

“The Fight of My Life”:¹

Alfred Fitzpatrick and Frontier College’s Extramural Degree for Working People

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with
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From 1922 to 1932, Frontier College was an “open” and “national” institution of higher education, which was empowered to award degrees to working people without access to the established universities. This experiment was the brain-child of Frontier College’s founder, Alfred Fitzpatrick (1862-1936), a former Presbyterian cleric inspired by the “social gospel”, who championed Canada’s campmen and manual labourers. With minimal resources and without a mature institutional structure, Fitzpatrick developed a Board of Examiners composed of scholars drawn from across the country’s English and French universities and created an extramural degree programme which was, in fact, unique in the English-speaking world. However, Frontier College soon met effective opposition and, thus, the flowering of greater popular access to higher education was delayed until after the Second World War.

De 1922 à 1932, Frontier College était un établissement « ouvert » et « national » d’enseignement supérieur habilité à décerner des grades aux travailleurs qui n’avaient pas accès aux universités reconnues. Cette initiative originale était due à Alfred Fitzpatrick (1862-1936), un ancien ecclésiastique presbytérien qu’animait l’esprit de l’« évangile sociale » et qui s’était fait le défenseur de ceux qui travaillaient sur les chantiers et des ouvriers. Disposant de maigres ressources et sans structure institutionnelle éprouvée, Fitzpatrick mis sur pied une commission d’examen qui regroupait des spécialistes venant d’universités francophones et anglophones de partout au pays et créa un programme « extra-muros » menant à un diplôme. Rien de pareil n’existait ailleurs dans le monde anglo-saxon. Malheureusement, le Frontier College se trouva vite en butte à une puissante opposition, si bien que ce n’est qu’après la Seconde Guerre mondiale que les humbles eurent plus largement accès à l’enseignement supérieur.

The power to award degrees to working people was reposed in Frontier College by authority of the Parliament of Canada. Maintaining that power in the face of educational and political assaults was a cause which Alfred

1. National Archives of Canada, Frontier College Papers, MG28 I 124 (hereafter cited as FC) 61, Fitzpatrick to Sir Joseph Flavelle, 14 March 1931.

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Fitzpatrick valued “more dearly than life”. Convinced that “the twentieth century will yet be the century of the masses”, the founder of Frontier College fought for “the universal diffusion of education”.²

The rise, exercise and demise of the degree was extraordinary. The *Frontier College Act of 1922*,³ was itself extraordinary, in that no other Canadian university operated under the authority of an Act of the Dominion Parliament or presented itself as a “national” institution. Frontier College was extraordinary as an “open” institution, in that an unconventional educational upstart from the Canadian bush was, in fact, unique in the English-speaking world in daring to offer what no conventional university would: a degree which could be completed entirely through extramural study. The death of the idea was also extraordinary, in that the Government of Ontario, instead of trusting in a judicial outcome which could have gone against Ontario’s constitutional position, employed the decisive political measure of financial strangulation to assert its authority in the field. As a result, provinces and universities postponed for half a century the blossoming in Canada of greater equality of access to higher education through the extramural degree.

To Fitzpatrick, it was no extraordinary thing, however, that “those neglected boys and girls I love” and those ordinary working people who could “never hope to attend a centrally located university” should aspire to qualify for a university degree through home study.⁴ New techniques in distance education and changed attitudes with respect to accessibility have since made his ideal a reality, to a very large extent. At the time, however, Frontier College’s undertaking, to award degrees only after “a course of study equivalent to that prescribed by the recognised universities”, was dismissed by the universities as an affront to their sense of responsibility in higher education, even though the programme was as academically rigorous as their own and was maintained by a Board of Examiners drawn largely from within their very own ranks. Frontier College also abided by all provincial legal and educational requirements. Ontario was obliged to admit that provincial exclusivity in the chartering of universities was a myth, but not until 1983 did Ontario pass the

2. Alfred Fitzpatrick, *The University in Overalls: A Plea for Part-Time Study* (Toronto, 1920), p. 107. Since that was at the very heart of citizenship, he saw himself waging a war to demonstrate the state’s responsibilities for an “educated citizenry”. In his struggle, he had to conduct various engagements over the social responsibilities of the universities and the educational validity of the extramural degree as well as the constitutional powers of the Dominion and provincial governments in education. However, the campaign’s objective, symbolized in the Frontier College degree for working people, was to secure the right of any Canadian anywhere, not just those privileged like himself, to attend a university, to develop one’s talents to the fullest. Since the man and his idea flew in the face of the political and educational wisdom of 1920 Canada, the degree for working people was easily swept aside, but not before demonstrating that the idea was entirely practicable, given the will.

3. *Statutes of Canada*, “An Act to Incorporate The Frontier College”, Bill 68, Ch. 77, 1922.

4. FC 61, Fitzpatrick to Flavelle, 14 March 1931; FC 187, Fitzpatrick to Miss Jessie Lucas (his secretary), 16 May 1923 and to Alex. Young (Millsville, N.S.), 3 May 1923

necessary legislation to protect what she now accepts as her "traditional rights" and "conventions" in higher education. Today, Frontier College would be eligible to award its degrees.⁵

Some saw Fitzpatrick as an educational trail-blazer. To others, he was a well-meaning eccentric. He saw himself as a Christian charged with a mission. At bottom, observed Sir Joseph Flavelle, a long-standing financial and moral supporter, Fitzpatrick's commitment to a degree for working people "originated with him from a sense of duty". Both as a Christian and the champion of the campmen and labourers of Canada, he felt driven to challenge institution and state. Through Frontier College, he believed, Providence was "working in the interests of the poor man... who will have the same chance of getting a degree as the richer one. We are just instruments... of this purpose." For Frontier College, which was "intended to spell 'opportunity' to the isolated toiler", he foresaw a "tremendous task that a kind of Providence has placed upon us" to establish what would "some day take its place as one of the important institutions of the country" and "one of the greatest educational features of Canada".⁶ Indeed, he once told his secretary, Miss Jessie Lucas, if George Washington Carver could establish a college for blacks in America, he could build up a college for workers in Canada.⁷ That was the stuff of grand visions. In reality, Frontier College was very nearly extinguished.

Fitzpatrick's ambition was a logical extension of his work amongst Canada's 250,000 campmen in the bush, in the mines and on the railway gangs. The devotion of his life to the service of the frontier labourers grew out of his personal, religious and educational background. Born in 1862 into a large and staunchly Presbyterian family of pioneering farmers in Pictou County, Nova Scotia, he was led by parental influence and his own proclivities towards the ministry and theological studies at Queen's University (1884-1892). There, in George Monro Grant, another old Pictonian, he found his hero and mentor. Fitzpatrick was one of Grant's quintessential Queensmen, those "noble, intelligent and unselfish men", who never forgot that the privilege of an education carried with it the obligation to serve and lead one's fellow man. Grant was Fitzpatrick's inspiration in founding Frontier College and its "labourer-teachers", who taught and served their fellow workers in the camps. At Queen's, Fitzpatrick thoroughly imbibed the philosophical idealism

5. *Statutes of Ontario*, "An Act to Regulate the Granting of Degrees", Bill 41, Ch. 36, 1983. The Regulations (effective 30 June 1984) require Ministerial consent before a degree-granting institution established by Act of the Parliament of Canada may operate in Ontario.

6. Flavelle to A.H.U. Colquhoun, 7 June 1929, quoted in N.A. Kefentse, "Universities and Labour Education in Ontario: A Study of the Politics of Co-operation between Unions and Universities" (M.A., U. of Toronto, 1975), p. 28; FC 190, Fitzpatrick to Edmund Bradwin, 7 August 1922; FC 187, Fitzpatrick to Lucas, 9 June 1922; FC 61, Rev. Dr. Robert Johnston (Chancellor) to Fitzpatrick, 2 January 1925.

7. Interview by Mr. Ian M. Morrison (formerly President of Frontier College) with Jessie Lucas, 10 November 1972.

espoused by Grant and the Scottish philosopher, John Watson. Upon graduation in theology in 1892, he embodied the “new”, “practical” and “applied” Christianity of the social gospel, which aspired to make religion relevant to the problems of the real world.⁸ Like others similarly inspired, Fitzpatrick found his church wanting. While some would be led to take the socialist road, Fitzpatrick, despite briefly flirting with forming a campmen’s labour union or entering politics on their behalf, always remained faithful to the idealist notions of harmony of the real and spiritual realms and the essential unity of all elements and members of society. Thus, Fitzpatrick was an activist Christian reformer, who believed that in the long run, the best results would be achieved through co-operation and the education alike of employers, unions, institutions and governments in their responsibilities to each other. Although he left the church’s “regular” work, he viewed his campwork and his crusade for educational opportunity for working people as no less religious for that. The camps and their inmates were his cross; their alleviation was his mission.

Personal guilt and family circumstances were also powerful elements in his sense of Christian duty. The only one of the twelve Fitzpatrick siblings to achieve a university education, Alfred, never forgot that his brothers knew intimately the world of work, some as manual labourers, and migration to find work. Additionally, the untimely drowning in California of his younger, favourite brother, Leander, who had joined an elder brother, Isaac, in the Redwood lumber camps, especially marked him. Indeed, it was through his anxiety to find Lee’s grave and to return Isaac to the family fold that Fitzpatrick, as an itinerant Presbyterian missionary in 1892-1893, had his first insight into the campmen’s life. Another came in 1897-1898, while out in Saskatchewan. Two Pictou neighbours, navvies on the CPR’s Crow’s Nest Pass construction, died under such trying conditions as to cause a public enquiry. Since one of them happened also to be Isaac’s new brother-in-law, Fitzpatrick felt personally the wasteland of the frontier labourer’s lot. Out of these experiences, an idea emerged, in 1899, when he moved to Nairn Centre in the Algoma District of “New Ontario” as one of the Presbyterian church’s “Mission to the Lumbermen”. There, where the campworld was multiplied in the thousands, Alfred Fitzpatrick began what became the Frontier College.⁹

8. Hilda Neatby, *Queen’s University, Volume I, 1841-1917* (Montreal, 1978), pp. 193-200, 233-235, 240; A.B. Mckillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence. Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montreal, 1979), pp. 200, 195-203, 216, 228; G.R. Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian Canada* (Toronto, 1985), pp. 24, 174-176, 184-186, 195; Allan Smith, “The Thought of George Monro Grant”, *Canadian Literature* (83, 1979), pp. 93-97.

9. FC 58, Fitzpatrick to E.W. Beatty (President, CPR), 17 October 1930. Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man: A Study of Work and Pay in the Camps of Canada, 1903-1914* (New York, 1928, reprinted in Toronto, 1972), provides the background to camp conditions; G.L. Cook, “Alfred Fitzpatrick and the Foundation of Frontier College”, *Canada: An Historical Magazine* (3, June 1976), pp. 15-39, indicates Fitzpatrick’s early responses.

