

## Dressing by Degrees: Academic Dress in British Columbia 1866–1966

By John Lancaster

### Prologue

Before leaving his quarters at Fort Victoria in the recently established Colony of Vancouver Island on Sunday 18 March 1849, the Revd Robert John Staines took clerical vesture from his trunk. Yesterday, after a six-month journey from England, he came ashore from the Hudson's Bay Company barque *Columbia*. Today his Sunday duties as Company Chaplain and Schoolmaster begin with the conduct of Divine Service.<sup>1</sup> For his ministrations, he likely donned Anglican choir dress: cassock, surplice, scarf and his Cambridge BA hood.<sup>2</sup> Reinforcing this assumption is the insight into his character garnered from the comment of Roderick Finlayson, a long time HBC servant at Fort Victoria: 'He was a man of frills, as we say, & liked displays ...'.<sup>3</sup> This service was probably the earliest appearance of academic dress in what is today British Columbia.

In those days, such attire was scarce in British Columbia. Few pioneers were graduates and those who were, save the clergy, would have had little motivation to encumber themselves with such possessions, and no occasions on which to wear them. Vancouver Island's brief-serving first governor, Richard Blanshard, who took up his duties on a snowy March Monday in 1850, was a Cambridge MA.<sup>4</sup> Coming unpaid to a colony with perhaps 300 settlers,<sup>5</sup> all but a handful of whom were HBC servants (and maybe as many as thirty times more natives),<sup>6</sup> it is doubtful that his chattels included a gown and hood. The Revd Edward Cridge,

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1 Fort Victoria post journal, 1846–50, entry date 18 March 1849, in manuscript, Hudson's Bay Company (henceforth HBC) Archives B226/a/1, Archives of Manitoba, Reel IM149.

2 He matriculated at St John's in 1840, migrated to Trinity Hall in 1842 and took his degree in January 1845. J. A. Venn (comp.) *Alumni Cantabrigienses, Part II, From 1752 to 1900*, 6 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1954), Vol VI, p. 4.

3 Roderick Finlayson, *History of Vancouver Island on the Northwest Coast*, in manuscript, Bancroft Library of the University of California; transcript in the Archives of British Columbia, in G. Hollis Slater, 'Rev. Robert John Staines: Pioneer Priest, Pedagogue, and Political Agitator', *British Columbia Historical Quarterly* (henceforth *BCHQ*) 14, (1950), pp. 187–240 (p. 196).

4 After matriculating in 1835 at Christ Church, Oxford, he again matriculated at Queens' College, Cambridge in 1838, graduating BA in 1840, and MA in 1844 (Joseph Foster (comp.), *Alumni Oxonienses: the Members of the University of Oxford, 1715–1886*, 4 vols (Oxford: Parker, 1888; repr. Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Klaus, 1968), Vol. I, p. 317; Venn, Vol. I, p. 295; Fort Victoria post journal, entry date 11 March 1850).

5 F. W. Howay, *British Columbia: the Making of a Province* (Toronto, Ryerson, 1928), p. 108; [W. Kaye Lamb,] 'The Census of Vancouver Island, 1855', *BCHQ* 4 (1940), pp. 51–58; Margaret A. Ormsby, *British Columbia: a History* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971), p. 112.

6 W. Kaye Lamb, 'The Governorship of Richard Blanshard', *BCHQ* 14 (1950), pp. 1–40 (pp. 5, 38).



Courtesy of City of Vancouver Archives; Major  
Matthews Collection AM54-S4-Port P1526

**FIG. 1 The Revd W. Burton Crickmer.**

who arrived in 1855 as successor to Chaplain Staines, was also a Cambridge graduate.<sup>7</sup> An 1859 photograph, shows him wearing gown and bands.<sup>8</sup> Given his strong evangelical convictions, the gown may well have been a preaching gown rather than an academic one and there is no hint of a hood. The Revd W. Burton Crickmer, an Oxford MA, arrived on the Pacific coast on Christmas Day 1858 as the first Anglican clergyman licensed as a missionary in the new mainland Colony of British Columbia. He may well have brought his academics on his missionary assignment: an 1866 photograph (Fig. 1) shows him wearing gown, hood and bands. It is the earliest known photograph of someone with a British Columbia connection clearly wearing academic dress.<sup>9</sup> The Rt Revd George Hills, the first Bishop of British Columbia, arrived in Victoria on the feast of the Epiphany 1860. Durham University, where he had taken his MA, awarded him a DD at the time of his episcopal appointment. Photographs of the bishop later in his ministry show him in rochet and chimere with the neckpiece of a hood clearly visible.<sup>10</sup>

Elementary education was the primary concern of pioneers in the western reaches of British North America. The United Colony of British Columbia, established on 6 Au-

<sup>7</sup> Admitted to St John's in 1844, he migrated to Peterhouse, matriculating there in 1844 and taking his BA in 1848 (Venn, Vol. II, p. 179). He was a friend of Staines (Slater, 'Rev. Robert John Staines', pp. 196, 235-40).

<sup>8</sup> British Columbia Archives, Visual Records Catalogue No. G-02055.

<sup>9</sup> He matriculated as a student of St Edmund Hall in 1851, received the BA in 1855 and took his MA in 1858, just before leaving on his missionary assignment. Foster, Vol I, p. 317. Crickmer left British Columbia in 1862. When the photo was taken he was Perpetual Curate of Beverley Minster. The original print has been retouched by hand to show the crimson edging of his MA hood. Note the cut of the gown sleeve.

<sup>10</sup> British Columbia Archives, Visual Records Catalogue No. I-84295, A-09771.

gust 1866, inherited Vancouver Island's 1865 Common School Act. British Columbia's 1869 Common School Ordinance repealed and supplanted the earlier legislation, but it took until 1872, a year after confederation with Canada, for British Columbia to have a Public School Act. As the years progressed, the government established elementary schools as the population warranted, but it was not until 1876 that Victoria High School became the first institution of secondary education in western Canada.

Thus, for a half-century after the 1866 union of the colonies, British Columbians who aspired to a university education had to travel afar. The closest Canadian colleges with degree-granting powers were church-related: St John's College, Winnipeg, established in 1866, and Emmanuel College in Prince Albert, founded in 1879, and given degree-granting powers in 1883. The closest public university in Canada, the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, opened in 1877. The University of Saskatchewan, in Saskatoon, began its life in 1907 and the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, opened its doors a year later. University education was also available in the neighbouring American states of Washington and Oregon, but the heavily prevailing British outlook of the province's citizenry probably acted as a strong deterrent to those who might have considered that route to a degree. The universities of Great Britain or eastern Canada were the common choice.

In 1890, bowing to growing pressure for local higher education, the provincial legislature passed An Act Respecting the University of British Columbia. It authorized degree courses in Arts, Science (including Agriculture, Mechanics, Mining and Civil Engineering), Law and Medicine. After the passing of this Act, 125 of British Columbia's citizens, '... graduates of any University in Her Majesty's Dominions, who shall have resided in this Province two months previous to the passing of this Act ...' came forward, paid a two-dollar fee, and registered as members of Convocation.<sup>11</sup> A full 80 percent of them resided in Victoria, Vancouver or New Westminster. The Roll of Convocation represented the clerical, legal, medical, engineering and teaching professions. There were no women.<sup>12</sup> It is fair to assume that the roll included almost every graduate in the province, although there may have been a few qualified but uninterested individuals and a similar small number excluded by the terms of the Act, being graduates of universities outside the British Empire.<sup>13</sup> Political squabbling meant that the 1890 Act and its 1891 successor failed. No faculty were appointed, no classes held, no degrees conferred. A University of British Columbia<sup>14</sup> would not be established for almost a quarter of a century. The creation of opportunities for post-secondary education passed to other hands.

## Tales from twelve robing rooms

During the years between 1893 and 1966 the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia established sixteen degree-granting institutions. Of these, one, the Congregational College

<sup>11</sup> *Statutes of British Columbia* (henceforth *SBC*) 1890, c. 48, ss. 5, 6.

<sup>12</sup> Harry T. Logan, *Tuum Est: A History of the University of British Columbia* (Vancouver: The University, 1958), p. 7. This absence of women is unsurprising as the first degree conferred on a woman in the British Empire was the BSc received by Grace Annie Lockhart from Mount Allison University in New Brunswick in 1875. Fifteen years later there would be few if any female degree holders, from either Canada or elsewhere, residing in a still raw western province.

