

# **THE HISTORY OF BEGINNING READING**

**From Teaching by “Sound” to Teaching by “Meaning”**



# THE HISTORY OF BEGINNING READING

From Teaching by “Sounds” to Teaching by “Meaning”

By

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## **FOREWORD**

In 1959, Admiral Hyman G. Rickover published his challenging and disturbing book, *Education and Freedom* (1960 paperback edition by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York). Admiral Rickover's very first chapter identified the problem: "Education Is Our First Line of Defense - Make It Strong."

I read Admiral Rickover's book when I was on a vacation Caribbean cruise in 1960, in which year I was taking courses to switch from secretarial work to teaching. The other paperback book in my suitcase was Dr. Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read, and What You Can Do About It* (Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., New York: 1955). Dr. Flesch's book was shattering. It also explained something to me which had puzzled me greatly. In the fall of 1958, I had attended a Saturday morning English class at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Rutherford, New Jersey. A back row of young ex-servicemen in that class had not been able to read simple material aloud correctly when the professor, Dr. Lloyd Haberle, had asked them to do so. The inability of these young men to read correctly had astonished me. Yet it was nothing to the astonishment I felt when I began teaching third grade in September, 1963, and found that the alarm bells being rung by Admiral Rickover and Dr. Flesch had largely fallen on deaf ears in the public schools.

In the twenty-two and one-half years I spent teaching primary grades in public schools, never once did the school administration endorse the kind of true phonics program which Dr. Flesch endorsed. Some attempts were made to improve the teaching of mathematics and science, but the attempts could do little good with a school population that had been crippled in its reading skills. This was particularly so since for many of the students, unlike those ex-servicemen I remember, their disability was hidden. (My text explains why the reading disability is so often hidden, and that the disability is the direct result of teaching beginning reading with the "meaning" method instead of the "sound" method.) It was because of the obtuse refusal of the school administrators to institute real phonics that I spent so much time remediating reading disabilities and developed the desire to do something about the problem myself. The oral reading research I carried out in my sabbatical half-year (September, 1977-January, 1978) and the years since then that I spent researching library materials have resulted in this history of beginning reading.

The section of this history from about 1820 to 1840 uses the frame of reference provided by Samuel Blumenfeld's brilliant history of that period, *Is Public Education Necessary?* (Devin-Adair, 1981; The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho, 1985). Blumenfeld's book documented the activities of the group of organized zealots from about 1820 to 1840 who largely succeeded in replacing private education in America with government education. The present-day use of the terms, "public" and "private" to distinguish government schools from non-government schools probably originated with the early nineteenth-century American zealots about whom Blumenfeld wrote. In the previous century in England, "private" education had instead meant home education, and "public" education had instead meant education outside the home. That usage still persists in the very exclusive "public" schools of England, which charge high fees and which are largely used only by the upper classes.

This history is also in debt to Blumenfeld's 1973 book, *The New Illiterates* (Arlington House, New Rochelle, New York, presently published by the Paradigm Company), for originally uncovering the fact that the American sight-word method is actually based on the deaf-mute method for teaching reading, as developed by the Abbe de l'Epee of France. The *New Illiterates* also documents the fact that the deaf-mute method was endorsed and used by Thomas Gallaudet for hearing children in America in 1830 and later.

Attention was originally focused both on Gallaudet and on the sight-word controversy in Boston by Mitford Mathews' very important book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago: 1966. However, Mathews did not realize that Gallaudet was promoting true sight-words, nor did he recognize Gallaudet's influence on the Boston sight-word controversy. Yet Mathews had uncovered enough of the historical path so that Blumenfeld knew the direction in which to travel.

In her 1967 book, *Learning to Read: the Great Debate*, McGraw Hill Book Company, New York, Dr. Jeanne S. Chall of Harvard University dispassionately and thoroughly traced the experimental data from the early twentieth century to establish which favored "meaning" and which favored "phonics" (sound) in the teaching of beginning reading. Of course, Dr. Chall found that "sound" won out overwhelmingly over "meaning." My entire historical text, and my own oral reading research, is concerned with the use of "meaning" or "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading and with the contrast in results. At the beginning of my historical research, I relied heavily on Dr. Chall's excellent material.

The rejection of the McGuffey Myth by this history will be jarring to many people initially. The McGuffey Myth is the so-called "fact" that the presumably "phonic" McGuffey series was used by eighty or ninety per cent of Americans in the nineteenth century. An explanation is given for the invention of that Myth which dates only from the late 1920's, long after the McGuffey readers were supposed to have been dominant. A reason is also given for the curious fact that the Myth is most completely accepted by those people who are the best informed on other matters.

Some terms used in this text should be defined. "Meaning" approaches in teaching the reading of alphabetic print are labeled "Code 1," and are considered the lowest on a scale from one to ten. "Sound" approaches are labeled Code 10, the highest on that scale from one to ten. Approaches falling in between are indicated by higher or lower code numbers.

Such a rating scale is particularly needed to evaluate those programs which purport to teach "phonics" but do an inadequate or faulty job, and which in practice depend heavily on "meaning." For instance, in its 1995 materials, the widely advertised *Hooked on Phonics* program, which superficially appears to have a strong "phonic" emphasis, actually rates, in my opinion, only a Code 3. That is because of its remarkably heavy and early introduction of sight words, its surprisingly inept, incredibly badly organized and unsatisfactory phonic lessons, and its apparent expectation that a learner working alone can go through the extensive practice exercises when he has no way of checking whether he is reading material correctly. That is the equivalent of classic and faulty "silent reading," since almost all of the learner's practice material is omitted from the recorded tapes. By contrast, *Sing, Spell, Read and Write* by Sue Dickson, St. Petersburg, Florida, a Code 10 program which also uses music and tapes, gives heavy oral practice drill on phonic elements through games and texts, but the oral drill is meant to be carefully monitored every step of the way by the teacher or parent.

In this history, the term, "synthetic phonics," refers to the building up, or synthesizing, of words from phonic elements, and is not a label for imitation phonics. Imitation phonics is referred to as "phony phonics." (Phony phonics is not true isolated-letter-based phonics but is actually only an exercise with parts of previously memorized, whole, meaning-bearing words, in which those whole words are pulled apart and then put together again in different combinations, like so many jig-saw puzzle pieces.) Analytic phonics, which is the reverse of synthetic phonics, refers to identifying letter sounds in syllables or words. At present in English-speaking countries, what is called "analytic phonics" is usually only phony phonics. However, in German-language countries, analytic phonics has been used successfully, in combination with synthetic phonics, since the early nineteenth century.

Before Blaise Pascal of France invented synthetic phonics in 1655, analytic phonics was the only kind of "sound" approach known. At that time, unlike today in English-speaking countries, analytic phonics

dealt with all the phonic elements in syllables and words. Sometimes the analytic phonics approach used rhyming sequences of known words or syllables, such as cake, make, take or fight, bright, sight. The classic syllable “sound” method was another analytic approach. It used the memorization of tables of regularly formed printed syllables, whose very regularity was the key to memorizing their phonic elements, or sounds: ba, be, bi, bo, bu, ab, eb, ib, ob, ub; da, de, di, do, du, ad, ed, id, od, ud, etc.

The use of rhyming in poetry only became general after the days of ancient Greece and ancient Rome. Therefore, it is not surprising that the rhyming “sound” approach (cake, make, bake) is far newer in the teaching of beginning reading than the regularity “sound” approach (ba, be, bi, bo, bu; da, de, di, do, du, etc.). That ancient syllable method (ba, be, bi, bo, bu) was meant to demonstrate the differences in vowel sounds, as well as to drill on consonant sounds. By contrast, the rhyming approach does not demonstrate differences in vowel sounds.

Since the syllable method demonstrates the differences between vowel sounds, it is very conceivable that it was invented in ancient Greece almost immediately upon the invention of the vowels themselves about 800 B. C. (The addition of the vowels to the Phoenician alphabet about 800 B. C. is discussed in this history.) Such a device as the syllable method which can demonstrate the differences between vowel sounds would have been necessary to demonstrate the purpose and precision of the newly invented vowels to those people who already knew the grave limitations of the consonants in the already existing Phoenician alphabet. As discussed in this history, the ancient syllable method is known to have already been in use by the Etruscans by about 600 B. C., and the Etruscans got their alphabet from the Greeks. The probability is that they got the syllable method from the Greeks, along with the alphabet itself, some time before 600 B.C.

However, analytic methods which are not thorough in teaching either rhyming or sound regularities omit the keys to the sounds of the syllables. They are therefore equivalent to sight-word methods.





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Comments given orally at the July 19, 1989, Open Meeting on Recompensation of Regional Educational Laboratories, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Room 328, Washington, D. C., after which a written copy of the remarks was formally submitted. No acknowledgment of the oral remarks or of the written paper has ever been received, eleven years later.

Material Submitted to the National Assessment Governing Board in October, 1989, in a short address at their public meeting, and further material submitted to them by mail in February, 1992. No acknowledgment has ever been received up to 2000, eleven years after that 1989 meeting. The first material was given in person at that public meeting of the Board in Trenton, New Jersey, in 1989. A paper was submitted as a record. The second materials were sent in 1992, eight years ago, in part or all, to over 20 members of the National Assessment Governing Board, none of whom has ever responded. The Board's meetings in various parts of the country at which the public was invited to speak in 1989 were purportedly held solely because the Board wished to respond to public opinion (presumably, such as my own). That claim was obviously built on a firm foundation of smoke and mirrors.

**PART 1**  
**Concerning Today's "Reading Instruction"**





## Introduction

The puzzling adoption in 1930 of a deaf-mute method for teaching beginning reading to hearing children in America can only be understood when the long history of teaching beginning reading is known. The deaf-mute method adopted almost immediately after 1930 from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans and from Canada to Mexico used a “meaning” approach to teach the beginning reading of alphabetic print, instead of the ages-old “sound” approach. The 1930 “Dick and Jane” deaf-mute-method primers and their later clones are indeed the disgraceful source of America’s so-called functional illiteracy problem. This history is an attempt to bring together most of the contributing historical sources behind those deaf-mute-method primers, including the long history of teaching the beginning reading of alphabetic print. Only with such information can so-called functional illiteracy, the warped fruit of the “meaning” method, be properly understood and obliterated.

What makes the deaf-mute “meaning” method doubly tragic is that the “meaning” approach is also an inferior way to teach deaf children to read, instead of the lip-reading “sound” approach. Both approaches are discussed in the article in Appendix A by Dr. A. L. E. Crouter from the July 28, 1900, issue of *The School Journal*. Dr. Crouter’s article was based on his school’s twenty years of experience in teaching deaf children in Pennsylvania with the two methods.

The deaf-mute “meaning” method will not seem so obscure to most modern readers if they recall that first-grade teachers sometimes hang word-signs on things in the first-grade classrooms: the word “door,” over the door, and “window,” over the window. That kind of labeling to teach reading is Reverend Thomas H. Gallaudet’s deaf-mute approach, which he used to teach reading in the first permanent American school for deaf-mutes, founded in 1817. Also, instead of oral speech, he taught silent sign-language. Before Gallaudet (1787-1851) founded his school, the first time he used the sight-word reading approach was when he wrote the word “hat” on a piece of paper, and, holding the written word next to his hat, showed a little neighborhood girl who was a deaf-mute that the printed sign meant the same thing as his hat. She understood it very well, without any idea at all of what the word “hat” sounded like when it was spoken.<sup>1</sup>

So do first-graders understand such printed sight-words, but they do it in the same way that they understand pictures, as symbols that are meaning-bearing, not sound-bearing. That is why, when their sight-word books line up a picture of a dog with the word, “dog,” the little first graders sometimes say, instead of “dog,” “puppy.” Believe it or not, that kind of error always pleases reading “experts” because it shows the child got the “meaning.”

In Gallaudet’s controlled-vocabulary approach, after students learned a stock of printed “sight-words,” the sight-words were strung together with unknown words in printed sentences, often under a picture illustrating the action in the sentence, as in his *Child’s Picture Defining and Reading Book*, 1830, which he said he had written for both deaf and hearing children. The children then silently guessed the meaning of these unknown connecting words from the context of known sight-words and the picture illustrating the action, thus adding these previously unknown words to their silent controlled vocabulary. An analysis of Gallaudet’s *The Mother’s Primer*, written in 1835 for hearing children, shows

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<sup>1</sup> Barnard’s *American Journal of Education*, May, 1856, “Educational Biography - Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet,” page 420. That incident suggests that Gallaudet was familiar with the Abbe de l’Epee’s sight-word approach before Gallaudet visited the school the Abbe had founded in Paris. Otherwise, we must assume young Gallaudet brilliantly re-invented the Abbe’s sight-word approach of the eighteenth century. However, at the very beginning, the Abbe did not dispense with the manual alphabet taught to deaf-mutes from the time of the English historian-monk Bede in the eighth century. Neither did Gallaudet in the American school he founded in 1817.

that in this book he limited the introduction of such “unknown” words on the average to less than ten percent of the running total of all words in a selection, meaning that if a child missed ALL the new words, he would nevertheless score 90% in accuracy, if he had already memorized the “old” words.

Gallaudet’s 1835 *The Mother’s Primer* was the first sight-word controlled-vocabulary book with a “frustration level” ever published for hearing children. (The idea of a controlled vocabulary for words introduced by SOUND for beginning readers was not new: Lindley Murray had done that early in the nineteenth century. Controlling vocabulary for words introduced by SIGHT to about ten per cent of the total vocabulary for hearing children instead of the deaf children Gallaudet had been teaching for years was brand new in America.)

Presumably based on his experience in teaching deaf children, Gallaudet apparently felt that, to understand the text well enough to assure correct context guesses on new sight words, at least 90% of the context had to be composed of previously memorized sight words. This is also the apparent origin of the 90% word-accuracy “frustration” level on present individual oral reading “inventories” used in classrooms. Below that “frustration” level of 90% accuracy in reading words, the children will miss too much of the meaning of the selection to guess the meaning of the unknown words.

The high-frequency word approach to teaching reading to hearing children may also have originated with Gallaudet. The high-frequency word concept must have been fairly common knowledge in Gallaudet’s time, according to pages 22 and 23 of Joshua Leavitt’s *Primer: or Little Lessons for Little Learners*, Leavitt’s Reading Series - Part I, published by John P. Jewett & Co., Boston, 1851, and copyrighted in 1847. Leavitt listed eleven words presumed to form one-quarter of anything we read, and a further list of 68 words which, with the first eleven given were presumed to form half of any written material. Leavitt’s 1847 list of 79 words forming one half of written material includes many words on Leonard P. Ayres’ 1915 list of the 50 words which he found to compose half of written correspondence, as discussed in his *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling*, pages 7 through 12, published at that time by Russell Sage Foundation, New York, and recently republished by Mott Media, Milford, Michigan. It is interesting that the nine words which Ayres’ found to comprise one-fourth of all written material are ALL on Leavitt’s list of the eleven words forming one quarter of all texts. Leavitt also included “it” and “is” in his list of those words comprising one-quarter of any text. However, Ayres lists “it” as the eleventh commonest word, and “is” as the thirteenth.

A statistical analysis of W. S. Gray’s 1914 oral reading paragraphs shows that he marked as “failing” those who scored below 90% word accuracy, so Gray, the father of the “Dick and Jane” readers, apparently was aware of the “frustration” concept as long ago as 1914. By 1915, Gray also had to know that if a child had learned the 300 commonest words in English, he could receive a score of at least 75% accuracy in reading simple material. In 1915, Leonard P. Ayres (1879-1946) wrote the following in *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling*, (pages 10-11):

“Thus the first of these figures shows that the 50 commonest words are repeated so frequently that with their repetitions they constitute nearly half of all the words we write. The first 300 words make up more than three-fourths of all writing of this kind and the 1,000 words with their repetitions constitute more than nine-tenths of this sort of written material.”

Therefore, anyone who knows the thousand highest-frequency words as “sight words” can score at 90%, or above the frustration level, when reading almost anything orally, even if incapable of reading any other words. Since such persons often can guess the remaining unknown ten per cent of words, they are hidden illiterates, whom we call today, “functional illiterates.”

Mitford Mathews, in his book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, University of Chicago Press, 1966, page 155, referred to word frequency studies. His source was a 1959 article, "Spelling As A School Subject: A Brief History," *National Elementary Principal*, XXXVIII (May 1959), pages 8-23, by Jean S. and Paul R. Hanna, which I have not been able to locate. Mathews said:

"From these studies there resulted a basic list of about three thousand words which comprise ninety-eight per cent of those used by children, and by adults in writing."

This also means, astonishingly, that a functional illiterate with a visual memory of only the three thousand highest frequency written words can read aloud at about 98% accuracy! Of course, the two per cent or so of low-frequency written words which the functional illiterate may miss if he cannot guess them from his spoken vocabulary will probably be the words carrying the most meaning in the written selection. It is the functional illiterate's inability to read these low-frequency words which accounts for his low "reading comprehension" on difficult material.

That list of the three thousand commonest words was prepared some time before 1959. It was undoubtedly at least in large part based on the work of E. L. Thorndike, who by 1921 had prepared a list of the ten thousand commonest words in children's literature. Thorndike's work appeared in its final expanded version as *The Teachers Word Book of 30,000 Words* by E. L. Thorndike and Irving Lorge, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York: 1944, and was not limited to children's literature.

The fact that these three thousand highest-frequency words constitute about ninety-eight per cent of simple printed matter should be contrasted to the fact that English has perhaps half a million words, all of which, except for the three thousand most frequent, probably occupy only about two per cent of the total number of words in any ordinary spoken or written selection. However, as noted later, Thorndike's more difficult literature count showed nine thousand high-frequency words occupying about ninety-eight per cent, but nine thousand is still a tiny proportion of the approximate half million words in English. It is the remaining two per cent of words in a selection, taken at random from the approximate half million words in English, which may carry the most meaning in a selection and which may be the most critical for understanding a selection.

The "meaning-content" of the highest frequency words is discussed by Roland G. Kent, on pages 4-5 of *Language & Philology*, (Longmans, Green and Co., New York: 1923, 1932):

"...fifty words, much repeated, compose half of all words written.... But these words, despite their frequency, are not half the treasures of our tongue, nor one hundredth; they are utterly empty of content.... No one could frame even the simplest letter without constantly using words not in this list. In fact, the investigators found that beyond 1000 words they could not draw up an additional list of 1000 words of common use, because the vocabularies of different persons diverged too greatly according to their interests or professions."

The thousand commonest words comprise about ninety per cent of most materials, so those above one thousand would comprise only about ten per cent. Even allowing for that fact, Kent's last statement could be misunderstood. Estimates of the average adult's total vocabulary vary widely, with most believable ones showing totals far above 20,000 words. Yet the rarer words in each person's vocabulary probably differ for every person. However, the probability is that all adult English speakers, unless mentally retarded, do not differ in sharing as common ground the 10,000 highest-frequency words occurring in written matter.

E. L. Thorndike's and Irving Lorge's *The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words*, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York: 1944, lists words under 10,000 frequency. Reading over such words, it is apparent no native English speaker with a normal intellect could fail to have ALL OF THEM in his base vocabulary.

Yet, even in this "common ground," of the 10,000 highest-frequency words, the relative frequency of these shared words will differ for each person and for each topic discussed. Therefore, those words which are in the 1,000 to 2,000 most-frequent range for one group of speakers or on one topic may not be in the 1,000 to 2,000 most-frequent range for another group of speakers or on another topic. Yet the speakers nevertheless do have these common words somewhere in their vocabularies. Apparently, this is really all Kent meant: that it was impossible to make a list of words which would be equally frequent in everyone's vocabulary and on every topic at the 1,000 to 2,000 range.

Many of the 300 very highest frequency words are only structural: they are simply the syntactical glue which ties speech together. It is the lowest frequency words which carry the heart of meaning, and which provide the rest of the half million or so words in an unabridged English dictionary. Yet, as stated, almost every individual must have a vocabulary list which, at the lowest frequency range, is peculiar to himself. If this were not true, there would not be a half-million or so words in English, every one of which, someone, somewhere, has in his own vocabulary.

Yet Thorndike's whole concept of publishing a guide to the "most important" words was wrong, because his idea that importance is dependent on frequency was wrong. For instance, to me, as a Roman Catholic, the word, "Eucharist," is of the highest importance, yet it only appears in Thorndike's lowest frequency list, in the 20,000 to 30,000 group.

Furthermore, Thorndike ignored the fact that the function of the highest frequency words is frequently only a mechanical one, and that they are therefore different in their very nature from lower frequency words. High-frequency words erect the necessary syntactical structure in which to manipulate ideas. In truth, by such use, they are really syntax, and not vocabulary. It is no accident that many of the very highest frequency words are so devoid of clear meanings that they are extremely difficult to define. Some such words are "the," "in," "before," etc. Yet it is only natural that the syntactical structure (the high-frequency words) should be bulkier than its contents (the low frequency words).

The use of such very high frequency words to build a clear syntax that is nevertheless totally devoid of meaning was demonstrated by Lewis Carroll in his amusing poem, "Jabberwocky," from page 156 of *Alice in Wonderland*:

"Twas brillig, and the slithy toves,  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe."

Thorndike's four-and-one-half-million-words running count of 1921, plus later ones, turned up the 30,000 different words that he included in his 1944 book. However, since English has about a half-million different words, an incredible number would have to be counted in a running count of connected text before all of those half-million different words finally would turn up, every one of which has importance or it never would have been coined. In 1828, Noah Webster produced his dictionary which had almost three times as many words as Thorndike's 1944 list. Yet, how many words in running text would have to be counted before even Noah Webster's petty 80,000 words showed up? Obviously, counts of 80,000 or of a half-million words would require vastly more running text than Thorndike's

four-and-one-half-million words of running text, which showed some “rare” words occurring only once in that four-and-a-half million.

Most were not “rare” words in the truest sense. For the most ludicrous examples of that fact, consider the numerical words (not the digit forms) from forty to forty-nine. Only forty, forty-five, forty-six, and forty-eight showed up in Thorndike’s book!

Thorndike reported his own statistics under the column marked, “T,” but he followed it with other counts: Lorge’s, Juvenile, and “S,” (miscellaneous). Forty-six had not actually appeared in Thorndike’s count, since he marked it “0,” but it showed up in the Lorge count with 19 occurrences, which is obviously why Thorndike included it. Yet it had occurred only once in the Juvenile count, and not at all in the “S” count.

Because the words, forty-one, forty-two, forty-three, forty-four, and forty-seven are not in Thorndike’s book, does that mean they are unimportant? The same pattern appeared in his book for number words for the fifties. Concerning the sixties, only sixty appeared, but seventy and seventy-five both appeared. Such scattered occurrences appeared for other number words.

Furthermore, it is obvious that words in the very lowest frequencies of Thorndike’s count very possibly might not show up at all in the lowest frequencies of someone else’s count, and vice versa. Therefore, his lowest frequency words are simply random samples of that class of words from an unabridged dictionary and cannot in any sense be used as a guide to all of the lowest frequency words in that range. Furthermore, the truth is that some of the most meaningful words, the words with which we transfer some of our most meaningful thoughts, may occur in true frequency ranges far, far below Thorndike’s 30,000 cut-off point, and therefore might not show up at all in Thorndike’s or similar counts, except by chance.

Although Thorndike listed word frequencies, his method told nothing about the portion of texts occupied by the highest frequency words, which facts Ayres had stated so clearly in 1915. Thorndike hid those facts by the way he grouped those highest frequency words. (See his discussion on his page x.) Why did Thorndike hide those facts, since something so very revealing about the nature of language is demonstrated by them? Did Thorndike’s hiding that information have anything to do with the fact that the cumulative high-frequency word concept is absolutely basic to the deaf-mute guessing method for teaching reading introduced by his ex-students, Gates and Gray, in 1930, that produced a sea of functional illiteracy?

That information did emerge with Ayres’ comments, quoted above, and it showed up again in Key Words to Literacy by J. McNally and W. Murray, published by the Schoolmaster Publishing Co., Ltd., London, in 1962 or before. W. Murray became the author of the Ladybird Key Words Reading Scheme, published by Wills & Hepworth, Ltd., Loughborough and Leicestershire, England. In its 1969 brochure, a very illuminating graph appeared which demonstrated the huge portions of an average adult’s vocabulary occupied by the highest frequency words. The graph showed that the twelve highest-frequency words occupy one-quarter of an average vocabulary, and one hundred occupy one-half, and so on. To my knowledge, that is the first time the cumulative high-frequency word effect became common knowledge again since Ayres’ spelling scale was published in 1915. Yet that information was certainly hidden by Thorndike, who just as certainly must have known those facts very well indeed.

The Ladybird material concerned the vocabulary of an average adult, but Ayres had referred instead to the vocabulary found in written texts. Ayres reported only on the thousand most common words in written texts. However, it would obviously be virtually impossible to show such a “frequency” occurrence for the total vocabulary contained in an unabridged English dictionary, because that would require a

running text count of massive proportions, enormously greater than the running text Ayres had used to produce his statistics on the thousand commonest words. Probably the entire contents of the British Library would not suffice for a count that could turn up all the words in an unabridged dictionary.

However, for purposes of illustration, assume that such a count were theoretically possible, and that a bar graph could be prepared based on such a count. At the bottom horizontal line, numbers would be shown for percentage of frequency. On the vertical line on the left would be entered the number of words occurring in each frequency.

On such a graph, the column for words at the highest frequency would be very low, for such words are few. Yet, as the frequency dropped, the numbers of words in each group and therefore the size of its column would greatly increase. The graph line that would appear drawn over the top of those columns would rise consistently and sharply.

Yet, if an adult's vocabulary could be superimposed on such a graph prepared from an unabridged dictionary, it would not show the constantly rising line of the dictionary graph, but instead would show the typical bell curve that is revealed when any inborn ability is graphed. What is being measured by vocabulary knowledge, assuming a person has normal hearing and is truly literate, is that person's inborn intelligence. Such an adult would know all of the very highest frequency words (the lowest part of the line underneath his on the dictionary graph) and almost all of the rest of the high frequency words (underneath his on the dictionary graph) which columns would be increasingly higher than the beginning ones. Up to that point, the adult's graph line would exactly match the line on the dictionary graph. However, as the number of words in the rarest frequencies increased on the dictionary graph so that the dictionary graph line rose, the number of those words in those rarest frequencies that the adult knew would increasingly drop. As the words became increasingly rarer, the numbers of such words the adult knew would become increasingly smaller. The result would be that the adult's graph would produce a typical bell curve, instead of the constantly increasing line on the dictionary graph.

The hopeless incompleteness of the Thorndike count can be seen by taking a group of words at random in his count of the 20,000 most common words (omitting the pages at the end in which he includes the ten thousand words from 20,000 to 30,000), and then comparing them to the same words in an abridged dictionary. Four words following one another in alphabetical order on the Thorndike 20,000-word count were rampant, rampart, ramrod, and Ramsay. When I compared them to the comparable page in alphabetical order in an abridged dictionary, I found that Thorndike had not included rampage, rampageous, rampancy, rampion (a plant), Ramses, Ramsgate (a seaport), ramshackle, and ramson (a plant). Some of the words he omitted are obviously very simple and well known (rampage, Ramses, ramshackle), but they appear no where on the Thorndike list of the 20,000 highest frequency words. Furthermore, the user of his list who is deluded into thinking that it does include many low-frequency words will not find such true low-frequency words on the Thorndike list as rampion and ramson. Yet these words appear even in a sharply abridged dictionary! (In Part II, Thorndike did include Rameses, with that spelling, rampage, and ramshackle, but still did not include rampageous, rampancy, rampion, Ramsgate or ramson. Yet rampageous and rampancy are commonly understood words.)