As Grant saw society's, so Fitzpatrick saw the camps' salvation as largely a matter of education. Both elevated education to an almost religious panacea. As Grant would say, "Train men's intelligence and you can trust them to take care of themselves and the country."¹⁰ While Fitzpatrick endorsed the words of contemporary educationalists like Dewey, Ruskin, Carlyle, Montessori and Froebel, whenever it served his purpose, his philosophy also grew out of his own experience. To Fitzpatrick, work was sacred and, even in the work of the unskilled navy, the bushman or the miner, "knowledge enters into it all; and the same knowledge developed and encouraged in higher effort may become a power." The power of knowledge was the power to liberate the worker; ignorance was the worker's enslavement. He identified the crux of the camp problem as the low levels of education of the Canadian bushman and miner, who, on average, had only attained the third year of public, usually rural, school, and the extensive illiteracy and lack of English of the foreign-born navvies. His principal weapon against ignorance was the "labourer-teacher", the teacher who laboured as an equal alongside the campmen. The labourer-teacher personified the "most humane, brotherly and Christ-like way" for the privileged university man to fulfil the "principle of the Incarnation" by honouring the labourer and his labour which the "Divine Carpenter...ennobled".¹¹ Hundreds of young university men — like Norman Bethune, James R. Mutchmor, Albert E. Ottewell or J.P. Bickell — successfully built bridges of understanding and knowledge to lives exposed to little more than working, eating and sleeping. One, Edmund Bradwin, who was recruited in 1903 as a University of Toronto drop-out, would remain Fitzpatrick's associate for the next thirty years. The ideal labourer-teacher, Bradwin was truly exceptional: a natural teacher of adults, he loved the campmen; always a student, he earned a Queen's extramural degree while working in the bush; a scholar, his Ph.D. from Columbia University was published as *The Bunkhouse Man*; a worker, he could turn his hand to any bush camp job and many besides in the mine and on the railway gang. However, because many others could not cope, Fitzpatrick also realized that he would have to train his own teachers from out of the ranks of the workers themselves according to his own philosophy and after his own principles and experience.

Fitzpatrick's outraged Christian sensibilities, railed against camp labourers' conditions, the excessive hours of labour, the overcrowded bunkhouses, the unsanitary health conditions and the dangers of industrial injury and death. To that scene, Bradwin and Fitzpatrick brought some of the earliest successful techniques for teaching adult illiterates and for reaching the thousands of immigrant labourers through programmes of basic English. They also developed the only "Canadianization" programmes for immigrants at the time. However, the approach was always experimental, designed to show what

10. Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, p. 85.

11. Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, p. 22; FC 188, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 28 October 1929; FC 61, Fitzpatrick to Flavelle, 14 May 1931.

could be done, if only the state and society would accept responsibility for educating all the people. For all the notice taken of these efforts, Frontier College “might as well have been crying in the wilderness”,¹² lamented Fitzpatrick, and he craved ways to bring national attention to a basic social issue. Although the activities had indeed become increasingly national in scope, Frontier College still remained organisationally the somewhat chaotic extension of a man desperate to find any means to promote the education of the workers. Completely at the financial mercy of charitable donations from employers, churches, individuals and grants from provincial governments, the College could not even enter a camp but for the co-operation of the employers. The restrictions thus entailed created a fine and difficult line for Fitzpatrick to walk between collaboration with the employers and the advancement of workers’ interest as men. The universal diffusion of education demanded more than criticism, experiments and the College’s fledgling efforts in the camps. A sound institutional structure with a secure financial base was an essential prerequisite if Frontier College were to have any chance of making a practical reality of its founders’ commitment to equality of access to education for all Canadians.

Fitzpatrick published his prescription in 1920 as *The University in Overalls: A Plea for Part-Time Study*. Its dedication, “To my brother, Tom, who knew too much labour, while I knew too little”, conveyed Alfred’s personal guilt about his own privileged, but inadequate and labour-free education and the stunted labouring lives of his brothers, Tom and Isaac, and also John, a blacksmith, and the thousands of other Canadian labourers, whom he had come to know so intimately. The ideal education was of the “whole” man, in mind, body and spirit, and the marriage of labour and the intellect. For him, indeed, no education was complete without the experience of labour. The title described literally his role for the universities: they would actually don overalls. Universities were central to his concept of “industrial education”, where the institutions entered the real world of work and their educational programmes reflected the practical needs of Canadian society and her people. Since, he argued, “the greatest educational problem of Canada is how to enable the multitude of manual and other workers to avail themselves of higher education”, the universities, “hedged about by false pride, custom and precedent”, had thereafter to “stoop down and fraternize with the workers”. Guided by the precept of “Education to the man at his work”, they could help workers and their families to grow “physically, intellectually and spiritually to the full extent of their God-given potentialities. This is the real education. This the place of the true university.” “True” universities would therefore promote educational diffusion by encouraging every form of extramural study everywhere. Degrees should be accessible to all those able to pass the examinations, “irrespective of where and how they earned their hard-won training and

12. Fitzpatrick, *The Diffusion of Education*, with Seventeenth Annual Report of the Reading Camp Association (1917), p. 7.

knowledge”. Working people, Fitzpatrick well knew, were hardly typical university material. The principle, however, was to enable exceptional individuals to rise above their immediate surroundings “while earning their daily bread”.

Arguments for increasing educational access were not unappreciated in university circles. However, Fitzpatrick’s directives about their degrees and their social responsibilities generally were hardly acknowledged. He proposed to bring the labouring experience into the educational, whereby degrees would be awarded to physically fit students only after “at least two years in part-time teaching, part-time study and part-time labour”. That was virtually unheard of in those days before notions of a work component in “co-operative” and “sandwich” programmes were admitted as educationally beneficial. Not only did he promote the educational value to individual students of the labouring experience, but he rejected the conventional strictures on lecture attendance and he praised the character-building benefits of individual and correspondence study. If such views were not enough to invite dismissal from the universities, his carrying of their social responsibilities to the ultimate extreme was. His dream was for the periodic release of up to half their professorial staffs to work and teach in common workplaces. With the addition of other volunteers from the professional ranks, the efforts of literally thousands of teachers could, in fact, extend education to Canada’s over two million manual workers. Even with that massive scale, such an idea — reminiscent of Norway’s “People’s University” where, since the 1860s, university staff and students had collaborated in adult education programmes — was completely alien to the Canadian experience. Moreover, by thus elevating the principle of individual volunteerism embodied in Frontier College’s labourer-teachers to institutional and national policy, he was going much too far for the universities and the state.¹³

No Canadian university was prepared to become the “University in Overalls”. In the first place, adult education had no great attraction for the universities; at that time, it had “no name and no social standing”, according to E.A. Corbett, first director of the Canadian Association for Adult Education. The first survey of Canadian adult education (1925), in a country still as much rural and agricultural as urban and industrial and with only nine million people thinly spread over a vast land, revealed the limited development of adult education compared with the recognized leader, the heavily industrialized and urbanized Britain, but also, even with Australia.¹⁴ There were profound

13. Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, pp. vii-x, 84-118. On the Studentersamfundets Fri Undervisning, see I. Udjus, “University Students as Adult Educators”, *Convergence* (5, 1974), pp. 76-79; S. Mellin-Olsen, “Adult Education in Norway”, *Adult Leadership* (14, June 1965), pp. 45-46.

14. E.A. Corbett, “A Brief History of Adult Education in Canada” in J.R. Kidd (ed.), *Adult Education in Canada* (Toronto, 1949), p. 6; C.M. McInnes, “Canadian Adult Education in 1925”, *Adult Education in the British Dominions* (London, 1925), reprinted in J.R. Kidd (ed.), *Learning and Society* (Toronto, 1963), pp. 4-10, 21.

weaknesses in the educational system: over 80 percent of Canadian children entering public school did not reach secondary levels; and only one half of one percent eventually reached university. Severe attendance problems in country schools and spasmodically observed compulsory schooling regulations were being tackled. However, the presence in the universities of as many preparatory students (about 10,000) as in the whole of Arts and Sciences indicated some of the problems in the secondary schools. Although any matriculant could attend, the rare farmer's or worker's son — or daughter — could even dream of a university education. There was no public financial aid of any kind. Many students, like all the labourer-teachers, therefore, had to work their way through college or rely on family or church support. Socially, Canadian universities were distinctively elitist.

Canadian universities were also small and vulnerable. Only the University of Toronto, with some 3,000 students in four colleges, entertained any international pretensions: even McGill had less than 550, Queen's about 450, and most, less than 200; and many were also poor, church-related establishments, with limited provincial and no federal financial assistance. They lacked the resources, the facilities, the personnel and the vision even to contemplate large-scale extramural programmes. They were also sensitive, as Fitzpatrick would find, to criticism about their roles and standards. They were reluctant, too, to sail, as Fitzpatrick would have had them, into the disputed, indeed uncharted, waters of education for adult working students. Fitzpatrick might chafe at degrees designed to prepare small numbers for the professions. Bradwin might castigate the universities' "pale and pretentious" imitations of Scottish and French systems and their ignoring of specifically Canadian responses to the needs of a great, undeveloped northern land. They could hardly expect, however, to endear themselves to university leaders striving to raise the laboriously established standards of their conventional degree programmes and educational activities.¹⁵

In the name of those standards, no Canadian university, in 1920, permitted a degree to be earned entirely extramurally. Indeed, in the entire English-speaking world, no institution offered both the degree and a full programme of extramural study. As Fitzpatrick's own surveys of over 100 universities would-wide had revealed, those offering degree credit for extension courses increased significantly in number from 17 percent in 1914 to 35 percent in 1920.¹⁶ Fitzpatrick was also well aware of British leadership in adult education and university extension. Thus, the publication of the so-called *1919 Report*, a landmark in adult education, could not have suited him better in

15. Robin S. Harris, *A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1690* (Toronto, 1976), pp. 234-237; Bradwin, *Bunkhouse Man*, pp. 229-233; Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, pp. 84-93.

16. Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, pp. 115-116.

timing or sentiment. Its aim of rendering education "as universal as citizenship" implied programmes both "universal and lifelong" and opportunities spread "uniformly and systematically over the whole community."¹⁷ However, even the University of London's highly respected and extensive range of external degrees were not accompanied by any instructional programme. Besides, for Canadians, they were remote because of British admission and degree requirements.¹⁸ In the United States, established extramural degrees had disappeared under a barrage of criticism about poor academic standards in correspondence education.¹⁹ Thus, while degree credit could be earned extramurally at many of those institutions most respected by Canadians, it was usually limited to a third or, rarely, as at the University of Chicago, to half of the degree. As a result, the thrust in university extension came from the so-called "Wisconsin Idea" of actually taking the university into citizens' homes. However, the inclusion of overtly vocational, recreational and utilitarian courses did not inspire confidence in universities in correspondence study for degree programmes, north or south of the border.²⁰

Canadian universities were even more cautious than American ones about extramural study. Some Canadians, therefore, would surmount limited access at home by turning to American extramural programmes. Indeed, at least one had maintained a Toronto office. However, just as Columbia's extension programme was regarded as "definitely outside the pale of academic respectability", so, W.J. Dunlop, Toronto's extension director between 1922

17. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, *Final Report* (London, 1919), cited in J.R. Kidd (ed.), *Adult Education in the Canadian University* (Toronto, 1956), pp. 1, 7-8.

18. Cyril O. Houle, *The External Degree* (San Francisco, 1974), pp. 20-27; Sir Douglas Logan, *The University of London: An Introduction* (London, 1962), pp. 11-12, 21-22. An even remoter possibility would have been at the University of South Africa: F.E. Rodel, "Correspondence Education in South Africa", *Proceedings. Sixth International Conference on Correspondence Education* (1961), pp. 81-95.

19. The Chautauqua College of Liberal Arts offered a degree under a New York State charter between 1883 and 1898, but it was not a "regular" university. See John H. Vincent, "The Rationale for the Chautauqua Movement", in Grattan C. Hartley, *American Ideas about Adult Education, 1710-1951* (New York, 1959), pp. 63-74; James Creese, *The Extension of University Teaching* (New York, 1941), pp. 30-32; Hartley, *In Quest of Knowledge: An Historical Perspective on Adult Education* (New York, 1955), pp. 172-175. On another programme up to the Ph.D. level at a small American church establishment, see H.C. Allan, Jr., "A History of the Non-Resident Degree Program at Illinois Wesleyan University, 1873-1910: A Study of a Pioneer External Degree Program in the United States" (Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1984).