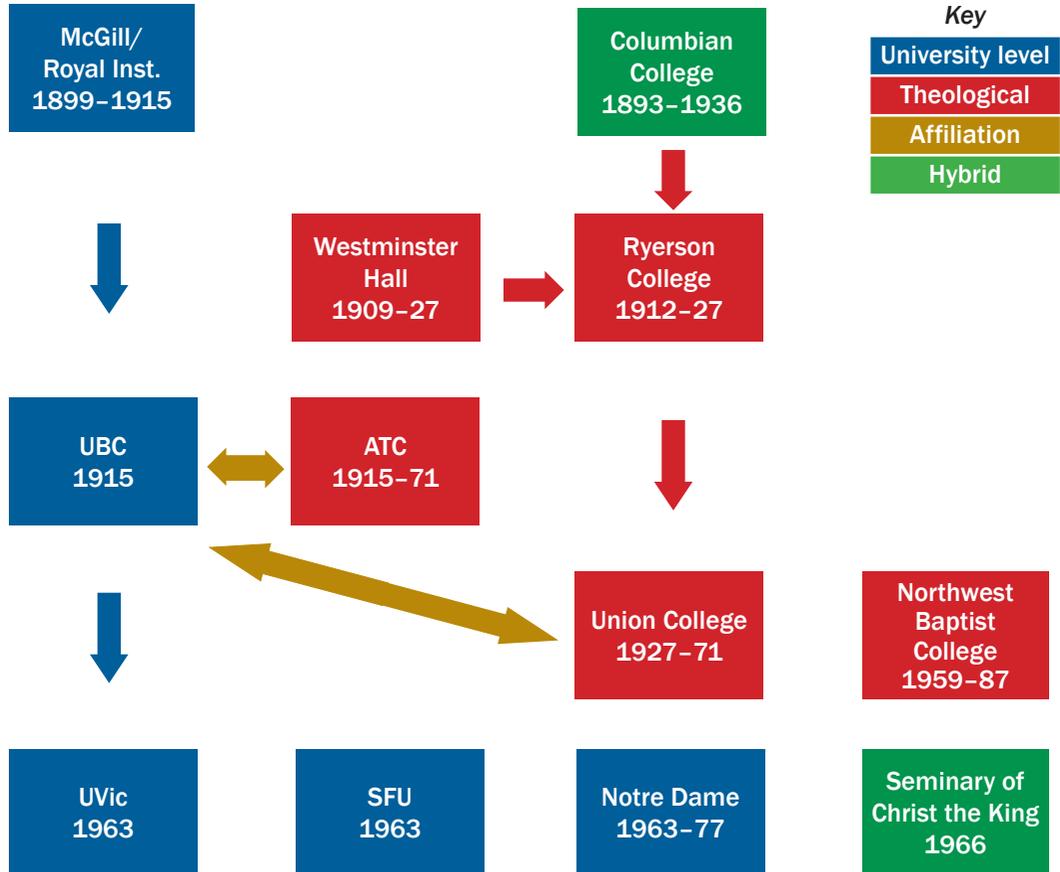
<sup>13</sup> The population of the province in 1891 was 98,173 (Daniel Francis, 'Peoples of BC', *Encyclopedia of British Columbia* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 2000), p. 540). A quick calculation indicates a degree-holding proportion of .00127%.

<sup>14</sup> Henceforth UBC.

of British Columbia (1914–27) existed only on paper. Another, St Andrew’s Hall (founded 1955),<sup>15</sup> now federated with the Vancouver School of Theology, never offered instruction or awarded degrees. Two, St Mark’s College (1956)<sup>16</sup> and Carey Hall (1959),<sup>17</sup> neither offered instruction nor used their degree-granting powers until after 1966. Attention thus turns to the relationships of the remaining institutions, each of which established its own traditions of academic dress.

Table 1 may help the reader grasp the relationships of the institutions involved in this study.

**Table 1**



<sup>15</sup> *SBC 1955*, c. 112, ss. 15, 16.

<sup>16</sup> *SBC 1956*, c. 68, s. 15. St Mark’s is now a degree-granting candidate member of the Association of Theological Schools.

<sup>17</sup> *SBC 1959*, c. 98, s. 16. Now known as Carey Theological College it offers degrees as an accredited member of the Association of Theological Schools.

## *Columbian Methodist College 1893–1936*

The Methodist Church takes pride of place in the history of higher education in British Columbia. The Columbian Methodist College Act authorized the institution to provide for the education of students in theology under the Church's authority and according to its principles and standards. The Act gave Columbian College '... the power to make provision for prescribing courses of study and for conferring degrees in the same ...'.<sup>18</sup> It thus became the first institution of higher education in British Columbia with degree-granting powers. Located in New Westminster, it was a residential school offering Senior Matriculation, and, because of its affiliation with the Methodist-aligned Victoria College in the University of Toronto, the first two years of Arts.<sup>19</sup> Student publications reveal that the College adopted the University of Toronto's distinction between undergraduate and graduate gowns. Photographs show Arts undergraduates in gowns identical to those of Toronto undergraduates, having long open-fronted sleeves with three reversed black velvet chevrons on each sleeve, after the manner of Clare College, Cambridge; graduates' gowns lack the chevrons.<sup>20</sup> Students at Columbian generally completed their degrees at the University of Toronto, with which Victoria College had federated in 1890. They would then wear a Toronto BA gown and hood. Those enrolled as BD students followed a similar path.

By the time of the Great War Columbian College's theological department had closed, partly because of the impact of the hostilities and partly because hopes were high for a new theological college in affiliation with the anticipated provincial university. The establishment of UBC, the 1923 relocation of theological training to the new Ryerson College in Vancouver, decreasing enrolment, church union and financial pressures led to the College's closing in 1936.

## *McGill University College and The Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning 1899–1915*

In 1894, new legislation permitted any of the four existing high schools in British Columbia to affiliate with one of five eastern Canadian universities.<sup>21</sup> The choice was McGill Univer-

<sup>18</sup> *SBC 1893*, c. 49, s. 10.

<sup>19</sup> In Canada, education is a provincial responsibility. In British Columbia, students completing twelve years of grade school and writing (or being exempted from) provincial Department of Education examinations received Junior Matriculation or university entrance standing. In a few larger centres, the local high school offered Grade XIII; completion of this grade earned Senior Matriculation status, the equivalent of the first year of a four-year undergraduate degree. In Ontario, high school graduation followed thirteen years of grade school, the equivalent of Senior Matriculation in British Columbia. A degree course in Arts at the University of Toronto was thus three years following Senior Matriculation; the equivalent course at UBC was four years after Junior Matriculation.

<sup>20</sup> *Lux Columbiana 1912* (New Westminster: Literary Society of Columbian College), p. 16, shows the distinction in a photo of the Principal, a Toronto BA, flanked by two Arts students. *Lux Columbiana 1913/1914*, pp. 28–29, shows on facing pages a group of Arts students and a group of Theology students each in their distinctive gowns. There were, however, occasional anomalies and inconsistencies, due perhaps to economy or necessity: e.g., a professor wearing an undergraduate gown and a BA hood! *Lux Columbiana 1907*, [p. 18]. Regarding the University of Toronto's gowns, see Matthew Cheung Salisbury, "By Our Gowns Were We Known": The Development of Academic Dress at the University of Toronto, *TBS*, 7 (2007), pp. 13–14.

<sup>21</sup> *SBC 1894*, c. 46, s. 6. They were the University of Toronto, the University of Queen's College, Kingston, the University of McGill College, Montreal, the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton and Dalhousie University, Halifax.

sity in Montreal. In 1899 part of Vancouver High School was designated Vancouver College and began instruction in Arts I, supervised and examined by McGill. In 1906, further legislation allowed McGill to establish a university college in British Columbia, giving the Royal Institution (McGill's corporate legal identity) power to govern it.<sup>22</sup> Instruction expanded to include two years of both Arts and Applied Science. In 1908 teaching extended to Arts III.

That same year, Victoria College, established five years previously in the provincial capital and housed in part of Victoria High School, became part of McGill University College/The Royal Institution, offering the first two years of Arts and Science. When UBC opened in 1915, it subsumed McGill's western operations in both Vancouver and Victoria. Half a century later, six annual Royal Institution scholarships still commemorated McGill's contribution to higher learning in the province.<sup>23</sup>

No mention is made of academic dress in the College *Calendar*, but McGill Vancouver College yearbooks for the years 1911–15 show photographs of students in gowns, presumably identical to those of McGill undergraduates: '... a plain black stuff gown, not longer than half-way between knee and ankle, with round sleeves cut around the elbow.'<sup>24</sup> Sometimes the women wore a tasselled trencher. Faculty probably wore their personal academic dress on formal college occasions.

### *Westminster Hall 1909–27*

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada opened Westminster Hall in the West End of Vancouver to address the demand for ministers in British Columbia's mission fields. As well as offering theological instruction, it had formal arrangements with both McGill and Queen's universities to allow students to qualify for their Arts degree extra-murally, after the manner of the University of London's external degree scheme.<sup>25</sup> The Act incorporating the institution empowered the Senate of the school '... to confer the degree of Bachelor of Divinity ... as well as ... the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.'<sup>26</sup> The Hall's BD conferred in 1912 on John T. McNeill was the first earned degree conferred in British Columbia.<sup>27</sup> This degree, of which nine more were earned during the life of the Hall, was essentially a postgraduate qualification, requiring a BA, a 75 percent average in the final year of the theology testamur program and a further year of study, including a thesis.<sup>28</sup> The hood for the BD was of black silk lined with blue, while the DD hood was of gold silk with blue lining.<sup>29</sup> The Hall was generous with honorary DDs, awarding no fewer than

<sup>22</sup> *SBC 1906*, chs. 28, 38.