That there is something fundamentally wrong with Thorndike's whole idea of word counts is demonstrated by the word, "economics." Thorndike rated it "8," meaning it occurred eight times in a million words, but his actual statistics showed it only occurred once in his own count of four and a half-million words, so by his own statistics alone it should have been in the 20,000 to 30,000 range. Yet it had occurred 119 times in the Lorge count, not at all in the Juvenile count, and 40 times in the "S" (miscellaneous) count. Its use obviously varied according to the purposes of the selections. However, it is an easily pronounceable and widely understood word, and in no sense can it be considered "rare," or at the fringes of a normal adult's vocabulary.

That word is truly representative of most of the words in the English language, the vast majority of which do not appear at all in Thorndike's count. Yet they appear with frequencies that are very high in certain areas of discussion. Teachers were counseled to "teach" words at the lower frequencies in Thorndike's text depending on their "importance." Yet how could any teacher possibly evaluate the ultimate "importance" of a particular word for a particular child? Why not let the child sound out ALL the words he encounters in print and acquire their meaning in print just as he does in conversation: by its context or by the dictionary?

As has been mentioned, in *A Measurement of Ability in Spelling* in 1915, Ayres referred to the fascinating fact that only about fifty high-frequency words account for about half of any written context. (The *Ladybird* material assumed that 100 words accounted for half, but whether the number is fifty or a hundred, it is still extremely small.) That general fact surely had to be known by Thorndike, and yet he made no reference to it. Yet the peculiar patterns formed by word-frequencies can become obvious by extrapolating from some of the word frequency figures that Thorndike did give for words above the two thousand most common. (He obscured facts on the two thousand most common.) However, unless someone knew ahead of time that word frequencies produce such peculiar patterns, it is highly unlikely that it would occur to him to dig out those patterns from Thorndike's frequency figures.

On page x of *The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words*, Thorndike said that 1,069 AA words occurred 100 times or more in every million words. The most meaningful word in that description was "more," since it is evident from Ayres' and others' work that only 50 or 100 of those 1,069 words would have accounted for one half, or 500,000, of those million running words, and the entire 1,069 would have accounted for about nine-tenths, or 900,000 of those running words. Yet Thorndike did not even hint at such extremely interesting and peculiar facts.

Also on page x appeared the fact that the 952 words labeled "A" had appeared between 50 to 99 times per million. However, after the vague statistics for the 1,069 and 952 most common words, clear statistics finally appeared, because these statements were followed by a table for the number of words occurring between 49 times per million and one per million. After each entry, such as 49 times per million, appeared the number of words with that frequency. The table began with listing the number 36 for the 36 words which had appeared 49 times, and ended with 5,209, for the 5,209 words which had appeared only once in a million running words. What is most notable is the great increase of numbers of words, as the numbers of times that words occur greatly decrease. To illustrate, the first four and the last four entries were as follows:

<u>Number of Occurrences Per Million Words</u>	<u>Number of Words At That Frequency</u>
49	36
48	35
47	33
46	38
.....	.....
4	1,064
3	1,442
2	2,503
1	5,209

Those last four entries total 10,218 words out of Thorndike's first 20,000, or more than half. Yet, as a percentage of the running million words, they account for only 1.9 per cent of the total. A study based on the far simpler material of letters, referred to previously, found that only three thousand of the highest

frequency words accounted for all but about two percent of that simpler material. However, since Thorndike's words were selected from the far heavier content of real literature, it is not surprising that about 9,000 plus words accounted for 98% of that heavier material, although only 3,000 words accounted for 98% of the far simpler material.

Thorndike had extended the 20,000 word list of 1931 to 30,000 words in this 1944 revision prepared with Irving Lorge, published by Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. Explaining the additional 10,000 words over the 20,000 of 1931, Thorndike stated on page x that 9,202 words had occurred less than once a million, but oftener than four times in 18 million words. That works out to between 0.2 per cent to 0.9 percent of each million words. For the sake of argument, those words might be said to occupy no more than 0.6 percent of the total million (and probably considerably less). A further 1,358 words were listed that occurred four times in 18 million words, bringing the 1944 total to 30,000 words. Those last 1,358 words would occupy .03 percent of a million words.

Therefore, Thorndike's "literature" words from about 10,000 to about 20,000 frequency would occupy 1.9 per cent of a running selection; and the words from 20,000 to 30,000 would occupy the total of about 0.6 per cent and 0.03 percent, or about 0.63 percent. The grand total of all the words from 10,000 to 30,000 would amount to only about 2.53 per cent of any page of print. (What is most surprising about the entries from 20,000 to 30,000 is the fact that such great numbers of them are not at all unusual, but are very ordinary, well known words. Therefore, by extrapolation, so must many words above the 30,000-word-level be familiar to most people.) Yet Thorndike had sampled only 30,000 words, and an unabridged dictionary has about half a million words. It is obvious that most of the words in that dictionary, if not already listed by Thorndike, must occur somewhere at the frequency level of one or two per cent, or less, of any selection.

Despite their very infrequent use, would anyone be so mad as to assume we could function as a society without the use of those hundreds of thousands of low-frequency words, none of which appeared on the Thorndike count? Why then, should not children be taught to read all such words by themselves, and be drilled in the use of a dictionary when the context does not provide sufficient help in figuring out meanings?

Thorndike's first tabulation in 1921 covered 10,000 words, and his final tabulation some twenty years later covered 30,000 words. Yet Thorndike's method of grouping words totally obscured that fascinating fact about word frequencies: the higher the frequency of a word, the greater is the percentage of a person's total spoken and written vocabulary that it occupies, and the lower the frequency of a word, the smaller is the percentage of an individual's total spoken and written vocabulary that it occupies. Count the number of times the word "the" is used in the preceding sentence, for example, in contrast to the word "fascinating."

Most of an educated person's vocabulary of the rarer words is learned through reading. Yet the deaf-mute reading method has resulted in rigid control of the vocabulary in children's books so that children's vocabulary cannot grow normally through exposure to books. In addition, the deaf-mute method also cripples children's decoding skills so that they will never be able to read with ease any materials which have normal, uncontrolled vocabularies. As a result, children's vocabularies do not greatly increase even when they are exposed to pre-1930 uncontrolled-vocabulary children's books or any adult materials which have uncontrolled vocabularies.

Children taught by the "meaning" method are crippled in their vocabulary development in the same way that a badly taught deaf-mute is crippled. They quite literally cannot easily "hear" new words when they are reading. Such artificially-deafened children never reach, and many never even remotely approach, the adult vocabulary level of which they had been potentially capable.



However, the graphs of the limited, smaller vocabularies of people taught to read by the deaf-mute method, if superimposed over the theoretical unabridged dictionary graph mentioned earlier, would still produce bell curves. Yet such curves would shift sharply leftward on the graph, toward the bell curves that would be produced by the limited vocabularies of the mentally retarded.

Concerning vocabulary growth, the following appears in the *Encyclopedia of Education*, Macmillan, 1971, under "Vocabulary Development:"

"Since it appears likely that we [derive] most of our words and meaning from the context, the study of how context operates is the single most productive method of instruction. The contribution of word parts is ...of serious limitation in their use."

This authoritative, "expert" quotation seems to argue against the use of "sound" in reading, obviously endorsing "psycholinguistic guessing." Yet it also certainly confirms that vocabulary growth is dependent on reading. Of course, no reasonable person could ever deny that figuring out the "meaning" of a new word is, indeed, done by the use of context, but to retain a clear memory of that meaning-bearing new concept so that it will be usable in the future, it has to be labeled and filed in our computer memory banks. The "sound" of a word is nothing more nor less than the label for an idea, or for "meaning." Without a label of some kind to use as a hook to resurrect that idea from memory, that idea cannot easily be brought back into memory for re-use. Furthermore, without applying "sound" as a label for that idea, it can never be spoken, and, for the vast majority of people, it can never be easily written.

Therefore, reducing vocabulary growth for children, which is the ultimate result of the deaf-mute-method reading method, ultimately reduces functioning intelligence.

Ayres' 1915 statistics on the thousand commonest words were based on adult written material, more than two-thirds of which were personal and business letters. By 1920, W. S. Gray's professor, E. L. Thorndike of Columbia Teachers College, had finished his almost ten-year-long personal effort of identifying the 10,000 commonest words, but his identification was made from children's printed literature. In 1921, Thorndike published his list of the 10,000 commonest words (which in later years was expanded to the 20,000 most common and finally to the 30,000 most common in general literature).

Thorndike's list of the 300 commonest words of the 10,000 for children was immediately used in 1920 to prepare beginning reading materials by Nila Banton Smith (1890-1976) and Stuart A. Courtis (1874-1969). Both showed additional ties to Thorndike or to Columbia Teachers College. A standardized arithmetic test by Courtis, who came from Detroit, had been used in the 1911-1912 New York school survey, managed by Paul H. Hanus of Harvard who, unlike Courtis, appears to have had no ties with the group promoting the "deaf-mute" method. In the January, 1920, *Teachers College Record*, Thorndike published, with Courtis as co-author, "Correction Formulae for Addition Tests," the same year that Courtis used Thorndike's vocabulary materials with Nila Banton Smith. In addition to having been the first with Courtis to use Thorndike's vocabulary materials, by 1932, Smith obtained her doctorate at Columbia Teachers College for her incredibly inept "history," *American Reading Instruction* (from which she omitted any mention of the 1920 work she and Courtis wrote). Soon after, Smith became one of America's foremost reading "experts" and an author on a deaf-mute method reading series of her own (which she did mention in her 1965 revised history) which undoubtedly was very profitable.

Only a few years after Nila Banton Smith and Stuart A. Courtis's *Picture Story Reading Lessons* (a deaf-mute approach for rank beginners) was written in 1920 based on Thorndike's list of the 300 commonest words, Thorndike's list of the 10,000 commonest words provided the basis for the controlled-vocabulary 1930 deaf-mute-method readers written by Thorndike's ex-students, Gates and

Gray. Such “basal readers” with rigidly controlled vocabulary were used through fourth grade, and very soon after through sixth grade.

With the 1930 arrival of these deaf-mute method controlled-vocabulary readers, the destruction of American vocabulary and syntax had begun. Obviously, a divergence in word frequency above the 1,000 level must occur even for children if they can independently read uncontrolled-vocabulary stories, but much of this divergence was to be erased when controlled-vocabulary books took over ALL of the publishing for children in the 1930’s and afterwards: not just school reading books like the Gates and Gray series, but books in all school subjects and, most meaningfully, in children’s literature! Famous children’s books were “adapted,” which means the vocabulary was diluted and the syntax was simplified.

It is the low-frequency words which are the most important because they carry the most meaning, but the great majority of American children have not been able to pronounce them, and therefore to learn them, since 1930, except for the few handfuls taught orally in class as “wholes” for “meaning” for specific lessons in science, “social studies,” and literature. Therefore, the fact that most American students today know very little science, “social studies” (geography and history), and literature, all of which are heavily dependent on low-frequency vocabulary knowledge, is exactly what we should have expected.

Something else, to which almost no attention is given, is the fact that complex syntax has almost disappeared from children’s books, along with complex vocabulary. Complex syntax is supposed to yield too-high “readability levels.” But how can children learn to read complex syntax, which is everywhere in true literature and even on every government printed form, if they are never exposed to it and drilled on it? (Failure to teach grammar properly is another cause.) As a result, in the ability to handle syntactical structure, some of our college students have been arrested at the “Oh, oh, look, Spot, look!” level. This is also why our students are so bad at written compositions. Since they have never learned to think in complex and internally consistent sentence structures, how can they be expected to reproduce them in writing?

Syntax, by its nature, is something which is completing itself - an action under way. By the 19th century in the English-speaking world, recognition of the importance of the syllable had been largely lost and attention was focused on “words.” Recognition of the real nature of syntax appears to have been largely lost along with recognition of the importance of the syllable, and it resulted in some bizarre ideas. William James spent much time writing about sentences, apparently without a clear understanding of syntax. E. B. Huey referred to James’ ideas in Huey’s 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* (pages 129-130):

“To attempt cutting... a sentence in the middle to get a look at it is, in James’ figure, like catching a snow flake crystal in the warm hand. The flake is no longer a crystal, but a drop. ‘So, instead of catching the feeling of relation moving to its term, we find we have caught some substantive thing, usually the last word we were pronouncing, statically taken, and with its function, tendency, and particular meaning in the sentence quite evaporated.’

“It is like ‘seizing a spinning top to catch its motion’ or ‘trying to turn up the gas quickly enough to see how the darkness looks.’”

In April, 1923, C. T. Gray of the University of Texas wrote an article for the *Elementary School Journal*, “The Anticipation of Meaning as a Factor in Reading.” He said:

“...the movement of the attention is always forward.... Someone has said that successful reading consists largely in accurate guessing.”

This energy that C. T. Gray found so puzzling in 1923 was nothing except the tendency of syntax to complete itself, somewhat comparable to the psychologist's idea of "closure." The ultimate confusion on the nature of syntax came with the idea of "psycholinguistic guessing" as a method for teaching reading. What seems to have been lost is what was apparently taken for granted by the ancients such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Syntax, by its nature, presses forward: it generates words. Syntax tends to shape the basic morpheme forms very precisely according to their precise syntactical function. (Some aphasics automatically correct grammar in repeating heard sentences without understanding them.<sup>2</sup>) Therefore, "words" are the end product of speech. Yet, syntax grows from a sound base, the syllable. The syllable is the raw material of speech.

It is interesting that Mario Pei, the famed linguist, was aware of this quality of syntax in French, that it is syntax, itself, which is the ultimate meaning-bearing unit. In his *Getting Along in French*, (Bantam Books, New York, 1958, page 8) Mario Pei, Professor of Romance Philology, Columbia University, said:

"The French speaker tends to run his words together in such a way that the phrase or sentence, rather than the word, is the unit of speech, as well as of understanding.... The syllable is of paramount importance in the sound sequence, and the tendency is for the syllable to consist of consonant-plus-vowel. But this tendency, common to all the Romance languages, is opposed in French by another tendency, that of dropping uh-sounds wherever possible, particularly at the end of words. ...there are actually two French pronunciations... one, which is heard on the stage, or when poetry is declaimed, or when an orator makes a solemn commemoration speech; and another, rapid-fire one, used in ordinary conversation, where syllables are run together and weird consonant combinations result from the dropping of uh-sounds...

"notre maison (NAW-truh meh-ZAW, in slow motion, NAWT meh-ZAW in rapid speech) our house...."

AW is nasalized. Pei's highly usable and simple pronunciations, reminiscent of Noah Webster's, should be noted, as well as his astonishing competence in languages. Pei has been treated with contempt by current "psycholinguists" and his great work appears to have faded into obscurity.

It should be noted that Pei made the point that it is the syllable that is of paramount importance in the sound sequence, and the real unit of speech in French is the sentence, rather than the word. In effect, this is true in English, too.

That being the case, to reduce practice by students not only on syllables but on the real unit of speech, the syntactical sentence, in its complex forms, is to stunt language growth.

If Gallaudet's whole word "meaning" reading approach sounds very like the teacher's guide in almost any modern reading series, it should, because most American reading series are only variations of Gallaudet's inferior deaf-mute method of teaching reading, even though they claim they use phonics. One highly popular modern reading series which I was forced to use in first grade in the school system where I taught actually stated that it wanted children to use only as many letter sounds in a word as were necessary to confirm their context guesses.

Context-guessing is Gallaudet's deaf-mute approach, and he added to it the visual comparison of letters in known words to new words to help in learning "new" sight words (none of which, of course, the

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<sup>2</sup> Page 22, *Two Sides of the Brain, Brain Lateralization Explored*, by Sid J. Segalowitz, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1983.

deaf children could speak but which they recognized only as pictures for their “meaning”). Gallaudet’s “visual phonics” approach, however, is comparable to the use of letter sounds in a word to help in context guessing for hearing children, which context guessing was specifically recommended by this series. Yet such letter sounds are learned only from whole sight words, and never in isolation.

“Context guesses” for little sight-word readers with normal hearing can obviously only be made for words which are already in the little “readers” spoken vocabularies. These little sight-word readers lack enough phonic ability to sound out truly unknown words so that they can add them to their spoken vocabularies. For such readers, vocabulary knowledge therefore cannot be increased by reading, but only by listening to oral speech. By contrast, phonic readers can sound out an unknown word from all of its letters and figure out its meaning from the context. Phonic readers therefore add both the spelling and the meaning of a previously unknown printed word to their vocabularies. The effect, of course, is cumulative: phonically-trained readers reach high school with larger vocabularies, besides being able to spell better and to read automatically with ease instead of with conscious, unpleasant, “psycholinguistic,” “whole language” guessing.

However, that is what “phony phonics” is: the use of as few letter sounds as possible, learned from previously memorized whole, meaning-bearing sight words, to confirm a context-guess for a new word in print (but not new in the child’s spoken vocabulary). The “new” word is carefully embedded in a controlled collection of sight-words, to assure correct context guesses. That is also what “controlled vocabulary” means: only words previously taught as “wholes” for “meaning” are routinely used in stories. “New” words (but new only as printed words - not spoken words) are introduced so they can be guessed as whole, meaning-bearing words from the story context, using perhaps a few letter sounds from other known whole sight words, plus pictures illustrating the story, to help children with their guesses from the context of the story. Children using one first-grade series, for instance, can read the “new” word, “suitcases,” fairly easily, pleasing their parents. The parents do not see the children study the picture at the top of the page showing a family leaving on a trip with suitcases. The parents also do not know how often the children have been drilled in their dreary reading group sessions to guess words in context from some few consonants like the “s” and “t” sounds in suitcases.

Most classes have at least three such reading groups, all of which have to trudge through at different times the same tiresome lessons in the teacher’s manual. These multitudinous reading groups, which turn every classroom into an inefficient one-room schoolhouse, eat up the most of the school day without teaching any of the children really to read. By contrast, American schools before 1918 did not have such reading groups. Soviet schools and most European schools do not have them today. That means every child in their classes gets 100 per cent of the teacher’s instruction in reading, instead of perhaps 33 per cent and sometimes considerably less as in America.

At least, hearing children have the sight words they are given to read in their spoken vocabularies. Deaf children do not. Deaf children, therefore, when taught with the faulty sight-word method, can only learn printed words for meaning, without sound, by pictures and context. As a result, their reading achievement with the use of the sight-word method is terribly retarded in comparison to hearing children taught with the sight-word method. As Dr. R. Orin Cornett of Gallaudet College, Washington, D. C., said at the Reading Reform Foundation Princeton meeting in 1979, (reported in the Reading Informer, Vol. 7, No. 1, page 5, October, 1979):

“The average reading level of 19-year-olds in schools and programs for the deaf in the United States is about that of a nine-year-old hearing child. We fail the deaf in their area of greatest need.”

Dr. Cornett therefore devised a sharply improved “sound” method for teaching the deaf, but his method is very unfortunately in little, if any, use today.

Yet there have always been far better ways than Gallaudet’s sign-language and sight-word method to teach deaf-mutes language. Surprisingly, one of the best was endorsed and promoted by one of the greatest nineteenth-century geniuses: Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone. Bell rejected the teaching of the Abbe de l’Epee of 18th century France who used silent sign-language and silent sight-words to teach the deaf, whose approach Gallaudet had imitated. Instead, Bell used a similar approach to that of Samuel Heinicke of Germany, the Abbe de l’Epee’s 18th century opponent. The 18th century Heinicke taught deaf-mutes lip-reading and true speech, not sign language, BEFORE he taught them to read phonetically, by the sound of print and not its meaning. This, of course, is a “sound first” method, and meaning is only introduced THROUGH phonics. By contrast, Gallaudet’s method is a “meaning first” method, and does not call for the teaching of sound or phonics at all. Samuel Blumenfeld uncovered this fascinating eighteenth century origin of the reading controversy, and outlined its history in one of his books, *The New Illiterates*, (1973, 1988, The Paradigm Co., Boise, Idaho).

Obviously, the argument in the teaching of reading for hearing children today remains precisely what the argument was between Heinecke and the Abbe de l’Epee in the eighteenth century: “sound” versus “meaning.” That argument is actually rooted in the structure of the human brain. The left side of the brain usually handles sequentially perceived, sound-bearing language, while the right side of the brain usually handles simultaneously perceived, meaning-bearing pictures.<sup>3</sup>

As reported by Itoh Sasanuma (1975, 1977), recorded on page 92 of Sid J. Segalowitz’s *Two Sides of the Brain*, some Japanese stroke patients with aphasia, or loss of speech, can read only the Kanji, or character meaning-bearing part of their script, having lost the ability to read the Kana, or syllable sound-bearing part of their script. From other references in available literature on the brain, it may be presumed that their loss of ability to read the Kana syllables resulted from damage in the LEFT angular gyrus area of their brains, where for over a hundred years damage has been known to cause a comparable loss of ability to read alphabetic sound-bearing print.

Logically, therefore, if the reading of Kana sound-bearing script is handled by the left angular gyrus area of the brain, the reading of Kanji meaning-bearing script should be handled by its mirrored counterpart, the RIGHT angular-gyrus area of the brain. The left angular gyrus area and the right angular gyrus area in human brains would then provide the anatomical basis for processing the only two types of visual writing which are possible for humans: sound-bearing, or meaning-bearing. (This anatomical basis for the two types of reading, which appears to be logically probable, has never been clearly spelled out, however, in any literature which I have ever seen.)

Reading is a conditioned reflex. Therefore, it should be anticipated, it appears to me, that learning to read meaning-bearing print such as Kanji, Chinese characters, or whole sight-words should establish a reflex to the angular gyrus area in the right, meaning-interpretive picture side of the brain; learning to read sound-bearing print should establish a reflex to the angular gyrus area in the left, or sound-interpretive language side of the brain. However, we now teach beginning readers in America to regard words as meaning-bearing, sight-word “wholes,” while we simultaneously drill them to sound out only some letters of those words (phony phonics) in order to help in guessing the meanings of the whole words. Children therefore are being drilled in the use of opposing reflexes on the SAME stimulus, something which occurs in no other activity. The resultant conflict is one of the causes of the disability known as “psycholinguistic guessing.”

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<sup>3</sup> Charles M. Richardson, the engineer/educator of The Literacy Council, Huntington Station, New York, points out the resemblance to computer memory: serial vs. parallel processing.

Not surprisingly, therefore, laboratory studies, such as by Davidson, Perl and Saron, reported by Daniel Goleman in the New York Times Magazine on May 12, 1985, show that young American readers today can read alphabetic print with BOTH SIDES of the brain. They are unlike the classic aphasic patients, most of whom would have been elderly and have learned to read before about 1826 or in non-English-speaking European countries teaching by “sound,” referred to in William James’ 1890 book on psychology. These patients had lost all ability to read after damage to the left side of the brain. Our modern American subjects are therefore also unlike the Japanese aphasic patients who lose all ability to read Japanese sound-bearing Kana print after damage to the left side of their brains.

Some unknown but almost certainly small proportion of children trained by the deaf-mute reading method in first grade become phonetic readers, anyway, figuring out for themselves the simple syllable/sound correspondences in English, which are specifically taught in phonic programs. Children who are taught to read alphabetic print as sound-bearing print, or who have figured out how to do so by themselves before whole-word conditioned reflexes are set, can achieve automaticity in their reading, as can Japanese readers of Kana sound-bearing and Kanji meaning-bearing characters, and as can readers of Chinese meaning-bearing characters.

However, those who learn to read alphabetic print as whole sight words can NEVER achieve automaticity as can readers of Kanji and Chinese characters, because the method relies permanently on conscious guessing. The right side of the brain which perceives things all at once like a picture is used to read whole, meaning-bearing characters like Kanji. In contrast, the left side of the brain which perceives things sequentially like a stream of language is used to read sound-bearing characters like Kana. Since Kanji and Chinese meaning-bearing characters can be seen with one fixation of the eyes, their correct meaning can be read instantly with the right, “all-at-once” side of the brain. Yet, for beginning readers, whole-sight words cannot be seen with one fixation of the eyes. Therefore, correct sight-word meanings cannot be read instantly with the right, all-at-once side of the brain. As a result, meanings must be guessed only from that part of the whole word which is picked up by the first fixation of the eyes. “Psycholinguistic guessing” is therefore the direct and inevitable result of teaching beginners to read alphabetic print with the right, “all at once” “picture” side of the brain instead of the left, “sequential” “language” side of the brain. Such a lack of automaticity in reading as conscious guessing is, by any rational definition, a disability despite Dr. Kenneth Goodman’s much-ballyhooed attempts to elevate “psycholinguistic guessing” to a cult. “Psycholinguistic guessing” makes the actual act of reading or decoding unpleasant, because it is conscious and therefore effort-filled, while reading or decoding automatically requires no conscious attention on the reading act itself, any more than conscious attention is required in the placement of our feet when we are walking.

One possible reason that an unsatisfactory deaf-mute method to teach reading was pushed into American schools in 1930 to teach hearing children was the apparent failure of most “reading experts” to realize that normal reading is an automatic conditioned reflex. Like other automatic conditioned reflexes such as walking, piano-playing or typing, it can function with or without the presence of conscious attention. To understand the “unpleasant” aspect of the conscious deaf-mute method, try walking across the room as you concentrate on placing each foot. How would you enjoy reading with that kind of concentration on the print? That is, however, how vast numbers of Americans today have to read.

On major testing programs comparing phonically trained children to sight-word trained children, phonically trained children have scored better than sight-word trained children on “reading comprehension” because they were not guessing. But since phonically trained children have formed normal automatic conditioned reflexes in reading, in more routine testing such as the annual school-administered California tests, they may score either high or low depending on whether they did or

did not choose to focus their attention on the content in that routine exercise. Widely fluctuating reading comprehension scores on such routine tests actually CONFIRM the presence of automaticity.

By contrast, children taught to read by guessing unknown words from a context of memorized sight words, which is a deaf-mute method, are incapable of reading automatically, by definition, since they use consciousness to decode words. Because the deaf-mute method guarantees forced attention, however, such “guessers” will show stable reading comprehension scores, while phonic-trained readers with true automatic conditioned reflexes may show either high or low scores, depending on their interest in taking the test. For this reason, stable reading comprehension scores for groups or individuals, wherever they occur, suggest a possible lack of automaticity and possible reading disability.

It was such stable “reading comprehension” scores, wrongly interpreted as showing the superiority of the deaf-mute guessing method, that permitted the early 20th century “experts” to promote the deaf-mute guessing method in the schools. However, they could only promote it by hiding its true nature under a false label, calling it instead the “intrinsic phonics” approach.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Evidence on Present-day Disabilities From the Deaf-Mute, Guessing, “Meaning” Method**

It is startling to read, on page 11 of *Becoming a Nation of Readers, The Report of the Commission on Reading*, The National Institute of Education, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C.: 1985, confirmation of present-day disabilities from the deaf-mute “guessing” method that was introduced in 1930. The U. S. Government report states:

“...the generally accepted current model of word identification [is that] a possible interpretation of a word usually begins forming in the mind as soon as even partial information has been gleaned about the letters in the word.... When enough evidence from the letters and the context becomes available, the possible interpretation becomes a positive identification.”

This model, using context and conscious guessing for word identification, which is based on actual tests on American readers, implies automaticity is lacking for these readers not just on unfamiliar words but almost ALL words!

For those printed alphabetic words being read by the right side of the brain as sight-word “wholes” for “meaning,” this was, however, to be anticipated. The right side of the brain handles things “all at once,” or globally and simultaneously, while the left side handles things sequentially. Since little beginning readers, when they are first forming their conditioned reflexes in reading, cannot see a whole alphabetic word “all at once,” as the much shorter Chinese and Kanji characters can be seen “all at once,” but require two or more fixations of the eyes,<sup>4</sup> in no way could these beginning readers see such whole meaning-bearing sight-words “all at once” with the right “meaning” picture side of their brains. Instead, they had to guess the meaning of the whole word instantaneously but consciously from the first few letters their eyes picked up. Therefore, because of the length of whole sight words, interference with proper conditioned reflexes and automaticity in reading alphabetic print is built right into the sight-word “meaning” method, even without the teaching of “psycholinguistic guessing.”