20. Arthur J. Klein, *Correspondence Study in Universities and Colleges and Class Extension Work in the Universities and Colleges of the United States* (Washington, D.C., Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Bulletin, 1920, n^o 10, and 1919, n^o 62), pp. 6-7, 30, and pp. 43-44; A.L. Hall-Quest, *The University Afield* (New York, 1926), pp. 98-100. On Harper and the University of Chicago, see R.J. Storr, *Harper's University: The Beginnings* (Chicago, 1966), pp. 196-203; George M. Woytanowitz, *University Extension: The Early Years in the United States, 1885-1915* (Washington D.C., 1974), pp. 62-68. On the "Wisconsin Model", see Merl Curti and V. Carstensen, *The University of Wisconsin: A History, 1848-1925* (Madison, 1949), II, pp. 556-569; B. Rosentretter, *The Boundaries of the Campus: A History of the University of Wisconsin Extension Division, 1885-1945* (Madison, 1957), pp. 66-67, 78-95.

and 1951, was upbraided by one professor: "I like you, Dunlop, but I detest what you are doing."²¹ Thus, at the University of Toronto, where external courses for teachers had begun in 1906-1907 and in 1920, some degree credit was being allowed for correspondence courses, notions of a credit programme extending to the far reaches of the province never went beyond the discussion stages.²² In the East, Dalhousie University, despite a tradition of service to adults, eschewed the activist example of Saint Francis Xavier and generally rejected anything straying from the university's traditional functions of teaching and research. In the West, where the new provincial establishments could be more experimental, the University of Alberta began Canada's first extension programme on the Wisconsin model. By 1920, all four provincial universities allowed some degree credit to be earned through correspondence. Yet, as late as 1934, Saskatchewan's president worried that in even allowing up to a year's credit, his institution was "in danger of going beyond its sphere".²³

Fitzpatrick's alma mater, Queen's, in inaugurating the only extramural degree in Canada, had "set the example for her sister universities", so far as Fitzpatrick was concerned. Regulations permitting the B.A. degree to be completed by correspondence had been codified between 1887-1889 and by 1894, examinations for candidates in the Northwest Territories and British Columbia were arranged. Queen's thus played the national role which Grant had sought. The degree's significance and value to working people was not lost on Fitzpatrick; Edmund Bradwin had completed his M.A. between 1907 and 1914, while carrying out his camp work to the North, East and West, without ever attending a class at Kingston. However, that went too far for some faculty. They were concerned about intrusions on their research time and sensitive to any suggestion, especially any emanating from Toronto (even though Dunlop himself had earned his degree extramurally from Queen's), that the degree was in some way substandard. In 1907, Ontario's Department of Education started restricting the secondary specialist's teaching certificate only to those completing at least two years in residence. Also, New York State was refusing to recognize any degree from a university offering an extramural degree. From 1909, therefore, extramural students had to complete at least one regular session (or four summer schools) at Kingston.²⁴ The significance of

21. Quoted in Kidd, *Adult Education in the Canadian University*, p. 13.

22. Allan M. Tough, "The Development of Adult Education at the University of Toronto before 1920" (M.A., University of Toronto, 1962), pp. 102-108, 136-144; Harris, *Higher Education in Canada*, pp. 254-257.

23. Patrick Keane, "Dalhousie University and the Nontraditional Student: The First Century", *Dalhousie Review* (63, Summer 1983), pp. 277-297; Harris, *Higher Education in Canada*, p. 391.

24. Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, p. 117; J.A. Blyth, *A Foundling at Varsity: A History of the Division of University Extension, University of Toronto* (Toronto, 1976), pp. 8-9; Neatby, *Queen's*, I, pp. 226-228; Harris, *Higher Education in Canada*, pp. 133, 255-256; Edward A. Dunlop, "A History of Extension at Queen's University, 1889-1945" (Ed.D., University of Toronto, 1981), pp. 12-17 and Ch. III, "The Period of Consolidation, 1889-1910", pp. 31-80.

that was not lost on Fitzpatrick, either. Grant, who had done most among the universities to extend "the library and the laboratory to industry and agriculture, to homestead and camp", he said, had in fact provided "equality of opportunity in university education" by allowing "anyone to study at the ends of the earth for credits for a Queen's degree." Consequent upon those changes in the Queen's regulations, therefore, Fitzpatrick presented himself as Grant's heir. He assumed the "ambition to retain, for those unable to attend university, the opportunity to study at home and fully qualify for a degree."²⁵

Post-war Canada had special educational needs. The universities, Fitzpatrick believed, were perfectly capable of responding to the needs at home, just as they had overseas with the "Khaki University". Under the leadership of Sir Robert Falconer (President, University of Toronto) as chairman of the Advisory Committee, Alberta's H.M. Tory as Director and McGill's Frank Adams as Deputy Director seconded faculty offered two years of instruction (including by correspondence) in Arts and a year of pre-medical Science, Engineering, Theology and Law. Every university awarded credit to returned soldiers enrolling as full-time students.²⁶ However, since most veterans had to return to neglected farms and vacated jobs, an extensive extramural programme made much practical sense. In the *University in Overalls*, Fitzpatrick called for university extension to be as "comprehensive as the need itself". That book, said Ralph Connor, "blazes its own trail..., invites investigation, courts criticism and challenges contradiction." It was greeted with damning silence by the universities. Certainly, various university leaders had over the years endorsed Fitzpatrick's campwork and their high regard for him personally was symbolized in 1922 in Queen's University's attempt to bestow an honorary D.D. degree on a true son for work "unique...in Christian and social service".²⁷ However, the leading figures in the "Khaki University" were also the most prominent opponents of the Frontier College degree. By contrast, the universities warmly welcomed "People's School" at Saint Francis Xavier. J.J. Tomkins' 1920 pamphlet, *Knowledge to the People*, employing rhetoric remarkably similar to Fitzpatrick's, admonished the universities to lead in responding to the call for "equality of opportunity for all". While "priest-teachers" would raise education to a spiritual plane amongst impoverished fishermen, miners, farmers and woodsmen, the difference was that Tompkins' "University in Shirtsleeves" was sponsored by a

25. FC 61, Fitzpatrick to Flavelle, 14 May 1931. Fitzpatrick's emulation of Grant is in an article of his in *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 October 1928, and in his unpublished manuscript, written after his retirement from Frontier College, "Schools and Other Penitentiaries", pp. 103-106, in FC 104.

26. Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, pp. 108-109, 112-118; J.R. Kidd, "A Study of the Influence of H.M. Tory on Educational Policy in Canada" (M.A., McGill University, 1944), pp. 61-94; E.A. Corbett, *Henry Marshall Tory, Beloved Canadian* (Toronto, 1954), pp. 143-157.

27. FC 40, R. Bruce Taylor (Principal, Queen's University) to Fitzpatrick, 19 April 1922; Fitzpatrick to O.D. Skelton, 6 May 1922. Fitzpatrick would regularly publish his endorsements in Annual Reports.

chartered university. Since plans for correspondence and extramural credit programmes were never realized, there existed none of the perceived threats of the extramural degree of the “University in Overalls”.²⁸

Such espousals of educational equality by Fitzpatrick and Tomkins were echoed, but neither insistently nor persistently, within Canadian labouring and farming ranks. Tom Moore, President of the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress, urged the universities’ doors to be thrown “wide open” and supported Fitzpatrick by becoming a member of the Board of Governors of the College. The United Farmers of Ontario aspired to see “the gospel of higher education” extended to “the outlying parts of the Province”, but their tenure in government was too short to realize any major developments in that direction.²⁹ Consequently, only the University of Toronto’s collaboration through its Extension Division in establishing the Workers Education Association in 1918 suggested any movement by universities towards an educational programme for workers. The catalyst had been W.L. Grant, the Principal’s son. He had brought back from his time at Oxford an association with Alfred Mansbridge’s movement and the belief that the universities could not risk isolation from the working classes. However, the W.E.A.’s success in forging a “link between labour and learning” came at the expense of the University’s own extension enrolments.³⁰ Moreover, Fitzpatrick complained the educational needs of workers could not be met by methods which carried them “off to the cloisters”. The W.E.A.’s British-style tutorial classes were inappropriate to Canada’s vast spaces and sparse population, as Principal Grant’s promotion of correspondence instruction had acknowledged. Nor could they reach beyond an elite of urban and white-collar workers directly into the farms, factories, homesteads, mills and camps. Indeed, the W.E.A.’s very existence, Fitzpatrick feared, merely provided Ontario an excuse of a workers’ education programme and the University the opportunity to syphon off more good money. Fitzpatrick dreaded the potential that the W.E.A. might approach Ottawa for a charter for a workers’ college. Tom Moore might then have felt constrained to resign from Frontier College’s Board of Governors, consequently threatening his own emerging plans. W.L. Grant had already resigned from the Board because he objected to Fitzpatrick’s refusal to accept his advice to work within the orbit of the University’s Division of Extension after the W.E.A.’s example. That, Fitzpatrick remonstrated, represented the kiss of death for Frontier College and the centralization, not the diffusion, of

28. Harris, *Higher Education in Canada*, p. 392; J.J. Tompkins, “Knowledge for the People” in Kidd (ed.), *Learning and Society*, pp. 92-107. See Alexander F. Laidlaw, *The Campus and the Community: The Global Impact of the Antigonish Movement* (Montreal, 1961), for a detailed study of Saint Francis Xavier University’s extension and adult education work.

29. *The Toronto Globe*, 18 March 1919; *The Farmers’ Sun*, 21 December 1921.

30. Ian Radforth and Joan Sangster, “‘A Link Between Labour and Learning’: The Workers Educational Association in Ontario, 1917-1951”, *Labour/Le Travail* (8/9, Autumn/Spring, 1981/82), pp. 41-59.

education.³¹ Ten years later, a bitterly distrustful Fitzpatrick accused the University of Toronto, which for a quarter of a century had “turned up its nose” at correspondence instruction, of precipitating Principal Grant’s premature death and of attempting to “kill off” anything threatening its dominance. A “great show” there would be, but the stifling of any genuine innovation in workers’ education would be the result. Consequently, since all others seemed to “run at the sight of overalls”, Fitzpatrick saw no alternative. “The Frontier College is the thing!”³²

In his quest for the total diffusion of education, Fitzpatrick could not demonstrate broad-based support. There were a few kindred spirits, however: churchmen, like the Rev. Dr. Robert Johnston of London, to whom the universities represented the “expression of the class spirit — the privilege of a few”; or an old Queen’s classmate, John McKay, who believed that the universities could never provide for “a fully educated democracy”.³³ Yet, the challenge was clearly national in scope. That demanded a national response, and a strong organization, and enough money, so that “more men may go out each year to tackle the situation”.³⁴ However, neither the Dominion, nor the provinces, nor the universities would accept responsibility. That, Fitzpatrick complained, left Frontier College “lone-handed” to deal with the “situation”, with means to place only 60 labourer-teachers from over 300 applicants in 1921, for example. Such lack of resources and organization obliged Fitzpatrick to expend too much energy on fund-raising — and making mistakes in the process — instead of refining his programme and training his teachers.³⁵ For Fitzpatrick, therefore, there was always a direct connection between securing a federal charter for a national institution playing a vital role in Canadian adult education and getting the money and the men. Bradwin worried about the priorities between “the *Grant* from Ottawa, or the *Charter*. Seems to me — grant comes first...[in order to] get the money and get the men into work.” Fitzpatrick remained convinced to the end that the College would get “ten times as large a grant with the charter as without it”.³⁶ Indeed, he believed, “looking back...we should have had a charter before we began the work”.³⁷

Even had there been the foresight, there were few grounds for financial confidence. Indeed, since 1903, Fitzpatrick’s appeals to Ottawa, “almost without exception”, had been referred to the provinces. Their’s was the responsibility “to educate the people”, it was argued, since constitutionally,

31. FC 190, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 16 February 1922.

32. FC 189, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 28 October 1929.

33. FC 38, Johnston to Fitzpatrick (n.d., 1921-1922?); FC 37, McKay to Fitzpatrick, 13 October 1921.

34. FC 189, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 4 April 1924.

35. FC 38, Fitzpatrick to W.L. Mackenzie King, 11 November 1921.

36. FC 190, Bradwin to Fitzpatrick, 31 January, 14 February and (?) March 1922; Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 16 August 1922.