<sup>23</sup> *Calendar of the University of British Columbia 1966/1967* (henceforth *UBC Calendar*), p. U89.

<sup>24</sup> Hugh Smith and Kevin Sheard, *Academic Dress and Insignia of the World*, 3 vols (Cape Town: Balkema, 1970), Vol. 1, p. 196.

<sup>25</sup> *Calendar of Westminster Hall 1912*, pp. 18, 30.

<sup>26</sup> *SBC 1909*, c. 67, s. 13.

<sup>27</sup> *Programme of the Fifth Annual Convocation of Westminster Hall*, 27 Sept. 1912. McNeill espoused an academic career in church history culminating in professorships at the University of Chicago Divinity School and Union Theological Seminary, New York. The Hall awarded him its DD in 1925. *Who's Who of Westminster Hall 1907–1927* (Vancouver, Committee of Graduates, 1944), pp. 14, 19.

<sup>28</sup> *Calendar of Westminster Hall 1911*, pp. 13–14.

<sup>29</sup> *Calendar of Westminster Hall 1920*, p. 27. There was no hood for the testamur. A monochrome photo of the Revd W. H. Smith, Principal of Westminster Hall, who received a Ryerson College DD in 1926, suggests hoods were of the simple shape. Bob Stewart Archives, B.C. Conference of

twenty-one during its two-decade life!<sup>30</sup> Following the 1925 establishment of the United Church of Canada, Westminster Hall amalgamated with the Congregational College and Ryerson College to form Union College of British Columbia.

### *Ryerson College 1912–27*

While maintaining Columbian College as a residential secondary school and general junior Arts institution, the British Columbia Methodist Conference also wanted to establish a separate theological college in affiliation with the proposed UBC in Vancouver. It was named to honour the nineteenth-century Ontario Methodist minister and education advocate Egerton Ryerson, the founder of the University of Toronto's Victoria College, which was the sponsor of Columbian College. After authorization by provincial legislation,<sup>31</sup> the Great War intervened and led to postponement of construction plans. Instruction, using the facilities of Westminster Hall, did not begin until 1923, giving Ryerson College an effective academic life of a mere four years. During this time four students earned BD degrees and the College conferred one honorary DD.<sup>32</sup> There is no information about the academic dress for these degrees. It may be that because of the close connection of Ryerson with Westminster Hall, the paucity of graduates and looming church union, that the college used Westminster Hall's academics.<sup>33</sup> The establishment of Union College of British Columbia included the absorption of Ryerson College.

### *The Anglican Theological College of British Columbia, 1915–71*

The Anglican Theological College of British Columbia Act gave it the '... power to issue the diploma of Licentiate of Theology and to confer the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and, subject to the requirements of the "British Columbia University Act", the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.'<sup>34</sup> With two constituent colleges, Latimer Hall (founded in 1910) and St Mark's

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the United Church of Canada, BCCA 1–168.

<sup>30</sup> *Who's Who of Westminster Hall 1907–1927*, p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> *SBC 1912*, c. 56, s. 13. There were no restrictions on conferring the DD; the BD required a previous degree.

<sup>32</sup> *Calendar of Westminster Hall and Ryerson College and of Union College of BC 1926/1927*, p. 31.

<sup>33</sup> *Programme of the Joint Convocation of Westminster Hall and Ryerson College*, 12 May 1926. At this convocation each college conferred an honorary DD on the principal of its sister institution. From the photo mentioned in fn. 29, it would appear that both colleges used the same academic dress.

<sup>34</sup> *SBC 1915*, c. 68, s. 13. The Anglican College, like Ryerson College, was restricted by *SBC 1908*, c. 53, s. 96 to conferring the BD (an extramural degree for which the LTh was a prerequisite) only on those who had a previous university degree. ATC avoided this stricture by the expedient of having an arrangement with Trinity College, Toronto, an extra-provincial theological college and university in its own right. Trinity would grant the degree *in absentia* to candidates who lacked a university degree but had passed the necessary examinations set by the Board of Examiners for Divinity Degrees of the General Synod of the Church of England in Canada. (*Anglican Theological College Bulletin*, 10 (1925), p. 2).

In 1963, after changes in legislation, *SBC 1963*, c. 52, ss. 54(e), 71, theological colleges affiliated with a university were empowered to grant degrees in theology without restriction, while provincial universities could not confer theological degrees. ATC then established curricula leading to both the STB and STM.

Hall (established in 1913) already offering instruction, ATC, as it became popularly known, saw its LTh hood conferred on its first four graduates in the spring of 1915.

ATC was the theological school of an ecclesiastical province of what was then (and would continue to be for almost another four decades) the Church of England in Canada. Thus College authorities can hardly have been unaware of an 1882 regulation of the English Upper House of Convocation stating that college hoods should be ‘... black, not silk, of either Cambridge or Oxford shape, and made distinctive to each college by the addition of a “narrow border or binding” of a colour.’<sup>35</sup> They blithely ignored this prescription.<sup>36</sup> The ATC LTh hood was of black stuff in the Oxford simple shape, fully lined with dark blue silk and bound similarly ½” on all outside edges, having a red cord 1” from the binding.

For a very small college, ATC developed an abundance of qualifications, each with a specific hood. Table 2 summarizes their descriptions.<sup>37</sup>

**Table 2**

Qualification	Shape	Shell	Lining	Outer Edge
<b>STh</b>	Full	Black stuff	Black stuff	2½” white silk on cape and cowl
<b>DipTh</b>	Simple	Black stuff	Black silk	Red cord 1” from all outside edges
<b>LTh</b>	Simple	Black stuff	Blue silk with ½” binding on all edges	Red cord 1” from binding
<b>BD</b>	Full	Black stuff	Blue silk	Red cord 1” from all edges
<b>STB</b>	Simple	Black stuff	Blue silk	1” Red silk on all edges, inside and out
<b>STM</b>	Simple	Navy blue silk	Scarlet silk	Blue braid 1” from the outside edge <sup>38</sup>
<b>DD</b>	Full	Scarlet cloth	Blue silk	Blue cord 1” from all outside edges <sup>39</sup>

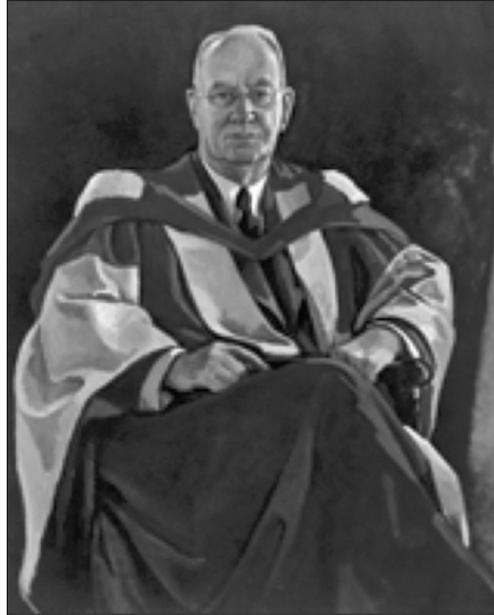
<sup>35</sup> Nicholas Groves, *Theological Colleges, Their Hoods and Histories* ([London]: Burgon Society, 2004), p. xi.

<sup>36</sup> In this, they were not unique. Montreal Diocesan College, Wycliffe College, Toronto, St Chad’s College, Regina and Emmanuel College, Saskatoon had fully lined LTh hoods as well. In contrast, Bishop’s University, Lennoxville, Trinity College, Toronto, Huron College, London, Ontario, St John’s College, Winnipeg and Queen’s College, St John’s, Newfoundland followed the English lead for their licentiates. It is also true that whenever Canadian theological colleges awarded a testamur/diploma, the hood generally conformed to the Convocation guidelines, presumably making a visual distinction between testamur/diploma, title and degree. The academic distinction between the three is roughly that the diploma/testamur course was for mature entry students and had no specific academic prerequisites or language requirements; the title was a general course, not quite to degree standard, but requiring some university preparation and basic Koine Greek; and the degree was the honours course. All courses were eventually three years in length.

<sup>37</sup> *Calendar of the Anglican Theological College of British Columbia 1968*, pp. 7–8. DD, BD and LTh hoods are illustrated in Smith and Sheard, Vol 1, pp. 160–61. The General Synod title of Scholar in Theology (STh) was an extramural qualification for the laity available at Anglican colleges across Canada.