The “model” quoted in this Government report, of course, describes readers trained with the deaf-mute approach. This is confirmed by the further statement on page 12 of *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, that present-day readers tested do not work out pronunciations by “letters and sounds” but by “analogy with known words.” This is a relatively slow, two-step deaf-mute skill usually done in the context of a reading selection: visual analysis of unknown words to compare their parts to remembered parts of known words. Arthur I. Gates, who wrote the 1930 Macmillan deaf-mute-method primer, coined a new name for this two-step deaf-mute skill in his paper in the June, 1925, *Elementary School Journal*, entitled “The Supplementary-Device Versus the Intrinsic Method of Teaching Reading.” That new name is “intrinsic” phonics.

Gates’ silent, intrinsic phonics (the silent, visual analysis of printed words done in combination with context guessing) replaced auditory phonic drill after 1930. Since the test data in *Becoming a Nation of Readers* shows most Americans are using such deaf-mute-method whole-word “phonics” today, Gates is still casting a long shadow over America!

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<sup>4</sup> Educational Development Laboratories, Inc., Research Information Bulletin No. 3, p. 12, 1960, reported on page 552 of *How to Increase Reading Ability*, Sixth Edition, Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay, 1975.



The statement on page 11 of *Becoming a Nation of Readers* that current readers “with more than fourth-grade reading ability make almost no mistakes with regular pseudowords” such as “tob” and “jate” is not consoling, because the report states they have to draw on their sight-word memory bank for similar whole words in order to sound out even these simplest of sound sequences. They make no use of real, letter-based phonics. Yet most phonically-trained first-graders can handle such letter sequences synthetically with the greatest of ease before January of first grade.

I am reminded of a beginning second-grader I taught who had memorized the words in her widely-used sight-word basal reader to the beginning second grade level, but who was incapable of reading the “new” word, “cat.” She needed more workbook practice using “analogy with known words” before she would be able to handle that phonic conundrum, “cat.” (I taught her straight one-step letter-based phonics and she was on the honor roll by fifth grade.) Another little second-grade boy I taught, who loved science, had transferred from another state after using the Macmillan series in first grade. He was retested on the Macmillan test in my class and did very well. Later, he asked me to read a “hard” word for him which stumped him. That word was “frog.”

It is ridiculous to claim such children were taught phonics because of some lessons on sounds of parts of whole, known sight-words in their first-grade series. Such parts of known sight words are meant ultimately to be used in two-step “intrinsic phonics.” First, children resurrect the memories of similar whole words, and secondly they compare their parts to the unknown word.

These two children were not unusual. Almost no one in American schools really expects first and second graders to read anything, particularly aloud, other than the controlled-vocabulary sight-word books in their classrooms. Certainly most teachers never ask them to read anything else aloud. To do so would be to ask the children to read at their “frustration level” (missing more than ten percent of the words) which would be very “unprofessional.” Even the vast majority of their “library books” have controlled high-frequency vocabulary.

No reading experts today ask where such “frustration levels” came from. They were originally, of course, deaf-mute-method concepts. As mentioned, Gallaudet’s 1836 *Mother’s Primer* introduced, on the average, less than ten percent of “new” words to be learned in contexts of, on the average, ninety percent of memorized whole words (or, on the average, 10 unknown words for every 90 known words).

However, Arthur I. Gates concluded such a vocabulary “load” was far too heavy for thoroughly learning new words and carried out extensive studies in the 1920’s to find the optimum number of “new” words to introduce in such running texts of memorized sight-words. He included in his statistics tests on mentally defective children and deaf children. Gates “discovered,” not surprisingly, that the brighter children could memorize higher concentrations of “new” words embedded in “controlled vocabulary” than could duller children. He cited studies specifically carried out on deaf children just learning to read, the studies apparently being carried out under his direction at Columbia Teachers College.<sup>5</sup> For the little deaf beginning readers, one new word was introduced for every 150 words of a story. He specifically noted on page 785 of the June, 1925, issue of *The Elementary School Journal*, concerning teaching deaf children under eight years old to read:

“Incidentally, study of the deaf should throw light on the values of phonetic training, since they cannot, of course, utilize this device.”

This comment of Gates and the study of beginning reading for the deaf clearly indicate that Gates understood the origin and nature of the inferior deaf-mute method he and William Scott Gray were to

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<sup>5</sup> *Interest and Ability in Reading*, by Arthur I. Gates, 1930, Chapter I (particularly page 17) and pages 210 and 211.

inflict on American children with their 1930 deaf-mute method primers. It should be stated, again and again and again: America's functional illiteracy is no accident. It was the result of intense, hard work on the part of these "reading experts" and their coterie, and it remains in place because their successors are in firm control of the education establishment.

Virtually none of the beginning third graders I taught from 1963 to 1975 had any knowledge of the short vowel sounds, which explains the inability to sound out words like "cat" and "frog." Estimates have been made that perhaps as many as sixty percent of English syllables contain short vowels, so the inability to read short vowels turns the "reading" of the majority of new words into pure context guesswork. The third-graders could only read new short vowel words by guessing them in sight-word contexts.

I spent the first month of third grade from 1965 to 1975 trying to get students to distinguish the vowel sounds in the short-vowel sentence, "Fat hen is not up," from Martin D. Brennan's and George J. Ameer's *Reading in a Nutshell*, Colfax Press, Inc., Wayne, New Jersey: 1965. I was eventually successful, and, in the course of a full year, managed to teach the third graders, with great difficulty, the phonics that properly taught first graders learn with ease before Christmas of first grade. I know, therefore, from long personal experience, how hard it is for sight-word trained children to learn true phonics.

The third grade spelling book began with short vowel words such as I drilled my classes on until well into October, and another third grade teacher (otherwise extremely competent) felt at that time, because of the difficulty the third graders were having, that such spelling words were "too hard" for third graders - words like pin, lot, tub, etc.! (Not long after, however, she became an ardent proponent of the need for true phonics in grades one and two, so that such problems would not develop.)

At the time, the school was using the Scott, Foresman and Ginn readers in grades one and two. They were standard, context-guessing, sight-word texts so the children's disabilities at third grade were understandable. Yet these intelligent third graders were doing very nicely on the meaningless Iowa silent reading comprehension tests, so the administrators, none of whom had ever taught primary grades, felt there was no problem.

Nor can sight-word trained readers properly handle vowel sounds as adults, unless they meet a teacher somewhere along the way who teaches them real phonics. The Gates-McKillop-Horowitz Reading Diagnostic Tests, copyrighted in 1981, by Teachers College Press, Columbia University, give a vowel test on ten spoken syllables containing five long and five short vowels (but not including the special vowels such as au, oi, etc). The test taker has to state only whether the vowel he had just heard pronounced in a syllable was a, e, i, o or u, and not even whether it was long or short. Since the long vowel sounds are almost self-evident (the "a" heard in "gate," for instance) this test really only tests the ability to identify the critical five short vowels, as heard in the words cat, pet, sit, top, cup. The Gates-McKillop-Horowitz test manual states:

"Even among the most skilled readers, an error or two may be made on this test, and this should not be considered significant in itself."

The earlier 1962 Gates-McKillop test manual said almost exactly the same thing. So, when an adult receives a score of, effectively, only 60% on the five critical short vowels (since the long vowels are self-evident), it is not considered "significant." Yet phonically trained children before the middle of first grade make virtually no such errors on the five short vowels, and certainly do not make errors on the long vowels! Phonically trained first-graders can decode, OUT OF CONTEXT, simple short-vowel words like "cat" and "frog" with ease before Christmas of first grade, and love doing it! They also delight their

parents by beginning to read billboards and signs they pass in the family car, which, of course, have almost no “context clues” to use for guessing.

A Soviet reading approach, in sharp contrast to our deaf-mute guessing method with its analogy-with-known-words substitution for vowel sounds and phonics, is referred to in *Educational Psychology in the USSR*, edited by Brian and Joan Simon, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, California: 1963). In his article reproduced in their book, the Soviet psychologist D. B. Elkonin recommended that Soviet children be drilled to name vowel sounds in spoken syllables, like those short vowels in the Gates-McKillop-Horowitz tests on which “skilled” American adults can score sixty per cent or less, BEFORE reading instruction even begins in first grade! Elkonin said (page 169):

“Ability to hear the separate sounds in words, to distinguish one from another and to generalize sounds, is vitally important for succeeding stages in mastering reading and writing.”

Yet, “expert” objections are often given to the value of teaching vowel sounds, since vowels can be pronounced very differently in different localities. But a child is not commuting daily between Maine and Alabama as he learns to read: he is exposed only to consistent vowel pronunciations from his teacher, which is all that is necessary for his own reading of these vowels consistently.

So there is a great gulf separating deaf-mute-method trained readers and phonically-trained readers, and the silent reading workbook is an attempt to bridge the gap. It is hardly surprising that Gates in 1930 gave great stress to these time-consuming, expensive, boring and pernicious “reading workbooks.” Such workbooks assure that students who have managed to reach what the experts label the “fifth grade level” of reading ability can finally pronounce most syllables like jate by comparing them to their stock of memorized sight words.

Nevertheless, when the bulk of people trained in the confusing deaf-mute manner reach upper-grade books filled with unknown terms which they cannot guess from the context because they are not in their spoken vocabularies, they find it difficult to learn such terms. That is the result of the conscious effort that must be used to apply their “intrinsic phonics.” An intelligent college graduate, a middle-aged mother, told me that she usually skipped over all the “hard” words when reading. It is obvious she is not alone in doing so. Since vocabulary knowledge, obviously of low-frequency words, is considered to be the best single indicator of intelligence, by lowering American students’ ability to learn such new words, the deaf-mute method has, effectively, lowered America’s intelligence quotient when reading. Difficulty in learning new words is also why our “reading problem” is presumed to be most acute in the upper grades, but the source of the problem is really in the first grade.

## Chapter 2

### The American Promoters Since 1883 of the Present-day Deaf-Mute Guessing “Meaning” Method for Teaching Beginning Reading

William Scott Gray was the father of the “Dick and Jane” Scott, Foresman deaf-mute-method readers. They were published in 1930 at the same time as Arthur I. Gates’ deaf-mute-method Macmillan primer. (The rest of Gates’ Macmillan reading series was published in 1931.) Because of their scientifically controlled vocabulary, the Gates and Gray readers differed from the sight-word readers which had been in increasing use in the 1920’s, which also caused reading disability but which did use a minimal amount of supplementary phonics. In the Gates and Gray readers, real phonics was totally removed.

The introduction of “new” words in the Gates and Gray readers did not exceed the level indicated by experiments as optimum for memorizing new “whole” words for meaning without the use of sound in a context of previously memorized sight-words. This is the precise method by which some little deaf children, who might not as yet have had any spoken vocabulary at all, were being taught to read at that time. However, because hearing children, unlike the deaf children, already had most of the words the reading books used in their spoken vocabularies, printed “new” words could be introduced faster for hearing children. As with the method used for the deaf children, the “new” printed words for the hearing children were repeated a scientifically chosen number of times in the “stories” to establish strong “bonds.” At the very beginning of reading, before a basic sight-word vocabulary of about 150 words to use as running context had been built up by various kinds of drill, such repetitions could produce possible idiotic sentences like “Oh, oh! Look, Spot, look!”

But most children DID learn something from such “instruction.” They learned permanently to disregard true letter “sound” and to concentrate solely on guessing the “meaning” of unknown words from the context of what they were reading. Since their faulty conditioned reflexes acquired in first grade did not permit them truly to “sound out” an unknown word and because so-called “intrinsic phonics” was so awkward, they often searched their vocabularies for a word whose meaning approached that of the “new” word. As a result, they produced misreadings like “horse” for “pony,” and “pot” for “pan,” and far, far worse according to Helen R. Lowe’s 1951 copyrighted paper, *How They Read*, a copy of which I obtained a few years ago from Mrs. Bettina Rubicam of Scottsdale, Arizona, former president of the Reading Reform Foundation.

Mrs. Lowe’s paper was based on more than 10,000 reading errors she had recorded from readers aged six to twenty-six, in school and out of school. She found such misreadings as “Switzerland” for “Massachusetts,” and “absence” for “attendance.” Such misreadings do have a kind of logic to them. But the “intrinsic phonics” training reared its head when “context meaning clues” provided no help, even though “intrinsic phonics” is supposed to be done in tandem with context-guessing so that the choices are “meaningful.” Instead of “meaningful” choices, truly lunatic misreadings occurred, because an unknown printed whole word looked something like a known printed whole word. This produced the reading of “noodles” for “mill bells,” “twelve onions” for “the travelworn paper bag,” and “molasses and radishes” for “masses of reddish gold clouds.” The trouble obviously came from dealing with alphabetic print as whole sight-words, instead of as letter sounds. Mrs. Lowe’s remarkable paper has, of course, never been published since it proves the harmfulness of teaching alphabetic print for “meaning” instead of “sound.” That her shattering research in 1951 never reached the general public, the teachers’ colleges or our public schools is additional proof that censorship is alive and well in America.

The impression is given in the media that our reading problems are recent. It should be noted that Mrs. Lowe collected all her data BEFORE 1951. Her 26-year old subjects would have been in first grade about 1931. Our major reading problems started over sixty years ago, about 1930, with the deaf-mute-method Gates and Gray readers. Yet many unfortunates during the 1920's were subjected to other sight-word readers produced by other "experts" in Gates' and Gray's circle, and became reading disabled despite the use by these books of minimal amounts of phonics. Nelson Rockefeller, who almost became president of the United States, acquired his "dyslexia" in a school run by such "experts" in the early 1920's.

Although they outlawed true phonics, Gray and Gates did speak of their "intrinsic" phonics. As discussed, what they actually meant, in comparison to rapid and automatic one-step synthetic phonics, was the relatively slow and conscious two-step visual and mental comparison of one whole, meaning-bearing sight word to previously memorized meaning-bearing whole sight words. In the course of this two-step mental gymnastic exercise, in which children compared the word they were actually seeing to the whole words stored in their heads, hearing children might make some generalizations for themselves about letter sounds and the sounds of word parts, since they already had all the words in their spoken vocabularies. However, hosts of children did NOT make such generalizations, and became the vanguard of our army of functional illiterates. Just consider the three sounds of "o" in "Oh, oh! Look, Spot, look!" What kind of generalization can a beginning reader make about the sounds of "o" if it is given three different sounds in one such short sentence at the very beginning of reading instruction?

Gray unwittingly confirmed that failure to understand the real nature of reading skill was the reason for these deaf-mute-method texts. In *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois: 1966, Mitford M. Mathews reported on the excellent first-grade reading at the end of the school year in a Chicago school about 1940 which was using the new phonetic Bloomfield method. Gray, then Dean at the University of Chicago, visited the class with the Press. First-grade children were picked at random to read orally from upper-grade books, and did so successfully, one boy pronouncing with ease, the word "satellite" from a sixth-grade book.

Mathews said:

"Father Stoga asked him what the word meant and the child said it meant a big object in the sky. Dean Gray found this answer unsatisfactory, showing that the child was reading, that is pronouncing, quite beyond the vocabulary appropriate to his age, and not getting the sense of what he read. He explained to the other visitors that what the children were doing was in no sense remarkable. He said that reading experts had long known that children could rather quickly be taught to pronounce words with remarkable glibness, but that real reading with understanding of what was read was another matter entirely. He pointed out that these children were mere word-callers, that they were pronouncing well beyond their mental ages, and that they were heading straight for serious trouble later in their reading development."

The child was actually demonstrating the oral reading accuracy which underlies a proper automatic conditioned reflex in reading, but Gray did not understand that. An obvious reason exists for Gray's remarks discounting the value of correct oral reading. That reason is the arrival of the "silent reading comprehension test," and, with it, its incorrect interpretation. The reason for that incorrect interpretation will become obvious after the deaf-mute guessing method's history is outlined.

By 1915, William Scott Gray (1885-1960) was at the University of Chicago, working on his doctorate, which was, astonishingly, on oral reading accuracy tests, under the psychologist Charles H. Judd. Gray had obtained his master's degree, even more astonishingly, on oral reading accuracy tests directly under the psychologist, E. L. Thorndike, at Columbia Teachers College in 1914. It was only a

year or so later that Arthur I. Gates (1890-1972) studied with Thorndike and James McKeen Cattell at Columbia, and in 1917 Gates actually lived briefly with the psychologist Cattell's family, at the time Cattell was fired from Columbia for opposing the World War I draft. Gates lost his draft exemption, presumably because of the association, but Thorndike had it reinstated (from *The Sane Positivist*, Thorndike's biography by Geraldine Joncich).

Thorndike of Columbia Teachers College and Judd of the University of Chicago were obviously old friends, as Judd said of Thorndike in *Teachers College Record*, Columbia University, New York: May, 1926,:

“...as students at Wesleyan University...(t)ogether we studied (the psychologist) James under our (psychologist) teacher, Professor Armstrong.”

Thorndike (1874-1949) had gone on to study personally under William James (1842-1910) at Harvard in 1895-1897, and even kept his experimental chickens in the basement of James' home, according to Geraldine Joncich's biography on Thorndike. Thorndike's tie with James was very close, as was Thorndike's later tie with James' close friend, the psychologist Cattell (1860-1944) at Columbia, with whom Thorndike studied in 1897, after leaving Harvard.

James McKeen Cattell was Chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science from 1924 to at least 1941, and possibly to his death in 1944. Cattell personally owned its journal, *Science*, from the mid-1890's until his death, as well as *School and Society* and other publications. Cattell was a co-founder of the Psychological Corporation about 1922 as well as one of its presidents and was president of the Ninth International Congress of Psychology at Yale University in 1929, attended by Pavlov and other luminaries. Cattell had visited the Soviet Union with John Dewey and others the previous year. After a brief quiet period following his firing from Columbia in 1917 for opposing the World War I draft, Cattell had resumed his many activities, as the huge files of his documents in the Manuscript Section of the Library of Congress in Washington attest. (That the Library of Congress accepted Cattell's huge collection of personal files many years after his death was an implicit admission of the extraordinary influence Cattell exerted on American society from the 1880's till 1944. It should be noted that formally published writings by Cattell were almost non-existent.) In the February, 1926, issue of *Teachers College Record* published in honor of Thorndike, Cattell spoke in his article contributed to that issue about the very close relationship he had with Thorndike over the years since 1897.

Cattell, of course, is the psychologist who presumably “proved” at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1883 and later in Leipzig, Germany, that we read words as wholes, purportedly debunking the argument for phonics. What Cattell actually showed was that it took as long to read aloud letter names as to read aloud the same number of words in sentences. Actually, that proved nothing, because letter names ARE words.

Interestingly, the names of isolated letters, as opposed to sound-bearing syllabic print, appear to be read by the right side of the brain. Aphasics who have lost the ability to read sound-bearing syllabic print because of damage to the left side of their brains have nevertheless sometimes demonstrated the ability to distinguish the letters.<sup>6</sup> By analogy, therefore, it appears that if “words” are taught as global wholes as letters have to be taught, such global whole words should also be read by the right side of the brain.

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<sup>6</sup> *Inside the Brain*, by William H. Calvin and George A. Ojemann, A Mentor Book, New York, 1980, page 32, and *The Waysiders*, by R. M. N. Crosby, Delacorte Press, New York, 1968, footnote on page 103.

The early American psychologists were a tiny group. A fellow graduate student whom Cattell tested in 1883 in his reading experiments at Baltimore under his psychologist professor, G. Stanley Hall, was the psychologist, John Dewey (1859-1952). Fifty years later, at an Aristogenic Society dinner in Dewey's honor, Cattell remembered, "Dewey made a notable record for quickness and understanding." (from "John Dewey," Cattell's copy of his 1933 talk in the Cattell files of the Collections of the Manuscript Division, Library of Congress). The psychologists' concern for "reading comprehension" obviously had deep roots. But, for the record, after 1883, when Cattell and Dewey were graduate students together, they did not work together again until 1904 when Cattell arranged to bring Dewey to Columbia (from the 1933 talk mentioned above). Cattell thought highly of Dewey, but Dewey and Cattell were apparently never as close personal friends as were Cattell, James and Thorndike.

Cattell's 1880's perception experiments, which were very scientifically done, were wrongly assumed to show that teaching words as wholes for meaning instead of sound improved speed and comprehension, so that with meaning-bearing sight-words all children could come closer to Dewey's "quickness and understanding." The reason for this wrong interpretation will be discussed further later. However, Cattell's experiments provided the necessary theoretical basis for teaching whole words for "meaning" instead of isolated phonemes for "sound." Therefore, since the end of the nineteenth century, Cattell's experiments have been cited in footnotes as "proof" of a presumed "need" to teach beginners by "meaning" instead of by "sound."

At the time John Dewey learned to read, in the early 1860's, and since about 1830, sight-words were taught to beginning readers almost uniformly in the United States, despite Nila Banton Smith's "history" which states otherwise (American Reading Instruction, original 1934 edition by Silver, Burdett and Company, the 1965 revised edition by International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware.) All that is necessary is to read journals and prefaces to reading books of the period to confirm that fact.<sup>7</sup>

One of the most astonishing blind spots in the history of American education concerns the enormous functional illiteracy problem in the nineteenth century. Not only is the existence of that problem a blind spot, but so is the history behind WHY the functional illiteracy developed in the first place. Yet the facts have been there all along, just crying out to be noticed. Original source material shows that functional illiteracy in America was the gift of two small groups of activists, one in the period 1826-1836, and the other in the period 1870-1880. Both groups worked successfully to defeat the teaching of true sound-bearing, letter-based syllabic phonics at first grade and to replace it with the teaching of meaning-bearing whole sight-words.

When these activists succeeded in replacing materials teaching syllabic phonics with materials teaching meaning-bearing sight-words at first grade, widespread functional illiteracy was the result. Among other sources confirming this fact is *L'Instruction Primaire a Philadelphie*, by F. Buisson, the French representative to the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition, who visited many American schools and met with school officials while in America. In a footnote on pages 232-232, Buisson referred to and quoted from American school reports concerning widespread reading failure in 1876, one of which said one third to one half of children left school before reaching fourth grade and many read very imperfectly. From a report from the News-Boys Lodging Houses in New York, where the boys had been in school two or

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<sup>7</sup> Among many others which can be cited are the preface to Charles W. Sanders' spelling book of 1838 and 1845; pages iv and last paragraph, page v of Elias Longley's *Pronouncing Vocabulary of Geographical and Personal Names*, 1857; pages 180-195 of James Pyle Wickersham's *Methods of Instruction*, 1865; and pages 13 to 17 of Edwin Austin Sheldon's *Teacher's Manual of Instruction in Reading; Designed to Accompany Sheldon's Readers*, 1875. As will be shown, after 1826, phonic spelling books like Sanders' very widely used text were not normally used until about the fourth-grade level. This is confirmed by the fact that Sanders, himself, wrote a sight-word primer, followed by a sight-word book one and sight-word book two.

more years, 20% had not learned to read, and another 20% thought they could but were found to be unable to read print freely. Buisson said:

“The reports of Mr. Kiddle, Superintendent in New York, agree with those of Cleveland, Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis and Milwaukee: ‘A half or a third of our children stay in school only three years or less, and during this time many learn to read only imperfectly.’”

These children were obviously not being taught phonics, because with proper phonic teaching, most children can be taught to read English independently by the end of first grade, and virtually all phonically trained children learn to read English independently by the end of second grade. In the Soviet Union, where phonics is taught, the teaching of reading is finished before the end of first grade, as is the case in many other places in Europe. The Soviets have required that children be seven years old to start reading, which, of course, greatly reduces the number of children who have not matured enough to form correct reading reflexes.

However, to understand the radical change the first group of activists brought about in 1826, which will be discussed in PART 4, it is necessary to define some of the school books which were used in the English language before 1826. After 1826, the activists increasingly used the word, “primer,” but through their influence the word had come to mean something very different from that which it had meant in the past. To understand the “meaning” method promoted by the 1826, the 1870’s, and the twentieth century activists, the true primers in English must be defined. So must some publications be defined which were contemporary with the true primers: the horn books, the ABC books, the catechisms and the spelling books.

Furthermore, to have a proper understanding of all of these materials, the roots of all of them and the methods used to teach them in the past must be discussed.



**PART 2**  
**The History of Reading Instruction Until the Early  
Eighteenth Century**



## Chapter 3

### Reading Instruction Materials of the Different Periods

#### Primers

True English primers had always been religious. Originally very long prayer books, they had developed by the start of the seventeenth century into religious reading books for children, with the catechism attached.

Children, of course, then as now, had access to stories, but what we think of as “stories,” or tales told solely for their amusing content, did not begin to become part of reading instruction until the middle of the eighteenth century. A delightful account of such “story books” for use outside of real instruction is given in *The Penny Histories*, “A study of chapbooks for young readers over two centuries,” by Victor E. Neuburg, published by Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York: 1969. His book is concerned with the true chapbooks, commonly 24-page or 32-page inexpensive printed story books, sold in great numbers by peddlers all throughout England in the eighteenth century and still sold in the nineteenth. (Obviously, there was a sizable literate public or there would not have been such a big market.) Much of their content Neuburg traced to stories in rhyme that had been told since the Middle Ages, and which showed up as ballads on printed single sheets in the seventeenth century. This kind of material certainly did not find its way into the primers, even when the later primers were meant more for children than adults.

Though originally meant as prayer books for adults, as will be shown later, primers apparently always had some use as advanced readers for children. But the confusion between primers, also called *Horae* or *Books of Hours* before the Reformation, and the ABC books which the children at that time studied first, before the primer, is long standing.

The original meaning of the word, “primer,” itself has never been settled. E. C. Birchenough wrote in “The Prymer in English” in *The Library*, Series IV, vol. 18, p. 177 (London, 1937):

“The word Prymer has been the source of much controversy, and even the O.E.D. provides no satisfactory explanation as to its origin. The word is first found in the Latin form of *Primarium* in the will of Mathew of the Exchequer in 1294. From then on, with the growing use of the *Book of Hours* among the laity, the word becomes increasingly common, finally taking on the English form of *Primmer*, *Prymer*, or *Primar*. By the sixteenth century, the word was well established, but its meaning was already lost in the mists of antiquity.”

Another name for the *Book of Hours* which was the major part of the primers before the Reformation was the *Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. It is still in print in the twentieth century, and in the United States is available from *Franciscan Herald Press*, 1434 West 51st Street, Chicago, Illinois 60609 (10th printing: 1979).

References to the *Book of Hours* pop up in odd places in history, which demonstrate its widespread influence. For instance, in the fascinating book, *Cortes*, by William Weber Johnson (Little, Brown and Company - Boston, Toronto, 1975, page 31), he tells of a Spaniard, Jeronimo de Aguilar, shipwrecked in Yucatan, Mexico, in 1511 and enslaved by a native chief. When Aguilar was found by the explorer/conqueror Cortes eight years later, he was carrying a greatly worn *Book of Hours* which he had used for prayer and, unsuccessfully, to keep track of time. Some of the shipwrecked survivors, according to Johnson, were victims of sacrifices followed by cannibalism, which fate Aguilar escaped. Interestingly, as will be shown, all but one or two of the Spanish printings of the *Book of Hours* before 1511 were in

Latin. It is fascinating to think of the Yucatan jungles in 1511-1519 as the setting for eight years of solitary Latin prayers!

