for construction purposes. Because professional persons argued that an additional £3,000 was needed to build the planned school, government had to seek financial support overseas. Unable to obtain approval for this additional expenditure at the very time that war clouds over Europe were increasingly demanding the urgent attention of British policymakers, plans to start construction were shelved. Barracks were soon erected to house the members of West India Regiment based at Grenada during World War II. When these buildings became available in the post-war period, the school moved into them on May 20, 1946.[92]

The debates surrounding the school's relocation in 1946 are instructive for the light they shed on contemporary attitudes at both official and unofficial levels toward secondary education and the role that the G. B. S. S. played in the plans being formulated. In early 1946, government had published a memorandum outlining its philosophy for dealing with the island's secondary education. Prepared in consultation with Mr. S. A. Hammond, "The Development of Secondary Education" represented the first attempt to articulate government's philosophy towards secondary education for the island as a whole. It recognized that in its efforts to produce a high calibre of civil servants, teachers, professionals, and civic leaders, government had long been considering plans to enhance the quality and expansion of secondary education. Because of the additional costs such expansion necessitated, government now faced the task of prioritizing and harmonizing its contributions to primary and secondary education.[93]

The document recommended the establishment of two secondary schools, a "Free" one of limited numbers and "Fee" one of unlimited numbers. The "Free School" would be selective, with the students being chosen by their "ability to profit." The "Fee School" would admit pupils whose parents could pay the fee and who "satisfied the other conditions of entrance now required by secondary schools." Enrolment growth at the "Free School" would be subject to legislative appropriations. Admission would be by selection based on examinations at ages 11-plus and 15 from either the "Fee School" or the elementary schools. The "Fee School" would receive its finances partly from fees and partly from public funds based on the number of pupils enroled. Inasmuch as fees constituted an important part of its financing, such a school could conceivably expand almost indefinitely so long as the fee structure remained sufficiently attractive and affordable to parents of potential students.

The proposal recognized the differing viewpoints then in currency regarding the merits of co-educational facilities. While rightly noting that "a progressive country does not provide less liberally for the education of its women than for its men," it left open the question as to "whether boys and girls should be educated together." The framers did, however, "envisage schools of a size that exist separately, or that could share the use of certain parts of the

school plant" like laboratories, or that could be consolidated. The document admitted that decisions on such issues should probably best be made after considerable public discussion. Recognizing the potentially divisive nature of any recommendation that could be construed as usurping the authority of the religious bodies, the document asserted that the question as to whether or not "the existing girls schools would take part in any new opportunities that may be provided is primarily one for their own authorities."[94]

The report paid particular attention to the potential use of the Tanteen barracks for educational purposes. Inasmuch as government was already engaged "in negotiation to secure these buildings for educational purposes" either on the present site or for relocation elsewhere, it admitted that the buildings could accommodate its reorganization plans. It strongly advocated that "these buildings could be progressively replaced (beginning for example with a hall) as the permanent requirements took shape and when building costs are lower and supplies better" than existed in the immediate post-war years. According to its calculations, the buildings at Tanteen could accommodate three schools. Apart from the two schools mentioned above with a total of 600 students equally divided along gender lines, also to be included was a senior school capable of accommodating 120 boys and 120 girls and having house-craft and handicraft departments. On the premises would be a Principal's House and a Hostel capable of providing accommodation for 40 boys and 40 girls.[95] Overall, the proposal represented a comprehensive plan for the buildings' use and a bold effort to revamp the island's secondary educational system.

Even before the proposals had become public, some persons had been articulating their vision for the future location of the G. B. S. S. and regarding government's provision for secondary education. Governor Sir Arthur Francis Grimble's comment in 1945 that Tanteen would be made available as a school site had renewed calls "that a building of collegiate design should be erected there." After the military had vacated the premises, one individual expressed the hope that any plan to use the Tanteen buildings for housing the G. B. S. S. would be temporary only. He repeated his insistence "on Grenada having an up-to-date Boys' Secondary School building and not a set of barracks that would tend to place our highest educational institution, so far as the important feature of atmosphere goes, in the category of the elementary school." Bearing in mind the Education Department's public pronouncements on the need for modern facilities for the primary schools and the more than £3,000 recently spent to provide ampler accommodation for the G. B. S. S. at Melville Street, the writer felt that moving the school to the barracks would constitute a retrograde step for secondary education. He bemoaned the fact that Grenada had "waited for decades on a new Boys' Secondary School. With positive financial provision now made for it in our Ten-Year Development Plan and assurance of C. D. & W. assistance, surely we can wait another two or three if so long should be required to see a proper building rise on the Spout Hill section of Tanteen."[96] Unaware of the comprehensive nature of government's proposal for Tanteen, this political activist and publicist was destined to change course.