<sup>38</sup> Blue could be a misprint for red, as blue braid would not show up well when laid on a blue background. Alternatively, perhaps the braid was intended on the *inside* edge. This question may never be resolved as the only two graduates holding this degree have died.

<sup>39</sup> Although *Anglican Theological College Bulletin*, 28 (1944), p. 9, specifies that the cord for this honorary degree is white, it became in practice blue. The College also conferred one earned DD. *Programme for the Fifty-second Annual Convocation of the Anglican Theological College of British Columbia*, 23 April 1969, [p. 3].



Peter Holborne photo [UBC 1.0135816], Courtesy of the University of British Columbia Archives

**FIG. 2 Dr L. S. Klinck, UBC president 1919–44, in official robes.**

ATC was the only part of UBC where students and faculty customarily wore gowns not just at academic ceremonies, but also for chapel, in classes and during meals. These were either the black UBC graduate's gown, described below, or the gown of the wearer's degree. DDs in full dress wore a scarlet Cambridge style doctoral robe with dark blue velvet facings and sleeve linings, identical to the UBC DSc robe. College officers wore their personal academic dress. Caps were optional. After ATC joined with nearby Union College to form the Vancouver School of Theology, that institution conferred ATC's last degrees in 1974.

### *The University of British Columbia 1915*

In the spring of 1908 the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia passed a third University Act. It established a provincial university and gave it the power to grant both earned and honorary degrees.<sup>40</sup> It took the University almost a decade to fulfil its mandate.

After years of planning, negotiation and uncertainty, the Hon. A. B. Carter-Cotton (who had been chancellor of the stillborn university in 1890–91) finally conferred UBC's first degrees at a Congregation<sup>41</sup> held on 4 May 1916 in the ballroom of the old Hotel Van-

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<sup>40</sup> *SBC 1908*, c. 53, ss. 2, 58(c). Instruction in Arts was free until the 1920–21 academic year (*SBC 1908*, c. 53, s. 102).

<sup>41</sup> The term congregation, rather than graduation, convocation or commencement was chosen for the University's degree ceremony; UBC's Convocation (which had certain statutory responsibilities, primarily the election of the chancellor) was a body consisting principally of the University's

couver. Chancellor Carter-Cotton and President Frank Fairchild Westbrook wore identical official robes, authorized by the University Senate: a scarlet cloth robe of Oxford DCL full-dress pattern and a scarlet full shape hood lined with white swansdown.<sup>42</sup>

At that first UBC Congregation, forty-one students received the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Those candidates already on active service with the Canadian Expeditionary Force graduated *in absentia*. Seventeen of the graduands were women, including a Japanese-Canadian.<sup>43</sup> The original plan for degree hoods to be 'blue (University color), edged with white swansdown'<sup>44</sup> was unfulfilled, perhaps due to supply problems occasioned by the Great War. Graduates' photographs in the 1916 and 1917 student yearbooks have no hint of white swansdown on their hoods.<sup>45</sup> The *1916/1917 Calendar* described them as of black stuff lined with blue.<sup>46</sup> By 1918, University yearbook photographs reveal that UBC hoods were beginning their evolution into a virtual replica of the London non-convocation bachelor's pattern. A neckband bound  $\frac{1}{4}$ " on both edges with a degree colour is clearly visible.<sup>47</sup> Hoods remained of black stuff, but the corners of the cape were rounded. In anticipation of conferring degrees at the magisterial level, the University soon reserved the fully lined hood with a plain neckband for masters. The cowl of the BA hood was simply faced  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and bound  $\frac{1}{2}$ " with 'University blue' silk.<sup>48</sup> On introducing degrees in Agriculture and (Applied) Science, BSA hoods had maize facings and binding while BSc hoods used scarlet.<sup>49</sup>

graduates.

42 Minutes, University of British Columbia Senate (henceforth Minutes), 15 March 1916, p. 14. Swansdown is a thick cotton fabric with a soft nap on one side. These robes, while distinctive, blurred the distinction between university officials and graduates. (See Fig. 2.)

43 Nine students in their final year, '... having enlisted for service overseas ...', were granted their degrees without examination. One of the women, Ella Cameron, was still teaching mathematics at Victoria High School in the provincial capital when the writer was a student there. *UBC Calendar 1916/1917*, p. 129; *Programme of the University of British Columbia First Congregation for the Conferring of Degrees, Thursday May 4th 1916*.

44 Minutes, 15 March 1916, p. 14. The Senate prescribed no pattern, but *UBC Calendar 1917/1918*, p. 37, describes hoods as 'of the Cambridge pattern.' Blue was adopted from the principal colour of UBC's coat of arms (Minutes, 16 Feb. 1916, p. 7).

45 *UBC Annual 1916* [Vancouver: Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia], pp. 21 ff.; *UBC Annual 1917*, pp. 34 ff.

46 *UBC Calendar 1916/1917*, p. 36.

47 *UBC Annual 1918*, pp. 41 ff.

48 *UBC Calendar 1917/1918*, p. 37. This change meant that the first two classes of alumni with their fully lined hoods would appear as magisterial graduates, perhaps a fitting tribute to these UBC academic pioneers. The first masters' degrees were conferred in 1919, both earned by female students. See Smith and Sheard, Vol 1, p. 158.

49 Minutes, 20 Feb. 1946, p. 1201: '... the terminology for the identification of the colours [of degree hoods] be that of Robert Ridgeway [*sic*] in his book *Color Standards and Color Nomenclature*, Washington, 1912.' University blue was to be Helvetia Blue IX, maize was Primrose Yellow XXX and scarlet was Scarlet Red I. In practice hoods for the BA and MA used a mid-blue which could be described as Ultramarine. This was probably because Ridgeway's dark blue could hardly be distinguished when laid against the black stuff of the body of the hood. BSc and MSc hoods used a lighter shade, which might be called Wedgewood Blue. In 1944 when the DSc was introduced, its hood was lined dark or Royal Blue, a colour corresponding to Ridgeway's Helvetia Blue. To avoid confusion and controversy, in this study the expression 'University blue' is for the most part avoided and the adjective blue modified as light, mid or dark, See also Sheldon Goldfarb, 'UBC's Colours: Blue and Gold,' <[www.library.ubc.ca/archives/colours.html](http://www.library.ubc.ca/archives/colours.html)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017].

In 1944, with a change in both chancellor and president, came a change in institutional dress for those office holders. The distinction between academic dress and dignitary's robes, overlooked when the University's academic garb was initially established, began to be addressed. The Hon. Eric Hamber, a former lieutenant-governor of the province, as chancellor, preferred to wear the scarlet robe and hood of the LLD that the University had awarded him in 1939; it will be described shortly. At the installation of Dr Norman MacKenzie as the university's third president, monochrome photographs show the chancellor vesting the new president in a black robe with square-ended glove sleeves each having three horizontal velvet bars near the base. The inverted-T sleeve openings, velvet facings and flap collar have metallic edging. An embroidered setting sun motif from the provincial and University coats of arms appears on the upper portion of each of the facings and on the sleeves at the armhole and base. The president wore a metallic-tasseled mortar-board.<sup>50</sup>

In 1951 Brigadier Sherwood Lett, an *in absentia* member of UBC's first graduating class, was acclaimed as chancellor, just as he had been acclaimed as first president of the University Alma Mater Society thirty-five years previously. He had spent two years at Trinity College, Oxford, as UBC's second Rhodes Scholar. It may well have been his recollection of Oxford's chancellor wearing a black damask silk robe elaborately adorned with gold lace and frogs in the Encaenia procession which led, during his tenure as UBC chancellor, to his assuming a similar robe (minus the train) as his official dress. Conterminously, a comparable robe, but with silver trim was adopted by the president.<sup>51</sup> These robes, worn with velvet mortar-boards having matching metallic tassel and trim remain in use today.

British academic dress influenced more than the design of the robes of UBC's chancellor and president. Undergraduates were prescribed ankle-length Cambridge pattern black stuff gowns with 'looped sleeves' (the loops presumably gathering the top of the open pointed sleeve); graduates' gowns were similar, with the loops replaced by ribbon strings attached inside the lapels, also after the Cambridge manner.<sup>52</sup> Eventually both loops and ribbon strings disappeared, doubtless victims of robemakers' cost cutting. In 1917, as a mark of patriotism and to recognize the war service of a significant percentage of UBC's students, the University Senate allowed the optional addition of a khaki cord to the edge of the yoke of the undergraduate gown.<sup>53</sup> This cord became a permanent feature of UBC's undergraduate gown. For many years the removal of this cord was a symbolic last act of a

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<sup>50</sup> *Totem 1945* [Vancouver: Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia], pp. 32, 35. See also *Totem 1947*, pp. 24, 25, 27; *Totem 1948*, p. 31; *Totem 1949*, p. 40; *Totem 1952*, p. 147. No record exists in the University Senate Minutes authorizing these new robes. While heading the University of New Brunswick (1940–44) Dr MacKenzie wore his personal academic attire, as that University did not prescribe official dress for the position. Smith and Sheard, Vol 1, p. 225.