37. FC 140, Minutes of Annual Meeting, 23 May 1931.

Ottawa could not “assist directly in education”. In 1920, Ottawa had underlined that position by refusing to consider tax relief for private gifts to universities, or any other financial assistance for that matter.³⁸ Experience had likewise shown that Fitzpatrick could expect little more from the provinces. With the official adoption of the name “Frontier College” (first used in 1913) in favour of the original “Canadian Reading Camp Association” and new bye-laws (1918), provincial incorporation had been secured in May 1919 in the hope of demonstrating that Frontier College was “a teaching organization in the same sense as any other college”. Yet, in 1920, the College could not even get a hearing before Ontario’s Royal Commission on University Finances. It was not a provincially-chartered university.³⁹ Since there was no point in a provincial charter when the “situation” was a national one, a federal charter seemed logical. Indeed, Fitzpatrick had spied some interest in important circles in Ottawa. Capitalizing on the College’s work in the camps during the “red scare” in 1919, he offered the labourer-teacher in *The Instructor and the “Red”* as an antidote to the agitator. He also made representations to a number of federal agencies and even went so far as to suggest that federal funds for Frontier College might be channelled through the RCMP. However, recognizing the dangers of identification in that, he directed his efforts towards the Department of Labour. Fitzpatrick was also aware that his efforts had engendered “considerable interest” on Mackenzie King’s part, largely because of the campwork. Perhaps because of his own Presbyterian background and his past idealist outlook, King, when in the Department of Labour, promoted conciliation in labour affairs and had been friendly towards Fitzpatrick’s work since its inception. However, King would only go so far: he personally endorsed Fitzpatrick’s fund-raising efforts and vaguely hinted that the Liberal Party caucus would favourably consider federal financial aid;⁴⁰ but that was enough encouragement for Fitzpatrick. Although he would get his federal charter, there would be no federal assistance until 1936. Then, almost as a reward for the work of the labourer-teachers in the unemployment relief camps, a grant came out of the youth training funds of the Department of Labour.

Whatever the prospects of federal funding, the “situation” demanded of Frontier College the right teachers. The College’s fundamental objective as proclaimed in the charter (Article 6) was to promote education and “higher educational training and instruction for teachers and social workers among

38. FC 35, Fitzpatrick to L.A. Hamilton (Minister of Education of Ontario), 5 June 1920; Harris, *Higher Education in Canada*, p. 210.

39. FC 140, Minutes of Board of Governors, 25 April 1918 and 28 January 1919; *Revised Statutes of Ontario*, “An Act to Incorporate The Frontier College”, Ch. 178, 1919; FC 34, Fitzpatrick to Newton W. Rowell, 13 December 1919; FC 37, Fitzpatrick to Rev. H.J. Cody, 27 October 1922.

40. FC 34, Fitzpatrick to J.S. Skeaff, 6 October 1920; FC 37, Fitzpatrick to Beatty, 30 December 1920; National Archives of Canada, King Papers, n^o 51810, King to Fitzpatrick, 5 July 1921; FC 38, King to Fitzpatrick, 29 November 1921; FC 43, Fitzpatrick to Col. C.F. Hamilton, 21 February 1923 and Fitzpatrick to Hon. James Murdoch, 1 March 1923; *The Instructor and the “Red”* with the Nineteenth Annual Report of the Frontier College, 1919.

Canadian working-men and women and Canadian immigrants." Since workers and immigrants could be anywhere in Canada, a new approach was required to reach them. When presenting Mackenzie King with his case for a federal charter, Fitzpatrick emphasized the need for continuity of service. Summer vacation periods were too restrictive. Labourer-teachers were not available at the start and end of the camp season, and the universities would not allow their students to miss classes. At the same time, the "situation" also required "a new kind of teacher...whose hands are trained as well as his mind and soul and who possesses that intangible quality that gives leadership." Fine, as many university students proved as labourer-teachers, Fitzpatrick continually faced the "impossibility of finding ten undergraduates...who are good axemen". To Fitzpatrick, the ideal was to be able to train workers themselves as his own teachers, at their places of work, but until then, Frontier College needed to "educate and grant degrees to its own instructors", as well as to any workers able to reach the standard.⁴¹ The case for a federal charter for Frontier College was epitomized in the Annual Report for 1921, appropriately subtitled as the "Coming of Age" of a national institution. The College's objectives were: "To educate the worker and give him a fighting chance; to educate and citizenize the immigrant; to meet the 'Red' agitator on his own ground." Their realization, he argued, lay in diffusing education to the workers and immigrants at their places of work, using teachers like his labourer-teachers who genuinely approached the workers as their fellow men. At least since 1909, he had been arguing that the failure to do so would make of the foreign workers in the camps the most fertile soil for the sowing of the "red" seed, with the results, in 1919, for all to see. However much he personally abhorred the disruption, he understood why it existed and he believed that education would liberate men from the appeal of communism. The "red" ploy was never prominent in his arguments, however, and it played no part in his representations, whether to Mackenzie King, the federal government and Parliament, or to provincial premiers, ministers and educational officials, or to university presidents and professors. Rather, it represented a useful justification at the time for federal support for his college for working people which would, in the fullness of time, take its place as a major national institution of adult education.⁴²

Perhaps inevitably the future direction of the small and struggling institution that Frontier College actually was depended upon the drive of a determined visionary. Yet, support from labourer-teachers well versed in the "situation" suggested some realism. As one put it, it was up to Frontier College to

41. FC 38, Fitzpatrick to King, 11 November 1921; FC 199, Fitzpatrick to King, 30 March 1922; FC 190, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 16 February and (?) October 1922; Fitzpatrick, *University in Overalls*, pp. 112, 119; Marjorie E. Zavitz, "The Frontier College and 'Bolshevism' in the Camps of Canada, 1919-1925" (M.A., University of Windsor, 1974), details that subject.

42. *The Frontier College: 'Coming of Age'; Annual Report, 1921.*

“lead the band of university extension” and show how “the university could be taken to the people”. As Fitzpatrick saw it, the itinerant university lecturer was no more use at the workplace than the itinerant missionary. The way, urged Joseph Wearing and Roy Weaver, lay in a “big push for degree-granting power”.⁴³ Perhaps equally inevitable was fear for the future of such a bold venture. So disturbed was Sir Joseph Flavelle that the “dignity” of the campwork would consequently be lost to “an entirely different class” of activity that he refused to join the Board. He could also anticipate Ontario’s reaction. Even Bradwin never entirely shook the fear that Fitzpatrick, whose immaculately tailored suits and delicate, rimless glasses made him look “more like the principal of a ladies’ college than the principal of a bohunks”, would sacrifice the campwork on the altar of the degree. “Alfred, your work”, Jessie Lucas reported Bradwin to say, “I’ll go along with this university phase of the work if you don’t drop the labourer-teacher.” Fitzpatrick reassured him, of course, but Bradwin knew that once bitten with a vision, the “chief” would persist to the bitter end with the principle at stake.⁴⁴

Fitzpatrick’s first Ottawa foray proved deceptively without incident. Frontier College, he found, was highly esteemed wherever he went. There were many wellwishers and collaborators. None of the federal party leaders objected to his plans. King even spoke of burying a small grant in the Immigrations Department’s vote.⁴⁵ The critical clauses in the Bill were drafted by the Chief Clerk of Committees, who had also found the necessary precedent in the charter granted by the Dominion Government to the Church of England, in 1883, to establish the University of Saskatchewan in the North-west Territories (which became, in 1907, Emmanuel College in the provincially chartered University of Saskatchewan).⁴⁶ Significantly, Quebec parliamentarians raised no constitutional objections. However, one of Frontier College’s patrons and a financial supporter, Sir Edmund Osler, had to be called on to stifle charges of unconstitutionality emanating from certain Conservative M.P.’s from Toronto.⁴⁷ As one of those Nova Scotians (Jessie Lucas recalled) so adept at “pulling wires” and exploiting his Pictou County

43. FC 189, Memorandum by G.N. Luxton, January 1922; FC 38, Wearing to Fitzpatrick, 29 October 1921; FC 140, Minutes of Annual Meetings, 28 January 1919, 11 March 1920, 26 January 1921, 28 February 1922.

44. FC 41, Flavelle to Fitzpatrick, 22 March and 21 July 1922; Morrison interview with Jessie Lucas, 10 November 1974 (Tape n^o 4).

45. FC 41, Fitzpatrick to Flavelle, 20 July 1920. The Deputy Speaker of the Commons, Hon. George Gordon, who had been on the Board since its foundation, provided the political entrées at Ottawa: FC 40, Wearing to F.A. McGregor (King’s secretary), 20 March 1922; Charles Stewart (Minister of Immigration) to Gordon, 25 March 1922; Wearing to Fitzpatrick, 22 April 1922.

46. See Jean Murray, “The Early History of Emmanuel College”, *Saskatchewan History* (9, 1956), pp. 81-101, for the fate of that Bill (*Statutes of Canada*, Ch. 47, 1883).

