

The Prince George Retired Teachers' Association Education Heritage Committee

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August 14, 2023

To George Davison, Chair

City of Prince George Heritage Commission

Proposal to include early school sites in the City of Prince George Interpretive Signs project

Tiiu Noukas, former co-chair of the Prince George Retired Teachers' Association Education Heritage Committee, had a conversation with Cheryl Livingstone-Leman several years ago about the possibility of some Interpretive Signs being created for early school sites. At the time Cheryl was a member of the City of Prince George Heritage Commission. Our committee believes that some of the early schools deserve recognition as they were important to the community. Cheryl suggested we submit a proposal to the Prince George Heritage Commission.

Our committee members have been researching the histories of regional schools and collecting/cataloguing school artifacts since 1995. We have completed fact sheets on nine early schools which could generate about five signs as some schools would be grouped together. We have enclosed the fact sheet of a school that was located at Queensway Street and 15th Avenue and had three names. We can provide the remaining examples as needed.

It is interesting that some buildings had several name changes and conversely some names were applied to several buildings. A city-wide naming contest in 1929 resulted in the *Prince George High School* becoming *Baron Byng High School*, the *Prince George Public School* becoming *King George V Elementary School* and the school at Millar Addition (our example) changing to *Connaught Elementary School*. Many Prince George street names were changed in 1953 and these have been recognized.

Each school fact sheet includes the city lot number of the time, the school's history, suggested photographs available from Exploration Place and the address and a photograph of the current location where each school existed. Our fact sheets were resourced from newspaper articles, B.C. Government Annual Reports, various publications, archives and our book *Historical Memories: People, Places, Programs and Services* (School District No. 57 Prince George).

We hope that our information may inspire future signs – either installations or virtual guides.

Sincerely

REDACTED

Kris Nellis

Co-chair of the Prince George Retired Teachers' Association Education Heritage Committee

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1916 Prince George Public School at Millar Addition / first Prince George High School / first Connaught School

This public school was first known as the school at *Millar Addition*. It consisted of two classrooms and a large central hall with two smaller rooms in the basement. Built by contractors Bronger & Flynn, it opened in [January 1916](#) and enrolled one class of elementary students. By [September 1917](#), there were 14 high school students registered in the city and the school trustees thought that was close enough to the 20 required for a high school. The decision was made for this Queensway Street site to be the first *Prince George High School*. The elementary students were moved to a school that had been built on Winnipeg Street.

During the influenza epidemic in late 1918 this high school was briefly used as a temporary hospital.

During [February 1925](#) the high school location was changed to the reconfigured former public school on Winnipeg Street. This *Millar Addition* building was then used for overflow classes, mostly for elementary children living in the area.

Connaught School was chosen as the official name in a 1929 school-naming contest, as the school was located on Connaught Hill. The Duke of Connaught had been Governor General of Canada from 1911-1916 and several places in Prince George were already named after him and his family.

In the late 1940s, to meet the needs of the growing city, a major expansion enlarged the school to seven classrooms. Unfortunately, a fire destroyed the building in 1951. It was decided to build a new *Connaught Elementary* on 17th Avenue at Pine Street which opened in 1953.

Suggested photos:

1. Exploration Place P996.7.5.23 or P981.35.69

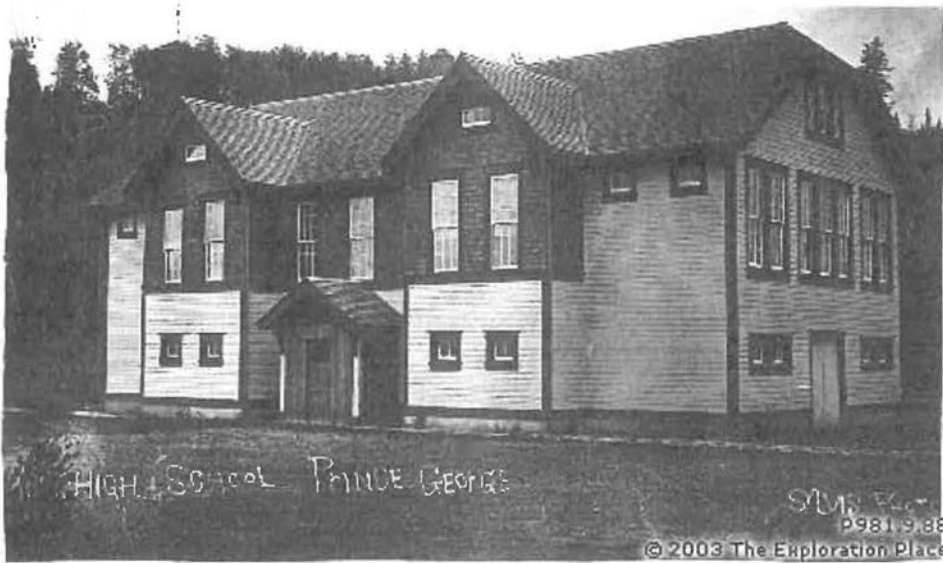
Public School Millar Addition

(n.b. Millar is misspelled as "Miller")



2. Exploration Place P981.9.88

High School



3. Exploration Place P988.18.20

Grade 1 Class at Connaught Elementary School 1947-1948



P988.18.20
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1916 Prince George Public School at Millar Addition / first Prince George High School / first Connaught School

Location: Block 238, on the north side of Queensway (Queen Street) at 15th (Manson Street).



This is the site today. The apartment building stands approximately where the school existed.

The photo was taken on the Queensway Street side of the lot.