<sup>51</sup> *Totem 1953*, p. 27 shows the chancellor and president in their new robes. Once again, there is no record of the authorization of these robes by the university Senate. See illustration in Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, p. 156.

<sup>52</sup> Minutes, 15 March 1916, p. 14. From the mention of 'looped sleeves', the open-sleeved undergraduate gown would perhaps be more accurately described as a London bachelor's gown. The graduate's gown described appears to be an Oxford bachelor's gown with Cambridge strings, there being no mention of a forearm slit.

<sup>53</sup> Minutes, 4 April 1917, pp. 37–38. Unfortunately, some robemakers have mistakenly used a gold cord.

graduand prior to Congregation.<sup>54</sup> There is no distinction between a bachelor's and a master's gown. The black college cap, when worn, distinguished between students and those who had taken their degree: graduates' tassels were longer than those worn by undergraduates.<sup>55</sup>

At the urging of Judge W. H. Howay, the UBC Senate resolved to defer the conferring of honorary degrees

... until such time as the University has become fully established as a seat of study and learning, and enjoys that dignity of position which will arise from its having conferred upon one or more of its students, for cause a degree in learning equivalent to that proposed to be granted in honoris causa.<sup>56</sup>

The University failed to respect this admirable commitment. Instead, it used its tenth anniversary as justification for honouring several eminent academic, governmental, political and military figures with the LLD. This was the University's only honorary degree until 1943. Recipients wore a black silk gown of the pattern prescribed for the undress Cambridge MD, but faced with claret-coloured watered silk,<sup>57</sup> and presumably decorated with Cambridge doctor's lace around top of the armhole and up to the shoulder as well as around the facings and flap collar and at the bottom of the squared glove sleeves. A black silk Cambridge shape hood, fully lined to match the facings and a black square cap with a long black tassel completed the costume.

The year 1933 brought transformation to the academic attire for honorary degree holders. Dark blue velvet lined the LLD hood, now of scarlet broadcloth. The scarlet broadcloth robe was now of the Cambridge festal pattern, with velvet facings and sleeve linings matching the lining of the hood and scarlet strings.<sup>58</sup> The introduction of two additional

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<sup>54</sup> 'Should Wear Robes', *The Ubyssesey*, 30 Oct. 1958, p. 2. As undergraduate gowns have virtually disappeared at UBC, and because the commercial supplier of graduation regalia will provide only generic black gowns, the removal of the khaki cord has become nugatory (Ellis Courtney, Director, UBC Ceremonies, email to author, 1 Sept. 2016). The cord is still, however, prescribed in the Calendar. *UBC Calendar 2016/2017* <[www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=1,6,0,0](http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=1,6,0,0)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017].

<sup>55</sup> There is no indication of their precise length (Minutes, 15 March 1916, p. 14; *UBC Calendar 1916/1917*, p. 36).

<sup>56</sup> Minutes, 12 Dec. 1917, p. 52. Disregarding his previous reservations, Judge Howay accepted an honorary degree in 1933, seventeen years before the University conferred its first earned doctorate. Two others on his five-member committee also jumped the gun: the University chancellor, R. E. McKechnie in 1925 and long-serving University governor and senator Evelyn Farris in 1942. A fourth member of the committee, French professor Harry Ashton, fulfilled the criterion by not receiving his honorary degree until 1952.

<sup>57</sup> Minutes, 8 June 1925, p. 424. The claret shade prescribed was that of London University's PhD festal robe. No examples of this gown and hood have survived (Christina Girardi, Administrative Coordinator, UBC Ceremonies and Events, email to author, 29 July 2016).

<sup>58</sup> Minutes, 10 May 1933, p. 276. There was also provision for an undress gown '... like the black silk gown worn by the recipients of the honorary LLD. of the University of Cambridge except that a dark blue silk cord shall be used in place of the silk and velvet braid of the Cambridge design'. The careful reader will recognize the gown described as a version of the Cambridge undress MD, which we have just seen was the pattern for UBC's original LLD gown. This new gown was probably

FIG. 3 UBC Congregation 27 May 1965. From left to right: President J. B. McDonald, Lt-Governor George R. Pearkes, Dorothy M. Somerset, DLitt, Francis R. Scott, LL.D, Chancellor Phyllis Ross, Harry T. Logan, LL.D, Registrar J. E. A. Parnell and Macebearer Patrick C. F. Guthrie. The photo appears on the cover of *Totem* 1966.



Courtesy of the University of British Columbia Alma Mater Society.

honorary degrees, in 1944, the DSc, conferred on Dr L. S. Klinck, the retiring president of the University,<sup>59</sup> and in 1945, the DLitt, awarded posthumously to Emily Carr,<sup>60</sup> to this day British Columbia's most famous artist, brought further changes. The scarlet robe with strings remained, but linings and facings of both robe and hood distinguished the new degrees: dark purple for the DSc<sup>61</sup> and cream for the DLitt.<sup>62</sup> A black velvet bonnet trimmed with a gold cord replaced the square cap.

In 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of its first Congregation, UBC graduated 3,260 students. Their degrees, taken through twelve faculties and seven schools, ranged from the bachelor's level to the doctorate.<sup>63</sup> Bachelor's and master's hoods were of black stuff edged and bound or lined with a distinctive colour. Professional doctorate hoods (MD, DMD and EdD) followed the Intercollegiate Code<sup>64</sup> doctor's pattern, as did the PhD.<sup>65</sup> Table 3 summarizes the earned degrees offered by the University in 1966, and the colours that distinguished each appropriate hood.

As indicated previously, all ordinary graduates wore the same black open-sleeved London style bachelors' gown, except for PhDs, who had a black ICC doctor's robe.<sup>66</sup> Graduating women generally wore tasselled caps.

never used.

<sup>59</sup> His portrait, (wearing his official, not honorary degree, robes) hangs together with those of all UBC chancellors and presidents in the Ridington Room of the university's I. K. Barber Learning Centre. See Fig. 2.

<sup>60</sup> She died two months before the degree was to be conferred.

<sup>61</sup> Minutes, 9 May 1944, p. 1042; 20 Feb. 1946, p. 1201.

<sup>62</sup> Minutes, 11 May 1955, p. 2168; 20 Sept. 1963, p. 3283.

<sup>63</sup> *UBC Calendar 1967/1968*, pp. A7-A8; A76-A77.

<sup>64</sup> Henceforth ICC.

<sup>65</sup> Minutes, 21 October 1953, p. 2006 [MD]; 15 Feb. 1967, p. 3716 [DMD]; 29 April 1970, p. 5251 [EdD—oddly preceded by its description in *UBC Calendar 1968-1969*, p. A8]; 14 Dec. 1949, p. 1569 [PhD].

<sup>66</sup> Minutes, 14 Dec. 1949, p. 1569.

**Table 3 University of British Columbia, earned degrees offered in 1966**

Faculty	Degree(s)	Facing/Lining	Cord** <sup>1</sup>
<b>Arts</b>	BA, MA	Mid-blue	
	BHE [Home Economics]	Turquoise	
	BLS	Cadmium yellow	
	BMus, MMus	Mid-blue	Alzarin crimson
	BSW, MSW	Magenta	
<b>Agriculture</b>	BSA, MSA	Maize	
<b>Applied Science</b>	BASc, MASc	Scarlet	
	BArch, MArch	Scarlet	Scarlet and white
	BSN [Nursing]	Scarlet	Mid-blue and white
<b>Commerce</b>	BCom, MBA	Grey	Black and grey
<b>Dentistry</b>	DMD	Lined red, edged lilac velvet	
<b>Education</b>	BEd, MEd	White	Mid-blue
	BPE, MPE [Physical Education]	Malachite green	
<b>Forestry</b>	BSF, MF	Brown	Green <sup>†2</sup>
<b>Graduate Studies</b>	EdD	Lined gold with mid-blue, white and gold chevron, edged light blue velvet	
	PhD	Lined gold, edged dark blue velvet	
<b>Law</b>	LLB, LLM	Amethyst violet	
<b>Medicine</b>	BSR [Rehabilitation]	Royal blue	Scarlet and white
	MD	Lined royal blue, edged scarlet velvet	
<b>Pharmacy</b>	BSP, MSP	Dark green	Scarlet
<b>Science</b>	BSc, MSc	Light blue	

\* Cords sit on the facing or lining 4" from the outside edge.

† From 1957 to 1961, faculty and student refugees from Sopron University who had fled Hungary *en masse* during the 1956 Revolution received academic hospitality at the university. On graduating from the Sopron Division of the Faculty of Forestry, they wore BSF hoods with the green cord modified to one of green, white and red, the Hungarian national colours. Minutes, 12 Feb. 1958, p. 2545.