47. FC 199, Senator F.L. Beique (Chairman, Senate Committee on Private Members’ Bills), 17 June 1922; FC 187, Fitzpatrick to Lucas, 23 May and 9 June 1922; FC 41, Fitzpatrick to Sir Edmund Osler, 2 June 1922; FC 55, Fitzpatrick to J.P. Bickell, 25 July 1929.

connections, Fitzpatrick persuaded his local representatives, E.M. McDonald, M.P., and Senator Charles Tanner, to sponsor the Bill. He also proved to be a master lobbyist. To him, there was "no disgrace" in expending "considerable elbow grease" to mobilize a national letter-writing campaign by his friends.⁴⁸ The *Frontier College Act* cleared Parliament in a month without a dissenting vote. Royal Assent was given on 28 June 1922. Surely, observed Bradwin, the provinces had been "caught napping".⁴⁹

Ontario had been caught unawares. The Minister of Education was too late to object to Ottawa. However, for Fitzpatrick to have proceeded without Ontario's blessing would be viewed, Bradwin feared, as an attempt to "thwart and defy" her. Fitzpatrick flatly refected the charge. By observing every legal requirement of public notification and parliamentary procedures, and by variously informing, without soliciting, the governments of Ontario, Quebec and Alberta without any objection, everything had been done in "the full light of day".⁵⁰ Consequently, he dared even to believe that "the coast was clear", until, that is, a "gunboat", in the form of Ontario's Deputy Minister, Dr. A.H.U. Colquhoun, "hove into sight" and fired the first salvos in a ten-year battle between Province and College. Colquhoun warned Fitzpatrick about his "big mistake" in relying on a precedent that the "best legal brains in Ontario" regarded as invalid. Even so, Colquhoun, an old friend and supporter, hinted at a compromise, wherein Frontier College could first secure Ontario's permission to operate. Since, Wearing advised, the same would have had to be repeated everywhere, that idea was rejected. There followed Colquhoun's delivery of a potentially mortal blow: he would not certify Ontario's grant for 1922 "until a definite conclusion is reached as to the College's desire to secure federal incorporation, which infringes upon provincial control of education".⁵¹ Fitzpatrick managed to keep the financially vulnerable College afloat by rallying powerful friends (Tom Moore, Newton W. Rowell, Joseph E. Atkinson of *The Toronto Star*, for example), and not a little help from

48. Morrison interview with Jessie Lucas, 23 October 1972 (Tape n^o 4); FC 40, Fitzpatrick to E.M. McDonald, 22 May 1923; FC 43, Fitzpatrick to Canon Emile Chartier, 18 May 1923; FC 41, Fitzpatrick to Ira A. MacKay, 1 May 1922 and to Dr. H.J. Toupin, 4 December 1922.

49. FC 187, Bradwin to Fitzpatrick, 8 June 1922. The parliamentary passage of Bill 68 can be traced in Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, First Session, 14th Parliament, 12-13 Geo. V, 1922, Vols. II and III. pp. 1334, 1487, 2207; and Senate, *Debates*, in the same session, pp. 279, 303, 324.

50. FC 60, Bradwin to Wearing, 17 March 1922; FC 187, Bradwin to Fitzpatrick, 8 June 1922; FC 35, Fitzpatrick to Hon. L.A. Hamilton (Ontario), 5 June 1920; FC 37, Fitzpatrick to Hon. George Smith (Alberta), 28 February 1921; FC 40, Fitzpatrick to Hon. L.A. Taschereau (Quebec), 15 May 1922. Parliamentary notice appeared in *The Mail and Empire*, inter alia, on 18 May 1922.

51. FC 187, Lucas (telegram) to Fitzpatrick, 25 May 1922; FC 190, Bradwin to Fitzpatrick, 10 June 1922; FC 40, Colquhoun to Fitzpatrick, 29 May and 15 June 1922, and Wearing to Fitzpatrick, 31 May 1922.

Calquhoun himself, for a direct appeal to the Premier and Minister.⁵² Those tactics would succeed again, but they could not always be relied upon, and therein lay Fitzpatrick's ultimate destruction at Ontario's hands.

The universities had also failed to make their objections stand in the first round. Prime Minister King cabled requests from H.M. Tory and Sir Robert Falconer for a delay until after the ensuing annual universities' conference, and they, also, were too late to present their case at Ottawa. Despite Fitzpatrick's fear that "those reactionaries", Tory and Falconer, would place the issue "in a drab light", nothing came out of the conference either.⁵³ An admirer of Fitzpatrick's campwork, Falconer deplored the College's "mistaken policy" of seeking to grant degrees for which "it ought to get powers as the rest of us do — from the Province". Fitzpatrick knew the futility of that, of course. Moreover, from where he stood, the University of Toronto would never be able to "overtake one-tenth of the work for it to do...Canada can surely sustain one national university, devoted to the interests of men so long neglected. There need be no cause of friction."⁵⁴ He persisted, therefore, in the "hunch" that Sir Robert will come around after a while and... 'recognise' the Frontier College." In the meantime, there was no choice but to "fight until the war is over." Eventually, he believed, "our little institution will come into its own". There could be "no question but that Frontier College has a big future."⁵⁵

Just how big a future Fitzpatrick foresaw for a working people's college became clear upon his return to Ottawa, in 1923, to secure power for "The Frontier University". His vision was of an institution, in Canada, emulating "in a small way" the University of London and offering external degrees in those frontier-relevant fields of forestry, mining, engineering and medicine. This time, the universities were ready and stopped him. Their petition, presented by Tory and Frank Adams of McGill, rested on conventional educational grounds: if the arts degree could be granted only after "a continuous course of study occupying every day of the week for four academic sessions",

52. FC 199, Rowell to Hon. G.H. Grant (Minister of Education of Ontario), 20 April 1922, and Grant to Fitzpatrick, 19 July 1922. Appeals directly to the Premier, such as in FC 43, Fitzpatrick to Hon. E.C. Drury, 20 March 1923, were almost invariably accompanied by a series of letters to newspaper editors, sympathetic editorials and a letter-writing campaign, but usually, success relied upon Colquhoun's work behind the scenes: FC 43, Fitzpatrick to Colquhoun, 15 October 1923.

53. University of Toronto Archives, Falconer Papers, Box 81, Tory to Falconer, 1 June 1922; FC 187, Bradwin to Fitzpatrick, 8 June 1922. The meeting of the National Conference of Canadian Universities at Winnipeg on 16 June 1922 is in their *Proceedings* (1922), p. 22, and Gwendoline Pilkington, "A History of the National Conference of Canadian Universities" (Ph.D., University of Toronto, 1974), pp. 114-115.

54. FC 41, Fitzpatrick to Falconer, 1 June 1922, and Falconer to Fitzpatrick, 2 June 1922.

55. FC 187, Fitzpatrick to Lucas, 9 June 1922; FC 40, Fitzpatrick to Wearing, 15 September 1922.

then, the authority to grant degrees in even more protracted programmes, which required faculty, library, laboratory and hospital facilities that Frontier College could not hope to provide, was “subversive” of those very standards that the universities had striven for a century to establish.⁵⁶ Fitzpatrick noted darkly how those attendance requirements, “so carefully enumerated”, denied access to “all but the most fortunate”, and he launched another of his lobbying campaigns on behalf of “the working classes who have hitherto been shut out from the privilege of higher education”.⁵⁷ However, just as the universities eschewed the extramural degree and offered no alternative to their traditional instructional methods in order to deliver programmes to people remote from the university, Fitzpatrick did not explain how he proposed to deliver his own professional programmes. Despite his patent sincerity, he “dismally failed”, protested one senator, to convince even the favourably disposed of the wisdom of his ambitions. He had over-reached himself.⁵⁸

Even more threatening was the universities’ success in calling into question the political wisdom and the constitutional validity of the original *Frontier College Act* itself. Fitzpatrick’s constitutional advisor was Ira A. MacKay, a distinguished scholar of Canadian constitutional law and Dean of Arts at McGill (but also a Pictou neighbour and family friend). MacKay illuminated the common fallacy that the usual canons of interpretation of the separation of powers in Sections 91 and 92 of the *British North America Act* could be extended to Section 93. That section, he explained, empowered the federal government to protect minorities and resolve disputes over separate schools, none of which was affected “in the remotest possible degree” by the powers of the *Frontier College Act*. Besides, the Dominion had the power to incorporate educational institutions, just as it could incorporate any enterprise with Dominion-wide dimensions. The universities and the provinces, he asserted, did not have a constitutional leg to stand on.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, further consideration of Fitzpatrick’s case was killed. When the Act was referred for an opinion to the Justice Department, the Deputy Minister found the charter’s validity “questionable”. While in his view, the Act “may...be...ultra vires” of the Dominion’s authority by reason of Section 93, he also acknowledged that provincial educational powers did not “necessarily exclude a power in the Dominion to incorporate a body promoting or imparting education.”⁶⁰ Fitzpatrick withdrew rather than face floor fight in Parliament or the black mark of defeat. As Wearing saw it, Fitzpatrick was “playing merry h— with

56. FC 185, Tory and Adams to Hon. A.B. Copp (Secretary of State), 23 April 1923; N.C.C.U., *Proceedings* (1923), p. 11 and Pilkington, “History of the N.C.C.U.”, p. 115.

57. FC 185, Fitzpatrick to Lucas, 12 May 1923; FC 43, Fitzpatrick to Senator Charles Tanner, 13 March 1923.

58. FC 185, Senator W.A. Griesbach to Johnston, 7 May 1923, and Senator G.H. Bradbury to F. Heap, 27 April 1923.

59. C 185, MacKay to Fitzpatrick, 10 May 1923. Wearing, as a lawyer, agreed: FC 40, Wearing to Fitzpatrick, 31 May 1923.

60. FC 55, Newcombe to Chief Clerk of Committees, 1 May and 23 May 1923.

the Constitution generally and you are likely to get to the Privy Council before you are through",⁶¹ but Newcombe's tacit invitation to the provinces to challenge the *Frontier College Act* in the courts was never taken up.

Time, Fitzpatrick hoped, would be on his side. The very idea of an extramural degree aimed at the atypical, working student was unconventional enough, but one promoted by such an unestablished institution as Frontier College, Fitzpatrick was well aware, might "seem like a very pretentious scheme". Thus, the judicial legitimization of the federal charter would have helped; indeed, Frontier College would have been unique in Canada. However, he craved the recognition of the established, provincially-chartered universities and that required their acceptance of the extramural degree. Identifying his constituency as those working people not otherwise served by the universities, he understood that "to give the worker a fighting chance, the need for the diffusion of education into their territory is urgent and imperative." In the five-year life of the degree, though, there was no time for working people to become candidates. Most candidates were rather like Fitzpatrick himself, something that he came to rue, since they probably could have availed themselves of more conventional degree programmes. Thus, clergymen constituted the three embarking on the M.A. and nine of the eleven B.A. candidates. The one completed M.A. (1930) was earned by the principal of a United Church theological college in Stanstead, Quebec, and one of the two B.A.'s granted in 1927 went to an Anglican Church minister from York Mills, Ontario. On the other hand, for fear of antagonizing the universities, the enrolment of university students or labourer-teachers was actively discouraged. However, Charles G.D. Longmore, a veteran of ten year's experience as a labourer-teacher and supervisor who also earned his B.A. in 1927, was more the typical candidate envisaged by Fitzpatrick. In its short life, the programme attracted 121 enquiries and 17 enrolments. Even that response established the need. Eventually, worker candidates could have emerged. Within 10 years of its inception, though, Fitzpatrick's dream of a worker's degree was dead.⁶²

To reassure the universities, the public and provincial educational authorities, Fitzpatrick promised the "highest possible personnel and efficiency" and that "no cheap degrees [would be] conferred."⁶³ As Ira McKay had warned, it was crucial that the inaugural calendar should make the right impression on the universities. Thus, it was "highly inadvisable if not imperative" that the proposed Board of Examiners should be as "formidable" as

61. FC 43, Fitzpatrick to Chartier, 18 May 1923; FC 185, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 20 May 1923; FC 45, Wearing to Fitzpatrick, 14 August 1923.

62. *Annual Report, 1921*, FC 185, "Full Report on the University Phase of Frontier College Work up to 1930, prepared by Registrar [Jessie Lucas] for filing". The M.A. was earned by the Rev. Thomas B. Moody, the B.A. by Rev. A.C. McCollom. The second non-clergyman B.A. candidate was an editorial writer for the *Regina Leader-Post*.

