

# History of Courtland Avenue School 1890-1940

*As compiled by Mr. Peter Fisher, Former Principal (1912-1917)*

In 1886, the accommodation in the Central School (now Suddaby School) became inadequate (the twelve rooms all occupied) and overcrowding threatened, whereupon the Board selected a site on Agnes Street and, at a cost of \$4000.00, erected thereupon a four-room, brick school in which two divisions were opened in the fall of the year with Miss Maggie Hyndman as head teacher. Two years later, a third division was opened and a fourth the next year, 1889, with Miss Jennie Thompson as Principal.



One year later, the overcrowding cry was heard again, and to give the necessary relief, the Board erected a four-room school on Courtland Avenue at a cost of \$4500.00. The tenders for the work was called for at the February meeting of the Board, and the building was ready for occupancy by September of that year. Three divisions were opened as soon as ready, and Miss Mary Cairnes was appointed Principal. She resigned at the end of that month, and Miss Edith Mathieson was appointed Principal in her stead. Miss Mathieson resigned January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1891, and Miss M. B. Tier, who had charge of Division V of Central School, was appointed head mistress of the school. The Assistant Teachers were Miss Austin and Miss Tillie E. Reid. Miss Tier continued in the position of Principal to the end of 1904.

In 1892, a kindergarten class was opened in the school with Mrs. S. L. Martin in charge. By the end of 1892, every room in the school had its full complement of pupils.

In 1893, the first trained kindergarten teacher, Miss S. H. Ayres, was engaged for Courtland Avenue School.

In 1896, further school accommodation was found necessary, and the Board after some deliberation, finally decided to add four rooms to the Agnes Street School and develop the grounds. Two rooms were occupied before the end of 1897.

In the year 1903 the same old question, inadequate accommodation, confronted the School Board. Population in the town was still rapidly increasing, the schools filled and additional accommodation required, as soon as possible.

Finally, it was decided to proceed with the erection of eight additional classrooms, four at Courtland Avenue School and four at Margaret Avenue School. These two additions cost in round figures: \$16000.00.

The year 1905 opened with the appointment of Mr. Arthur Foster as Principal of Courtland Avenue School, and one month later Mr. J. F. Carmichael was appointed Principal of Margaret Avenue School.

The Courtland Avenue School staff consisted of Mr. Arthur Foster as Principal, assisted by Miss M. B. Tier, Miss Mary Fenton, Miss Edith Taylor, Miss Emma Reuter, Miss Minnie Levan, and Miss Susie H. Ayres. Miss D.A. Cook was appointed in September of that year.

On January 1, 1912, Mr. Foster was transferred to Central School as Principal, and Mr. Peter Fisher, who had been first assistant at Central School, was appointed Principal of Courtland Avenue School. Mr. Fisher continued as Principal until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1917, when he resigned to go into other work.

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1912, the staff of Courtland Avenue School consisted of Mr. P. Fisher, Principal, assisted by Miss Bessie Munn, Miss Emma Reuter, Miss C. L. Brown, Miss Annie Waugh, Miss M. Dowswell, Miss Grace Waugh and Miss Grace Campbell. Miss Mulloy was appointed subsequently as Kindergarten Assistant.

Mr. W. G. Bain followed Mr. Fisher as Principal for 1½ years when he resigned, and Miss Olive Matthews was appointed Principal from September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1919. After one year, Miss Matthews resigned, and Mr. Bain was re-appointed as Principal of the school and continued in that position until September 1927, when he was transferred to King Edward School as Principal. Mr. Bain remained as Principal there until his untimely passing on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1932.

After Mr. Bain left Courtland Avenue School, Mr. Stanley Hodgins became Principal until September 1st, 1937, when he was transferred to Victoria School upon the retirement of Mr. J. F. Carmichael. Mr. W. Gordon Loney was appointed Principal of Courtland Avenue School September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1937.

By the year 1928, the school population of the city had increased very appreciably and additional accommodation was again required. The Courtland Avenue district had been built up and to meet the requirements, the School Board decided on another building programme. Plans were prepared by Mr. B. A. Jones, Architect, for the renovation of the existing portion of Courtland Avenue School and for the addition of eight classrooms, as well as for the installation of adequate heating, lighting, and ventilating systems, and the grading of the grounds.

The general contract for the work was given to Dunker Bros.; the plumbing and heating contract was given to Wm. Knell & Co.; the electrical work was done by Messrs. Mattel and Bierwagen; and the painting was done by Mr. A. Bindernagel.

On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1928, the Board made arrangements for a loan of \$70,000.00 to cover the cost of the addition to the school. On December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1928, the building inspector of the city reported the cost of the new building and equipment at \$92000.00 but including the grading of the grounds, the total cost was \$94297.00.

During the building of the new school, pupils were taught at nearby schools. In September, the newest portion of the building was occupied but the old section was not ready until after the new year. The name Courtland Avenue School was retained.

In its equipment and general accommodation, the school cannot fail in its appeal to the children so fortunate as to be under the influence of such pleasant surroundings. Every day, on entering its portals, both teachers and pupils alike will be thankful that their lot has been cast amid such a pleasant and inspiring environment, of which all must reap benefit.

In 1940, the teaching staff consisted of the following: Mr. W. Gordon Loney, Principal; Mr. I. M. Kirkness; Mr. J. C. McClelland on leave with CASF); Miss Grace White; Miss Beatrice Uttley; Miss Kate McColman; Miss Jennie King; Miss Venona Asmussen; Miss Elva Wildfong; Miss Nan Cameron; Miss Reta Christner; Miss Catherine Heath; Miss Nettie Donald (on leave, illness); Miss Harriet Ellis; Miss Elizabeth Koch (part-time kindergarten assistant); Mrs. Laura Dunlop (supplying in the absence of Mr. McClelland); Mrs. W. Taylor (supplying on room 9); Mrs. T. Boon (supplying for Miss Donald)