The PhD dress evolved in keeping with its status as the University's senior earned academic distinction. In 1967 ICC doctoral regalia was replaced with a maroon silk Cambridge festal style robe with mid-blue facings and sleeve linings both piped and buttoned with gold, together with a Cambridge pattern mid-blue silk hood lined, and the neckband trimmed, with gold silk. A gold cord and tassel trims the maroon silk bonnet.<sup>67</sup>

Perhaps the most interesting later development in UBC's academic dress was the provision for the Special Honorary Degree (DHC) conferred in 2012 on seventy-six former students of Japanese origin who could not complete their degrees because of a federal government internment order removing them from coastal British Columbia during World War II. Over the ordinary UBC graduate's gown recipients wore a red ICC doctor's hood lined with royal blue satin with an old gold chevron and binding, edged on the outside with white braid.<sup>68</sup>

### *Union College of British Columbia, 1927-71*

Union College was the amalgamation of theological colleges established in British Columbia by the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches. College officers wore personal academic regalia; neither students nor graduates had distinctive gowns prescribed. As an affiliated college of UBC, presumably university gowns were worn when required. Unlike Ryerson College, the Congregational College and the Anglican Theological College, there were no restrictions on the theological degrees Union College could confer.<sup>69</sup>

The College's earned degree hoods were all of the Oxford simple shape. The STM was of black silk, lined and bound ½" on the posterior edge with gold silk and bound after the ICC manner with 3" scarlet velvet on the anterior outside edge. Those receiving the BD, a postgraduate qualification, wore a black silk hood, lined and bound ½" on all edges with blue silk, and trimmed with a gold cord 1" from the binding. The hood for a BTh, Union College's basic degree, was of black bengaline lined with purple silk.<sup>70</sup> There was no hood for the college testamur. A proposed BRE (Religious Education) was apparently never conferred.<sup>71</sup>

The honorary DD hood, made of scarlet cloth in the Toronto doctor's full shape, had a gold chevron on its purple silk lining.<sup>72</sup> No information is to hand regarding a doctoral robe. It may be that, following their Anglican colleagues' lead, Union College borrowed a red LLD robe with its purple facings and sleeve linings from UBC for those receiving the Doctorate in Divinity. Alternatively, and more likely, as Union College's hood patterns paralleled those of Victoria College in the University of Toronto, with which as we have seen,

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<sup>67</sup> Minutes, 24 May 1967, p. 3772. The hood is generally made with square corners to the cape and the neckband bound 3/8" gold.

<sup>68</sup> *Programme of the Spring Congregation for the Conferring of Degrees* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 2012), pp. 5, 92. Up-to-date information on UBC's current eighty-four degrees and their corresponding academic dress is available at <[www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=1,6,0,0](http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=1,6,0,0)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017]. Photos of contemporary BA, MEd and PhD gowns and hoods are available at <[www.gaspard.ca/university-of-british-columbia/](http://www.gaspard.ca/university-of-british-columbia/)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017].

<sup>69</sup> *SBC 1927*, c. 86, s. 17.

<sup>70</sup> Bengaline is a finely ribbed woven mix of silk and cotton.

<sup>71</sup> *Union College Calendar 1931/1932*, pp. 18-19; *1951/1952*, [p. 10].

<sup>72</sup> Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, pp. 162-63, 166. These pages illustrate and describe Union College's hoods.

Union's predecessor Columbian College was affiliated, DDs in full dress may have followed the lead of the Toronto institution and worn either a conventional master's gown or a black Geneva gown, together with a black velvet mortar-board with a gold tassel.<sup>73</sup>

Like its sister institution, ATC, with which it amalgamated in 1971 to form the Vancouver School of Theology, its awards ceased in 1974.

### *Northwest Baptist Theological College, 1959–87*

At the close of World War II, Evangelical Baptist leaders in British Columbia and the three prairie provinces established Northwest Baptist Bible College in Port Coquitlam, a suburb of Vancouver. Subsequently the College reorganized and relocated to Vancouver, and in 1959 the provincial legislature granted it power to confer all theological degrees as the Northwest Baptist Theological College.<sup>74</sup> During its independent existence it granted the BD (later converted to the MDiv) and the MTh. In 1987 it joined with the Canadian Baptist Seminary and Trinity Western Seminary to form the Associated Canadian Theological Schools consortium at the nascent Trinity Western University.<sup>75</sup> Enquiries have been unsuccessful in eliciting information about the College's academic dress. It may be that Trinity Western adopted the dress of the older institution.<sup>76</sup> If so, Northwest would have introduced the ICC in British Columbia, using a blue-lined hood with a gold chevron.

### *Notre Dame University of Nelson, 1963–77*

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Nelson established Notre Dame College in 1950. Initially a junior college, it received degree-granting status in 1963, becoming British Columbia's first private university.<sup>77</sup> The chancellor wore a robe of scarlet silk trimmed with gold lace and white fur around the neck, down each side and around the bottom edge. The glove sleeve openings were gold lace trimmed as well. This use of fur as an academic trimming material was a first for British Columbia, but unsurprising given Notre Dame's organizational affinities with the Roman Catholic Laval, Montréal and Ottawa Universities in Eastern Canada, each of which incorporates fur into its academic attire.<sup>78</sup> A black velvet mortarboard with gold lace edging and tassel completed this official dress. The president's robe was similar, but blue, trimmed with silver. The presidential velvet mortar-board had a silver lace tassel and edging.

Another Notre Dame innovation was the provision of a Board of Governors robe. It was of dark blue stuff with the front facings trimmed on each outer edge with two rows of white ribbon and pleated open sleeves trimmed with white cord.<sup>79</sup> A governor's mortarboard was of dark blue stuff with a tassel of mixed threads of white and blue. Doctors' robes were Cambridge style in royal blue material<sup>80</sup> with facings and sleeve-linings of corded silk matching the degree hood binding and a royal blue mortar-board with a gold tassel.

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73 Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, pp. 280–82.

74 *SBC 1959*, c. 103, ss. 15, 16.

75 Northwest Baptist Seminary, 'Northwest's History', at <[www.nbseminary.ca/about/history](http://www.nbseminary.ca/about/history)> [retrieved 21 Feb, 2017].

76 Bert Harkes, sometime General Manager, DSR Harcourts, email to author, 15 Sept. 2014.

77 *SBC 1963*, c. 57, ss. 2, 8(c), 12(e).

78 Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, pp. 185–88, 217–21, 232–38.

79 Presumably this was a London style bachelor's gown with the cord supporting the pleats.

80 Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, p. 228.



**FIG. 4** Notre Dame University of Nelson Chancellor Hugh Keenleyside and President Aquinas Thomas, SA, in official robes. Fr. Thomas appears to be also wearing the hood of the honorary DLit just conferred on him at the 1969 Notre Dame graduation.

*Calendar of Notre Dame University of Nelson 1975-1976, p. 13; Courtesy of University of Victoria Archives*

Graduates' hoods conformed to the shapes and dimensions of the ICC but with distinctive modifications. Honorands wore hoods with a royal blue shell (thus matching their robe) lined with light blue silk on which were placed two 2" chevrons of white silk. Each hood had binding over the cowl, ½" on the interior and 5" on the exterior with velvet of the appropriate ICC colour, namely: drab, DBA (Business Administration); light blue, DED; purple, LLD; white, DLit; pink, DMus; and white, DPS (Political Science).<sup>81</sup>

Bachelors wore an Intercollegiate style gown and a standard mortar-board together with a black nylon rayon hood lined with light blue silk and having a 3½" white chevron.<sup>82</sup> Each had an ICC velvet binding: of white for the BA; light blue for the BEd; yellow<sup>83</sup> for both the BSc and the unusual BMRS (Medical Record Science); drab for the equally unusual BSA (Secretarial Arts); and brown for the BFA. A blue lining with a white chevron also distinguishes the ICC style hoods of both St Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia<sup>84</sup> and those of the Jesuit-sponsored Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. During its lifetime, Notre Dame had successive affiliation agreements with each.<sup>85</sup> With the expansion of post-secondary education in British Columbia through the establishment of regional colleges, beginning in 1966 with the founding of Selkirk College in nearby Castlegar, the provincial government acquired and closed Notre Dame in 1977.

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81 Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, p. 229. Is the white velvet binding for the DPS a misprint, easily possible in a three-volume reference work? Political Science is a social science and thus would be trimmed with golden yellow, according to the ICC. If this were the case each honorary degree hood (and robe) would be clearly distinguished.

82 It is unusual for an institution following the ICC code to have different linings for earned and honorary degrees.

83 Was the ICC golden yellow for science degrees intended?

84 Founded in 1853, it is also a Roman Catholic diocesan-sponsored university.

85 Laurence K. Shook, *Catholic Post-secondary Education in English-speaking Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), pp. 397, 400.