63. FC 184, Fitzpatrick to G.A. Pendleton, 23 October 1928; FC 40, Fitzpatrick to Colquhoun, 9 August 1924.

possible and that the academic standards had in fact to be equivalent to those of the "recognised" universities.⁶⁴ At the same time, however, the operation of the programme had to be cheap if there were to be wide access. Fitzpatrick was therefore persuaded by such considerations of prestige and economy to dispense with early ideas of building up a permanent faculty around the likes of Bradwin (then on a doctoral programme at Columbia) and to establish a Board of Examiners of "no equal" composed of the "outstanding members" and "senior" men and enough heads of department in the existing universities to satisfy the most demanding skeptic. A galaxy of academic talent, "beyond reproach" and "internationally known", was the result.⁶⁵

Fitzpatrick's collaborators were certainly senior and included twenty-four presidents, deans, department heads and full professors. There were two presidents (H.P. MacPherson, examiner in Latin, Saint Francis Xavier; and Cecil Jones, examiner in Mathematics, New Brunswick) and two deans (MacKay, Arts, McGill; and C.D. Howe, Forestry, Toronto). Two were college principals (John Millar, examiner in Religion, St. Stephen's College, University of Alberta; and M. Cummings, examiner in Agriculture, Nova Scotia College of Agriculture). Another, Carl Dawson, examiner in Sociology, was the director of McGill's new School for Social Workers. Most were full professors and department heads. Five others headed public institutions or government research departments. Many were also established scholars. Two were Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada (H.L. Stewart, examiner in Psychology; and Charles G.D. Roberts, examiner in English) and a third was a Fellow of the Royal Economics Society (editor of *The Canada Yearbook*, S.A. Cudmore, examiner in Economics). Eleven held honorary doctorates from well-known Canadian and American universities. Among the nineteen full professors, three held endowed chairs (Stewart, George Munro Professor of Philosophy at Dalhousie; Ira MacKay, examiner in Philosophy, the Frothingham Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at McGill; and W.L. Phelps, examiner in English, the Lampson Professor of English at Yale). Only nine, mostly in Agriculture, did not hold doctorates in their disciplines. Thirty Canadian and three American universities were represented on the Board of Examiners.

These names lent prestige to Fitzpatrick's enterprise, but their motivations were as varied as their number. Some were drawn by their personal regard for and association with Fitzpatrick, such as MacKay, his neighbour from Pictou, and Roberts, another Maritimer, or Ray Dearle (examiner in Physics and Professor at Western Ontario), a former labourer-teacher and supervisor. Some, perhaps, were motivated by their sense of Christian duty towards their fellow men, while others had emerged from humble

64. FC 43, MacKay to Fitzpatrick, 14 January 1924.

65. FC 190, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 26 January 1922; FC 187, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 28 August 1922; FC 40, Fitzpatrick to Wearing, 15 September 1922; FC 41, Fitzpatrick to MacKay, 21 May 1924; FC 191, Fitzpatrick to G.H. Ferguson, 30 November 1930.

backgrounds themselves and may have felt some guilt about their new, privileged lives. Some, perhaps without even fully comprehending the educational implications of their decisions, succumbed to Fitzpatrick's lobbying. Several even joined despite the opposition of their presidents, like Dawson and MacKay at McGill, and Howe and members of St. Michael's, University and Victoria Colleges at Toronto. Some even, like Roy Fraser (examiner in Biology and Professor at Mount Allison) shared Fitzpatrick's commitment to the "democracy of education" and "equality of opportunities" for all citizens.⁶⁶ Whatever their personal motivations, Fitzpatrick had exposed a well of moral and philosophical, if not institutional, support within the very heart of the Canadian academic establishment.

By aiming for representation primarily from the larger, provincially-supported institutions, Fitzpatrick hoped for acceptance, of course, but he also secured the response of a genuinely national enterprise to a national problem that could not have come from the provincial universities. His success was striking in the Atlantic (Dalhousie; Saint Francis Xavier; New Brunswick), Ontario (Toronto; Western; and McMaster) and Pacific regions (the University of British Columbia provided H. Mack Eastman and his successor as Professor of History, Walter N. Sage, as examiners in History). However, a notable failure was the absence of his beloved alma mater. There, O.D. Skelton, of whom Bradwin had been a former student, opposed the federal charter.⁶⁷ Only in the prairies did he fare badly, although he had had an initial success with the University of Manitoba's Professor of English, A.W. Crawford. On the other hand, Fitzpatrick's acute sensitivity to French-language interests, with respect of both examiners and programmes, gathered in all the major institutions of Quebec (McGill; Montreal; and Laval) as well as Ontario's francophone University of Ottawa. In addition, Gustave Lanctôt, Dominion Archivist of French material, examined in the course in the History of the French Regime. Indeed, by so melding all the regional, national, linguistic and denominational features of the country, Frontier College was, said MacKay, "a characteristically Canadian venture".⁶⁸

Fitzpatrick's failure in the prairie universities came despite the fact that Presidents Walter Murray of Saskatchewan and H.M. Tory of Alberta were potentially kindred spirits of Fitzpatrick. Not only was Murray a Maritimer, a Presbyterian and formerly the idealist Professor of Philosophy at Dalhousie,

66. FC 184, Fraser to Fitzpatrick, 4 October 1924. Joining Fitzpatrick from the University of Toronto were Rev. Henry Carr, Professor of Greek and History of Philosophy at St. Michael's College, Eric Owen, Professor of Greek at University College, and Rev. J.W. MacMillan, Professor of Sociology at Victoria.

67. FC 41, Fitzpatrick to Skelton, 1 April 1922, and Skelton to Fitzpatrick, 18 April 1922. Fitzpatrick's representative at McMaster was Paul Mueller, Professor of German.

68. FC 184, MacKay to Fitzpatrick, 2 July 1924. Fitzpatrick's examiner in French was Henri Jasmin, Professor of Romance Languages at the University of Montreal; Rosario Benoit, from Laval, examined in History; Professor H.D. Brosseau, examiner in Religion, was at the University of Ottawa.

but he claimed education for his religion. Despite Murray's assurance of neutrality should any of his faculty choose to join Fitzpatrick, Ira MacKay, who had been Murray's student at Dalhousie and his appointee to positions in Philosophy and Law at Saskatchewan, warned of Murray's secret obstruction. Nor could MacKay claim any influence over his former mentor. Not only had he been embroiled in a bitter dispute over Murray's administration, but his association with Frontier College upon moving to McGill did not help. Indeed, the University of Saskatchewan's provincial charter had been complicated by that very 1883 federal legislation for the Church of England's university from which had come the precedent for the *Frontier College Act*. Most importantly, Murray was as strong a proponent of the single, central, provincial university providing all services, including the extension as his friend and neighbour in Alberta, H.M. Tory.⁶⁹ Tory had had as humble Nova Scotian beginnings in neighbouring Guysborough County as Fitzpatrick in Pictou. He had had as great a struggle to attend McGill as Fitzpatrick at Queen's. Appreciating the social role of his university, Tory had told his new extension director, E.A. Corbett, in 1923: "What you've got to do is find a way to take the University to the people." That philosophy had resulted in the first Canadian extension programme on the Wisconsin model, but it did not encompass an extensive extramural degree programme. Fitzpatrick was convinced that much of A.E. Ottewell's success as an adult educator at Alberta had arisen from his experience as a labourer-teacher on a railway-gang back in 1911. Nevertheless, Fitzpatrick would not even approach Tory. Nor did Tory ever waver in his opposition to Frontier College.⁷⁰

Fitzpatrick did not help his case by obtaining some of his examiners from non-academic, and some non-Canadian, institutions, however reputable. When he could not find established academics, like Skelton in Economics, he turned to S.A. Cudmore at the Dominion Bureau of Statistics and made Bradwin his associate examiner. To secure a representative in Saskatchewan, he appointed the director of the provincial experimental farm. His use of other examiners from federal agencies at Ottawa may have enhanced Frontier College's national image. His American associates were distinguished scholars (Phelps from Yale and Professors Edward A. Ross of Wisconsin and Ernest W. Burgess of Chicago, both in Sociology) and they may have helped to create

69. FC 41, MacKay to Bradwin (n.d.) and Fitzpatrick to MacKay, 24 November 1924. On Murray's presidency and the disputes about the University's charter and with Ira MacKay, see Michael Hayden, *Seeking a Balance: The University of Saskatchewan, 1907-1982* (Vancouver, 1983), pp. 16-32, 53-54, 85-115; Murray, "Early History of Emmanuel College".

70. On Tory's career at Alberta, see Corbett, *Henry Marshall Tory, Beloved Canadian*; Kidd, "Influence of Dr. H.M. Tory..." (M.A., 1944); W.H. Johns, *A History of the University of Alberta, 1908-1969* (Edmonton, 1981). On Tory's role in university extension, see E.A. Corbett, "Dr. Henry Marshall Tory" in H. Rouillard (ed.), *Pioneers in Adult Education* (Toronto, 1954), pp. 22-27; E.K. Broadhus, "Small Beginnings (1935)" in Kidd, *Learning and Society*, pp. 45-50. On Ottewell, see Corbett, "A.E. Ottewell" in Rouillard, *Pioneers*, pp. 70-76; *We Have With Us Tonight* (Toronto, 1957), pp. 4-5, 24-28).

more of an international image. Canadian academic circles, however, viewed such moves with hostility. That hostility had influenced the refusal of Fitzpatrick's friend, Dean W.S. McLay at McMaster, to join the team.⁷¹ On the other hand, Charles G.D. Roberts, one of Fitzpatrick's earliest contributors and a member of the Frontier College Board of Governors, was ready to assist "that most original and interesting institution, The Frontier College!"⁷²

By the standards of the day, Frontier College was original and the press recognized it as such upon the appearance of the calendar for the inaugural session (1925-1926).⁷³ Central to Fitzpatrick's thinking was the association of work with study and no other institution deliberately linked the two academically. The degrees were designed for those "earning a living" and M.A. candidates had to be at least thirty years old. The programme was explicitly aimed at those located "in the homestead, farm, camp, shop, and other unprovided situations generally" and avoided competition with the established universities. To Fitzpatrick, "a background of experience in the practical activities of life" was the essence of education. Thus, degrees were "related to everyday life". M.A. candidates were to conduct research in such "vital subjects as settlement, immigration, unemployment, conservation and reforestation" with theses based upon original research and the candidates' "own experience in field work and during successive years in some definite vocation." By relating courses and requirements to Canadian realities, the B.A. degree was also unusual. In recognition of one Canadian reality, the provision of courses in each of Field, Animal and Poultry Husbandry and of Horticulture and Agricultural Engineering made Agriculture one of the strongest programme areas. However, it was the compulsory requirement of Biology in the first year of the B.A. and Forestry in the second which was distinctive. The compulsory French-language requirement and the place accorded to the history of French Canada was unknown in the English language universities at the time. Such requirements had their practical dimension, but they also made Frontier College extraordinary for the day in its acknowledgement of the "national" and "Canadian" characteristics of the people which the institution aspired to serve. The degrees were also "open": they alone, in North America, could be completed entirely by correspondence. Instructional assistance, occasionally available from resident instructors in remote locations, would compensate those unable to attend a regular university, while the absence of

71. FC 184, Dean W.S.W. McLay (McMaster) to Fitzpatrick, 14 March 1929. In addition to Cudmore and Lanctôt, Fitzpatrick's examiners from Ottawa were Cyril J. Watson, examiner in Chemistry, from the Dominion Experimental Farm and Morley Wilson, examiner in Geology and Mineralogy, from the Dominion Geological Survey.