Once the proposal entered the public domain, Marryshow warmly endorsed it. He admitted that his strong views of January 1946 against moving the school had been flawed because "we had no official indication of the very comprehensive scheme drafted for utilisation of the former Camp as a general education centre." His concerns that a collegiate type building would not be built were eased by a portion in the memorandum that "'when the organisation takes permanent shape, the existing buildings can be progressively replaced by permanent buildings designed for this purpose.'" The inclusion in the plans for a hostel, play centre for pre-school children, pre-vocational and vocational training unit, laboratory, library equipment, as well as the secondary schools convinced Marryshow that the plan was worthy of his endorsement. Within three weeks, Marryshow had been transformed from critic to supporter of the educational goals for Tanteen.[97]

The Board of Education's debates on the proposal at four meetings held between February 26 and April 9 exposed the sharp disagreements and passions regarding plans for the Tanteen complex and the future of secondary education on the island. Clarifying aspects of the memorandum that had remained nebulous, Education Officer Harry J. Padmore proposed housing the secondary schools, hostels, and related buildings on top of the Spout Hill, while the lower level would be home to the St. George's Senior School, Vocational Training Departments, and Infants Play Centre which "would afford senior girls practical lessons in mother-craft." Because of the long distance between Tanteen and St. George's, government would have to consider providing facilities for providing mid-day lunches for the students.[98]

The most heated and passionate discussions centred over schooling for girls, whether or not co-educational facilities should be encouraged, and the role of religious bodies in educational matters generally and in the governance of the existing girls' schools in particular. While most participants agreed that the Military Barracks should be used immediately as temporary housing for the G. B. S. S., a consensus quickly emerged favouring construction of a modern structure as quickly as possible. Hon. J. B. Renwick prophetically predicted that "the next generation would find itself without any adequate buildings or resources. Attractive as the scheme presented might [99]

look, it appeared to him unsound policy to lose the present opportunity to build a proper school." According to his reasoning, a new building would emerge within five years at most.

Representatives of two religious bodies introduced religious considerations that had always been barely beneath the surface from at least 1945. Anglican Archdeacon Harold G. Pigott feared the "intensely secular" plan could "become an instrument against Christianity in the hands of unscrupulous persons in the future."[100] He therefore advocated religious education as a central feature of the school's curriculum. Roman Catholic Fr. Aldhelm M. Bowring's contribution to the religious aspect soon became evident. He warned that, "should the scheme be forced through (he challenged the Board to say that the Catholic two-thirds of Grenada was properly represented on it)," the people would learn through bitter experience the cost they were being asked to bear. Opposed to two schools, Bowring saw little merit to the entire proposal. He feared that Pigott's suggestion that government 'permit' the church-run Convent and Church of England High School to continue operating as they did seemed to suggest that Pigott was mistakenly attributing to government power either to close them at a later date or directly intervene in their operation. If, cautioned Bowring, government persisted in imposing the scheme, "it only remained for Catholics of the Colony, barely represented on the Board or in the Legislative Council, to organize themselves in defence of the freedom and education to which the people as a whole were entitled."[101] His strenuous and absolute opposition and objection to the scheme were evident throughout his discourse.[102]

Disagreements also surfaced over how best to provide additional educational opportunities for girls. T. E. Noble Smith had suggested a bold plan entailing the creation of a government school for girls on the Melville Street site of the G. B. S. S. following its move to Tanteen. To support his viewpoint, Smith had maintained that "everybody in Grenada wanted to see a girls' secondary school run by Government established in the colony." In this he had the support of Pigott, who preferred a selective girls' school at Tanteen. Soon, however, this ambitious and long-overdue initiative for girls' education became the subject of a protracted discussion and heated exchanges. Bowring rightly inquired of Smith "if he would as a member of Council and a peoples representative, be prepared also to support a Catholic secondary school for boys because a still bigger number of people in Grenada wanted that."[103] Retreating to what he mistakenly assumed to be safer ground, Pilgrim recommended co-education in certain subjects in the secondary schools.