The background of this Little Office or Book of Hours is discussed in the Catholic Encyclopedia of 1913 (page 275, vol. XII), in the article “Popular Devotions:”

“Historically speaking, our best known devotions have nearly all originated from the imitation of some practices peculiar to the religious orders or to a specially privileged class.... The Rosary, for instance, is admitted by all to have been known in its earliest form as ‘Our Lady’s Psalter.’ At a time when the recitation of the whole hundred and fifty Psalms was a practice inculcated upon the religious orders and upon persons of education, simpler folk, unable to read, or wanting the necessary leisure, recited instead of the Psalms a hundred and fifty Pater Nosters or supplied their place more expeditiously still by a hundred and fifty Hail Marys said as salutations of Our Lady. The Rosary is thus a miniature Psalter.... Or again, those who coveted the merits attaching to the recitation of the day and night hours of the clergy and the monks supplied their place by various miniature Offices of devotion, of which the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin and the Hours of the Passion were the most familiar....”

Further historical background is given in the article “Little Office of Our Lady” on page 294 of Volume IX, of the 1913 Catholic Encyclopedia. The Little Office which formed the greater part of the pre-Reformation primers is described as:

“...a liturgical devotion to the Blessed Virgin, in imitation of, and in addition to the Divine Office. It is first heard of in the middle of the eighth century at Monte Cassino (Italy).... it is probable that the Little Office, as a part of the liturgy, did not come into general use before the tenth century; and it is not unlikely that its diffusion is largely due to the marked devotion to the Blessed Virgin which is characteristic of the Church in England under the guidance of St. Dunstan and St. Ethelwold. Certainly, during the tenth century, an Office of the Blessed Virgin is mentioned at Augsburg, at Verdun, and at Einsiedeln; while already in the following century there were at least two versions of her ‘Hours’ extant in England.... By the fourteenth century the recital of the Little Office had come to be an almost universal practice and was regarded as obligatory on all the clergy. This obligation remained until St. Pius V removed it by the Bull ‘Quod a nobis’ of 1568.... Down to the Reformation it formed a large part of the ‘Primer or Lay-folk’s Prayer-book,’ and was customarily recited by the devout laity, by whom the practice was continued for long afterwards among the persecuted Catholics.”

It should be evident from this history that the original primer had nothing whatever to do with teaching beginning reading but was the laity’s prayer book. However, like the Psalms for so many centuries before, which formed a large part of the Book of Hours or primer, it might very well have been given to children for practice in reading. Once they had finally memorized the sounds of Latin syllables in the letter-based syllabary in their ABC books, children were able to recite these syllables when they saw them in the Latin prayers in the ABC books and in the Latin primer. In modern terms, the primer prayer-book material for practice in reading was used by children to pass from stumbling reading of the newly memorized syllable sounds to automaticity in reading them.

A major source for information on early primers is Charles C. Butterworth’s *The English Primers* (1529-1543), copyrighted and published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1953, and reprinted by Octagon Books in 1971. Butterworth records that adult primers were enormously popular before 1560. This would indicate they ceased to be popular during the Elizabethan period, as another authority, who will be quoted later, confirms. As Butterworth points out, adult primers were in effect later replaced in the Anglican Church by the Book of Common Prayer. Butterworth said:

“For the primers enjoyed an extensive popularity: more than 180 editions of them appeared during the crucial years from 1525 to 1560... some in Latin, some in English together with the Latin and many in English alone. No wonder the printers took interest in a product that could absorb an average of five new editions a year!

“The Primer contained, along with other devotional matter, a significant amount of Scripture... some forty psalms in their entirety as well as familiar pages from the New Testament and occasional excerpts from the Old....

“The Primer was thus a religious handbook.... There appears to have been originally no strict regulation of its exact contents. It was from the beginning a compilation, but it always centered about the Book of Hours.”

The pre-Reformation primers in England, those before 1534, and the ones immediately afterward were composed for adult lay people. With such huge editions of a publication meant for a market only of lay people, it is difficult to understand how some writers can claim the English had a low literacy rate at the time of the English Reformation in 1534. The many pre-Reformation chantry schools endowed by wills to teach poor children and the ABC schools in the parish churches had apparently done quite a good job of teaching reading, or these primer sales would not have been possible. Because of the structure of written Latin, when the ABC letter-based syllable method was used to teach reading in Latin instead of English, teaching children to read was actually a relatively easy job (unless children were too young - under six years.) Yet St. Thomas More himself was concerned by what he surprisingly considered low literacy in England in the beginning sixteenth century, estimating that only about sixty percent of the population was literate.

In his book, *Teaching Reading in Early England*, (Pitman Publishing Company, London, England: 1973, page 157), W. J. Frank Davies reported the estimate of St. Thomas More, which had been given in More's text, *Apology*. More wrote that the number of people in England who were able to read was more than half the population, and the population at that time was about four or five million.

That More is reported to have expected something better tells a lot about the positive attitude of the times to lay literacy. Yet his estimate compares very favorably with honest estimates of functional illiteracy in America today.

An excellent description of the adult primers and their use before and immediately after the English Reformation in 1534 is given in Edwyn Birchenough's 1937 paper, "The Prymer in English," reprinted in the English journal, *The Library*, London, Series 4 - volume 18, pages 178-181. In it, he mentions the Paston family, whose surviving correspondence provides a remarkable historical window on the fifteenth century. The John Dorne whom he mentions was a bookseller whose 1520 sales records have survived, which is another remarkable historical source:

“The beautifully illuminated Latin Horae or Prymers that one sees in the show cases of museums are the prototypes of the printed Prymers which form the subject of this paper. They contained a calendar, an almanack for finding the date of Easter and other movable feasts over a period of years, the Little Office of Our Lady, the Seven Penetential Psalms, the Fifteen Gradual Psalms, the Litany of the Saints, the Office of the Dead, and the Commendations of Souls. To this basic structure were added other devotions both liturgical and popular... Without going into the history of the Little Office of Our Lady, one may say that it was a miniature of the Divine Office or Canonical Hours, which were sung at various times throughout the day in the great cathedral and monastic churches. It was divided like them into seven hours, Matins with Lauds, Prime,

Tierce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline, each having its proper hymns, psalms, lections, collects, antiphons, versicles, and responses, but differing from those of the Canonical Hours in being constant throughout the year. The same psalms were sung at the same hour instead of varying from day to day, there were no long lections.... The Office of the Dead.... was composed largely of Psalms and lections from the Book of Job. The Commendations which went with it were nothing more nor less than Psalm 119 A.V.

“In 1447 the Pastons bought a Prymer for 2s. - say L2 in modern money - which as books went in those days was not expensive. With the introduction of printing the price fell rapidly, and in the Day Book of John Dorne, who was perhaps the Blackwell of the 1520's, the average price ranges from 3d. to 6d.... Another point of importance to the social historian, is that one probably knows more about the owners of Prymers than of any other class of books. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the literate classes were nearly all conversant with Latin, because if one went to school at all Latin was the one subject which was sure to be taught, and the Prymer was the book one had to read before one was admitted to the mysteries of grammar. Many grammar schools seem to have expected this to have been done before admission. As human nature does not change, and boys will always scribble in books, many Primers contain their signatures often repeated, comments on their schoolfellows, drawings and even what look suspiciously like 'cribs.' Their parents also wrote in the books, for before the Reformation the Primer occupied the place of the family Bible, and births, deaths, and marriages were duly recorded in the calendar.... Primarily, however, the Prymer was a book of a liturgical nature for private use, and it was customary for the laity to say the office either at home or in church as a private devotion. Even Thomas Cromwell is recorded to have said his 'Hours,' and an Italian visitor to England tells how English women who could read would go to church and recite the Little Office verse by verse with a companion in a low voice, in the manner of a religious....”

Birchenough cited *A Relation, or rather a True Account, of the Island of England, 1847*, Camden Society, No. 367, p. 23, as his source for the Italian's comment. He continued:

“How common the practice was may be judged not only from the well-used condition of the extant copies, but from pictures in which men and women are shown with their Prymers. Quite common is the picture of Saint Anne teaching Our Lady to read from a Prymer, or of Our Lady reading the Little Office with the Child Jesus on her knee, a scene that the artist doubtless took from his own home. In the light of this, it is rather surprising that Prymers in English are rather rare before 1535. Only 15 manuscript ones and no printed ones are extant before that date. One would have imagined there would have been a demand for a vernacular version, because wills show us that the ordinary user was the well-to-do shopkeeper or country gentleman, whose Latin was probably pretty rusty.... In Germany and the Netherlands vernacular books of Hours are extremely common and do not appear to have been censored by the ecclesiastical authorities. The French editions began to appear at the end of the fifteenth century and survived the attempt of the Sorbonne to suppress them in 1525. One or two were even printed in Spanish and Italian, but none in English. The 15 extant manuscript Prymers may be dated between 1381 and 1450 at the latest, after which there follows an inexplicable gap of eighty years in which no single English Prymer is to be found, though there are plenty of Latin ones. The whole thing is shrouded in mystery. There is no document known in which the use of vernacular Prymers is condemned.”

For the purpose of this history, Birchenough's comments establish that little children practicing the sounds of their newly learned syllables were shielded from the vagaries of English spelling not only in the ABC books, as will be shown, but in the primers until some time after the Reformation in England in 1534. It is no accident that the move to reform English spelling came shortly after the switch to English in the primers and ABC books, and in the hornbook material copied from the ABC book. It is also no

accident that the first English spelling reformer was a teacher who taught beginning reading, John Hart. He wrote his first manuscript in 1551, which will be discussed later. Hart said the thing which prompted his work was his difficulty in teaching children to read in English. Previous to Hart's day, when children learned to read first in Latin, there is no record of any difficulty in the transferring of skills learned in the reading of Latin to the reading of English, probably because all print had become firmly identified in the readers' minds as "sound." After having learned Latin, children could apparently absorb the sound irregularities of the spelling of English syllables simply by sufficient exposure to them. Yet teaching children to read first in English is inefficient by the syllable method and causes problems. Therefore, English spelling irregularities must be dealt with immediately, at the very least by analytic phonics, and Hart clearly recognized the problem. Failing to deal with the problem of sound irregularities in English when children are taught to read in English may result in children's reading of print as meaning-bearing whole words rather than sound-bearing syllables.

T. W. Baldwin provides background on the switch from Latin to English, in his *William Shakspeare's Petty School*, The University of Illinois Press, Urbana: 1943, starting on page 34 and following. Citing the *Victoria County Histories, Berkshire, Vol. II*, p. 175, Baldwin quotes the July 10, 1526, instructions for the chaplain-schoolmaster at the chantry school of Childrey. Without using the terms, ABC Book or catechism, his excerpt describes the content of each of those books in 1526, eight years before the English Reformation. It states the boys should be taught, "in English," the 14 articles of the faith (in effect, the Apostles' Creed), the:

"10 Commandments of God, the 7 mortal sins, the 7 sacraments of the church, the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit, the 7 works of mercy, as well corporal as spiritual, the 5 bodily senses, and the manner of confession."

This standard European catechism content was customarily taught orally and not from books, as pointed out in *Histoire du Catechisme*, "Preface", page I, by M. Le Chanoine Honoraire Hezard, Cure de St. Pierre de Sens, Paris, published by Victor-Retaux. Paris, 1900. While Baldwin's excerpt specifically ordered that the former materials were to be taught in the vernacular, "in English," it made no mention of language for the following, but from other sources they are known to have been taught in Latin in 1526:

"In the first place he should teach the boys the alphabet, the Lord's Prayer, the Salutation of the Angel, and the Apostles's Creed, and all other things necessary for serving the priest at mass, together with the psalm *De Profundis* and the collects together with the prayers customary for the dead, also he should teach them to say grace as well at dinner as at supper."

As Baldwin pointed out:

"Most of the materials... are to be found in the ABC printed by Thomas Petyt in the next decade."

The remainder would be primer materials. These 1526 chantry directions show the beginning curriculum: catechism in English (presumably oral), and prayers in Latin (obviously written, since it specifically mentioned "the alphabet").

In 1536, King Henry VIII changed this ancient practice of reciting prayers in Latin. Baldwin quoted Henry's 1536 "Injunction:"

"...diligently admonishe the fathers and mothers, maisters, and gouvernours of youth beyng within theyr cure, to teche or cause to be taught theyr chyldren and seruantes, euen from theyr

infancy, theyr Pater noster, tharticles of our fayth, and the tenne commandementes in theyr mother tonge....”

“Tharticles of our fayth” was the Apostle’s Creed, formerly learned both in Latin in the ABC book and in English, separated into 14 or so articles, in the oral catechism.

The 1538 injunction of Archbishop Edward Lee of York commanded that the former Latin prayers had to be memorized in English by everyone during church services and said curates “must give Warninge to thaire Parochians, that none of them be absent at such Times as any of the Saide Three shall be rehersed” (the “Three” being the Pater Noster plus the Ave Maria, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments). The coercion also concerned the written prayers:

“All Curates muste cause one Booke, comprisinge the Pater Noster and Ave Maria in Englishe, the Crede and the Tenne Commaundements in Englishe, to be set upon a Table in the Churche openlie, that all Men may reasorte to learne them, at all such Tymes as they woll... They must charge all the Fadere and Modere, and Heades of Howseholdes, and Gode - Fatheres, and Gode - Motheres, and Scoole-Maystres, accordinge to the King’s Highnes Injunctions, to see theire Children, Servantes and Scoleres, well instructe in the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Crede, and Tenne Commandiments in Englishe, and all oder Thinges compprised in theis Injunctions.”

It should be noted that, in 1538, the first words of these prayers still had to be given in Latin (“Pater Noster,” “Ave Maria,” but significantly not the name, the “Tenne Commandiments”) even when ordering that the prayers had to be memorized in English. No English words for the beginning part of these prayers (“Our Father,” “Hail Mary”) were as yet in use. It should also be noted that York in 1538 must have had a considerable degree of lay literacy, or no such “booke” would have been placed in the churches.

At the other end of England in that same year of 1538, the Bishop of Exeter wrote:

“Also that all chantry priests, soul priests, and other stipendiaries within my said diocese, in the avoiding of idleness, the nourisher of all vice, from henceforth diligently endeavor themselves to instruct the children of the parishes, where they dwell, in virtue, teaching them especially their Pater noster, Ave Maria, and Creed, the Ten Commandments, with the seven works of mercy, in the English tongue, or in the Cornish, where the English tongue is not used.”

After quoting the above on page 39, Baldwin went on to say:

“The petty teachers within the church itself are now ordered to teach these fundamental materials in the vernacular.

“At the refoundation of Canterbury in 1541, it was provided that ‘No one shall be admitted into the school who cannot read readily, or does not know by heart in the vernacular the Lord’s Prayer, the Angelic Salutation, the Apostles’ Creed and the Ten Commandments.’ ....It was the prime business of petty school to inculcate these official elements of the faith, and the boy must have them before he could enter grammar school.”

Baldwin continued, on page 40:

“The translation of the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord’s Prayer so printed in 1543 passed into King Henry’s Primer, 1545, and its dependents. Thus the authorized and required ABC would now supply these materials in the official translation, and so by 1545 the



whole lower school system through ABC, Primer, and grammar had been brought to the official uniformity which was begun long before. The process was in fact complete by 1543.”

In 1545, Henry VIII issued his authorized primer, which the scholar C. C. Butterworth in *The English Primers, 1529-1545* called “a direct forerunner of the Book of Common Prayer.” Henry VIII’s decree stated:

“...for avoiding of the diversity of primer books that are now abroad whereof are almost innumerable sorts... to have one uniform order of all such books throughout all of our dominions.... Every school master and bringer-up of young beginners in learning next after their ABC now by us also set forth do teach this primer or book of ordinary prayers unto them in English....”

That statement of Henry VIII makes it absolutely certain that the first book meant for children in 1545 was the ABC book, and not the primer. From that time forth, the use of Latin to teach beginning reading was apparently illegal. Henry VIII can truly be called the father of English reading disabilities.

Concerning Henry’s 1545 primer, Birchenough wrote (page 191):

“On 29 May 1545 Grafton published THE PRI=MER SET FOORTH || by the Kynges maiestie and || his Clergie, to be taught || lerned, & read: and none || other to be vsed || throughout || all his || dominions. || M.D.XLV. || by which all existing Prymers were superseded.... To judge from the number of editions printed by Grafton and Whitchurch, with whom he shared the monopoly, the suppression of the Sarum Prymer must have been very efficiently carried out, and the Customs seem to have managed to prevent the smuggling of Prymers from France.... The public did not take kindly to the measure, for in October, 1546, when an order was issued for the burning of Popish books, an agent reported to London, that the injunction had been wilfully misinterpreted, and that the populace cheerfully burnt those set forth by authority: ‘and his primers which be now utterly despised and not used nor taught the youth, contrary to his most godly meaning and commandment. They teach the old Latin with the old ignorance and would that printers should print them again and promise them good utterance.’”

As stated, after a transition period, the Book of Common Prayer eventually appeared as the true adult replacement for the earlier adult Latin primer. However, versions of English religious primers hung on into the nineteenth century, and these primers in English were used as reading books from the Elizabethan period onwards for children who were past the beginner stage. Their content, of course, differed greatly from the earlier Sarum primers. (A Sarum primer meant a Salisbury-type primer as opposed to a York-type primer.) Birchenough concluded (page 194):

“...the real Elizabethan Prymer was a shortened edition of Seres’ A Primmer or boke of private prayer - c. 1553. This was nothing more nor less than a school edition of Morning and Evening Prayer from the Prayer Book, with the Catechism. To this was added an A.B.C., the Litany, the Seven Penitential Psalms, with sundry graces drawn from Henry VIII’s Prymer, with the title of The Primer, and Catechisme. This was the book that was used down to July 1651, when it was finally abolished by the Commonwealth.

“Although the Prymer trade in 1651 was flourishing enough for a deputation of Prymer binders to complain that they had been deprived of their livelihood, there is not a trace of a Prymer between 1580 and 1660, when Charles II restored to the Stationers’ Company the monopoly they claimed to have enjoyed during the reign of James I and Charles I. It seems probable that the Prymer, either in Henry VIII’s version, or according to the Book of Common

Prayer, was rarely printed after 1585. The Prymer printed in the following years was merely a glorified ABC book containing certain elements drawn from the Prymer, and bound cheaply in paper or vellum wrappers for school use. There seems no doubt that the popular prayer book of the period for adults was the Psalter, usually in one of the metrical versions. This seems to be borne out by the fact that the Catholic minority who still used the Prymer, but could only obtain it through underground channels, have preserved and handed down a fairly representative selection of editions of Prymers according to the revised Roman Use issued during this period. Had such a thing as an Anglican Prymer existed except as a cheap school text-book it is inconceivable that none should have survived.”

These sources make it clear that the original Latin primer in England was superseded for adult use in the Church of England by the Book of Common Prayer. Yet a version using some of the content of Henry VIII’s primer, and still retaining its religious nature, did remain, but largely for school use, and in English, not Latin. Because of the difficulty in learning to read in English, the alphabet and syllables which appear to have been limited solely to the ABC books when children learned to read in Latin were now regularly shown at the beginning of the primers. It was a mute kind of testimony to the increase in reading problems with the transfer to English for beginning readers. The Elizabethan school version presumably inspired the New England Primer and other largely religious primers which were primarily composed for children.

Notwithstanding the fact that Dr. Samuel Johnson, the lexicographer, as late as 1773, (quoted in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913, Volume XII, page 425, “Primers”) defined a primer “as a small prayer book in which children are taught to read,” the primer was not the book in which children before and after the Reformation were taught to read, but the book in which they practiced reading once they had learned to read. This obviously was the case as long ago as the fourteenth century. Butterworth states concerning even the relatively few English language manuscript primers dating from the time of Chaucer, when the vast majority of manuscript primers were in Latin:

“Yet we do find as early as the time of Chaucer and Wycliffe - that is, the latter half of the fourteenth century - regular Books of Hours in manuscript form translated into the English vernacular. Several of these have been edited and made available in print to modern readers. They were full-scale Primers after the use of Sarum (Salisbury). So far as one can judge, they were not specially designed for the instruction of children.”

Nevertheless, often cited as proof that the primer was used for teaching reading as long ago as the fourteenth century are the lines from Geoffrey Chaucer’s “Prioress’s Tale” from his *Canterbury Tales* (1386) about the “litel clergeon seven years of age:”

“This litel child, his litel book lerninge,  
As he sat in the scole at his prymer.”

Yet, in no sense could any true primer before the Reformation be called “litel” as it contained before that time as a standard item the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or the “Hours,” which, as shown previously, were many prayers - mostly Psalms - to be said at different liturgical hours during the day. As C. C. Butterworth remarks in *The English Primers* (1529-1545), Chaucer’s child was most probably using:

“...some simple manual of instruction in the rudiments of religion, beginning with an alphabet.”

At that point, at the end of the fourteenth century, the “simple manual” would have been an ABC book instead of the wax tablets that had been used to teach little children to read since ancient times. However, the age at which he was starting school should be noted: a reasonable seven years, not an immature three or four years as in the seventeenth century.

### The ABC Book, and the Hornbook, Which Was the ABC Book’s First Page

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the standard curriculum for beginners was the “first letters,” song and the psalter. W. J. Frank Davies’ commented (on page 22 of *Teaching Reading in Early England*, Pitman Publishing, London, England, 1973):

“Pope Gregory IX (1227-41), decreed: ‘Let every priest who presides over a people...have a man to keep school (the gloss has ‘for teaching the Psalter and singing’) and admonish his parishioners that they send their sons to church to learn the Faith and that the priests may chastely educate them.’ This was repeated in 1280, and others of similar intent were promulgated in the ensuing centuries....”

Whatever the meaning of the word, “sons” in the original Latin quotation which Davies translated, (more commonly the word “children” appears in similar quotations), the fact is that both boys and girls received this primary education (but not Latin public grammar school education), as will be obvious from quotations which follow.

Concerning the 14th and 15th centuries in England, Davies stated on page 34:

“Disputes about the status of the various types of schools were rife. A famous one took place in Warwick in 1315

‘between the Master and the Music Schoolmaster over the Donatists (i.e., grammarians) and the little ones learning their first letters and the psalter.... That undue encroachment of scholars on one side and the other may cease for the future,’

it was decreed

‘that the present Grammar Master and his successors shall have the Donatists, and thenceforward have, keep and teach scholars in grammar and the art of dialectic if he shall be expert in that art, while the Music Master shall keep and teach those learning their first letters, the psalter, music and song.’”

No mention is made in this of any “book,” but just that children should learn their first letters and psalter, which is exactly how little Irish beginners had learned in the sixth century, with the use of wax tablets, as will be shown.

But, on page 93, Davies wrote (and note the literacy of the abbess who acted as teacher):

“Piers Plowman remarked that Abstinence the Abbess had taught him the ‘ABC’...he could have been referring to either the letters of the alphabet or the skill of continuous reading itself. When in 1389, Philippa and the seven-year-old Blanche, the two daughters of Henry IV, were given two books ‘of ABC’ for two pence, the term had also come to signify the actual book itself.”

The Piers Plowman tales are placed shortly after the middle of the 14th century. I suspect the Piers Plowman reference is to an ABC book, just as with the king's daughters in 1389. That latter quotation, of course, clearly establishes that the ABC book had arrived by 1389. It also establishes that ABC books were being produced (obviously by professional scribes) and sold as a marketable commodity with a distinct price, so there must have been a market!

In the Piers Plowman tales, the abess - a literate woman - taught the plowman in the tale - a laborer. The anonymous tales originally date from about 1362, with additions by unknown authors to 1395 (source: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1963 edition, Vol. 13, p. 690-691: Langland, William - The Vision of Piers Plowman). Since the Piers Plowman ABC remark had to be made between these dates, it could hardly be said to confirm widespread illiteracy in England in the late Middle Ages, if it were not startling that either women or laborers should be literate. By contrast, (from W. J. Frank Davies, page 54) in the seventeenth century, and though it concerns only writing and not reading, Shakespeare's daughter Susanna could barely write, and his daughter Judith had to rely on her mark!

The English upper classes of the period, particularly after the massive population loss from the Bubonic plague of the mid-fourteenth century, (not that of the sixteenth century) tried very hard to keep the English boys like Piers Plowman "down on the farm."

Davies wrote (page 45):

"In 1391 the Commons prayed Richard II that 'no serf or villein henceforward put his children to school in order to procure their advancement by clergy.'"

"Advancement by clergy" did not usually mean at that point in time becoming a priest. It is actually the source for the ordinary meaning today for the word, "clerk."

Davies continued:

"It was like trying to stem the waves of the sea, and the failure to prevent the migration to the towns and into trades and for schooling was finally admitted by the Statute of Artificers in the reign of Henry IV (1406) which allowed, among other things, 'every man or woman, whatever their estate, (to be) free to set their son or daughter to learn letters at any school which may please them in this realm.'"

Note the even-handed reference to women and girls, on the same footing as men and boys, and to the implied existence of many schools then in existence to teach "letters."

By the end of the fourteenth century, the schools in the realm were no longer moving from the alphabet and syllables and prayers, by way of wax writing tablets, to the Psalms, but were teaching the alphabet, syllables, and prayers in manuscript ABC books. The content of the late 14th century child's manuscript ABC book was most probably like the usual content known from the printed ABC books in Europe in the 16th century: the alphabet, syllabary, Pater Noster, Ave, and Creed, all in Latin.

Gregory Reisch's *Margarita Philosophica*, Heidelberg, 1486, carried an allegorical picture of a child being presented with a tablet showing the alphabet, as a woman (obviously meant to be a mythological person whom Ellwood P. Cubberley labeled, "Wisdom,") turned the key to the door to the tower of learning. The various levels in the tower of the traditional learning of the period were labeled. An original copy of the book carrying the full illustration showing those medieval levels of learning is in the rare book collection of the New York Public Library. One of the many places in which at least a part of the picture has been reproduced is the frontispiece to W. J. Frank Davies' *Teaching Reading in Early*

England, Pitman Publishing, London: 1973, but the Davies' reproduction omitted the tower and the levels of learning. A copy is included in Appendix A of the full illustration, from page 154 of *The History of Education* by Ellwood P. Cubberley, Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston-New York-Chicago-Dallas-San Francisco: 1920. The Cubberley reproduction was taken from the 1508 Basel edition of *Margarita Philosophica*. The illustration certainly implies that sixteenth century beginners were no longer using wax tablets as the first step but instead were being given an ABC tablet or book. (Very probably the ABC tablet being handed to the child in the picture was meant to precede the standard European Latin ABC of the sixteenth century.)

The ABC book and the hornbook which was a part of the ABC book were considered to be something separate from primers. In Chapter XIV of *A Volume of Vocabularies... from the Tenth Century to the Fifteenth*, published in 1857, by Thomas Wright (1810-1877), Wright gave the Latin words for the following fifteenth century English words (as cited by Andrew W. Tuer in his *History of the Horn Book*):

a myssale, a calendar, a ymner (hymner), a antyphonere (or) letony [litany], a nabse (an abc), a grace, a primer, a sawtyr (a psalter), a brevyar, a processyonar, a mertillage (martyrs) a bybulle [Bible], a manuelle and others

*History of the Horn Book* by Andrew W. Tuer, (1897, 1968, 1979 - Arno Press, Inc., New York, New York) is a wildly disorganized book, from which an enormous amount of useful data may nevertheless be culled, like raisins from a cake. On page 374 of the *History of the Horn Book*, Andrew W. Tuer mentioned the above references by Wright, and stated that Wright had recorded the words, "Hoc Alphabetum, a nabse" on his list which showed Latin words followed by the above fifteenth-century English equivalents. Wright's list makes it clear that by the fifteenth century the ABC book had arrived and was NOT considered identical to the primer, since the primer was also on the same list. However, both books possibly were sometimes bound together in the days of manuscripts, which, in the late Middle Ages, were produced commercially by professional scribes.