72. FC 184, Roberts to Phelps, 3 May 1929.

73. Positive press reviews were seen, inter alia, in Toronto (*The Globe*, 23 September 1925; *Mail and Empire*, 26 September 1925), Montreal (*Family Herald*, 14 October 1925; *La Patrie*, 28 November 1925; *La Presse*, 24 March 1926), Winnipeg (*Winnipeg Tribune*, 21 October 1925), and in trade journals such as *Industrial Canada*, November 1925, and in church organs like *The New Outlook*, 4 November 1925.

the residential experience of university attendance would be more than regained through "contact with men" and the self-discipline of homestudy and the working experience. The programme also had the benefit of being cheap (\$5 tuition and \$10 examination fees per course) and convenient, since the candidate could enrol at any time, and examinations could be written in English or French anywhere in Canada, three times a year, upon six weeks' notice. All scholarships, bursaries and prizes were reserved for those engaged in labouring, studying and teaching.⁷⁴ The intent of making the degree accessible to working people anywhere in Canada was, therefore, apparent.

Yet, the degree could not be too unconventional if there were to be a chance of "bringing round" the likes of Falconer and Tory. Matriculation was as for any recognized Commonwealth or American university. Preparatory courses, which might have helped some underprepared working students, were not offered, at least for a start. Apart from the Biology, Forestry and French requirements, the remainder in English, Latin or Greek, and Mathematics (until 1927, two other Arts or Science subjects could have been substituted for each of the latter two), as well as common third and fourth concentration requirements, made for a conventional Canadian B.A. degree of the 1920's. There were no concessions to the working man on that score. Therefore, Fitzpatrick hoped, too, that the rigours of the curriculum would satisfy the universities. The constraints of the extramural degree, delivering instruction through correspondence, meant that a full offering of courses in the humanities and social sciences was possible, but only the introductory levels in the sciences and agriculture. In view of Fitzpatrick's frustrated ambitions in the direction of professional programmes, he probably had ideas of remedying that weakness once the programme became well established. For the present, however, Fitzpatrick, who designed the programme himself and wrote some of the course outlines for the examiners' approval, was determined that the content, the reading and writing requirements, and the examining standards would satisfy the demands of any Canadian university. C.D. Howe's employment of the same Forestry course as he used in Toronto's extension programme indicated the desired standard. There were important differences, however. As MacKay had emphasized, each course had to be designed with "a certain breadth of completeness in itself", since "many of our students will fall by the way". From the very outset, it was expected that very few would ever get beyond the first or second years.⁷⁵ By no means was it a "cheap" degree. The principle of access was the thing.

74. Frontier College, *Calendar*, First Session, 1925-1926, pp. 5-28, 33-36. Financial aid to a total of \$3,225 came from the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways and *The Toronto Star*.

75. FC 184, Fitzpatrick to Cudmore, 9 December 1924, and Roberts to Phelps, 3 May 1929. University of Toronto Archives, Howe Papers, Box 4, contains the correspondence between Howe and Fitzpatrick and the Director of Extension (Dunlop), while Box 5 contains examination papers and various correspondence relating to candidates and fees.

The completion of two B.A.'s in 1927, a significant event both for Frontier College and in Canadian adult education, did not advance the principle, however. Fitzpatrick decided against a convocation. It was, he thought, "better not to begin with a blaze of trumpets" and antagonize the universities.⁷⁶ His caution was in vain, however. While John Millar at St. Stephen's was prepared to accept theological candidates presenting the B.A. (Frontier College), McMaster refused to accept the degree and rejected Charles Longmore's application for graduate study. Worse for Fitzpatrick, the United Church Board of Education faithfully reflected the universities' philosophy by demanding "attendance of every candidate for the ministry at college for four years leading to the B.A. degree before taking the theological course". In short, the Frontier College B.A. was not "equivalent of the standard set up by the United Church".⁷⁷ Nor was any extramural degree, therefore. Later, in 1933, the University of Toronto's Council of the Faculty of Arts would arrange for those two 1927 graduates to receive Toronto's B.A. *ad eundem gradum* upon completing their M.A., but neither did.⁷⁸ Thus, the B.A.'s disappeared without recognition. They had not gone unnoticed, however. At the 1928 "Matriculation Conference" of the Ontario universities, both the charter's legality and the degrees' validity were challenged. President W.S. Fox of the University of Western Ontario was commissioned to investigate. The universities, however, did nothing, "not wish[ing] to appear before the people of Canada as endeavouring to thwart Frontier College", according to Bradwin's report of the meeting with Fox. Yet, Fox's request to Ray Dearle, his head of Physics, to withhold his name from the Frontier College's Committee on Standings coincided with Crawford's resignation under pressure from Manitoba's president and with Fitzpatrick's failure to secure McMaster's W.S.W. McLay as a replacement owing to presidential opposition. Thus, Ray Dearle's advice landed "like a bomb...in our midst", said Jessie Lucas. "[T]rouble [was] brewing."⁷⁹

The trouble was the government of Ontario. G. Howard Ferguson, Premier and Minister of Education, intervened directly and decisively, with full cabinet support, on account of the constitutional objections "properly raised by the Universities of Ontario". Cancelling Frontier College's 1929 grant, Ferguson delivered a blow to the vitals. Ontario's financial support

76. FC 51, Fitzpatrick to Rev. L.L. Young, 8 July 1927.

77. FC 184, Millar to Fitzpatrick, 25 January 1927; FC 185, Rev. J.W. Graham (Secretary, United Church of Canada Board of Education) to Fitzpatrick, 22 January 1929; FC 191, Lucas to Fitzpatrick, 14 March 1931.

78. University of Toronto Archives, A71-006/004, Meeting of the Council of the Faculty of Arts, 4 December 1933, pp. 1167-1168, and 24 September 1934, p. 1256. The clergyman did not bother while Longmore, preoccupied with Frontier College's financial crisis, did not complete: Morrison interview with Jessie Lucas, 29 January 1973 (Tape n° 7).

79. FC 140, Minutes of Annual Meeting, 16 June 1920; FC 184, Crawford to Fitzpatrick, 7 August 1928; McLay to Wearing, 14 March 1929; Dearle to Fitzpatrick, 8 April 1929; FC 188, Lucas to Fitzpatrick, 22 January 1929.

(\$28,000 between 1924 and 1928),⁸⁰ Fitzpatrick allowed, had always been "more a political question than a departmental one". Fitzpatrick had always managed to stay afloat from year to year because his friends' political influence at Queen's Park and Colquhoun's assistance behind the scenes in the Department of Education to "railroad the Frontier College grant through". However, the process was "infinitely worse than slavery", Fitzpatrick complained. "No man who has never financed in such conditions has any conception of that hell and fire" entailed in such a precarious financial existence. Once again, he turned to friends, like Flavelle, for there was "no man in Canada whose friendly suggestion would count for more than yours".⁸¹ He spat at the university "caputs" for "kicking" Frontier College and creating a "closed corps" which had made "equality of opportunity in education non-existent in Canada". However, the "hitch", protested Principal Bruce Taylor of Queen's, was not with the universities, now secure in the knowledge of decisive provincial action. Flavelle, therefore, was persuaded to let matters take their own course.⁸² Ferguson claimed to be "at a loss" to understand Fitzpatrick's purpose in "attempting to invade the provincial jurisdiction without in any way advising the Province". The now outraged Fitzpatrick could not understand how Ferguson could claim ignorance: he had given proper notice back in 1922; and he had personally sent the first Calendar directly to Ferguson, who, in turn, had personally acknowledged its receipt. Nor could he understand how Ferguson could decide without warning and "contrary to all principles of honour that the grant should be cut off after seven years on the pretext of the charter." Ferguson was adamant. Ontario's approval of Frontier College's right to grant degrees in that province had first to be secured. Of that, of course, there was no guarantee whatever.⁸³

Responsibility and control was the issue. Ontario had expressed no doubts about the academic standards of the degree, but, surely, Ferguson told the mediating Canon H.J. Cody, Ontario could not have "a lot of universities springing up all over the Province, particularly when we have no voice in the powers conferred by their charters." Ferguson was especially mindful that Ontario would end up paying for Ottawa's creatures anyway. Fitzpatrick had demonstrated that Ontario's grant went entirely to the camp work and the degree programme was self-supporting, but that was not enough for Ferguson.

80. Ontario Archives, Department of Education Files (hereafter cited as Ontario, Education), 182/2, 1934 Memorandum by Colquhoun for Ferguson, 7 June 1929; and Memorandum by the Chief Accountant, 26 June 1929.

81. FC 187, Fitzpatrick to 'F.C.', 15 May 1924; FC 188, Fitzpatrick to Colquhoun, 5 April 1928; FC 55, Fitzpatrick to Flavelle, 30 May 1929.

82. FC 61, Fitzpatrick to Flavelle, 17 April 1931; FC 184, Taylor to Fitzpatrick, 6 February 1930.

83. Ontario, Education, 182/2, 1934, Ferguson to Fitzpatrick, 10 June 1929; FC 58, Fitzpatrick to Colquhoun, 9 August 1929. The Calendar is in Ontario Archives, Premier's Files, Ferguson Papers, Box 63, as is Ferguson's acknowledgement to Fitzpatrick of 22 September 1925.

Since Flavelle had learned Ontario feared that by going to Ottawa, Fitzpatrick could then “avoid the restrictions imposed by Ontario’s education authorities”, there was no point in Fitzpatrick’s even entertaining compromises of any kind, “unless [he was] prepared to agree to the views of the Department of Education”.⁸⁴ Ferguson’s successor, George S. Henry, reinforced that position. He refused to receive petitions from Wearing and other prominent Fitzpatrick supporters like S.D. Chown and J.P. Bickell. Nor would he entertain any suggestion of testing the charter’s validity in the courts. Aware that there was some internal wavering at Frontier College, Henry was absolute in his demand. No more grants would be forthcoming until the Frontier College’s degree power was “definitely and unequivocally” renounced.⁸⁵

Frontier College’s pretensions in higher education affronted Ontario’s perceptions of responsibility for her own citizen’s educational needs. Indeed, Ferguson had his own educational agenda and would not be found wanting by the likes of Frontier College. As he had told Flavelle, his ministerial duty was to bring “the greatest advantage to the largest number of people...[and] make available advanced educational facilities in every section of the Province...”⁸⁶ Since only six percent of Ontario’s school children even reached secondary levels, Ferguson promoted rural school consolidation. Fitzpatrick applauded the province’s innovation of the peripatetic “schools on wheels” in northern districts. Acutely aware that the University of Toronto drew 80 percent of its enrolment from within 30 miles (50 percent from within the city itself), Ferguson was highly disposed to regional, especially northern, demands for the extension of the university access. Equally, he was acutely cost conscious in those economically depressed times. Since provincial assistance to the University alone surpassed the total for the entire provincial school system, he was also anxious that Queen’s and McMaster — much less Frontier College — should not also become provincial charges. He was very sympathetic, therefore, to proposals advanced by provincial educational officials like Dr. F.W. Merchant to transfer the first year, and even the second, of the four year pass degree to the collegiate institutes and high schools. Such notions had surfaced at both the Royal Commission on University Finances (1921) and more explicitly in the Select Commission on the University of Toronto (1922-1923). The universities were no more disposed towards that method for increasing access to higher education that they were to Frontier College’s. In 1931, they reduced the pass degree to three years and added a year to the

84. FC 58, Cody to Ferguson, 18 September 1929; Ferguson to Fitzpatrick, 13 January 1930; Johnston to Ferguson, 25 January 1930; Ferguson to Fitzpatrick, 14 August 1930; FC 61, Flavelle to Fitzpatrick, 15 May 1931.