Fundamental to the creation of single-sex schools had been the notion that co-educational environments were likely to lead to distraction for the pupils and possible "immorality." Assuming that the memorandum was likely to win Board endorsement, Pilgrim's motion had merely suggested "that it is the opinion of this Board that the Schools suggested to be erected at Tanteen should be Co-educational, at least in certain subjects and that the experiment be watched with great care." Pilgrim was obviously interested in insuring that women obtain more educational opportunities than currently existed. Moreover, he rightly pointed out that co-education already existed at the elementary level and was likely to be more cost effective at the secondary level than single sex schools. Currently, he noted, two girls of the Convent and two of the C. E. H. S. were doing science subjects at the Boys' Secondary School. He felt "it was to the benefit both of the girls and boys to be there and the entire G. B. S. S. staff was with him on that score. As he suggested in his motion, they should let boys and girls learn together and watch the experiment carefully."[104]

Seeking to disarm his critics by addressing head-on what he undoubtedly perceived as a likely source of contention, Pilgrim admitted "the bogey was sex." But, he noted, co-educational secondary schools on Montserrat, Tobago, and British Guiana were already witnessing excellent educational results. In all his years as Education Officer, he "had not known of any rabid outbreak of immorality to the detriment of the Education Department because of co-educational methods in the primary schools."[105] Methodist Reverend J. R. Webster offered qualified support to co-education, while Pigott seemed more in favour of the existing limited sharing of certain classes rather than the broadly defined co-educational facilities and curriculum that were central to Pilgrim's motion.

Staunch opposition came from the Roman Catholics, led by Bowring. In his mind, the vast majority of boys and girls who would attend the secondary schools at Tanteen "were the children of parents who claimed to follow Christian educational traditions and ideals; and those educational ideals were definitely against co-education whenever and wherever it could be avoided." Bowring gained support from Pitt who, while conceding it might be useful "along certain lines and for certain subjects" to bring boys and girls together, threatened to vote against any proposal that entailed a "whole-time condition of mixed classes." Pilgrim's amended motion advocating limited co-education in "certain subjects" was approved.[106]

After considerable debate, the Education Board voted to use Tanteen as temporary site for the G. B. S. S. Members agreed that for the time being there should be only "one boys' secondary school of college standard for scholarship and paying students." Pending the erection at the earliest possible date of a permanent structure, the

former Military Camp buildings were to house the G. B. S. S. The school was to be one of many educational facilities to be housed in the complex.

Secondary education for girls witnessed uneven improvement and expansion at this time. In 1939, the Convent was in the process of obtaining new facilities. In August 1939, the foundation was being dug for the proposed new school. Reverend Brother Gabriel, "an architect of no mean ability," had journeyed from Trinidad to inspect the site prior to the preparation of the building plans.[107] Although in 1938 the Convent had earned a creditable appraisal for the quality of education it provided and the nature of its facilities, the Church of England High School's "buildings, equipment, and site had been declared far below the required standard of a modern secondary school." As the school's manager, Pigott used the occasion of the Board's decisions on the Tanteen facilities to successfully lobby for Board support for its improvement. He recommended that "Government lease, or rent at a nominal rate, or otherwise make available, to the Anglican authorities such buildings and land at the Tanteen or elsewhere as may be required for a modern girls' Secondary School, for the purpose of conducting the Church of England High School where they can be in a better position to cooperate with Government in its new secondary school scheme."[108]

The relocation of the G. B. S. S. to Tanteen in 1946 was a forerunner to enhanced attention at multiple levels to the nature and quality of secondary education on the island. The Roman Catholics were undoubtedly frustrated by what they perceived to be godliness likely to emanate from the trend toward permitting girls to attend classes at the boys' school that lacked a core religious element in its administration and curriculum. Committed to provide a "healthy" religious environment for the education of its youngsters, they opened their own boys' secondary school in January 1947.[109] Soon, the Anglicans would move the Church of England High School out of the Lamalie House premises it had occupied since 1916 into new facilities at Tanteen. Later still, the addition of a Technical Wing to the G. B. S. S. and the creation of a Teacher's Training College went a long way towards fulfilling the mission of policy-makers when they decided to use the relocated G. B. S. S. as the centrepiece for an educational complex at Tanteen.

The old "temporary" accommodation still in use, 2002 (click on image to see larger picture)

References

1 CO 321/53, Maling to Robinson, April 22, 1882; Robinson to Kimberley, May 1, 1882.

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3 *The Chronicle*, Jan. 19, 1884.

4 *The Chronicle*, Jan. 26, 1884.

5 CO 321/78, LaBorde to Robinson, May 26 and Oct. 27, 1884.

6 West Indies, *Report of the Royal Commission appointed in December 1882, to Inquire into the Public Revenues, Expenditure, Debts, and Liabilities of the Islands of Jamaica, Grenada, St. Vincent, Tobago, and St. Lucia, and the Leeward Islands, Part II, Grenada, St. Vincent, Tobago, and St. Lucia*. (London, 1884), 61.