### The Use of Catechisms and ABC Books in England and France

The child's "prymer" to which Chaucer referred in the fourteenth century was probably a manuscript ABC book in Latin, ("a nabse") and not like the 14th century manuscript book in English which George A. Plimpton owned. Plimpton referred to this manuscript in his book, *The Education of Chaucer*. Plimpton's material could have been a catechism meant for children who could already read. It was also very likely a non-conformist Lollard catechism. Before the Reformation, the ABC books, with which children learned to read and which were in Latin, did not normally include the catechism. The catechism was, of course, taught in the vernacular, but it was normally taught orally and not from pupils' books (as outlined in *Histoire du Catechisme*, "Preface", page I, by M. Le Chanoine Honoraire Hezard, Cure de St. Pierre de Sens, Paris, published by Victor-Retaux. Paris, 1900).

Despite the fact the catechism before the Reformation usually had been taught orally and not from books, at least some printed catechisms in the vernacular appear about 1500, probably because of the easier availability of printed books. Colet's appeared in the early 1500's. Another book which appears to be a catechism but which is apparently wrongly listed as an ABC book appeared in the *Catalogue des Livres* of Baron James de Rothschild (1884 - page 177-179), with the name *La Croix de Par Dieu*, the French expression for the English equivalent "Christ's cross." Before the Reformation, alphabets were preceded by a cross and in reciting the alphabet the child might say, as Tuer recorded (page 81) from Morley's *Introduction to Music* (1597):

"Christ's crosse be my spede,  
In all vertue to proceed."

Tuer recorded (page 80):

“The complete alphabet was at times cast on English church bells, some examples being preceded by the (cross).”

It is in this symbolic sense of the alphabet, not as something to be used to teach reading to beginning readers, that Rothschild's *La Croix de Par Dieu* was apparently named, as it has the standard content of the catechism in the French vernacular. It contained the Ten Commandments, the lists of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, the seven capital virtues, the seven capital sins, and so forth, as well as the Creed in French rhyme. These were standard in the catechism. It also included the Our Father and Hail Mary in French prose from the Latin ABC book, which were not translated in England at that time, possibly because of the Lollard history. It is true that, on the back of the first leaf of the Rothschild copy, the alphabet was shown in red, but it was obviously catechetical in intent, as following each letter was a word for a religious concept: A = Amytie, B = Benivolence, C = Crainte, D = Douleur, etc.

If beginning reading were taught by Rothschild's catechism, it would probably have meant teaching reading for “meaning” and not for “sound,” as no syllabary was included. Yet the following clear records exist on the teaching of beginning reading in France in the seventeenth century, only a hundred years or so after the Rothschild text was produced. The records confirm that the teaching of beginning reading in France at that time followed the pattern of the standard Latin ABC book, not Rothschild's catechism, and the teaching of beginning reading included heavy drill on the syllabary. Since the methods in France in the seventeenth century were very like the ancient Latin ABC book, it is therefore only reasonable to assume that the Rothschild ABC printed about a hundred years or so before should more properly be called the Rothschild catechism.

Buisson's 1887 *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie* quoted Pere Charles Demia, who ran schools and a normal school in Lyons, France, in 1672. The children in his school first learned the regularly formed syllabary and then learned to read their prayers in Latin, before they learned to read in French. After having learned to read, for instance, “In nomine patris” (In the name of the Father,) the first words of their Latin prayers, the children in Demia's class then read them again, each child reading one syllable: the first would read “in,” the second “no,” the third “mi,” the fourth “ne,” the fifth “Pa,” and the sixth “tris.” Children practiced their letters and beginning syllables with dice, as Locke had suggested and as was suggested earlier in England in 1653 in a book by Sir Hugh Plat. Pere Demia said concerning such dice:

“where should be printed the letters or the syllables, with which the children will play, being given a pupil more capable to settle their differences....”

This, of course, was also an early use of the monitorial school idea, the founding of which is wrongly attributed to Bell and Lancaster about the beginning of the 19th century.

That two different kinds of readers were being produced then, too, by the relative beginning emphasis on “sound” or “meaning” is clearly seen from the comment of another 17th century author quoted by Buisson, “L. D. B., Priest,” who wrote *The Parish School* in 1654, apparently in Paris. The author warned concerning the teaching of beginning readers:

“Not to undertake to make them fly in reading before they know how to spell the letters because, wishing to advance them teaching them so many things at one time, one makes their reading so confused that further they are a long time learning; (and) they never know to read well, neither in Latin or in French.

“To proceed, therefore, by order, it is necessary (1) to teach the little children to know the letters (2) to assemble them to make syllables, (3) to spell the syllables to make some words, and afterwards to read....”

Obviously, Pere L. D. B. recognized two types of readers and thought they were permanent, since he said considering the poorly taught who had not received heavy training in “sound.” “they never know to read well, neither in Latin or in French.”

The famous ancient Roman educator, Quintilian, also recognized the need for heavy emphasis on the sounds of the syllables in teaching beginning reading, and saw the existence of different types of readers from faulty teaching back in the first century A. D. He said in his *Institutio Oratoria* written around 50 A. D.:

“For learning syllables there is no short way; they must all be learned throughout, nor are the most difficult of them, as is the general practice, to be postponed, that children may be at a loss, forsooth, in writing words. Moreover, we must not even trust to the first learning by heart; it will be better to have syllables repeated, and to impress them long upon the memory; and in reading, too, not to hurry on, in order to make it continuous or quick, until the clear and certain connection of the letters become familiar, without at least any necessity to stop for recollection. Let the pupil then begin to form words from syllables, and to join phrases together from words. It is incredible how much retardation is caused to reading by haste; for hence arise hesitation, interruption, and repetition, as children attempt more than they can manage, and then, after making mistakes, they become distrustful even of what they know. Let reading, therefore, be at first sure, then continuous, and for a long time slow, until by exercise a correct quickness is gained.”

It is obvious that Quintilian was recommending objective “sound” teaching and was emphatically opposed to “speed reading” for beginners. However, from his comment that the general practice was to postpone the learning of the most difficult syllables and his further comment, “It is incredible how much retardation is caused to reading by haste,” it seems fairly certain that Ancient Rome also was turning up some psycholinguistically “guessing” readers who read more by “meaning” than by “sound.”

The priests in France whose teaching practice has just been quoted obviously agreed with Quintilian.

The record before the eighteenth century therefore indicates that the catechism was not used to teach beginning reading in France, just as it was not used in Great Britain. Both Rothschild’s text and Plimpton’s manuscript were almost certainly catechisms, and were not used to teach beginning reading. What was used was the ABC book with its syllabary, which emphasized “sound” and not “meaning.”

### Hornbooks

In Andrew W. Tuer’s *History of the Horn Book*, (1897, 1979, Arno Press, Inc., New York, New York) on page 281, he referred to a late 14th century manuscript, of Chaucer’s time, (Harl. MS 3954, British Museum) which read:

“Quan a chyld to scole xal set be  
A bok hym is brout  
Naylyd on a brede of tre  
That men callyt an abece...  
Red letter in parchemyn  
Makyth a chyld good and fyn

## Lettrys to loke & se'

That "chylde" who was the contemporary of Chaucer's student in the last half of the fourteenth century started with "an abece" and so must have Chaucer's little clergeon. The content of its first page, which would contain the alphabet and syllabary and require much practice and time, was apparently saved from wear by being "nailed on a board of a tree," (the most likely translation), just as the content of the first page of the printed ABC books was later mounted on horn-covered wooden paddles called hornbooks.

The earliest specific reference Tuer could find to a hornbook he gave on page 285, citing *The Prose Works of the Rev. R. S. Hawker, Vicar of Morwenstow* (London: Blackwood and Sons, 1893) as his source. Tuer obviously quoted directly from Hawker, and Hawker had obviously partially quoted directly from a sixteenth century will. Yet Hawker had not, unfortunately, shown exactly which words were a direct quotation from that sixteenth century will and which were his own. Citing that material from Hawker, Tuer wrote:

"The Will of Dame Thomasine Perceval, dated the Vigil of the Feast of Christmas, 1510 A. D., directs 'that a chantry with cloisters, should be built near the church of Wike St. Marie, Cornwall, which she endowed with thirty marks a year, and further directs that there shall be established therein a schole for young children born in the parish of Wike St. Marie; and such to be always preferred as are friendless and poor. They are to be taught to read with their fescue (pointer) from a boke of horn, and also to write, and both as the manner was in that country when I was young.' The age of the Dame we do not know, but we learn from Hawker that John Bunsley took her to London in 1463. Say she was eighteen in that year, and that she was taught the A B C when five years old, then we have the date 1450 when the horn-book was in use."

Such wills founding free chantry schools (chantry schools being run by a priest who also prayed for the soul of the dead benefactor) were very common in England in the 14th and 15th century, the wills often stating such schools were to favor the poor. Since leaving such legacies to teach poor children to read was considered a commendable act of mercy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it is, again, hard to accept statements of historians who claim lay illiteracy was widespread in fifteenth-century England, particularly among women, and that literacy was little valued except for the religious. After all, this was a lay woman's will and she was apparently literate, and had apparently learned to read as a little girl in rural Cornwall in the mid-fifteenth century. She specifically referred to the teaching of reading in the "manner" "in that country when I was young," so she was probably not the only little girl, and possibly a commoner at that time, who was getting such instruction about 1450 in Cornwall. It is interesting that, unlike the Paston women, however, she had apparently been taught to write.

What makes her will of interest for this history is its reference to the horn book in use about 1450. Yet it appears clear from the 14th century poem referred to previously that the practice was common about one hundred years earlier, shortly after 1350. The ABC book and the contents of its first page mounted as a horn book, therefore, in the 14th century, as in the 15th, preceded the primer.

What is also of interest is her reference to a fescue or pointer which replaced the stylus used to write on the wax tablets when the wax tablets were replaced by the ABC books. The horn book pointer was obviously not only used to point to the syllables being read, but must have been put to a further heavy use in the first stage, when the child was learning the syllables. Since the horn book normally only showed syllables through "da, de, di, do, du; ad, ed, id, od, ud," the rest of the consonants and vowels had to be pointed to in the alphabet at the top of the page as the child constructed for himself the rest of the syllables: "fa, fe, fi, fo..." etc. (the probable source of the fe, fi, fo, fum of the nursery rhyme).



Yet, one of the cardinal laws of the present-day sight-word method is that children must NEVER point at the print when they are reading in the way that old Dame Perceval mandated in her will. Such pointing is assumed to interfere with smooth reading for “meaning.” As mentioned earlier, the formal teaching of reading in Soviet schools is finished in first grade. However, children are given pointers at first grade just like the fifteenth-century fescues Dame Perceval remembered, and are expected to use them when they read their school texts for several years afterwards. Apparently, the Soviet psychologists believe that left-to-right movements in reading, and, most particularly, the moving from the end of one line to the beginning of another are automatisms that take longer to establish than do phonic skills. After its editors visited Soviet schools, the American magazine, *The Instructor*, reported in its January, 1959 issue:

“Each child has a small wooden pointer that he uses to point to the syllables as he reads. This is used through the first three grades and higher if the child requires it.”

The Soviets, hardly surprisingly, have no “functional illiteracy” problem.

The record indicates, therefore, that the ABC book apparently appeared for the first time about the 14th century, and, with it, its first page mounted as a horn book. The ABC book and horn book displaced the wax writing tablets for beginners on which children since ancient times had practiced the alphabet and syllabary from models written by their teachers, at the same time that they were learning to read the alphabet and syllabary.

The History of Wax Tablets for Reading Instruction, Which Preceded the ABC Books and Horn Books, and The Use of Such Wax Tablets for Recitation

A wax tablet from as long ago as 600 B. C. and a syllabary from the same period have survived. They are referred to in H. I. Marrou’s *A History of Education in Antiquity*, published in France in 1948 and in America by Sheed and Ward in 1956 and Mentor Books in 1964.

Marrou wrote (pages 335-336) that the Latins took their alphabet from the Etruscans, and, by great good fortune, materials have been found which demonstrate something about the way the Etruscans handled primary education. Marrou said that direct evidence about the Etruscan methods comes from materials which are older than anything of the kind that survives from Greece. He said an ivory writing table from Marsigliana d’Albegna has been dated to about 600 B. C. On the top of its frame is a complete alphabet, and, as he said, it is obvious that the alphabet was supposed to be copied by a pupil on the soft wax surface that would have been surrounded by that frame. Marrou said that seven more examples survive of such model Etruscan alphabets, all dated to the 600’s, and that one of them even includes a syllabary. He commented:

“Clearly, Etruscan teaching went through the same stages as Greek, and there can be no doubt that the Etruscans took their teaching methods, as well as the secret of writing, from their first Greek masters.”

Marrou cited as his sources for information on the Greek syllabary and word lists Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, Book I, Chapter I, page 30, 37; *Publications de la Societe Royale Egyptienne de Papyrologie, Textes et Documents*, II - O. Gueraud, P. Jouguet, “Un Livre d’Ecolier du IIIe Siecle avant Jesus Christ,” p. 1-20, 27-30, 38-47, 58-114; U. Wilcken, *Urkunden der Ptolemaerzeit, altere Funde*, I, 147, 1-29; Athenaeus, *The Sophists’ Banquet*, X, 453 CD; *II Inscriptiones Graecae, editio minor*, vol. II, 2784; P. Collart, *Les Papyrus Bouriant*, I, 1-140, Paris, 1926; *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1908, XXVIII,

122, 2; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, V, 8, 357; C. Wessely, *Studien zur Palaeographic und Papyruskunde*, II, xlv, 2; and Bataille, *Deir el Bahari*, 187.

The Gueraud-Jouguet material shown above that Marrou cited as one of his sources reports on a third-century-B.C. Greek papyrus on which was written a long syllabary. It was found in the sands of North Africa just before World War II. However, Marrou considered the elaborate material to be a teacher's guide, and not just a book (*livre*) of a student (*ecolier*) which was what Gueraud and Jouguet had concluded.

Wax tablets like those of the Etruscans were also used in the Hellenistic period about 300 B. C. in Greek-language schools. Marrou cited as his sources for information on writing tablets B. P. Grenfell, A. S. Hunt, H. E. Bell, etc., *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, p. 736; *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1893 XIII, p. 293 seq.; and *Amtliche Berichte aus den koniglichen Kunstsammlungen, monatlich erscheinendes Beiblatt zum Jahrbuch der kgl. preuszischen Kunstsammlungen*, Berlin, XXXIV, p. 211 seq.

Marrou wrote (page 216):

“The materials the children used were of various kinds. Their first writing-tools, equivalent to our slates, were single, double or multiple wooden boards; when there was more than one, the various parts were joined together either by hinges or by a single piece of string passed through a hole. Each board had a waxed surface inside a hollow frame, and the pupil wrote on this with a pricker whose other end was rounded and was used as a rubber.”

Marrou's description of Hellenistic bound wax tablets from about 300 B. C. matches exactly the Springmount wax-tablet “book”, pulled from a bog in Ireland early in this century, and which is dated to the sixth century A. D., and which will be discussed later in this history. Wax tablets were also mentioned in a thirteenth-century French romance, referred to later, in which story children were learning French and Latin and being taught to write on a wax tablet with a gold stylus.

The wax tablet approach for beginning readers, therefore, lasted at least from about 600 B.C. to about 1350 A.D., or almost 2,000 years, while the ABC book, dating from about 1350 to 1750, lasted only about 400 years. But almost no one today knows about the almost 2,000-year-long use of wax tablets for teaching not only beginning reading but writing, and the obvious superiority of the wax tablets to the ABC books.

The earlier wax tablets which were displaced by the ABC books during the 1300's are discussed by W. J. Frank Davies in his book, *Teaching Reading in Early England*, Pitman Publishing Company: 1973, London, England, pages 68-69. Concerning practices from the time of the ancient Greeks, as long ago as Plato's day, Davies wrote that it was thought at the time that writing had a connection with learning to read, so that one was used to help with the other. Wax-covered tablets were used for writing and had a sample alphabet written at the top. Students used styluses to form the letters on the wax below the sample alphabet. Davies commented that Plato, in his work, *Protagoras*, suggested that lines be provided for helping the learner. Davies also mentioned that in the *Epistles* (xciv) of the Roman, Seneca, (c. 4 B.C.), learning to write was discussed. Seneca said that:

“when children are taught to write letters, [their] fingers are held and their hands grasped and guided to help...’ [copy the letters].

Davies wrote that Seneca said that children should then be told to copy the sample letters themselves and to correct their own writing, by comparing it to the samples.

Davies referred to the suggestion of St. Jerome, that a mother's hand be used to guide her little girl's hand when learning to trace the letters on a wax tablet. That suggestion was one of many in a letter that St. Jerome wrote to Laeta, the mother of the little girl, Pacatula, before 400 A. D (which correspondence is discussed again later). Note that, with the advent of Christianity, one of the few surviving references from that early period on teaching beginning reading is in a letter written to a mother, counseling her how to teach her daughter to read and write by the use of wax writing tablets.

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Nevertheless, evidence exists confirming the fact that some pagan women in Europe were taught to read. One such source concerns the use of a different kind of writing material than wax tablets by a particular pagan woman. The material was a wafer-thin piece of wood, not a waxed sheet. The reference occurs in a fascinating article written by William Least Heat-Moon, appearing on pages 222 and following of the December, 1993, edition of the catalog of Lands' End Direct Merchants, Dodgeville, Wisconsin. The article, "Lost Letters Found," was Part Two of a highly entertaining travelog Least Heat-Moon had written, *The Best of Britain*.

While traveling in the British Isles, he and his wife visited Hadrian's Wall, built by the Roman Emperor Hadrian about 1,900 years ago, between what is now Scotland from what is now England. Least Heat-Moon wrote that the archeologist Robin Birley had uncovered 1,257 wafer-thin wooden sheets since 1973, when digging at the site of officers' quarters pre-dating the wall.

William Least-Heat Moon wrote that Birley first found a wet, sticky square. When pulled apart, it revealed unpunctuated characters in a language Birley did not know. By the time Birley got the square to a university for translation, it had blackened so much that the letters were no longer visible.

Yet the presence of a non-Latin language was not surprising. "Romans" in the Roman army about the time of Christ, the apparent period of the officers' quarters near the wall, came from all over the Roman Empire. Probably very few actually came from the city of Rome. For instance, St. Paul was obviously proud of being a Roman citizen, and he was a Jew from Jerusalem. So were great numbers of other Roman citizens who came from other parts of the Roman empire proud of their citizenship although they retained part of their ethnic roots. In one very real sense, the Roman Empire was like the United States of America. It was full of citizens who came from all over the world but who greatly valued their citizenship.

Nevertheless, Robin Birley soon found sheets written in Latin. William Least Heat-Moon wrote that the use of infrared photography made it possible to read Birley's growing collection. The sheets were mostly personal letters, which had been:

"...written on thin wafers of birch and alder incredibly preserved for two millenia because, as Roman soldiers leveled old buildings for new construction, they covered the debris with clay to make a smooth surface, thereby sealing off oxygen from whatever was underneath.... [The sheets were]... the oldest hand-written Latin material by ordinary people anywhere in Europe.

"He found a letter from Claudia Severa inviting the wife of a Vindolanda commander to come to her birthday party; a scribe wrote the invitation, but at the bottom is Claudia's own scribble: 'Farewell dear sister.' ...

Least Heat-Moon commented that Claudia Severa's short message is the oldest surviving example in the world of a woman's writing. It confirms, of course, the literacy of a probably pagan woman. He continued:

“Letters from soldiers don’t speak of religion or the Emperor... [but] complain about money, bad roads, pinkeye, and ‘wretched Britons.’ ... a schoolchild copied out a line from Vergil and beside it is his teacher’s evaluation: ‘Sloppy.’

“Birley said, ‘The people living here on the northern edge of the Roman Empire get their spelling and declensions wrong - which doesn’t help us - but we have to remember they wrote as they spoke, with no thought to style and no idea their humble words would reach people this far from their time.’”

William Least Heat-Moon wrote that less than ten per cent of the site had been examined, so more such wafers must still be there - and also in places like London and York, wherever the physical circumstances were similar.

Birley’s work certainly seems to suggest the probability of the widespread use of wafer-thin wooden sheets for disposable messages in other areas of the Roman empire, as well. Papyrus would not have been so easily available since it came from Egypt, and it certainly would have been more expensive. (Discussed later is the use in Ireland and Scandinavia of wooden sticks for recording very short messages in Ogham or in runic lettering.) However, in contrast to the use of such materials as wooden sheets (or sticks) or papyrus for sending messages, waxed tablets were used all over the ancient world for recycled personal use.

In Andrew W. Tuer’s *History of the Horn Book* (page 2), quoted in part elsewhere, Tuer wrote:

“In Gaelic, spalag, which also means a piece of dried bark, is the hornbook itself, while brad and brod apply only to the letters written or printed on its surface. In his *English-Irish Dictionary* (1732) Hugh Mac-Curtin, who devoted himself to the study of the early history of Ireland, gives Clairin, lit. a little board or tablet, as the equivalent for horn-book.”

Tuer did not cite his source for the Gaelic words he gave, but it presumably was also Mac-Curtin’s 1732 *English-Irish dictionary*, which included words from the “early history of Ireland,” to the study of which Mac-Curtin reputedly had devoted himself. That early historical period would presumably be from about the time of St. Patrick until the advent of the Viking invasions (roughly 450 to 800 A. D.). However, Tuer’s hornbook definitions contradict each other (a piece of dried bark vs. a little board or tablet), which suggests that Tuer was wrong in stating that one of the meanings for the Gaelic word, “spalag,” besides “a piece of dried bark,” was “hornbook.” However, Tuer was probably right that “spalag” meant a piece of dried bark and that it could have “letters written or printed on its surface.” If so, then “spalag” bark writing sheets certainly sound a great deal like the kind of first-century wafer-thin wooden writing materials which Birley has been finding near Hadrian’s wall.

The use of cheap, conveniently available and easily disposable writing materials made from wood or bark might well have been widespread in ancient times in the British Isles, including Ireland, and all over Europe where forests were still widespread. If such a use had not at one time been common, the word, “spalag,” is not likely to have eventually have found its way into Mac-Curtin’s 1732 *English-Irish dictionary*. Yet, because materials such as Birley’s thin wooden sheets and Mac-Curtin’s “spalags” were so fragile, they would long since have crumbled away, unless they were enclosed in the same sort of time capsule that developed in the accidentally weather-proofed soil that the builders unknowingly put in place near Hadrian’s wall.

Marrou told (pages 212-218) of Greek primary schools in the Hellenistic period about 300 B. C. which taught reading at the same time that they taught writing. The Greek language schools began by teaching a thorough syllabary and followed it with words which were difficult to pronounce. The Greek emphasis about 300 B. C. for beginners obviously was on “sound” rather than “meaning.”

Yet, writing in 1948, Marrou, who undoubtedly never taught beginning reading, deplored this old syllable method as unsuited to children’s needs and unlike the modern humane “global” sight-word method that had been promoted in France increasingly after 1920 and sharply so after World War II. By the early 1950’s in France and in the 1960’s in Germany, this global method met enormous opposition from the public because of its failures. Yet Marrou in France in 1948, like so many of our intellectuals in America today, believed the propaganda of the “reading instruction community.”

One such example of later propaganda is *Au Seuil de la Culture*, Les Editions du Scarabee, Paris, 1965. It was written by Robert Dottrens, who had previously taught in Geneva, Switzerland, before the global method was banned there. Consisting of an imaginary conversation between a mother and a school principal, his book was an attempt to justify the banned global method. The mother said of her daughter’s first grade teacher:

“...her teacher uses this global method that all the world knows is worth nothing.” (Page 7:  
“...son institutrice emploie cette methode globale dont tout le monde sait qu’elle ne vaut rien.”)

Dottrens therefore unwittingly recorded for posterity the outrage French-speaking parents felt for the global “meaning” method and the fact that “all the world” did not include the intellectuals. The failure of the sight-word, global, “meaning” method in Europe and South America will be discussed at the end of this history.

Marrou found fault not only with the syllable method. He obviously also thought little of memorization, or recitation, in the ancient schools. Such memorization of texts has almost disappeared from modern education. Whether it is an improvement or not is a matter of opinion. But memorization, or recitation, was definitely a part of the wax-tablet approach. Marrou wrote concerning recitation (page 215) in the Hellenistic schools:

“Closely associated with reading was recitation: the selected passages were not only read aloud but also learnt by heart, and it seems that beginners at least used to recite in a sing-song manner, syllable by syllable: “com-ing through, ray by ray, A-pol-lo, the mor-ning sun...”

Concerning Marrou’s comments on recitation, he cited as sources Callimachus, *Epigrams*, 48, and Herondas, *The Schoolmaster (Mime III)*, 30-36.

The ancient practice of oral recitation of material to be learned was still around when Lewis Carroll wrote of such recitations in *Alice in Wonderland*, but it is rarely to be seen in classrooms today in the English-speaking world. However, a watercolor drawing from a UNESCO calendar from a few years ago, “The Recitation,” by Tonje Strom Aas of Norway, showing a class of children reciting in unison, demonstrates that recitations are still alive in at least one European country.

A surprisingly worthwhile study on such recitations was carried out by, of all people, Arthur I. Gates. It was apparently prepared for his doctorate. (His doctorate was not prepared on spelling, as I had believed. His work on spelling, *Psychology of Reading and Spelling with Special Reference to Disability*, Contributions to Education, No. 129, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, came later, in 1922).

The date of the publication of Gates' doctoral thesis at Columbia (September, 1917), suggests Cattell's input since, as stated by Geraldine S. Joncich in her biography of Thorndike, *The Sane Positivist*, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut: 1968, page 379, Gates was living with the Cattell family and working with Cattell in the summer of 1917. Gates' (and possibly Cattell) may very well have chosen the topic of recitations because of comments made over a century before by Dugald Stewart of Scotland, the philosopher/psychologist, who wrote *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*. In a footnote on page 219, Chapter VI, of Volume II of Stewart's work, which was published first in Great Britain in 1814 and in 1821 in Boston by Wells and Lilly, Stewart said the following concerning oral recitation as a help in learning material:

"It seems to be owing to this dependence of memory on attention, that it is easier to get by heart a composition, after a very few readings, with an attempt to repeat it at the end of each, than after a hundred readings without such an effort. The effort rouses the attention from that languid state in which it remains, while the mind is giving a passive reception to foreign ideas. The fact is remarked by Lord Bacon...."

An idea of Gates' curious and forgotten 1917 work, as forgotten as Dugald Stewart's is today, is given by the excerpts below:

"Recitation as a Factor in Memorizing, by Arthur I. Gates, *Archives of Psychology*, No. 40, September, 1917, *Columbia University Contributions to Philosophy and Psychology*, Volume XXVI, No. 1, The Science Press: New York.

"Preface: The present investigation was begun in the Psychological Laboratory of the University of California in the spring of 1916. The experiments in which children served as subjects were conducted in a public school in Oakland, California, while those upon adults were, for the most part, carried out in the Psychological Laboratory of Columbia University...."

"To Mr. N. Ricciardi, Principal of the school visited, I am indebted for the privilege of conducting the experiments upon his charges.... My debt of gratitude to Professors G. M. Stratton and Warner Brown of the University of California and to Professors J. McKeen Cattell, R. S. Woodworth, E. L. Thorndike, H. L. Hollingsworth, and Dr. A. T. Poffenberger of Columbia University is very great...."

These names are rarely associated in the literature today: Cattell, Thorndike, and Gates. Therefore, it is interesting to read in the above quotation that Gates himself confirmed the close tie in September, 1917.