85. FC 60, Wearing, Chown and Bickell to Henry, 3, 14 and 15 January 1931; Ontario, Education, 182/2, 1934, Henry to Fitzpatrick, 21 February 1931.

86. Ferguson to Flavelle, 12 January 1927, quoted in Edward E. Stewart, “The Role of the Provincial Government in the Development of the Universities of Ontario, 1791-1964” (Ed.D., University of Toronto, 1970), p. 385.

requirements for admission to both the pass degree and the four year honours degree by demanding senior matriculation thereafter. As for increased access, therefore, between 1920 and 1945, Ontario's 18-to-21-year-olds attending university increased only from 3.94 percent to 4.78 percent, and Ontario did not charter another university (Carleton College) until 1952. Nevertheless, province and universities could, for the moment and for different reasons, combine against an educationally unorthodox and federally chartered intruder.⁸⁷

The combination was fatal to the extramural degree. It was very nearly fatal to Frontier College itself. The debt approached \$30,000 by the summer of 1930. So devastating was the loss of \$22,500 of Ontario's grants that the labourer-teachers out in the camps could not even be paid their summer stipends. Fitzpatrick vowed never to "sell our souls for a mess of pottage". Somehow, he would "keep the ship afloat". Bank and personal loans were secured. Cheques were "kited". He "count[ed] the days" until other, smaller, provincial grants arrived "like manna from Heaven." A \$3,000 grant from the C.N.R. staved off bankruptcy, but Fitzpatrick's readiness to rename the College "Macauley University" (after T.B. of Sun Life) or, six months later, "Flavelle University", upon their endowing college, told the true desperation.⁸⁸ The tension nearly destroyed a personal association of 30 years. Bradwin, seeking "fair co-operation" with Ontario by compromising on "non-essentials", entreated Fitzpatrick not "to seize the sword and claymore". Bradwin's attempt to speak plainly about the financial hopelessness resulted in their only bitter exchange and Fitzpatrick's angry demand for Bradwin's resignation. Bradwin retreated in holiday and walked the streets for a month. In great personal distress, Bradwin contemplated disaster. "Fitzpatrick, who has fizzled in financing and is crazy on publicity — Has taken the Field from me entirely — the only thing that was in good shape." Bradwin, who had devoted himself to the campwork, who had written the *Handbook For New Canadians*, but who had always deferred to the "chief", could now foresee his own head going into the basket at the hands of a Board loyal to the Fitzpatrick who had appointed them. The distracted Fitzpatrick pleaded with Bradwin not to be surprised "if some inarticulate gurgling sounds were emitted from my throat in anticipation of the day you would fit the noose on my neck and pull it and the charter would be gone forever."⁸⁹

87. Stewart, "Universities of Ontario", pp. 343-362, 375, 385-409, and Peter G. Oliver, *G. Howard Ferguson: Ontario Tory* (Toronto, 1977), pp. 241-249, 321-325, 328-331. See also R.M. Stamp, "Schools on Wheels: The Railway Car Schools of Northern Ontario", *Canada: An Historical Magazine* (1, Spring 1971), pp. 34-42.

88. FC 191, Lucas to Bradwin, 21 August 1929; Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 2 and 28 August 1930; FC 188, Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 2 April 1930; FC 59, A.D. Willis to Macauley, 3 October 1930; FC 61, Fitzpatrick to Flavelle, 17 April 1931.

89. FC 188, Bradwin to E. Collins, 9 May 1931; Fitzpatrick to Bradwin, 21 April and 7 May 1931.

Bradwin had supported the degree, provided that the labourer-teachers were not threatened, until Premier Henry's ultimatum. He decided that the College had to be saved from its begetter who was by then, in his own words, engaged "in the fight of my life". In a six-paged epistle to Wearing, he called for a "vital reorganisation if this thing is going to get off the rocks". Since the courts could always have ruled on the degree, the central issue, in his judgement, was whether the College was still "a one-man institution", when so many others had gone through "fire and water" for the work. "In the end, Frontier College and the labourer-teacher is the main thing." Wearing, the once enthusiastic supporter of the degree who had accompanied Fitzpatrick to Ottawa back in 1922, came round to the view that the degree was "a great mistake" and, as a former labourer-teacher, agreed that the "really essential" work lay in the camps. Working with Flavelle behind the scenes, Wearing led the governors to the ineluctable decision on 22 May 1931. Still, Fitzpatrick insisted on fighting one last fund-raising campaign, but his motion could not even get a seconder. Totally isolated, Fitzpatrick had to accept defeat.

The board's fateful decision was too late, however, to save the vision of a university degree for working people, even in the remaining provinces and territories. Even as the College's memorial surrendering the power to grant degrees in Ontario in return for restoration of the provincial grants was being delivered up in July, Premier Henry had shifted the ground. He was advised authoritatively by the Law Clerk that Ontario, without protective legislation, was, in fact, "legally powerless" to prevent "a more or less complete subversion of our educational system...and...a serious invasion of provincial rights by means of incorporation of educational institutions by legislation at Ottawa." Indeed, the very act of entering into an agreement with Frontier College implied recognition of federal powers being voluntarily surrendered. Therefore, Henry told Fitzpatrick, "We will require you to go to Ottawa asking for a repeal of Section 10 of your Act."⁹⁰ Ontario was attempting "to score one on Ottawa", insisted Ira Mackay. His position, although admittedly "not entirely orthodox", had consistently emphasized the weakness of Ontario's case. Indeed, he believed, Ontario knew that she would lose a court fight. Thus, since no other provinces had remonstrated against the federal charter, a surrender to Ontario's new demand would have been tantamount to forcing Ottawa's "abdication of the power to incorporate educational institutions in Canada for all time to come". Newton W. Rowell also had no doubt about federal jurisdiction: not only was there that 1883 precedent, but in 1924, Ottawa had chartered the Shantun Christian College, with which he was associated. China was not in Ontario, however. Henry turned away all petitions, whether presented by the College or by twelve prominent citizens of

90. C 61, "Memorandum taken up to Parliament Buildings on 13 July 1931 by Committee chosen at Annual Meeting"; Ontario, Education, 182/2, 1934, "Memorandum for the Deputy Minister of Education Re: Frontier College", by H. Cummings, Law Clerk, Private and Municipal Bills, 10 July 1931; FC 60, Henry to Fitzpatrick, 17 October 1931.

Toronto accepting the original Ontario demand, or by Newton Rowell accepting surrender in all provinces, but not in the territories. The last would at least have preserved the idea in the hope of acceptance in more hospitable days. However, political and financial realities won the day over constitutional powers and educational innovation. Fatiguing, Flavelle, Rowell and even Mackay all counselled unconditional surrender in the interests of survival.⁹¹ Even the office staff, their salaries already cut and their jobs at stake, opposed Fitzpatrick. As Jessie Lucas observed, however, "You could talk to him, but you just couldn't break his will." A weary Fitzpatrick, his sense of betrayal so profound as to create paranoid perceptions that even his closest associates were government spies,⁹² still could not face the final act. He left the special meeting of the board on 19 December 1931, which agreed absolutely to Ontario's demands. Fitzpatrick remained titular head while Bradwin mended fences to retrieve the lost grants.⁹³ Article 10 was excised from the *Frontier College Act* at Ottawa on 27 April 1932, without debate, and eliminated access to the Frontier College degree throughout all of Canada.⁹⁴

Frontier College continues to operate in Ontario and the rest of Canada with its amended federal charter. Another fifty years would pass before the Province of Ontario acknowledged Ottawa's prerogatives in higher education. Not until the middle-1950's did the call emerge from Canadian adult education circles to the universities for extramural degrees open to all. Only now are new techniques in distance education bringing university-level education within the reach of every qualified citizen. Fitzpatrick had ended his years with the College a broken and bitter man. His resignation, written in September of 1931, came into effect with the clearing of the debt. Bradwin was confirmed as Principal in February of 1933.⁹⁵ In 1935, Fitzpatrick was honoured with an O.B.E., Ontario's consolation award for a lifetime of service. Alfred Fitzpatrick died in 1936 at the age of 75 years. Ultimately, Fitzpatrick was patronized, and tolerated, because, as Flavelle would say, he was "an unusually good sort [who] has done a noble piece of work", but his idealism was ahead of its time. Indeed, one member of the Board of Governors argued that "in one hundred years, the public would consider the system initiated by

91. FC 61, MacKay to Fitzpatrick, 24 July, 23 October and 1 December 1931; Fitzpatrick to Henry, 24 November 1931; Wearing, Flavelle and Rowell to Fitzpatrick, 13, 16 and 28 November 1931; FC 63, MacKay to Fitzpatrick, 17 December 1931; FC 140, Minutes of Special Meeting, Board of Governors, 19 December 1931.

92. Morrison interviews with Jessie Lucas, 23 October 1972 and 29 January 1973; M.E. Robinson interview with Jessie Lucas, 7 March 1975.

93. FC 140, Minutes, Board of Governors, Meeting of 19 December 1931. Ontario, Education, 178/5 contains the original agreement, signed 19 December 1931, and the correspondence dealing with the restoration of Ontario's grants.

94. Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, *Debates*, LXVIII, No. 57, 27 April 1932, p. 2631.

95. FC 188, Fitzpatrick to Board of Governors, 11 September 1931; FC 140, Minutes, Annual Meeting, 22 February 1933.

Frontier College a wonderful idea". Others echoed the sentiment, but the need to maintain good relations with universities, governments and the public at large in order to sustain basic adult education in the camps could not be lost. Others would have to take up the task of access to higher education at another time. Flavelle told Fitzpatrick, "It is not for me to say your idealism was wrong. It was only that your idealism was out of step with what was practical."⁹⁶

The triumph of financial practicality over Fitzpatrick's ideal of a degree for working people meant that Frontier College would become a permanent fixture in the world of Canadian adult education. In 1934, the University of Toronto's Director of Extension requested Bradwin to join in sponsoring a federal charter for the Canadian Association for Adult Education. The anomaly did not escape him. "The fact of Section 10 is only beside the point! If Ottawa can grant charters, it can include Section 10", he told Jessie Lucas. "[S]ome day, Frontier College can have a comeback on something taken from us under pressure of poverty."⁹⁷ The C.A.A.E. was not another unwanted university, however, and Frontier College never needed a comeback. Almost immediately, it became too deeply involved in the unemployment relief camps and, then, the wartime and postwar adjustments to do so. Today, there is no need. In 1933, Canon H.J. Cody, Falconer's successor as President of the University of Toronto, considered Frontier College's affiliation with the University under the Director of Extension's wing. From the outset of the discussions, Dunlop enunciated "a definite fundamental principle": the University would control the students from matriculation through graduation and establish all academic standards. However, there remained an important function for Frontier College "within its own sphere."⁹⁸ Thereafter, under Bradwin's guidance, Frontier College remained in the obscurity of its backwoods sphere. He never challenged the universities' or the provinces' assumptions on that fundamental social question of the citizen's access to higher education. It was Bradwin, therefore, who in 1954 received what Fitzpatrick perhaps always secretly desired, the universities' accolade of an honorary doctorate from the University of Toronto.

96. FC 140, Minutes, Annual Meeting, 22 May 1931 and Special Meeting, 19 December 1931; Ontario, Education 178/5, Flavelle to Henry, 8 December 1932; FC 63, Flavelle to Fitzpatrick, 7 October 1932.

97. FC 191, Bradwin to Lucas, (n.d., June/July?) 1934.

98. FC 184, Dunlop to Bradwin, 18 November 1933.