## *The University of Victoria, 1963*

The University of Victoria was British Columbia's second public university.<sup>86</sup> It was universally known as UVic from its inception, much to the distress of Dr Malcolm Taylor, its first president. The university had a long gestation, reaching back to 1903, when it began as an extension of the local high school in affiliation with McGill University. Its post-secondary activities, suppressed with the founding of UBC in 1915, were revived under local pressure in 1920, but now in affiliation with the provincial university. After six decades of offering instruction in the first two years of Arts and Science, it became an independent degree-granting institution in 1963. During its last two years of dependent existence it offered enough senior university courses to allow students to qualify for UBC degrees without attendance at the Vancouver campus. Becoming independent, it chose distinctive academic attire immediately because of the instant requirement to confer degrees.

On 25 May 1964, at UVic's first Convocation, His Honour Judge Joseph Clearihue, who had laboured long and hard for the establishment of a university in the provincial capital, was installed as chancellor. He exchanged his black silk county court judge's gown and bands for a robe of purple corded silk with glove sleeves open from floor to elbow, having purple velvet facings which continued around the neck after the manner of ICC doctoral gowns, with both facings and armholes trimmed with gold braid. Dr Harry Hickman, the acting president assumed the presidential robe. It was like the chancellor's but of royal blue corded silk trimmed with blue velvet and gold braid. Both chancellor and president wore black velvet mortar-boards with gold tassel and trim. (See Fig. 5.)

Following the example of the recently established Notre Dame University, UVic prescribed academic dress for members of its Board of Governors. They wore a Cambridge DMus pattern festal gown of grey cloth material trimmed on the outer edges of the facings with gold and blue ribbon, together with a black cloth mortar-board with black tassel.

Unlike UBC, UVic did not hesitate to grant honorary degrees. At its first convocation, long-time Victoria College professor of zoology Jeffree Cunningham received the LLD, UVic's only honorary degree at the time. He wore a robe like that worn by the university's governors, but of scarlet wool broadcloth with front facings and sleeve linings of blue-purple silk taffeta. A scarlet cloth hood of Aberdeen shape lined with blue-purple silk taffeta together with a black round velvet bonnet trimmed with scarlet cord and tassels completed his academic costume.

It is the hoods prescribed for degrees which are most illustrative of UVic's innovations in academic dress in British Columbia. Disregarding historic connections with McGill University (which adopted the Cambridge shape) and UBC (which used the London shape), UVic chose the Aberdeen shape as the pattern for all its hoods. Bachelors' hoods are of silk taffeta of the same solid colour within and without: BA, red; BEd, blue; and BSc gold. The colours of these hoods are a conscious tribute to McGill (whose livery colours are red and white) and UBC (whose heraldic colours are blue and gold). Another innovation in the UVic scheme is the substitution of two cord rosettes, of the same colour as the hood, for the neckbands of these initial hoods. Fasteners on their underlying gown secure them, resulting in gown and hood generally being assumed as a single garment.

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<sup>86</sup> *SBC 1963*, c. 52, s. 5(1) (b).

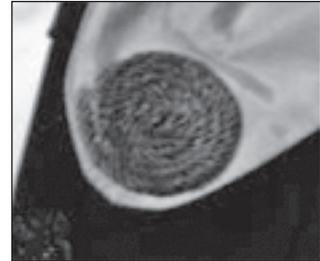


Courtesy of University of Victoria Archives, Historical Collection, 054.0209

**FIG. 5** University of Victoria Chancellor Joseph Clearihue and Acting President Harry Hickman in official regalia. Dr Hickman's cap lacks the prescribed gold trim around the skull.



Courtesy of Gwyneth Anderson  
**FIG. 6 University of Victoria Governor.**



Author's photo collection  
**FIG. 7 University of Victoria BA graduate. Note the cord rosette.**

From its outset, UVic had made provision for master's degree regalia. By 1965, plans for graduate degrees were well underway; the University conferred her initial masters' degree in 1968. Magisterial hoods are of the same colour and dimension as those for the baccalaureate, but have a mitred neckpiece in place of the rosettes. Additionally, there was a one-inch band of black velvet 1" from the outside edge of the cowl and neckband.

Those admitted to UVic earned degrees wear ankle length black gowns (with open sleeves for bachelors and closed glove sleeves for masters), and a black cloth mortar-board.<sup>87</sup>

### *Simon Fraser University, 1963*

In the summer of 1808, as he made his famous descent of the river now bearing his name, Simon Fraser could not have imagined that high on the northern hills he was passing as he approached tidewater an eponymous university would stand a century and a half later. Named to honour the North West Company's pioneering explorer, Simon Fraser University, known popularly as SFU, itself pioneered certain aspects of academic attire in British Columbia. As an 'instant university' whose legal foundation had only been laid two years before it began holding convocations,<sup>88</sup> conferring degrees and offering instruction, the minds of University officials turned early to devising a system of academic attire.

Dr Gordon M. Shrum, the Chancellor (who had guided the university from conception to birth), wore a red silk robe with glove sleeves having inverted-T armholes. The broad facings and flap collar are of gold silk. The presidential robe was like the chancellor's,

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<sup>87</sup> *University of Victoria Calendar 1964/1965*, pp. 10–11. Subsequent additions and modifications to the UVic scheme of academic dress are beyond the scope (1866–1966) of this article, but may be followed in the annual editions of the *Calendar*. Notable among them are the adoption of the Burgon shape for the PhD hood, a redesigned robe for University governors, and distinctive robes for emeritus chancellors and presidents. Details of the University's current academic dress are available at <[www.uvic.ca/calendar2015-09/CAL/TUofV/UnRe.html](http://www.uvic.ca/calendar2015-09/CAL/TUofV/UnRe.html)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017].

<sup>88</sup> *SBC 1963*, c. 52, s. 5 (1) (c).



**FIG. 8 SFU President Patrick McTaggart-Cowan in official dress.**

SFU Aerial Construction Collection photo, F-30-3-0-0-4, item 3041; © George Allen Estate; Courtesy Simon Fraser University Archives

but of blue silk with silver silk facings.<sup>89</sup> Both chancellor and president wore a black velvet bonnet.<sup>90</sup> The chancellor's bonnet had a gold cord and tassel trim, while the presidential cord and tassel were silver. Members of the Board of Governors and lay members<sup>91</sup> of the University Senate wear a black silk robe with a square collar,<sup>92</sup> faced down each side of the front with gold silk, but no headdress.

SFU's first tranche of honorary degrees, conferred at the official opening ceremonies on 9 September 1965, appropriately included Simon Fraser, 15th Lord Lovat.<sup>93</sup> Receiving his LLD he wore a red silk Cambridge pattern festal doctorate robe. Its 5 ¼" red silk facings had 2" blue silk exterior edgings. His Aberdeen style hood was blue silk, lined with gold silk and his bonnet was blue velvet with a light blue cord and tassel. The choice of red and blue as the basic colours for the University's ceremonial dress flows from the Fraser of Lovat coat of arms and appears regularly in gowns, hoods and headdress, as well as in the University's armorial bearings.<sup>94</sup>

89 This description, based on photos of early SFU ceremonies is at variance with Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, p. 259. Smith and Sheard's description may be a first evolution of the robes of both chancellor and president; the present robes represent a further evolution.

90 Instead of a mortar-board, thus blurring the distinction between University officers and graduates. A parallel solecism occurred at UBC. See pp. 39–40.

91 It is not clear whether lay status means non-graduate, non-alumni or non-faculty.

92 This sounds very much like a QC style gown; however further details are unavailable.

93 At <[www.sfu.ca/ceremonies/honorary-degrees/past\\_honorary\\_degrees.html](http://www.sfu.ca/ceremonies/honorary-degrees/past_honorary_degrees.html)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017].

94 *Simon Fraser University Calendar 1965–1966*, p. 16.

Two years later, twelve students who had transferred from other institutions with advanced standing, fulfilled their course requirements. The University, now with a complete scheme of academic dress, conferred on them, as appropriate, its first earned degrees, not just at the baccalaureate, but also at the magisterial and doctoral level.<sup>95</sup>

Hoods for these graduates, made of cord bengaline, also conformed to the Aberdeen pattern. The PhD hood was blue, lined with silver silk. It was worn with a red silk robe like that worn by holders of the honorary LLD, but with 4" red silk facings and no blue edging. The doctoral bonnet was identical to that for the LLD. The University broke new ground for British Columbia in prescribing distinctive gowns for bachelor's and master's degrees: while preserving their traditional patterns, it ordered them made of blue silk bengaline and worn with a blue cloth mortar-board and matching blue tassel.