(page 1) "... It is at once obvious that the solution of such questions is of tremendous import for the work of the school. It is imperative that recall or recitation, as a factor in learning, should be analyzed and its quantitative importance determined.... Earlier investigations have found in the case of many adults that the optimum combination of recitation and reading may lead to the mastery of a given lesson in one-half the time required to learn it by reading alone. If such findings should hold for children, and if it is generally true, as Miss Baldwin found, that twenty-five per cent. or more of the pupils in the schools rely entirely upon reading in their learning, the loss of time and energy is appalling.

"The present study presents the results of an effort to answer a practical problem of the school-room - namely, What are the relative values of learning by reading as compared to learning by recitation in the case of school children working under school conditions and with the ordinary school-room methods of attack?"

(On page 7, referring to previous studies) “The general result is that for all materials recitation is a more effective method of learning than reading only.

(On page 85) “It is clear that the children strongly preferred the methods in which recitation was included.

“The reasons for their preferences are varied and not very specific. Such statements as, “It isn’t such hard work,” “I learn better that way,” were common. Some explained their preferences as follows: “I knew I was learning them when I recited”....

(Page 93) “Recitation, in brief, differs from reading physiologically by the fact that it selects and exercises the bonds upon which the established habit depends, while reading calls into action some bonds that are not strictly needed for recall, omits some that are requisite, and does not so well exercise the remaining few, needed for recall. Recitation is for memorizing what practice is for other habits. The physiological basis is the same.”

Having written a worthwhile defense of “recitation” in learning with astonishing clarity in comparison to his muddy writings in later years, Gates made no further reference, to my knowledge, to this worthwhile material, nor, apparently, did almost anyone else. Nor, apparently, has much been written on the fact that “recitation” is a form of “recall,” and is therefore a stronger and more usable kind of learning than is “recognition.” Recognition is the weaker kind of learning which can pass multiple choice tests. It is about all that is required of most students today. The only reference I have ever seen to the topic of recitations is in The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932 where an entry appeared under “Skaggs, E. B. and others. Further studies of the reading-recitation process in learning. 80 cents. ‘30. Archives of Psychology.”

Instead of building on Gates’ interesting 1917 work on oral recitation, Gates and Gray fostered “silent reading” in classrooms and protested against oral reading exercises, as they were supposed to interfere with “comprehension.” Of course, oral reading is not the same as recitation from memory, but, since it is oral, it is one step closer to recitation than silent reading is. Nila Banton Smith wrote in American Reading Instruction, (1934, 1965, pages 158-159):

“The Transition from Oral to Silent Reading - What Brought About the Change?

“From the beginning of reading instruction, oral reading had maintained its supreme and undisputed claim over classroom methods. In marked contrast to this traditional practice, we find a period of years, let us say approximately between 1918 and 1925, marked with an exaggerated and, in some cases, almost exclusive emphasis upon silent reading procedures. What brought about this sharp reversal of practice?”

Indeed, what did? Her suggestion that it came from “the ever-increasing attention directed towards meanings in all phases of education” is not satisfactory. One thing is certain: with only silent reading, no one could hear children stumbling over words they could not read. (Of course, Smith was wrong on another point: oral reading had ceased being “undisputed” after 1870, as will be shown.)

Marrou also made the following comments (page 215) concerning the Hellenistic schools:

“Thus were children taught to read: when one compares the school manual dating from the end of the third century B. C. that has been edited by Gueraud and Jouguet with any of the Coptic schoolbooks of the fourth century A.D., one is struck by the extraordinary similarity of the

methods employed: with more than five centuries between them, the procedure is the same in both cases.”

Coptic books were Egyptian books, and the record strongly suggests that the methods used to teach beginning reading in the ancient world persisted not only in Coptic Egypt in the fourth century A. D. but were introduced into Ireland in the fifth century A. D.

It is pertinent to give some evidence concerning the routes by which these ancient methods might have been transferred to ancient Ireland, which in turn had a great influence on both England and the Continent through its seventh century missionaries. Wandering Irish missionaries starting from the seventh century and the newly-converted Anglo-Saxon missionaries who joined them shortly afterwards brought culture as well as faith back to the European mainland. This was a few centuries after the fall of Rome and the resultant widespread destruction of culture on the European mainland as the barbarians took over. The Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionary monks were apparently using the same methods for teaching beginning reading which had been used since antiquity, except that the material to be memorized was no longer pagan classics but the Psalms. Since these missionaries were “insular,” and descended from the Irish and the Anglo-Saxons who were outside the influence of ancient Rome, some explanation for how they acquired knowledge of such ancient methods is obviously in order. One such source were the post-Roman era schools such as Illtud’s in Britain. Another such source was almost certainly Egypt, and a third was almost certainly the Isles of Lerins.

Such sources as Illtud’s Welsh school are discussed in the excellent book, *The Age of Arthur, A History of the British Isles from 350 to 650*, by John Morris, Senior Lecturer in Ancient History, University College, London, published by Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, in 1973. John Morris also initiated the journal, *Past and Present*, in 1952 and was its first editor.

Morris discussed the fifth-century Christian schools in Britain after the fall of the Roman Empire. During the Roman era, of course, Roman schools had existed in Roman-occupied Britain. However, the post-Roman British schools were largely only in Cornwall and Wales, and from them grew the sixth-century Irish schools of the recently converted Irish. Then, in the seventh century, Irish missionaries brought their educational practices and Christianity to what is now northern England (by that time, Anglo-Saxon, not British), and then to western Europe. By the eighth century, the Irish were joined in Europe by English (Anglo-Saxon) Christian missionaries. Morris stated that the English and Irish missionaries continued their work in later centuries in eastern Europe. The long cultural development, from the 400’s until several centuries after 800, is described beautifully by Morris (particularly from page 409). Morris wrote:

“The schools of late Roman Britain resembled those of the rest of the empire, and are described by the Sicilian Briton.... The boys’ boarding school, divided into forms, was normal, though most of the students lived out in lodgings.... In the early empire, Westerners of breeding had been reared to fluency in Greek as well as Latin. In the 4th century Greek was still taught in the greater cities, Carthage, Trier, and doubtless also London, but the wide scholarship of Jerome was a rarity; most boys left school with one language only, like Augustine, to whom Greek remained a foreign language.... Britain was exceptional; Augustine complained that Pelagius prevailed in debate in Jerusalem by reason of his fluent Greek....”

Pelagius in the fourth century who was fluent in Greek is presumed to have been Irish. About 200 years later, another Irishman, St. Columbanus, was also competent in Greek. In the first century before Christ, Julius Caesar wrote that the Celts in what is now France preferred memorization of texts to writing them but did use Greek letters, not Latin, when writing was necessary. The Ogham alphabet, devised by the Irish pagan Celts about 300 A. D. shows a greater resemblance to the Greek alphabet than to the



Roman. Considering that fact about the Irish Celts about 300 A. D. in combination with Julius Caesar's remark about the Continental Celts about 40 B. C. using Greek letters, the claim that is sometimes made that the early Irish were fluent in Greek may well be true. The pagan Irish, if schooled in Ireland in the famous pagan Celtic Druidic schools that dated back many centuries before Christ may well have learned Greek letters (and possibly Greek texts) in such schools. Therefore, the competence of any Irishmen in Greek may not have resulted from studying in British schools, as Morris assumed.

However, in late Roman times, some Irish were certainly visiting Britain in search of a Roman education. For instance, Morris referred to an Irishman, Coelestius, who had been educated in a monastery, presumed to have been in Britain, and who was a practicing lawyer in Rome in the early 400's.

One such famous but post-Roman monastic British school in the 400's was that of Illtud. Morris wrote:

"Illtud in the later 5th century inherited and developed the experience of Europe and of Britain. Like Paulinus of Nola, Cassiodorus and other Roman noblemen, he withdrew to live a personal monastic life on his own estates; but unlike them, he maintained a school, whose pupils boarded with him. As in Martin's school, the pupils were sons of laymen, whose parents expected most of them to return to the world after a long schooling. Illtud's teaching techniques were ancient, for five year old infants learned their alphabet from twenty pieces, termed *eleae* and *tesserae*, as the great Roman educationalist Quintilian had prescribed four centuries earlier, insisting that primary schooling must begin with the handling of physical letters, cut from ivory, bone or wood."

Morris said that an account of Illtud's school is to be found in the early biographies, *Lives of Samson and Paul Aurelian*, and said that the material which demonstrated Illtud's gentle competence was based on first-hand stories.

Illtud's school was known best, but other early schools also existed. Morris wrote that two other men, Paulinus and Docco, were also considered to be fine teachers. Another school that was well regarded was in Caerwent, run by a man named Tatheus. The schools were sometimes referred to in the early "Lives" as *Gimnasia*, and Morris said that Winwaloe's was labeled a *scolasticorum collegium*, a college of scholars. Yet Morris said that in the later biographies, or "Lives," such detail is uncommon.

Morris wrote that "Cadoc" taught the infant "Malo" to write his letters on a wax tablet. He said that many "Lives" made it clear that the schools taught both religious and non-religious texts, "both disciplines," or "liberal studies." Although *Demetia, The Life of Teilo* made a point of denouncing the "figments of the poets," and the "history of antiquity," Morris wrote that, by contrast, *David's Life* "remembers that in his youth he learned rudimenta as well as the scriptures...."

Morris pointed out that the first Irish monks came to Britain for Christian learning, since the ages-old secular Irish schools were pagan. Morris wrote that:

"...the first influential school in Ireland was that of the British-born Mocteus at Louth. Like Cassiodorus in Italy, but unlike Illtud, he exempted his pupils from agricultural work; but the exemption seemed odd, even improper, to the Irish, and most of the early monks were proud to grow their own food. The first great native Irish school was founded at Clonard in the 530's by Finnian, who had previously gone for some years to 'study with the elders of Britain'. He was universally regarded as the 'teacher of the Irish saints', as well loved as Illtud in Britain; and from

the middle of the century new monastic schools multiplied, many of them founded by Finnian's pupils."

The position of women in pagan Celtic Ireland was high. Presumably that accounts for a difference between British and Irish schools about which Morris commented. Morris wrote:

"The Irish schools differed from the British in that they were coeducational from the start.... In later 5th-century Ireland the houses of Brigit, Darerca, Faencha and other women were more prominent than monasteries for men; and several early monks, like Enda, had been obliged at first to live with a minority of men attached to a community of women. The claims of women of equal monastic right were well established when the first schools opened, and Finnian of Clonard and his pupil Ciaran of Clonmacnoise are reported to have attached houses for girls to their monastic schools; though there was opposition, coeducation prevailed, stoutly defended by Dagaueus, the father of the art and craftsmanship of the Irish schools, who taught in turn at a number of the major monasteries...."

Morris referred to the monasteries housing both women and men as "double monasteries." Whether the term is his, or was used at the time is unknown. However, Morris wrote that such monasteries, and the schools attached to them, multiplied. In the schools, many children are recorded as having completed a ten-year course, starting at the ages of 5 or 7. Boys intending to become priests were schooled longer, until they were 19 or 20. Morris wrote further concerning the curriculum:

"In the monastic schools, in contrast with Patrick's secular education, spoken and written Latin began in infancy, so that children grew up fully bilingual.... most of the major monasteries had land and manpower enough to feed their pupils, and their status grew when the Convention of Drumceat incorporated the old learning within the Christian framework. Their influence encouraged the monastic studies, so that the hostility to profane letters, advocated with success in Britain by David and Teilo, found fewer adherents in Ireland.

"Educational opportunity made the Irish rather than the British houses the main centres of Christian learning. In the 7th century, students from Britain and Gaul began to frequent the Irish schools. Early in the century Agilbert, later bishop of the West Saxons and of Paris, left his native Gaul to spend a long time in Ireland 'in order to read Divinity', for Ireland offered an advanced education that he could not find at home. Bede was amazed at the open-handed ease of the Irish educational system in the middle of the century, remarking that

"...there were many Englishmen in Ireland, both noble and plebeian, who left their homeland in the time of bishops Finan and Colman either to read Divinity or to live more continentally. Some soon bound themselves to a monastic vow, but others preferred to travel around the cells of different teachers for the joy of reading. The Irish welcomed them all, gave them food and lodging without charge, lent them their books to read and taught them without fee."

Morris commented on the rarity of such schools in history which offered free education to anyone desiring it, whether they were countrymen or not, and with all expenses paid. He said that Ireland was prosperous for several hundreds of years because of these excellent schools, and men trained in these schools were sought all over Europe.

Morris remarked that such truly free, and truly good, education is not a luxury but is, instead, a good investment. Morris wrote:

“The freedom and the vigour of the schools was designed for learning, but it also brought material reward.... Advances in mechanical engineering, in plant and animal biology, and above all in the cheap application of technological knowledge, rapidly increased agricultural and manufacturing production; the sudden widespread exploitation of waterpower, by devices long known and long unused, and the intensification of arable farming, were initiated by the same monasteries whose skills illuminated manuscripts and worked beautiful metal objects; both were the direct consequence of the educational system....”

St. Columba and his Irish monks emigrated to Iona in Scotland in the sixth century. The Irish were then called “Scots,” but it is little known today that Irish immigrants brought the name, “Scot,” to Scotland. Yet almost everyone today does know about a native resident whom St. Columba reported seeing almost 1,500 years ago: St. Columba is the first to have recorded sighting the Loch Ness Monster!

It was St. Columba’s Irish variety of monasticism which spread in northern England. However, the Canterbury foundation in southern England, with its Italian roots, was in competition with the prospering English monasteries to the north which had an Irish origin. Morris wrote:

“...Among the English, double monasteries multiplied from the 660s onward; Benedict Biscop and others encouraged houses of purely English foundation and traveled to Italy to bring back books, that their scriptoria copied and circulated; Aldhelm tried without success to persuade English students that they could find at Canterbury in Theodore’s time a Greek and Latin education as good as any to be had in Ireland.”

It was St. Columba who founded the Iona monastery in Scotland. Another monk, whose name is often confused with St. Columba, was St. Columbanus, living at about the same time. St. Columbanus left Ireland, where Bangor was one of its most famous monastic schools, and founded monasteries on the European continent. Morris stated (pages 400 to 405):

“Columban was the first of the insular monks to make a weighty impact on Europe. For a quarter of a century he had served his abbot, Comgall, Columba’s close friend. When he landed in Gaul in 590, he had behind him their experience, and the teachings of Finnian, David and Gildas [Ed.: Finnian was from Ireland, the other two from Britain]; he quoted Gildas with respect, and may have known him personally. His stern simplicity shattered the conventions of Frankish Christianity. When he strode into the court of one Merovingian king and denounced his lechery and misgovernment to his face; when he adjured another to forswear his earthly crown for the greater glory of a tonsure; when he publicly rebuked their formidable grandmother Brunhilde for crimes that all men knew but did not mention, then he sharply and openly expressed a disgust that their subjects had harboured in silent resignation.... The Merovingian government deported him, but they could not suppress the monasteries he had founded, nor prevent him from founding Bobbio among the Lombards of Italy.

When Columban was deported, he was placed on a ship on the Loire headed for Ireland, but left it and went on to stay a while in Switzerland where later a great and famous monastery, St. Gall, arose, named after Columban’s companion, St. Gall, who remained in Switzerland. However, Columban crossed the Alps to Italy, where he founded the Bobbio monastery, and where he died. Morris said, concerning Columban’s ultimate influence:

“In Gaul, Columban brought the learning of Comgall’s Irish Bangor to the Vosges at the end of the 6th century. The movement that he began swept Gaul in and after the 640’s, as the original monastic reform had swept Britain and Ireland a hundred years earlier. Large numbers of monasteries founded by the Irish and English and by their native Frankish adherents also

established libraries and copied books; if Agilbert had been thirty years younger, he would have had no need to go to Ireland to advance his education. Some Franks and many Englishmen still studied in Ireland, for the Irish libraries and learning were older than their own, and a journey to the land whence their monastic Christianity had come was in itself a pilgrimage. But the substance of Irish education had already spread abroad, and was in the next century carried to Germany.”

Concerning that continuing spread of religion and culture, from fourth century post-Roman western Britain, to fifth century Ireland, to sixth century northern England, and then back to the continent in the seventh century, Morris wrote:

“Monastic fervour swept eastern Gaul in the middle of the seventh century as intensely as in contemporary England or as in Ireland and Britain a century before. Merovingian society was in decay and ready for inspiration; the inspiration came almost entirely from the Irish and Anglo-Irish monks, with some contribution from the British, but with hardly a trace of influence from the earlier monasteries of Gaul or Italy.

The energy was not dissipated in the seventh century. Morris recounted that the English and Irish monks continued their spread as evangelists in Eastern Europe, but served as scholars in Western Europe:

“The force of the movement west of the Rhine was expended during the seventh century. Beyond the Rhine it was constantly renewed for many centuries. In the eighth century the English and Irish began to evangelise the heathen German[s] and their further neighbours. Boniface of Devon became archbishop of Mainz and apostle of Germany. Many of the bishops and abbots whom he directed were Irish; the most remarkable among them was Virgilius of Salzburg, who outraged orthodox opinion by teaching that other worlds besides our own exist in the universe. From Austria, later generations reached eastward. An Irish Colman became the patron saint of Hungary; others preached in Poland; and Brandenburg in Prussia perhaps owes its name to an Irish Brendan....

Morris then commented on the fine character of these emigrant Irish and English monks, whose sudden appearance on the scene certainly appeared providential. If these monks had not been superior men, they could never have achieved what they did. Some writers have remarked on the curious fact that these monks “conquered” the European continent for the causes of both religion and culture, but managed to do so without ANY warfare whatsoever. However, ugly force certainly appeared again under Charlemagne who used swords to “convert” his heathen opponents.

Morris wrote:

“The quality of the Irish monks in Europe was as remarkable as their expansion in time and space, from North America to the Ukraine. Though evangelists continued to convert remote heathens, many of the Irish in western Europe transferred their emphasis from preaching to learning. From the seventh century to the eleventh the terms Irishman and scholar were virtually interchangeable; and until the Norse invasions, the English fully shared their scholarship....

“The greater part of the early monasteries of Europe north of the Alps were founded by Irish, English or British monks, or by their native converts; to them most of the peoples beyond the Rhine and Danube frontiers of Rome, save for the eastern Slavs, owed their first conversion to Christianity. In the second and third generations the undisciplined enthusiasm of Irish founders no longer sufficed, and these houses sought an orderly rule; most of them ultimately observed the Rule of Benedict of Nursia, to form the nucleus of what was later termed the ‘Benedictine Order’.

However, Morris had traced the historical roots of the Irish and English monasteries which brought classical Roman learning back to the European continent after the centuries of cultural upheaval that followed the fall of Rome. Morris wrote:

“The monasteries of medieval Europe owe their being to Arthurian Britain.... The tenuous ancestry of British monasticism reaches back through Illtud and Docto [in fifth-century Britain] to the teachings of.... Martin [of Tours, in fourth-century France].

Morris commented that the new education, coming out of the new Irish and English monasteries, had appeared on the Continental scene at precisely the right time, because the old Roman system had disappeared only shortly before. He then produced a quotation from Gregory of Tours who wrote about fifty years before the spread of the monasteries, with their new learning and with their monks who loved books and the skillful copying of books. Gregory was in despair, because he had no idea that the culture that Tours had sent abroad in Martin’s fourth-century time was going to be returning to Tours and to Gaul itself in the very near future - like so much symbolic bread on the waters. Gregory of Tours wrote:

“Culture and education are dying out, perishing throughout the cities of Gaul.... there is no grammarian to be found, skilful enough in dialectic to depict the present age in prose or verse. You often hear people complaining, ‘Alas for our times; literacy is dying among us, and no man can be found among our peoples who is capable of setting down the deeds of the present on paper’.”

Morris commented:

“The monks came just in time to replace the dying education of antiquity with a new learning, alert to seize upon what suited the needs of its own day.”

As John Morris made very clear, the post-Roman British schools such as Illud’s were certainly a primary source for educational practices in Ireland, and, then, from Ireland, to northern England and to all of post-Roman Europe.

However, a second but rarely mentioned source of educational practices, besides the post-Roman British schools, was Egypt. Considerable contact between Ireland and Egypt about the fifth and sixth centuries appears probable, despite the fact that some modern authors discount it (such as Lloyd and Jennifer Laing (Celtic Britain and Ireland - The Myth of the Dark Ages, St. Martin’s Press, New York: 1990, pages 176-177).

Concerning concrete knowledge of Egypt in Ireland, which concrete knowledge implies that cultural exchange in such areas as education was possible, the geographical poem<sup>8</sup> from the Book of Leinster, attributed to the schoolmaster at Ros Ailithir in Cork, Ireland, about 975, and assumed to be the school geography, reads in Verse XXI:

“Egypt of famous deeds,  
Most fertile of all lands,  
Along by the River Nile southward  
It is neighbor to Africa.”

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<sup>8</sup> From the article, “On the Geography of Ros Ailithir,” by Rev. Thomas Olden, on pages 219 and following of Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Second Series, Volume II, 1879-1888.

It is assumed the author of the geographical poem was drawing from later classical authors such as Pliny who considered Africa to begin on the western side of the Nile. The point is that the existence and location of Egypt were part of a schoolroom exercise in Ireland which was to be memorized only 400 years after the date when any contact between Ireland and Egypt is considered unlikely by some scholars.

It is true that geographical knowledge deteriorated in the late Roman empire, as shown by George H. T. Kimble in *Geography in the Middle Ages* (New York: Russell & Russell), and the geographical texts most widely studied in the Middle Ages were often compiled from these later inferior classical geographical writings. Yet the earlier classical knowledge that the world is a sphere, and even the almost precise knowledge of its circumference, persisted in the less popular but still studied writings. For instance, St. Vergilius of Salzburg, Austria, an Irish monk of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, had a famous confrontation with St. Boniface of England, then in Germany, defending the idea that men existed in the “antipodes,” or on the other side of the earth, and in the 9<sup>th</sup> century Bede of England, writing from his monastery, acknowledged that the earth is a sphere. The “progress” fallacy is probably the cause today of the frequent unwillingness to grant that past ages also possessed much knowledge. According to Kimble (pages 20-21), Orosius, a Spanish priest of the fifth century, had lived for several years with St. Augustine at Hippo in Africa, and later wrote an encyclopedia, including a geography. Kimble said Orosius drew on earlier classical sources:

“The Western Ocean forms the boundary of Europe in Spain at... the Pillars of Hercules.... Africa begins with the land of Egypt and the city of Alexandria... that great Sea (Mediterranean)... which touch(es) all the continents and the lands in the centre of the earth... Lower Egypt is bounded by Syria and Palestine on the East, by Libya on the West, by Mare Nostrum on the North and on the South, by the mountain which is called Climax, together with Upper Egypt and the Nile.... Britain, an island in the Ocean, extends a long distance to the north: to its south are the Gauls (i.e., France). The city called Portus Rutupi (Richborough in Kent) affords the nearest landing place for those who cross the water.... This island is 800 miles long and 200 miles wide.... Ireland is quite close to Britain and smaller in area. It is, however, richer, on account of the favourable character of its climate and soil.”

Kimble added:

“For all its limitations (Orosius’) *Historia* proved to be very popular during the centuries that followed.... To study history was to read Orosius and he was quoted by almost every Christian encyclopaedist down to about A. D. 1300. Among those who made use of the whole text were Alfred the Great and Isidore of Seville. But even as late as c. 1410, we find Pierre d’Ailly referring to it with the utmost respect.”

Not only did clear knowledge of Egypt’s location persist in the so-called Dark Ages, but records of contact with Egypt also exist, such as of papyrus imports into France about 600 A. D.. It is impossible to doubt this. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, page 246 (1963) states that some French deeds written on papyrus and dating from the seventh century are still in existence, although papyrus was not used by Charlemagne and those who came after him. Since papyrus in the seventh century came only from Egypt, the existence of these French deeds dating to the seventh century is proof of continuing Egyptian dealings with the continent, at least until the Moslem conquest later in the seventh century.

Saint Columbanus of Ireland founded Bobbio monastery in northern Italy about 600 A. D., and since evidence exists of a continued two-way communication between Bobbio in Italy and Ireland about 600 A. D. requiring foot-travel over the Alps, it is difficult to understand why contact between Egypt and Ireland about that time, which would have been by relatively easier water travel, should be considered so improbable.

The Irish monks in those early centuries carried leather satchels to hold their books as they traveled across the roads and Alps of Europe. It was undoubtedly in one of these that the Antiphony of Bangor, written in Ireland between 680 and 691, found its way to Bobbio, Italy, where it or a copy of it by an Irish scribe turned up almost a thousand years later.

The attitude of those highly educated old monks in the sixth and seventh centuries towards their demanding rule which included manual work, study, and prayer, is shown in Latin verses from The Antiphony of Bangor. A translation is given in a footnote on page 56 of Religion and the Rise of Western Culture, Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh 1948-1949, by Christopher Dawson, Sheed & Ward, Inc. 1950, Image Books, Doubleday: New York, 1958:

“...the rule of Bangor is good, righteous, divine, severe, holy, zealous, just and wondrous.

“A ship that is never troubled though tossed by the waves: a bride adorned for the marriage of her lord and king.

“Truly it is a stronghold, secure and well defended - the city set on a hill, glorious and comely.”

In The Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Vol. II, page 249, that copy is referred to as “A MS. from the monastery of Bangor in Down, written or copied from a MS. written during the time of Abbot Cronan (680-691). It is now in the Ambrosian Library at Milan.”

Note the reference in that Irish manuscript from the 600's to “A ship that is never troubled though tossed by the waves...” obviously the ocean waves. The reference must have been to an ocean-going ship, because it is hardly likely that a scholar like Dawson could have accepted the translation, “ship,” for a little boat like the Irish curragh. It seems apparent that those old monks from the 600's must have found ocean travel a familiar enough topic so that they used it for a metaphor.

It is a matter of record that when the then-reigning king in what is now France threw St. Columbanus out of the country for rebuking the king for his unsavory “life style,” (the king had multiple concubines, all of whose offspring he wanted baptized,) Columbanus boarded a ship on the Loire bound for Ireland (as recorded in St. Columbanus' biography written shortly after his death by Jonas). Obviously, there was such a thing as available commercial water travel about 600 A. D., as an alternative to foot travel for those old monks. That fact supports the probability of direct contact between Ireland and Egypt at that time.

The leather satchels carrying such books as those of St. Columbanus are referred to in Six Months in the Appenines, by Margaret Stokes, London: 1892, Geo. Bell & Sons, on pages 14 and 110:

(Columbanus') “bell, chalice and knife are shown at Bobbio, and his crosier or wooden staff was removed to St. Gall... He is represented on his tomb carrying his book satchel as he stands watching the transport of the wood from which his oratory is to be built at Bobbio. Examples of such a satchel may be seen in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy and the Library of Trinity College, Dublin and Corpus Christi, Oxford.

“(His) biographer, Jonas, makes much of his study of grammar, rhetoric, geometry, poetry and the Sacred Scriptures.”

Jonas' biography is considered highly reliable. That Italian monk arrived at Bobbio in 618, only three years after St. Columbanus died. Jonas based his biography written between 640 and 643 on information he obtained from those who knew St. Columbanus. Jonas also wrote of Eustace, Attala and Bertulf, whom he knew personally, and Bede "incorporated these lives into his ecclesiastical history," according to The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, Vol. VIII, page 498. Bobbio a thousand years later in the so-called "Renaissance" was found to be a treasure house of classics, which would have been copied, however, long after St. Columbanus' death in the early seventh century. Papyrus, still being imported from Egypt during St. Columbanus' lifetime and probably in wider use than more expensive parchment, deteriorated relatively rapidly in the moist climate of Europe. The papyrus of St. Columbanus' day would have disappeared in a few hundred years. After it became difficult to get papyrus because of the Moslem conquest of North Africa, texts were instead copied on long-lasting parchment made from animal hides.