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8 *The Chronicle*, Nov. 29, 1884.

9 *The Chronicle*, Nov. 29, 1884.

10 *The Chronicle*, March 1, 1890.

11 The material in this and subsequent paragraphs regarding the school's structure is culled from a notice that appeared in *The Chronicle* of December 6, 1884.

12 *The Chronicle*, Jan. 17, 1891 and March 14, 1891.

13 See the story in *The Chronicle* of December 20, 1884, where the editor expresses regret over the delay in the school's opening.

14 *The Chronicle*, Dec. 27, 1884 and Jan. 17, 1885 announced the new opening date.

15 *The Chronicle*, June 6, 1885.

16 *The Chronicle*, April 4, 1885.

17 *The Chronicle*, March 1, 1890.

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19 *The Chronicle*, Dec. 27, 1884.

20 *The Chronicle*, Jan. 16, 1886.

21 Massiah to Governors of the St. George's Grammar School, May 8, 1885, *The Chronicle*, June 6 & June 20, 1885.

22 A 1911 report that Hughes had been associated with the school for twenty-five years would place the date of his first hiring at 1886. CO 321/257, Cameron to Harcourt, Sept. 16, 1911.

23 Massiah to Governors..., May 8, 1885.

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25 25 CO 321/87, Sendall to Legislative Council, July 31, 1885. CO 321/84 Robinson to Derby, Feb. 9, 1885 (with enclosures).

26 Legislative Council Minutes, Aug. 5, 1885.

27 *The Grenada People*, Aug. 5, 1885.

28 Schooles to Comissiong, May 12, 1885 in *The Chronicle*, Aug. 22, 1885.

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30 *The Chronicle*, March 1, 1890.

31 *The Chronicle*, Jan. 12, 1889.

32 *The Chronicle*, March 1, 1890.

33 CO 321/120, Hutchinson to Knutsford, Dec. 18, 1890 (with enclosures).

34 CO 321/134, Roberts to Wingfield, Jan. 19, 1891.

35 *The Chronicle*, March 14, 1891.

36 Of the total 53,209 inhabitants on the island in 1891, Roman Catholics numbered 29,314 while Anglicans constituted 19,273 (36 percent). See C0 321/129, "Report on the Census of 1891," in Hutchinson to Knutsford, Sept. 23, 1891.

37 Drayton to Sendall, July 4, 1889, in "Report on Grenada's Blue Book for 1888," PP C-5620-22, (1889).

38 *The Chronicle*, Sept. 2, 1893.

39 *The Chronicle*, Dec. 5, 1891.

40 *The Chronicle*, Aug. 5, 1893.

41 *The Chronicle*, Aug. 5, 1893.

42 Legislative Council Minutes., March 15, 1895.

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44 Legislative Council Minutes, Dec. 30, 1901; April 26, 1902; Dec. 13, 1902.

45 *The Chronicle*, Dec. 27, 1902.

46 *The Federalist*, July 8, 1892.

47 CO 321/215, Drayton to Chamberlain, June 13, 1903.

48 *The Federalist*, June 10, 1905.

49 *The Federalist*, Aug. 22, 1905.

50 *The Federalist*, Oct. 17, 1905, and Nov. 15, 1905.

51 *The Chronicle*, Feb. 17, 1906; *The Federalist*, Feb. 21, 1906.

52 Legislative Council Minutes, Dec. 15, 1905.

53 Legislative Council Minutes, Jan. 13, 1908.

54 *The Federalist*, June 4, 1908.

55 Legislative Council Minutes, Aug. 5, 1910.

56 *The Federalist*, Jan. 15, 1910.

57 CO 321/264, Sadler to Harcourt, Feb. 8, 1912; 321/271, Sadler to Harcourt, Feb. 15, 1913.

58 CO 321/257, Cameron to Harcourt, Sept. 16, 1911 (with enclosures). The father of Hugh Dillon Baptiste who taught at the school from 1936 onwards and served as Head Master from 1965 until his retirement in 1975, E. C. Baptiste was on the school's staff until 1928. On January 1, 1929, he moved to the Education Department where he held the post of Assistant Inspector of Schools.