Non-doctoral hoods were red, and assigned distinctive bindings on the outside of the cowl to indicate the degree and its level: blue for BA and MA; white for BEd and MEd; and gold for BSc and MSc. Bachelor's degree bindings were 1¾" wide on both the sides of the cowl while master's hood bindings were 2½" wide.<sup>96</sup>

### *The Seminary of Christ the King, 1966*

Thirty-five years after being established to train Roman Catholic priests, this professional school conducted by the Benedictines of Westminster Abbey, Mission, received legislative permission to confer the BA and theological degrees.<sup>97</sup> Officers and graduates of the school wear ecclesiastical, not academic, costume,<sup>98</sup> perhaps a not unconscious return to the origins of academic dress, and a suitable note on which to end these robing room tales.

### **Epilogue**

After Vancouver Island's first independent settler, Walter Colquhoun Grant, arrived from Scotland on 11 August 1849, five months after Chaplain Staines, he established himself on a hundred acres on the Sooke Basin, just off the Strait of Juan de Fuca, some forty kilometres south-west of Victoria. Soon thereafter he imported seeds of Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), intending to produce a visual reminder of his homeland. Grant's plantings were so successful that broom has invaded south-western British Columbia, even extending into the West Kootenays, home of Notre Dame University of Nelson.<sup>99</sup> The shrub's introduction and colonization, noted on the historical marker now standing on his original acreage,<sup>100</sup> is a botanical parallel to the establishment, spread and recognition of academic dress in the inhabited areas of the province.

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<sup>95</sup> *Simon Fraser University Convocation Program*, 20 May 1967.

<sup>96</sup> Academic dress information is lacking in any SFU Calendar between 1965 and 1970 although documented in Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, pp. 259, 264. The university website <[www.sfu.ca/convocation/traditions/university-regalia.html](http://www.sfu.ca/convocation/traditions/university-regalia.html)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017], gives full details of present-day academic dress for University office and degree holders, as well links leading to photos of each hood.

<sup>97</sup> *SBC 1966*, c. 67, ss. 9, 10.

<sup>98</sup> Smith and Sheard, Vol. 1, p. 179.

<sup>99</sup> Lewis J. Clark, *Wild Flowers of the Pacific Northwest*, ed. John J. Trelawny (Madeira Park, BC, Harbour, 1998), pp. 271-72.

<sup>100</sup> Elida Peers, Historian, Sooke Regional Museum, email to author, 24 Nov. 2015.

From its tentative introduction at Fort Victoria and slow growth over a century and a half, academic dress in British Columbia reached a varied and robust maturity. While not seen frequently, citizens readily recognize academic dress as the outward symbol of advanced educational achievement, although understandably not always with full appreciation of its subtleties. After the first degree was conferred in British Columbia in 1912, it took little more than half a century before a full range of gowns, hoods and headdress was prescribed and worn by officers and graduates of provincial institutions of higher learning.

As clergy were the first to appear in academic dress in British Columbia, so church-sponsored colleges were the first to prescribe distinctive gowns and hoods in the province. These colleges tended to espouse the Oxford pattern for hoods. UBC, while intending to adopt the Cambridge pattern, in fact had her hoods (apart from those for honorary degrees, professional doctorates and the PhD) transform into the London pattern.

It was UBC, however, which gave the real impetus to the wearing of academic dress in British Columbia. For fifty years, until the UVic and SFU challenged its dominance of the provincial academic dress scene, UBC gowns and hoods appeared increasingly at academic occasions on and off its campus as well as appearing in the pulpits of various denominations. Whether from lack of coordination or cooperation, both UVic and SFU chose Aberdeen shape hoods rather than distinguish between themselves, for instance by one using the Oxford or Edinburgh shape, or by using fur edging—particularly in view of the fur-trading roots of Victoria and Simon Fraser’s employment.

The ICC probably influenced some of UBC’s colour choices: maize for Agriculture; brown for Forestry; purple for Law; lemon for Library Science; green for Physical Education; and dark green for Pharmacy. In addition, UBC also explicitly adopted the Code for its original PhD regalia and in addition assumed the Code’s shape for its MD, EdD and DDS hoods. This latter decision introduced a third inconsistency into its scheme of academic dress, the first being the confusion between academic and official dress in its initial provision of attire for both the chancellor and president, and the second being the contradiction in colour among the hood linings of the LLD and LLB and the DSc and BSc.

It is unsurprising that British Columbia’s academic wardrobe excluded both the *épitoge*, doubtless rejected as too foreign in *British* Columbia, as well as the Warham Guild shape, probably considered too antiquarian. Although mooted at SFU, the use of tartan in the University’s hoods was briskly vetoed (see Figs 9 and 10).<sup>101</sup> Had this suggestion been accepted, it would have made SFU unique in Canada and a member of an exclusive group in North America.<sup>102</sup>

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101 The hoods in Figs. 9 and 10 are in Fraser Modern Red tartan, probably because the robe-maker, Sainthill-Levine of Toronto, did not have any of the very similar Fraser of Lovat tartan material handy. There is an amusing incident from the new university’s early days when possibilities for academic attire were under discussion. The University’s first president, Dr Patrick McTaggart-Cowan, aware of Simon Fraser’s Scottish heritage and proud of his own, was tempted by tartan hoods. Prototypes were produced and discussions ensued, but the idea was vetoed by Chancellor Gordon Shrum, ‘No, Pat’, he said. ‘Not everyone likes the Scots’ (Correspondence from R. J. Baker to William Saywell, 18 Nov. 1983. SFU Archives and Records Management File F-193-5-2-3-1).

102 No other Canadian university incorporated tartan into its academic dress; in the United States, only the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University) in Pittsburgh, Penn., Covenant College and Theological Seminary in Lookout Mountain, Ga., and Iona College in New Rochelle, N.Y., used tartan linings for their ICC style hoods. Those tartans are Carnegie, Cler-



Courtesy of Gwynneth Roseborough, Simon Fraser University Student Services

**FIGS 9 & 10 Prototype SFU tartan hoods. Presumably they represent a baccalaureate and a doctoral degree respectively. The binding of the hood on the left is 2" wide.**

Gowns, like hoods were signs of graduate standing, except at UBC and its affiliate ATC where a khaki cord denoted undergraduate status. Glove-sleeved master's gowns had to await the establishment of UVic and SFU. The use of headdress became unusual except for its optional use at graduation or in yearbook photographs.

There are two aspects of academic dress not in any way regulated or even mentioned by British Columbia academic authorities during the century under consideration: the concept of *sub-fusc* and the use of bands. The conventional nature of the academic world at that time is probably the reason there was no mention of what underlay a gown and hood. The assumption was that it would be business attire or similarly conservative dress. The superior courts of the province followed the English tradition of bands for judges and lawyers, but as legal, not academic, attire. Although from 1953 on UBC Faculty of Law graduation photographs feature gowns, hoods and bands, the latter were worn only as an earnest of a graduate's professional aspirations, not as part of their academic dress. Oxbridge graduates and others might wear bands at academic ceremonies, but merely as a matter of personal choice. Protestant ministers commonly wore bands with their preaching gown; a few Anglican clergy assumed the wearing of bands with choir dress, but again as an individual choice, not an academic requirement.

The province's three major universities achieve a varied clarity in proclaiming the status of their in-course graduates. UVic's system of hoods clearly distinguishes between the levels of earned degrees; SFU hoods, however, need a sharp eye to distinguish between the  $\frac{3}{4}$ " difference in the width of the stripes that differentiate the hoods of bachelors and

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gy and MacLean of Duart, respectively (Kevin Sheard, *Academic Heraldry in America* (Marquette, Mich.: Northern Michigan College Press, 1962), pp. 65, 72; Smith and Sheard, Vol. III, p. 1810).

masters. The coloured cords on UBC hoods can be almost indistinguishable at a distance, especially on hoods such as the BSF (brown with green cord) and BSc (Forestry) (brown with light blue cord) or the BArch (scarlet with white cord) and the BSN (scarlet with blue and white cord). The hoods of the denominational colleges, with their modest number of graduates and limited degree offerings could clearly differentiate their various degrees.

While academic dress became more common over the course of a century, an ordinary graduate might still only wear it twice, once to have a photograph taken for use in a student yearbook, with its possible distribution to parents, spouses or benefactors, and a second time at graduation. Thereafter only academics, clergy and teachers might have occasions on which it was expected, required or seemly to wear dress pertaining to their several degrees.

Today, fifty years after the century under consideration, a new generation of degree-granting institutions has emerged. Twenty additional publicly funded post-secondary bodies now offer at least a bachelor's degree. As well, a further fifteen private or extra-provincial public institutions have government authorization to offer specific degree programmes at the bachelor's level or higher.<sup>103</sup> In addition, thirteen theological institutions have statutory authority to confer theological degrees.<sup>104</sup> There are great opportunities remaining to document the further evolution of academic dress in British Columbia.

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103 At <[www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/degree-authorization](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/institution-resources-administration/degree-authorization)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017].

104 At <[www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/find-a-program-or-institution/find-an-institution](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/find-a-program-or-institution/find-an-institution)> [retrieved 21 Feb. 2017].

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