The most telling evidence of contact between Egypt and the Continent, including Ireland, about 600 A. D., is the spread of the bubonic plague in the sixth century A. D. John Morris, in *The Age of Arthur*, wrote (Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1973, pages 222 and following) that it was the plague that was the principal disaster of the Mediterranean and of Europe in the middle of the sixth century, and the plague had originated in Egypt:

"...It began in Egypt in 541 or 542, and reached Constantinople in 543, whence it ravaged 'the whole Roman empire.' Gregory of Tours, then a child in the Auvergne, narrowly escaped infection in November, probably of 544; he records its sweep through central and southern Gaul in 544 and 545, naming places that lie along the trade routes to the upper and middle Rhine, or to northern or north western Gaul. The Irish Annals put the first outbreak in Ireland in 544...."

Morris said it was possible to trace the route of the plague, as it spread to Britain from its origin in Egypt. He wrote:

"Contemporary notices tell incidental stories of sea-borne trade between western Britain and Europe and the eastern Mediterranean in the sixth century. An Egyptian Saint's Life concerns the voyage of a merchantman that imported lead from Britain, presumably from Cornwall or the Severn estuary; central Ireland imported wine, and a ship of Gaul brought news of Italy to Kintyre, vessels of Nantes were regularly 'engaged in the Irish trade'; though many of the saints who sailed abroad are made to float on leaves and stones, others are prosaically recorded to have paid their fares to commercial shipowners."

Morris stated that the content of these old texts is supported by archaeological findings. Pottery from Egypt and southern Gaul has turned up in diggings in old monasteries and royal sites in Ireland, southwestern Britain and southwestern Scotland. He commented that the ships bringing in the pottery and wine obviously also brought in rats carrying the plague.

Curiously, while the Irish and the British were victims of the sixth-century plague, the English (Anglo-Saxons) were not. Morris commented that the English immunity can also be understood by studying the texts and archaeology of the period:

"The English escaped from infection from the British, because the British refused to have contact with them. They escaped infection from Europe because they did not import from plague-infected areas. What trade they had is indicated by their grave goods; their imports were the ornaments and weapons of northern and north-eastern Gaul, and of the Franks of the lower Rhine. These are the regions which Gregory omits from his account of when and where the plague was rampant."



However, what Morris called the “geography” of the plague certainly confirms Irish contact with the Continent - and even with Egypt - of that period. The Egyptian Saint’s Life to which Morris referred, concerning a merchantman in contact with Britain, provides further confirmation, as does the citation mentioned below, about Egyptian monks of the period who were buried in Ireland..

In Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Second Series, Volume II, Dublin: 1879-1888, a May 12, 1884, letter is printed from the Right Reverend Charles Graves, Lord Bishop of Limerick. On pages 280 and 281, Graves said:

“In times of persecution, Egyptian monks fled to Ireland, bringing with them their speech, their art, their ecclesiastical usages. In the Litany of Aengus, mention is made of seven Egyptian monks buried in one place.... In Upper Egypt I have recognized several forms of cross which we regard as Irish and Ancient Irish.... by far the most interesting of the results... will be deduced from a comparison of the methods of ornamentation exhibited in the Coptic Gospels and service-books with those of which we have such fine examples in our Ecclesiastical MSS.”

Graves did not say how the Egyptian monks came to know that far-off Ireland would provide a Christian refuge for monks, so much so that the Egyptian monks bypassed the far closer and Christian Italy, France and Spain. However, Ireland at that time was a far more peaceful haven than the Continent as it was unaffected by the barbarian migrations. However, obviously, Irish monks must have gone to Egypt first. Irish monks were famous for their wanderings.

A recent television program on Ireland discussed its wildlife, and properly noted that cats were not native to Ireland. The suggestion was made that early Irish references to cats were really references to stoats, the native European weasel which in winter turns white. I believe specific mention was made of the famous poem in Gaelic from some time (and perhaps some appreciable time) before about 750. The poem concerned a white cat, Pangur Ban, owned by an Irish monk.

However, rather than doubt the presence of true cats in Ireland by 750 or so, it is reasonable to assume that the poetic reference to a white cat, Pangur Ban, is just one more confirmation of contact between Egypt and Ireland. Such contact was apparently strong among the monks, not only because of the fact that monasticism itself originated in Egypt. Since early Irish records actually refer to the presence of a group of Egyptian monks in Ireland, because they were buried there, it is very possible that such Egyptian monks brought their Egyptian cats with them. If that were the case, Irish monks could then easily have acquired pet cats from the Egyptians. (Cats are prolific!) Therefore, “Pangur Ban,” owned by an Irish monk some time (and perhaps some appreciable time) before 750 or so, and made famous by that monk’s poem, probably was a true cat, and not a stoat, or weasel.

In keeping pet cats while in the religious life, Irish monks certainly had two continental monks to imitate who had become well known Italian popes before 750 A. D. and who could have made such a practice not only well-known but respectable. Saint Gregory the Great (540-604) was the pope from 590 to 604, and Saint Gregory III was the pope from 731 to 741. On page 77 of his book, *The Cat Who Came for Christmas* (Little, Brown and Company, Boston and Toronto: 1987), Cleveland Amory wrote:

“Popes such as Gregory the Great and Gregory III, Leo XII, and Leo XIII, not to mention Pius VII and the late John Paul, were all pro-cat, and there are many stories of their affection for the animal. When Gregory the Great and Gregory III, for example, renounced all their worldly possessions, each refused to renounce one thing - his cat....”

No one doubts the presence of cats in Italy in the sixth and eighth centuries, and it is a matter of record that these two “Gregories” owned their pet cats while still laymen, as did other Italian laymen of

the times. Yet Irish laymen in those times apparently did not own pet cats because cats were not established in Ireland. Yet, since Irish monks of the general period were in contact with Egyptian monks, it seems highly significant that the reference to a true cat was made by an Irish monk instead of an Irish layman.

Pangur Ban's presence in a monastery some time before about 750 A. D. might have been acceptable because of the example given by the "Gregories." The presence of pet cats, not barn cats, in European monasteries might even have become very common, and very possibly even have grown from the influences of Egyptian monasticism, since Egypt is where Christian monasteries originated. The point is that ancient Ireland, where true cats were unknown, is known to have had a particular white cat in a monastery before about 750 A. D. The forebears of that Irish cat would have had to be immigrants. Also in Ireland, ancient sources state that a group of Egyptian monks had been buried there. The existence of Pangur Ban in Ireland before about 750 appears to provide further confirmation of Egyptian contact between Egypt and Ireland before that date.

The ancient poem about Pangur Ban is discussed on page 39, *A First Book of Irish Literature*, by Aodh de Blacam, (1934, Kennikat Press Scholarly Reprints, Port Washington, New York: 1970). He said the poem occurred in:

"... the late eighth century Carinthian MS.- a 'commonplace' book kept by an Irish student, in which notes on Greek declensions, etc., are interspersed with Gaelic verses.... In one of these Carinthian poems a monk compares himself to his cat, Pangur Ban, who hunts mice while his master hunts words. No more pleasant humour, delicate wit, could be found in any cultured age than in this ancient Irish poem. The metre is that peculiar Celtic metre named *deibhidhe*, in which an accented syllable rhymes with an unaccented syllable....

"It is instructive to observe that an Irish scholar in a far land was familiar with poems in a finished prosody. They must be fragments of an extensive vernacular literature then in being, which has all but perished...."

The poem is also discussed on page 13, *A Literary History of Ireland*, by Patrick C. Power, The Mercier Press, Cork, Ireland: 1969.

"Whatever fragments of verse survive from the early times have been preserved thanks to the monks who transcribed them and who were demonstrably the authors in many cases. There are many echoes of the peace and quiet in the secluded monastery of these times between A. D. 600 and A. D. 800. One poem comes to mind particularly in this regard. It is known to Gaelic scholars as *Messe ocus Pangur ban* (I and Pangur the white) from the first line, as is the Gaelic custom. This little piece of verse is cast as a comparison between the studies of the scholar and the activities of the white pet-cat who hunts patiently for mice in the cell while his master hunts knowledge. There is a little hint of the preference the scholar has for the cat because the animal is not jealous of his master's success, unlike other scholars:

"I love better than all fame  
At my note-book to take pains,  
Not jealous is Pangur Bawn,  
He loves too his own calling."

"Others, the poet seems to infer, may be jealous of my success, but not Pangur!"

The “Gregories” and their pet cats, and the Irish monk and his Pangur Ban, lived in the period dubbed the “Dark Ages.” The human warmth and compassion of such men form a grim contrast to the lack of compassion in the so-called “advanced” Middle Ages period after about 1300. Read of the wedding festivities of the Catholic Henry VIII when he married his poor first wife, Catherine, in the early 1500’s. Some ugly animal abuse was actually part of the official public celebration! Also, Cleveland Amory referred briefly to horrors visited on cats in the so-called “advanced” period of the later Middle Ages, which horrors would have nauseated the two canonized Pope Gregories eight hundred years or so before. It is a marvel that the later Middle Ages are not more widely recognized as morally degenerate in comparison to the pre-1000 A. D. period, at least in those Christian places that happened to be currently free from the barbarian turmoil of that time. Most notable among such places, for several hundred years, from about 500 to about 800, were England and Ireland. It was precisely that peace which may have drawn Egyptian monks to visit there.

Heavy cultural contacts between the Mediterranean and Ireland by way of Spain in the seventh century are discussed at length in J. N. Hillgarth’s *Visigothic Spain, Byzantium and the Irish*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1985. The following is from the section, “Visigothic Spain and Early Christian Ireland,” page 177:

“From Carthage, ships coming originally from Alexandria or Constantinople could gain the south of Spain, sail up the Guadalquivir to Seville or up the Guadiana to Merida or continue round into the Atlantic to reach Braga and the North. There seems no doubt that some of the Eastern ships that had reached Northern Spain continued on their way to the British Isles.

“Our strongest archaeological evidence for these voyages consists of the Eastern Mediterranean pottery, much of it evidently intended to provide for Celtic liturgical needs, recently found in the West of England, especially North Cornwall, South Wales, and Southern Ireland.... Almost all the sites where it has been found are on the coast. It is not found north of a line from Dublin to Anglesey and it has been suggested that this may indicate the distance which Mediterranean traders were prepared to sail. The... date of this pottery is not yet fixed but pottery very similar in type is dated c. 425-600.”

The Hillgarth text pointed out obvious cultural ties between the Spain of Isidore of Seville in the seventh century and Ireland, and also pointed out that the numerous grammatical writings on Latin in seventh century Ireland show a Spanish influence. (Seventh century Latin grammars written by the Irish are discussed by Professor Louis Holtz in his book, *Donat et La Tradition de l’Enseignement Grammatical*, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, 1981.) Spain was heavily influenced by Mediterranean trade, and Ireland was heavily influenced by Spain. The cultural link with Egypt and the Mediterranean is clear, and was both indirect and direct.

Therefore, much material evidence such as on art work and on imports suggests contact, both direct and indirect, between the Coptic world (Christian Egypt) and Ireland not only as early as the sixth century A. D., but even earlier. Marrou was “struck by the extraordinary similarity of the methods employed” in teaching in Coptic Egypt in the fourth century A. D. to ancient Greek methods. Yet that similarity to ancient Greek methods also exists in beginning teaching methods described in the ancient saints’ written “lives” from Ireland for the period from about 500 to about 800. Just as in the ancient Greek writings, both the Coptic and the Irish writings describe the use of wax tablets, the use of standard texts (the Psalms in Ireland), the use of memorizing and the practice of reading aloud - and, almost certainly, the use of the same syllabary. One likely explanation for the similarity of the ancient Greek and old Irish methods is that those methods came first from Greece to Coptic Egypt, and then from Coptic Egypt to Ireland.

A third source for practices in the teaching of beginning reading is almost certainly the Isles of Lerins in the Mediterranean. By the influence of St. Patrick, those methods reached Ireland, and, from Ireland, England. It is true that practices in England, after its conversion to Christianity, were influenced from two cathedral sources: Canterbury (seventh-century Italian) influences and York (seventh-century Irish) influences, but the original influence on the English monasteries from which the Anglo-Saxon missionaries came was Irish. St. Patrick is recorded as having taught many “alphabets,” but since he is considered to have been born from Celtic British stock in what is now southwest England after the fall of Rome (in the same general area as Illtud’s school), and since he studied as an adult in France, also after Roman influence there had declined, the question needs to be answered: From what sources did St. Patrick acquire his knowledge of how to teach “alphabets” as they had been taught in ancient Rome? One source obviously was the post-Roman schools in southwest Britain, such as Illtud’s, in which ancient Roman practices survived. But another source also existed, and it was located in the Isles of Lerins.

The Isles de Lerins off the coast of France in the Mediterranean are probably one of the connecting links to the educational practices that had been used in the ancient world. The religious trained there spread through fifth century France, and Patrick may have been in contact with them or may have studied there himself. The Isles de Lerins are two islands in the Mediterranean off the south-eastern coast of France, near Cannes, now called Sainte Marguerite (Lera) and Saint Honorat (Lerina). “Lerins,” possibly only the latter island, has been famous as a source of early Western monasticism. The islands were well within the boundaries of the old Roman empire and close to the boot of Italy. They obviously would still have been heavily influenced by Roman cultural practices, such as how to teach beginning reading, shortly after the fall of Rome in the 400’s. It was at that time that St. Patrick was studying in France (Gaul).

The historian, Christopher Dawson, had no doubt about the important place of Lerins in monastic development, as he described it in his book, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* (1950 Sheed & Ward, 1958 New York: Image-Doubleday). Dawson discussed the rise of monasticism in Britain and Ireland and its relationship to Lerins. He commented that, in the Mediterranean, the old monasticism was disappearing because of the collapse of the Roman empire, but that in the North a new monasticism was establishing a new Christian world. Dawson wrote (page 49):

“It was among the Celtic peoples that this aspect of monasticism was first developed. We know, indeed, practically nothing of monastic origins in Britain apart from the foundation by St. Ninian of the monastery of Candida Casa in Galloway in 397, which became a centre of Christian influence first among the Picts and later in Ireland. But in the fourth and fifth centuries the famous Pelagius was a monk from Britain, while his chief disciple Caelestius was, apparently, of Irish origin. Moreover Faustus of Riez, the greatest and most learned of the early abbots of Lerins, was himself a Briton, and there is little doubt that it was from Lerins that the main tradition of Celtic monasticism and liturgy was derived.”

Dawson pointed out that, with the end of Roman influence in Britain and the collapse of the church organization that had existed during the Roman period, monasteries became the dominant influence in the British church, as monasticism was the dominant influence from the beginning in Ireland. Dawson commented that, while St. Patrick may not have been a monk, he was strongly influenced by monasticism. Dawson believed that St. Patrick had been in direct contact with Lerins, and cited St. Patrick’s remark, in his “Confession,” that he so much wanted to go back to Gaul to “visit the brethren and to behold the faces of the Saints of the Lord.” He commented further that Irish monasticism had to be as old as St. Patrick’s time, since Patrick wrote of the “countless sons of the Scots [Ed.: Irish] and the daughters of chieftains, who had become monks and virgins of Christ.”

Dawson remarked:

“In Ireland the Roman tradition of city life and the city episcopate were non-existent, and so it was natural that the Irish Church should have found its natural centres in the monasteries which rapidly became very numerous and very populous.”

Dawson spoke on page 60 of the continuing influence of Lerins on England at a later period, incidentally confirming widespread traveling at that time:

“Benedict Biscop, above all, devoted himself to the development of religious art and learning. He had served his novitiate at Lerins, the ancient capital of Western monasticism, and on his repeated journeys to Rome and Gaul he brought back to England a wealth of manuscripts, paintings, relics and vestments, as well as masons and glaziers and singers for the adornment and service of the church. Finally, in 678, he brought with him from Rome the arch-chantor of St. Peter’s, and the abbot of one of the Basilican monasteries at Rome who acted as Papal legate at the Council of Heathfield in 680, and who spent two or three years instructing the monks of Northumbria in the music of the Roman chant and the annual order of the Roman liturgy.....”

Dawson told of the final end in the eighth century of the Lerins monastery which had been so influential for three hundred years, from the time of St. Patrick in the fifth century (page 61):

“...the victorious tide of Moslem invasion was sweeping over the Christian lands of the Western Mediterranean and Northern Africa. By 720 the Saracens had penetrated as far as Narbonne, and in the following years all the old centres of monastic culture in Southern Gaul, such as Lerins, were sacked, and even Luxeuil, the centre of the tradition of St. Columban in Burgundy, fell a victim to Arab raiders. At the same time Charles Martel, the leader who checked the Moslem advance at Poitiers in 732, was hardly less of a danger to the church, owing to his wholesale exploitation and expropriation of bishoprics and monasteries to provide benefices or fiefs for his warriors.”

But neither St. Patrick nor the Isles de Lerins were the sole sources for Irish monastic teaching practices in the fifth and sixth century. Nor were the post-Roman schools in Britain the only other source. Other sources were the many contacts previously discussed that existed between Ireland and Egypt. It appears self-evident that such contacts must also have existed to some degree between Ireland and other parts of that ancient world for a very long time. After all, the infamous Pelagius, active as long ago as St. Augustine’s day in the fourth century, is assumed to have come from Ireland. Therefore, contact must have existed to some degree long before St. Patrick’s arrival in the fifth century.

The ancient Greek and Roman methods for teaching beginning reading discussed by Marrou therefore probably reached Ireland through all of these sources. The result was the use of what was called the “alphabet” (undoubtedly the syllabary), wax tablets, and the idea that standard texts should be memorized aloud by beginners, which texts were the Psalms in Ireland. As a result of the memorization, done orally, of these Latin written texts at a very young age and the close teacher contact needed with wax tablets which would assure that the meaning of the written texts was understood, these little students became bilingual in Gaelic and Latin, equally fluent in both languages.

Yet the ancient wax tablets<sup>9</sup>, with their wonderful benefits for beginners, died out for beginners in the later Middle Ages, being replaced by the ABC book, although wax tablets hung on for older students and

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<sup>9</sup> Another source is the article, “On Some Waxed Tablets Said to Have Been Found at Cambridge,” by T. M’Kenny Hughes, *Archaeologia: or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity*, Published by the Society of Antiquaries of London, Vol. LV, London, 1897, p. 257 and following.

adults. Yet this is the same period in which we have been conditioned to think “progress” was making everything better. The idea of “progress” when applied to culture instead of technology can be a terrible superstition.

The ABC book of the fourteenth century was probably short and provided little material for reading, memorization and recitation. The appearance of the ABC book for beginners instead of wax tablets which commonly contained the Psalms for children to memorize (“recite”) was a distinctly degenerate step in the teaching of reading. The quality of Latin learning itself declined because little children were no longer writing and memorizing the Psalms in Latin by reciting them orally, though they did learn at least to read them later, after the ABC book, if they continued in school. The ABC book also abolished the copying of letters and syllables which the beginner had obviously done on his wax tablets from his own personally tailored model provided by the teacher. The child therefore no longer learned to write simultaneously with learning to read. The ABC book also reduced the need for a close teaching and correcting relationship between instructor and child. The instructor no longer had to write out specific material for each child to memorize and to copy and then to correct the child’s work. Now the instructor could simply hand out, probably to large classes, ABC books which could be used over and over. The ABC book was probably shorter in manuscript form than in the later printed pamphlet, which appears to have been commonly sixteen pages in its printed form in England and to have included “graces” or additional prayers.

Children with such ABC-book instruction sometimes never learned to write, as appears to have been the case with the women in the Paston family in England in the 15th century, who could read but found writing difficult. The famous Paston family correspondence tells much about that period. With the disappearance of the wax tablets for beginners, writing had become a separate subject from reading, and the Paston women presumably never had writing classes. As late as the post-Revolutionary period in America, writing classes were housed and taught apart from reading classes.

However, as mentioned, Davies showed (page 32) that wax tablets were apparently still in use at least in France in the thirteenth century to teach children to write (and probably to read, though they may have had manuscript texts also). Davies said that the earliest known record in medieval writings of a song school turned up in a thirteenth-century French romance which had been translated into English. In it, the children attended school to learn Latin and French, and how to write on a wax tablet with a gold stylus. Davies remarked that it is obvious the school was for both boys and girls, since one pupil broke down and cried as he said:

‘I cannot sing or read in any school without Blanchefleur.’“

Davies also referred to a reading curriculum (page 345) in Warwick, England, in 1315, when the dispute mentioned earlier took place in which it was recorded that it was:

“between the Master and the Music Schoolmaster over the Donatists (i.e. grammarians) and the little ones learning their first letters and the psalter....”

The sequence in 1315, therefore, for English beginners, was still “their first letters” (probably meaning the alphabet and syllabary) and the Latin Psalter, just as it had been 800 years before in Ireland. No mention was made of an ABC book, although the phrase, “their first letters” does not rule it out.

Yet, when Geoffrey Chaucer wrote about his little “clergeon” in “The Prioress’s Tale” around 1380, a short 65 years after 1315, the ages-old sequence of “first letters” and Psalter was gone. So was any mention of the ages-old wax tablets for rank beginners to learn to write, the use of which dated back to ancient Greece, and which turned up as late as the 13<sup>th</sup> century in that French tale quoted earlier. All of those ancient methods for beginners had been replaced by the hornbook cited earlier and what is conceded

to have been only an ABC book, not an adult primer. The ABC book would have included only the alphabet, syllabary, and simple prayers.

Davies gives a modernized version of the beginning of Chaucer's "The Prioress's Tale":

"At the far end of the street there had been established a small school where a number of Christian children received each year the kind of instruction that was normally prescribed for youngsters in that country, that is, learning to read and sing.... As this little child was learning his primer, he heard the others singing "Alma Redemptoris Mater" just as children who have learnt their hymn-books are wont to do. As much as he dared, he drew closer and closer, listening intently all the time to the words and the tune till he knew the whole verse off by heart. As he was so young, he had no idea what the Latin meant, so one day he begged one of his friends to tell him the meaning of the song in simple language. His older companion then confessed, "Yes, I am learning to sing but I don't know much Latin."

Following is an English translation of the Latin verses beginning the Alma Redemptoris Mater. It is these verses which must have been sung by Chaucer's slightly older boy, and the content is obviously not difficult. ("Thou," "thy," and "thee" would obviously not appear in the Latin version.) The translation is given on pages 101 and 106, *The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary In English*, published by Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, Illinois, 10th printing, 1979, with an Imprimatur of September 8, 1944:

"Mother of Christ, hear thou the people's cry,  
Star of the deep, and portal of the sky.  
Mother of Him who thee from nothing made,  
Sinking, we strive and call to thee for aid.  
Oh, by that joy which Gabriel brought to thee,  
Thou Virgin first and last, let us thy mercy see."

It is obvious that education standards had taken a sharp drop by about 1380, when Chaucer wrote the "Prioress's Tale," which was one of his *Canterbury Tales*. The Psalms that had still been in use in England in 1315 for rank beginners like Chaucer's "clergeon" immediately after their "letters" had been replaced by a simple ABC book. For Chaucer's slightly older boy, the Psalms had been replaced by a hymn book. The ages-old wax tablets for beginners had also disappeared, and, with their disappearance, the teaching of writing to beginning readers. Furthermore, the quality of Latin learning was dropping also, as shown by that older boy's remark, since he could not even understand what was the relatively simple Latin of a song he had memorized. The fact that it was relatively simple is shown by the above translation.

The age at which a language is learned has a great influence on fluency. Irish children from about 500 to 800 A. D. learned to read and write Latin as a series of sounded syllables at the age of seven, and almost simultaneously learned the meaning of what they were pronouncing aloud as those syllables formed syntax and then words in the Psalms which they were reading aloud, writing and memorizing. As a result, they learned Latin almost like their mother tongue. That initial teaching method, the memorizing of meaningful syntactic wholes by reading their syllables aloud, was the probable cause of the bilingualism of the educated Irish which John Morris cited in *The Age of Arthur* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973)....

On page 409, Morris described that bilingualism in early Ireland among the educated Irish. Since Ireland had never been occupied by Rome as England and Wales had been, Latin had never been used by the general Irish population. However, the use of Latin had been dropped by the general population in what is now England and Wales following the collapse of the Roman Empire. Morris wrote:

“The population ceased to speak Latin after Roman civilisation was destroyed; British turned into Welsh in the same years in which the Irish, British and English languages were first written, in the decades on either side of 600. Vernacular literacy gave a new orientation to education and literature, lowering the barriers between the learned and the unlettered. The earlier Irish annalists wrote sentences half in Irish and half in Latin with no more embarrassment than any other fully bilingual people, and continued to do so into the 11th century. They wrote as they spoke, and some schools sought to preserve Latin from contamination by forbidding their pupils to talk Irish to one another, or to converse with the local Latinless population.”

When the learning of Latin meanings was delayed in the fourteenth century until children were older, as with Chaucer’s little song school companion singing a Latin hymn without knowing its meaning, the quality of Latin learning declined.

The effect of the Latin ABC book in suppressing the understanding of Latin for those who never followed it by learning the Latin Psalms is demonstrated by the following quotation from about 1430 cited in *The Invention of Printing* by Theo. L. De Vinne, New York: Francis Hart & Co., 1876, page 176. De Vinne took the quotation from the Books of Brewers Co. (1415-1430):

“And there are many of our craft of brewers who have the knowledge of writing and reading in the same English idiom, but not others, to wit, the Latin and French before these times used....”

#### The English Spellers, Which Replaced Most English ABC Books

Spelling books were invented in the last half of the 1500’s, about fifty years after the switch from Latin to English for teaching beginning reading, and spelling books were originally meant only for the teaching of beginning reading. The need for spelling books arose because beginners had great trouble learning to read in the English ABC books since, unlike Latin, English sometimes has variant spellings for a single syllable, and sometimes variant syllable pronunciations for a single spelling. The old Latin ABC book had been able to teach children successfully to read Latin syllables, while Latin (and later English) whole-word spellings were learned only incidentally, not formally. In contrast, the function of the new English spelling books was to teach beginning readers to read, not just the confusing English syllables, but English whole words correctly since English whole words had to use those confusing variantly-spelled and sometimes variantly-pronounced English syllables.

Before the switch to teaching beginners to read in English instead of Latin, there had been no such thing as a uniformly agreed-upon spelling of whole words in English. The variant English spellings for syllable sounds had been used interchangeably in English words, as the mood happened to strike the writer. Highly educated people sometimes spelled an English word several different ways in the same text, which was acceptable as long as the letters made the right syllable sounds. At that time, no one could look up English “spellings” in the “dictionary” because there was no English dictionary.

All that changed with the invention of the spelling books because spelling books effectively standardized the spellings of most English words, and froze specific syllable spellings into each of those words. Therefore, the idea that there is such a thing as a “correct” spelling of an English word was born at the same time as the spelling books themselves, in the last half of the 1500’s,

The spelling books rapidly eclipsed the English syllabic ABC book. The content of its first page nevertheless hung on for many beginners as the syllabic horn book until the late eighteenth century, and for some relatively fewer beginners until about 1826. Largely in Britain, the hornbook also continued until about 1826 in a folding cardboard version with pictures for each letter (as “a” for apple, and so on).



This was known as the *battledore*, invented just before the mid-eighteenth century, and it also contained the syllabary. After about 1826, the “sound”-approach *battledores* were replaced by the “meaning”-approach picture ABC books of the nineteenth century which lacked the syllabary, whose purpose was only to amuse children while introducing them to the alphabet at home before they entered school.

The syllable method continued as the introductory step in the teaching of reading at the beginning of the new spelling books all through the eighteenth century and until about 1826, both in America and Great Britain. The *History of Little Goody Two Shoes* of 1765 is very specific in its references to teaching reading by the syllable method in the dame school spelling-book approach. The authorship of the anonymous *Goody Two Shoes* was attributed to Oliver Goldsmith by Washington Irving, William Godwin and the engraver Bewick, according to “Notes” on pages 165-166, of *The Heart of Oak Books*, Edited by Charles Eliot Norton, Second Book, D.C. Heath & Co., Boston: 1895 (1902).