59 CO 321/271, Sadler to Harcourt, June 13, 1913.

60 *The West Indian*, (Mail Edition), Feb. 13, 1915. The Convent had an enrolment of 77 in 1914 and spent a total of £373 for its operation. Of this amount, £150 came from government. The Grenada Girls' School's total expenditure was £411 15s. For information on the schools' expenditures and enrolments, see the Blue Book for 1914.

61 *The West Indian*, (Mail Edition), Feb. 13, 1915.

62 *The West Indian*, (Mail Edition), Nov. 21, 1919 and Jan. 16, 1920.

63 *The West Indian*, (Mail Edition), Dec. 19 & June 6, 1919.

64 *The West Indian* (Mail Edition), Feb. 27, 1920.

65 *The West Indian*, (Mail Edition), July 16, 1920.

66 *The West Indian*, (Mail Edition), July 16, 1920.

67 *The West Indian*, April 9, 1936.

68 *The West Indian*, April 12, 1936.

69 *The West Indian*, April 19, 1936.

70 *The West Indian*, April 22, 1936.

71 *The West Indian*, May 3, 1936.

72 *The West Indian*, May 8, 1936.

73 *The West Indian*, May 21, 1936.

74 *The West Indian*, June 9, 1936.

75 *The West Indian*, Dec. 2, 1936.

76 *The West Indian*, Feb. 23, 1937.

77 See, for examples of this, letters and stories in *The West Indian* of Feb. 28, March 14, March 17, April 8, April 9, and April 18, 1937.

78 *The West Indian*, May 21 & June 10, 1936.

79 *The West Indian*, Oct. 11 & 13, 1936.

80 *The West Indian*, Oct. 13, 1936.

81 *The West Indian*, Oct. 21, 1936.

82 *The West Indian*, May 8, 1938. The previous year's examination results had been extremely unimpressive.

83 On Grant's performance as captain and player for the West Indies, see Michael Manley, *A History of West Indies Cricket* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1988), Appendix C.

84 *The West Indian*, Oct. 4, 1935. This writer, G. Guy Renwick, noted that according to the will of John Michael Gay of March 11, 1887 and who died on February 28, 1889, £50 was to be paid by his executors to the Grammar School's Governing Body for the establishment of a library for the school. But, bemoaned the writer, "what became of the money? There was no library in 1902 when I entered the school, and I doubt that there was any before."

85 *The West Indian*, May 8, 1938.

86 *The West Indian*, April 6, 1946.

87 *The West Indian*, June 14, 1936.

88 *The West Indian*, Feb. 27, 1938 and May 8, 1938.

89 *The West Indian*, Feb. 10, 1946.

90 *The West Indian*, Sept. 4 & Sept. 11, 1946. Jordan was highly recognized in Trinidad and Tobago for the successes of Tobago's Bishop's High School, which he nurtured from its inception. Among his students was Arthur Napoleon Raymond Robinson, president of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. In an article, one Trinidad writer remarked that "[i]n Tobago Rawle Jordan fashioned a good school, in Grenada it is confidently hoped that he will write the name of a great West Indian headmaster." Jordan reportedly had no teaching experience prior to his appointment to Bishop's High School.

91 *The West Indian*, May 8 1938.

92 *The West Indian*, Feb 12, & May 11, 1946, as well as the debates at the Education Board between February and May of that year.

93 "The Development of Secondary Education in Grenada." This document was printed in *The West Indian* of Feb. 12 and Feb. 13, 1946. The material on the proposal in this and subsequent paragraphs draws from this document.

94 Ibid., *The West Indian*, Feb. 13, 1946.

95 Ibid., *The West Indian*, Feb. 13, 1946.

96 *The West Indian*, Jan. 19, 1946.

97 *The West Indian*, Feb. 12, 1946.

98 *The West Indian*, Feb. 28, 1946.

99 *The West Indian*, Feb. 28, 1946.

100 *The West Indian*, March 14, 1946.

101 *The West Indian*, March 2, 1946.

102 *The West Indian*, March 2, 1946.

103 *The West Indian*, April 6, 1946.

104 *The West Indian*, March 30, 1946.

105 *The West Indian*, March 30, 1946.

106 *The West Indian*, March 31, 1946.

107 *The West Indian*, Aug. 26, 1939.

108 *The West Indian*, April 10, 1946.

109 One source attests that Roman Catholic Archbishop of Trinidad Count Finbar Ryan referred to the G. B. S. S. as a "godless" school. This term was regularly used as early as 1938 to refer to any school not run by religious bodies. See, for example, the debates in the Legislative Council for 1938 where Hon. F. B. Patterson uses that term to refer to the absence of grant-in-aid religious-run schools on Carriacou.

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