In the article, “*Syllabaire*,” on pages 713-715 of the “S” volume of *Encyclopedie ou Dictionnaire Raisonne des Sciences, des Arts, et des Metiers*, by Denis Diderot et al, published in 28 volumes from 1751 to 1772 in Paris, France, a description is given of beginning reading materials then in use in the French language. From the dates of the encyclopedia, the article may be considered to be describing reading materials available in France perhaps at least from 1740. (For those who wish to check further, a very complete description of eighteenth and nineteenth century approaches in teaching reading in France is given in the article, “*Lecture*,” in F. Buisson’s *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire*, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris, 1887.) The *Encyclopedie* article stated:

“*Syllabaire*...(is the common name for) the little book that contains the first elements of reading in any language. *Abecedaire* books are not at all rare, good ones are not common, and the best are not without faults.... But what material (is offered) for these first efforts? It seems to me that until now scarcely any discernment or attention has been applied in the choosing of them.

“In some *Syllabaires* are the Lord’s Prayer, the Angelic Salutation, The Apostles Creed, the Confiteor, the commandments of God and of the church, and sometimes the penitential Psalms..... Some other *syllabaires* contain only useless things, out of place, or above the level of the children: I have seen in one principles of grammar, and what principles! in another, Aesop’s fables each reduced to four lines of French poetry, sometimes difficult to be understood by the most adequate of readers.”

The most common French 18th century “*syllabaire*” he described was obviously a blend of the old ABC book and catechism, just like those in use in Protestant countries, but it is interesting that he told of the arrival in France by mid-18th century of other beginning reading books, even though he found them inadequate. He recommended instead a “story book” approach, after the syllabary was learned, with the Old Testament story of Joseph being printed so that on the left the words were divided into syllables, and on the right, the same material would be printed without the words so divided. This emphasizes, of course, the conviction that the learning of printed syllables is the fundamental step in reading.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the old ABC-book approach in other European countries than Great Britain was replaced by many different beginning reading materials. The syllabary survived in beginning reading materials in Latin-language countries. Latin languages have many open syllables which are solely “sound-bearing” (as *ve - lo* in French). But in the nineteenth century the word method (usually with phonics in languages other than English) displaced the syllable method in Germanic languages. Germanic languages have many closed syllables which are “meaning-bearing” (as *hund* in German and *dog* in English). As mentioned above, the article, “*Lecture*,” by J. Guillaume, in *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie*, compiled by F. Buisson in Paris, France, 1887, is a superb historical source concerning these later trends in France and to some degree elsewhere. (However, I believe the article makes no reference to

the open-vs.-closed- syllable differences in these languages. Yet I suspect it is these differences which probably account for the move in Germanic languages to whole words instead of syllables in the teaching of beginning reading, even when using phonic “sound” methods)

From the time English spellers were invented, they were also used in place of or following the hornbooks. The function of the ABC page used on hornbooks in England, (the alphabet, an abbreviated syllabarium, and Pater Noster or Our Father), and the apparent function of its abbreviated syllabarium will be discussed later. England appears to be the only European country which treated the first page of an ABC book in this fashion, as a hornbook. Other countries did have paddles with print like the hornbook but they showed only the alphabet, as discussed by Andrew W. Tuer in his *History of the Horn Book*.

After 1596, the English spellers consisted of the alphabet, the syllabary, and lists of words to be learned by spelling their syllables, with occasional short paragraphs inserted on which to practice the learned words.

One of the first published spelling books, however, was F. Clement’s 1576 *The Petie Schole*, “With an English Orthographie, wherein by rules lately prescribed is taught a method to enable both a childe to reade perfectly within one moneth (sic), & also the unperfect to write English aright.” Clement’s book contained lists of rules illustrated by certain words, and was not a “dictionary” word-list approach.

Two other books, one published in 1576, and one in 1561, may also be among the earliest English spelling books, and will be mentioned later, when R. C. Alston’s bibliography of spelling books in English is discussed.

In 1596, Edmund Coote of England published *The First Book of the English Schoole-maister*, and *The Second Book of the English School-maister*, followed by a catechism, all three bound together as one book. Coote’s was the model for the spelling books which were to follow, and was enormously popular, being produced in a vast number of editions for over a century. It contained not just systematic rules, but systematic spellings, and inserted short paragraphs for reading practice, and it had many imitators. One may have been the “spelling book” which was published in the Massachusetts colony 47 years later by Steven Daye in 1643. That book has not survived, but only the record in the Dunster manuscripts of Harvard of its having been published.

Work on phonetics and opposition to irrational English spelling had taken place in the mid-16th century shortly after the switch from Latin to English. These innovations and their authors are discussed by Mitford Mathews on pages 23-29 of *Teaching to Read - Historically Considered* (1966). Sir Thomas Smith wrote the first published treatise on English phonetics in 1568 (*De recta & emendata... Scriptione...*) The second to publish works on English phonetics (*An Orthography...* in 1569 and *A Method...* in 1570) was the school teacher, John Hart, but, as mentioned, he was the first to have worked on the problem, producing a manuscript on it in 1551. Hart recommended true analytic phonics. Though not the first to publish, he was apparently the first English phonetician, since his unpublished manuscript on the problem is dated to 1551.

In Charles C. Fries’ article, “Linguistics and Teaching of Reading,” page 594 and following of *The Reading Teacher* May, 1964, Fries said:

“The discussions in English concerning the methods and materials for the teaching of reading began at least four hundred years ago. John Hart finished the writing of his *The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of Our English Tounge* in 1551.

‘For even so I have opened the vices and faultes of our writing: which cause it to be tedious, and long in learning: and I learned hard, and evill to read.... And then have I sought the meanes (herin written) by the which we may use a certaine, good and easi writing, onli following our pronounciation; and keping the letters in their auncient, Simple and Singular powers.’

“Hart’s Orthographie of 1569 developed much more completely the principles set forth in his manuscript of 1551 and proposed the use of an ‘augmented’ Roman alphabet as a consistent spelling of the ‘sounds.’”

Note Hart’s decided inference that he had learned to read in English and not Latin, and had found it “hard.” If he were perhaps 22 in 1551 when he wrote the above, he would have been five years old and learning to read in 1534, the year Henry VIII broke with Rome. By that year, the switch from Latin to English for some beginners was apparently in place. Actually, as mentioned later, the obscure and unlocatable ABC by Thorpes was cited in a 1531 trial, and that ABC was almost certainly in English. Yet such English ABC’s were probably little used before the critical year of 1534.

Charles C. Fries wrote the following on page 9 of *Linguistics and Reading*, Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc., N. Y. 1962:

“Hart’s method... provides certain special symbols... each symbol having only one sound....”

On page 8, Fries referred to Hart’s 1570 book, “A Methode or Comfortable Beginning for All vnlearned whereby they may bee taught to read English, in a very short time with pleasure.....” Fries said that John Hart wrote in the preface:

“This maner of teaching is after the councell of the excellent Latine rhetorician Quintilian who died above xiC yeres past.”

Fries also referred on page 8 to Hart’s 1551 *The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of Our English Tounge*, and to Hart’s 1569 “An Othographie conteyning the due order and reason how to write or paint thimimage of manne’s voice, most like to the life Of nature.” Note the sixteenth century English parallel in “thimimage” to the practice in French. In French, when the article, “le” (the) is followed by a noun beginning with a vowel, the two words are contracted, as in “l’ecole” (the school).

Attempts were made in some of the earliest spellers to teach children, by analytic phonics, the variant sounds letters could have in English syllables. The concern for irrational English spelling and phonetics continued into the next century. Mitford Mathews showed on pages 27-28 that a schoolmaster named Richard Hodges published in 1644 *The English Primrose*, in which Hodges taught children to pronounce English words by diacritical marks on words, again presumably by the use of analytic and not synthetic phonics.

Analytic phonics means to analyze whole syllables to become aware of their separate sounds, as the German Valentin Ickelsamer had done in his 1527 book, *The Shortest Way to Reading*, when he had children analyze the sounds in the word “Ot - to.” He also had them concentrate on the position of their mouths in forming consonants.

W. J. Frank Davies in his 1973 book, *Teaching Reading in Early England*, (pages 126-129), gives the best explanation in English which I have ever seen on Ickelsamer’s book on analytic phonics. Ickelsamer’s book has never been translated into English. (Why has not our massive, tax-supported “reading instruction community” done this long ago?) Ickelsamer did not teach isolated letter sounds and thn how to blend these isolated letter sounds together to form syllables, which is synthetic phonics, an

invention uniformly attributed to Blaise Pascal in France in 1655. I have not seen a copy of Richard Hodges' book but it is interesting that it predates Blaise Pascal's invention of synthetic, sounding-and-blending phonics by only eleven years.

Yet most spellers in England from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century showed little or no concern with that kind of analytic phonics but relied on the syllable method as a guide to the sound in words. Spelling books in England often also used the kind of analytic phonics which results from grouping together words which rhyme ("band, hand, land," "eight, weight, freight".) However, since the syllable method is a reliable guide to the sound of Latin words but unreliable on English words, it became more difficult to learn to read in English after the switch to the vernacular for beginners.

Dating from the mid-17th century in England, some spellers did include the word "primer" in their titles, and sometimes both words, "primer" and "speller." Yet the content of such books shows that they were clearly meant as spellers as they were sharply different from the true religious primers in the English language, which, as discussed, began appearing during the reign of Henry VIII, as replacements for the adult Latin primer or Book of Hours.

### Information on Specific ABC Books and Hornbooks

After printing arrived in the last half of the fifteenth century, ABC books were often sixteen pages long. They were cut from one large sheet of paper printed on both sides, called a "signature," which was cut up into eight small sheets. With printing on each side, that produced a sixteen-page booklet from one large sheet of paper. Because of wear on the first sheet, however, which took the longest time for the child to learn because it had the alphabet and syllabarium, it was the practice after printing arrived (as before, to judge from the poem previously quoted) to mount most of the contents of the first sheet under a transparent piece of horn on a wooden paddle. Undoubtedly, the content of the first page was often printed solely for that purpose. Covered with horn, that sheet on a paddle was called the hornbook.

Tuer reproduced and discussed on pages 126-130 of *History of the Horn Book* an uncut printed sheet, printed only on one side, dated to about 1622. That was the era when the hornbook was produced in vast quantities. The circa 1622 sheet has four different varieties of horn-book pages printed on it, which were obviously meant to satisfy differences in purchasers' tastes. Two of the hornbook pages have the syllabarium, but two do not. However, those which are alike concerning the syllabarium differ in their endings: one of each ending "amen" and the other "so be it." These circa 1622 hornbook pages are presumed to have been printed in Aberdeen, Scotland. Since none of the alphabets begin with the "Christ's cross" which was standard on Catholic and Anglican primers, they were obviously meant for the Scottish Protestant market.

The versions without the syllabarium show that some people, as early as the seventeenth century, had probably dropped the use of the syllabarium and switched to teaching by whole words (moving from "sound" to "meaning.")

Tuer reported (pages 197-19) that John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, also wrote *A Book for Boys and Girls*, published in London in 1686, in which he said:

"Nor let them fall under Discouragement,  
Who at their Horn-book stick, and time hath spent  
Upon that A, B, C, while others do  
Into their Primer, or their Psalter go."

Bunyan followed this with appalling advice on teaching children to read. After children had learned their vowels and consonants:

“...then set your Child to spel-ling. Thus T-o, to, T-h-e, the, O-r, or, I- f, if, I-n, in, M-e, me, y-o-u, you; f-i-n-d, find, S-i-n, sin: In C-h-r-i-s-t, Christ, i-s, is, R-i-g h-t-e-o u-s-n-e-s-s, Righ-te-ous-ness.

“And ob-serve that e-ve-ry word or syl-la-ble (tho ne-ver so small) must have one vow-el or more right-ly pla ced in it.”

The Scottish hornbooks printed without the syllabarium apparently met the requirements of incompetent instructors like Bunyan, who skipped the syllable “sound” step and went straight to spelling “meaning”-bearing whole words after the alphabet. His students, as a result of not having learned the syllabarium sounds, “at their Horn-book stick... while others do into their Primer...go.” What Bunyan proposed is exactly what caused reading problems in mid-nineteenth century America: spelling whole meaning-bearing “words” without any reference at all to the sounds produced by their letters. His comments on vowels would not have been much help because, by itself, it would have told the child nothing about sounds. Reports of reading and spelling problems which are sometimes heard in the seventeenth century are understandable for children who got this kind of misinstruction.

But it was not the norm. Tuer reproduced on page 216-217 a poem, Horn-book, by William Hornebye, London, in 1622, which reads in part:

“...Sweet Lad, come, and thy Horn-booke con.  
And so the A B C he first is taught;  
And from that to spelling, he is after brought;  
And being right instructed for to spell,  
He learns his Sillables and Vowellls well.  
Then, with due teaching he doth well consider  
By’s Master’s rule how he may put together.  
The Horn-booke having at his fingers end,  
Vnto the Primer he doth next ascend.”

Note the sequence in Hornebye’s 1622 poem: the hornbook to the primer, with no mention of the ABC book. By that time, its use was fading.

Unlike Bunyan’s student, Horneby’s student memorized the sounds of syllables by spelling them orally and then pronouncing them, (b-a, ba, etc.) and then “put together” the sounds of these spelled syllables with “due teaching” to make words. Such a student could eventually learn to read, despite the vagaries of English spelling. The student continued, of course, to be drilled on the syllables in words in his primer, or spelling book, to whichever he moved next.

The confusion between the ABC books, of which the hornbook was a part, and the primers is, however, widespread and goes back very far in time. The Catholic Encyclopedia (1913, Vol. XII, page 426) in its article on primers assumed that true Latin primers were printed for English children as early as 1520, because of an English bookseller’s entry about selling primers “pro pueris” or for children:

“...the day book of John Dorne (Oxford Hist. Soc. 1888), bookseller in Oxford in 1520, preserves many entries of the sale of books called ‘primarium pro pueris,’ with indications that make it certain they contained the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin... though none of these now survive....”

Very likely, the following reference is to the same material. In Charles C. Butterworth's *The English Primers (1529-1545)*, he referred on page 6 to a 1514 French edition which might be Dorne's 1520 "primarium pro pueris." France exported many books for sale in England at that period.

"In... 1514, we have also a Primer published in Paris particularly for the use of children (S.T.C. 156916)<sup>10</sup> and so designated in the Latin title, which begins: "Hore beate marie virginis ad vsum Sarum pro pueris." This is one of the first primers in print to contain the alphabet...."

Butterworth's (S.T.C. 15916) reference and Dorne's 1520 entry may both refer to the book in the following bibliographical entry shown by H. Anders in his article, "The Elizabethan ABC with the Catechism"<sup>11</sup>:

"Horae beatae Mariae Virginis ad usum Sarum (i.e. Salisbury) pro pueris. Paris 1514 for Francis Bryckman (London). Contents: The ABC, Pater noster, Ave Maria, Credo, Confiteor, and other prayers."

Anders' description, however, shows that a 1514 Paris edition, (most likely the same as Butterworth's) was called an "Horae," a synonym for primer, and was printed for sale in London, but only contained the standard material of the ABC books except that some prayers may have been taken from the very long Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, (called also the Book of Hours, Horae or Primer). Yet the Paris printer in 1514 did not call it an ABC book as he possibly should have done. He gave it the lofty title of Horae beatae Mariae Virginis ad usum Sarum, the same as many adult primers. That undoubtedly pleased the little ones who were given the book, to have a "book" just like their parents' prayer book.

Six years later in London, Dorne recorded that he was selling a "primarium pro pueris" which contained "The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin." That title is the English translation of the Latin title of the 1514 Paris edition, and Dorne may very well have been selling the same book at that period when England imported many books. The Paris edition certainly sounds like an ABC book, so it is not surprising that Dorne would have many entries for sales because ABC books always sold well. If Butterworth's reference is also to the same 1514 Paris book to which Anders refers (as seems likely), then that book was probably not "one of the first primers in print to contain an alphabet" but just another ABC book. If the 1514 book and Dorne's 1520 reference are to ABC books, that would mean it was only after Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1534 that some true primers printed in England are known definitely to have included the alphabet and syllabarium. The 1514 edition is presumably extant, but I have no further information on it.

Testimony is given concerning the sequence of school books in the early 16th century, in St. Thomas More's *Confutacyon of Tyndales answere* written in 1532. More wrote this work in opposition to non-conformist books. Just after discussing "Barns boke" mentioned again below, More compared a

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<sup>10</sup> Short Title Catalog of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad. 1475-1640. Compiled by Alfred William Pollard and G. R. Redgrave (With help of ... others) London, The Bibliographical Society, 1926. Lists 1514 STC 1596 (in printer's spelling and printing format of the time, v for u, etc.) Horae beatae mariae virginis ad usum sarum (pro pueris) Paris...imp. [presumably imported by] F. Byrckman, London. Cited as source, E. Hoskins' 1901 London catalog, listed below.

<sup>11</sup> Anders' article is printed in *The Library*, the publication of the Bibliographical Society, Oxford University Press, London, 1936, Fourth Series, Volume XVI, page 38. Presumably Anders got this description from what Butterworth refers to as Edgar Hoskins' 1901 "monumental catalogue covering the entire field from 1478 to 1897" of English primers, Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis or Sarum and York Primers with Kindred Books and Primers of the Reformed and Roman Use. I have not seen this catalog, nor have I seen the 1514 primer, which I assume is extant.

non-conformist sequence of books which were most probably in English to the accepted, prevalent sequence of books in Latin for children:

“Then have we fether yet besyde Barns boke, the a b c for chyldren. And bycause there is no grace therein/ lest we should lakke prayours, we haue the prymer, and the ploughmans prayour, and a boke of other small deuocyons, and then the hole psalter to. After the Psalter, chyldren were wont to go to theyr Donat & theyr Accydenche but now they go strayte to Scripture....”

No record exists of the ABC book mentioned by More. However, Butterworth shows (page 14) that in 1563 John Foxe published “Actes and Monuments of these latter and perillous dayes” in which he printed a list of non-conformist books, both in Latin and English. These books were produced at the trial of Richard Bayfield on November 20, 1531, the year before More’s paper. The list included:

“The new testament in english with an introduction to the Romains. The parable of the wicked Mammon. Thobedience of a christen man. ABC of Thorpes. The sum of scripture. The primer in English. The Psalter in English. A dialoge betwixt the gentleman & the plowman.”

The resemblance less than a year before More wrote to More’s list is striking. Very possibly the non-conformist ABC, which was probably in English, to which More referred was the “ABC of Thorpes” of which no copy survives, which was also most probably in English. It is clear from More’s comment, “...there is no grace therein” that the book lacked the standard graces and prayers of the printed ABC books of the period, two surviving copies of which will be discussed.

More’s comments show the textbook sequence at that time in England was the ABC book, obviously preceded by the hornbook, its first page, and then the primer and psalter (but all in Latin, as he criticized the English translations of the non-conformists). Next in the standard curriculum came the Latin grammars known as the Donat and accidence, all in Latin.

Concerning the catechism, the normal practice at that time was for a teacher to teach it directly to the children without books for the children (as described in *Histoire du Catechisme*, “Preface,” page I, by Canon Hezard, Paris, 1900) although there were exceptions. Even as early as 1470, shortly after the invention of printing, a German catechism was printed, *Christenspiegel*, or the Christian’s Mirror, written by Dederich, which became very popular and which was followed by two other German catechisms written by others which also were issued in many editions (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 5, article “Doctrine,” page 79, edition of 1913, Encyclopedia Press, Inc., New York).

Before the Reformation in England, beginners learned to read in Latin. As *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913) states in its article, *Prayer-Books* (Volume XII, page 352):

“One point may be noted as of some importance, and it is: that down to the breach with Rome Latin predominated, even in those books published for the use of the laity. The Pater, Ave and Creed, and the Psalms were commonly said by the people in Latin and no printed edition of the Office of the Blessed Virgin, or in other words no entirely English Primer, is known to have been issued before 1534. But the books of the last fifteen years of Henry’s reign accustomed the people to pray in English, and under Mary we have printed Catholic primers both in Latin and English, and in English alone. It may probably be said that from this time forth the uneducated laity, even though Catholics, prayed almost exclusively in English.”

They also now learned to read in English instead of in Latin, practicing their beginning syllables now on the Our Father instead of the Pater Noster, and on the other prayers and the Psalms in English. This switch from Latin to English for beginning readers caused great problems initially, as Hart pointed out. It

resulted in the writing of “spelling books” before the end of the sixteenth century, since irregular English spelling does not adapt well to the Latin syllable method. In English, several different syllable spellings are sometimes used for one single syllable sound, while at other times one single syllable spelling can stand for more than one syllable sound.

Beginning soon after the Reformation in England in the early sixteenth century, some true primers in English did begin with the alphabet and syllabarium just as the ABC books had always done. Then that practice became the norm in primers after the mid-sixteenth century. Furthermore, the oral vernacular catechism was often printed and added to English-language ABC books and to English-language primers after the sixteenth century. Nevertheless, even the new primers in English with the alphabet and syllabarium were never meant for rank beginners, any more than the old Latin primers had been. It was the ABC book or its first-page content on the hornbook that was still meant for beginners, until the speller finally displaced both of them. That is made clear by the decree from Henry VIII, cited by Butterworth, which has already been quoted.

The ABC book was still clearly understood as something apart from a primer as shown by a definition given shortly after the Reformation. Tuer records (page 390):

“John Florio, born of Italian parents in London, was partly educated in Germany, and settled at Oxford, where he taught French and Italian, and was appointed by James I tutor to Prince Henry. In his *World of Words*, which appeared in 1598, he gives ‘Horne-Book, Abecedario, and A-bee-cee’ book as synonymous.”

The first surviving printed ABC book for use in England most probably is the one described by H. Anders in his article “The Elizabethan ABC with the Catechism, published in *The Library, A Quarterly Review of Bibliography, Fourth Series, Volume XVI*, Oxford University Press, 1936. He recorded, on page 38 “(An early sixteenth-century ABC in Latin after the use of Sarum.)” and described it as follows:

“Contents: The ABC. In nomine patris...ab,eb,ib,ob,ub...&c. Pater noster. Ave Maria. Credo....”

Anders followed this by listing the beginning words of numerous graces and prayers in Latin which completed the booklet but he did not list the Ten Commandments which were part of the oral vernacular catechism in Catholic countries, and not part of the ABC books. Anders referred to the fact that W. H. Allnutt reproduced this Latin ABC in 1891, and that it was probably printed in the reign of Henry VIII. Anders said it lacks a title but stated it was “imprinted at London.”

The first printed ABC book in English (or at least partly in English) which has actually survived is a sixteen-page post-Reformation copy from about 1538. Anders gave this description:

“The BAC (sic) bothe in latyn and in Englysshe... Col.: Thus endeth the ABC translated out of Laten to to (sic) Englysshe with other deuote Prayers. Imprynted at London in Paules Chyrche yarde at the sygne of the maydens heed by thomas Petyt. (c. 1538), 8 leaves.

“Contents: ABC and syllables, Pater noster, Ave Maria, Credo (the preceding, from Pater noster, are given both in Latin and English), Confiteor. Then follow nine pages containing graces and a short prayer, all in English, the book concluding with the Ten Commandments much abbreviated and rhymed, and a few short precepts in the form of prayers, ‘God Giue me grace the sicke to visit and giue them mete that be hungry’, &c. The Commandments and precepts are not in the Latin text reprinted by Allnutt. The first grace is the same as the first in the Latin text quoted above, which was evidently a



general favorite, has remained so through the ages, and almost invariably occupies the first place in any collection of graces. (ii) Petyt's second grace also follows the Latin version fairly closely, though ending on a post-Reformation note....

“(This, which closely follows the ABC in Latin just referred to, probably appeared c. 1538. It was reproduced in facsimile by Shuckburgh in 1884 from a copy in the library of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.)”

Tuer reproduced the first page of the Shuckburgh c. 1538 “BAC” ABC book on page 378 of his text, and a copy is in Appendix A of this book. On page 380, Tuer reproduced the first page of the probably slightly earlier and probably pre-Reformation Alnutt ABC which was all in Latin, which is also in Appendix A. Tuer also discussed on page 383 of his book Allnutt's paper concerning this earlier ABC. Only 25 copies of Allnutt's June, 1891, paper were printed which included “many valuable notes on the ABC and its history by Mr. W. H. Allnutt of the Bodleian Library, Oxford...” Tuer said the ABC reproduced by Allnutt is “treasured in Lord Robartes's library at Lanhydrock. It is printed on four leaves of vellum, with rubricated capitals, and was found imprisoned as binder's waste in the covers of an old book, where it had remained undisturbed for something like three and a half centuries...” If Tuer is correct in his description, Allnutt's ABC reproduction of what is probably a pre-1534 edition is only eight pages long, not sixteen like Shuckburgh's c. 1538 reproduction.

Foster Watson saw and read Allnutt's rare 1891 paper, which he reported was titled “An early 16th century A B C in Latin after the Use of Sarum. Reproduced from the original in the Library of Lanhydrock. With a few Introductory Notes on the A B C and its History. Privately printed for Lord Robartes (1891)”. Watson reported on it in his book, *The English Grammar School to 1660* (First edition 1908; Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., London, 1968). Watson made the following remarks in Chapter IX, “The A B C and the Horn-Book A B C” (pages 161 and 162). He reported that Allnutt also described a manuscript ABC from the 14th century, from the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow.

“14TH CENTURY MS. ABC.

“(cross) A a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r (plus script r) long s [and plain] s, t u v x y z & : est amen? Paternoster with Lord's Prayer in English, the Ave, Credo, Confiteor, Misereatur, and Graces and list of Seven Sacraments.

“Allnutt's Note. ‘In old time they used three prickles at the latter end of the Crosse-row, and at the end of their bookes which they caused children to call tittle, tittle, tittle, signifying that as there were three prickles, and those three made but one stop, even so there were three persons and yet but one God.’ ‘A new Booke of new Conceits. By Thomas Johnson, 1630.’”

The “three prickles” that made “but one stop” sound very like the printer's mark known as the asterism, in which three asterisks form a triangle. Possibly the asterism is descended from the Crosse-row.

The lack of a written syllabary in that fourteenth-century (probably Scottish) manuscript ABC did not mean the syllabary was not to be practiced. The hornbook syllabary only went as far usually as the letter “d.” Nevertheless, children were obviously expected to construct all the syllables after “d” for themselves, as in fe, fi, fo, etc.. Yet little children must have found it very difficult and lingered at that first do-it-yourself “fe-fi-fo” step for a very long time. Their lingering at the fe-fi-fo step is the probable source of the chant, “Fe, fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman,” in the fairy tale, Jack, the Giant Killer. However, before the hornbook was in use, the invention of which was an obvious attempt to simplify matters for children, children would still have had to use a copy of the alphabet to construct the syllabary

for themselves, using their fescue, or pointer, to point to the letters as they were used in building syllables.

Watson continued:

“Copies of a printed A B C in England so early as 1520 are not extant, yet they are known to have existed, and to have been on sale by booksellers, at any rate at York in 1510 and Oxford in 1520.

“‘The ABC fore to lern red’ we know from Dorne’s Daybook was sold at 1d. The A B C was published in two forms, on paper and on parchment. In paper, copies were ordinarily sold at 1d. and there are 18 entries of A B C’s in paper sold by Dorne. There are also 18 entries of the sale of the parchment A B C. The usual price was 2d.”

Watson’s footnotes for these 1510 and 1520 references and for Dorne’s records are:

“1. Ibid. (Allnutt’s paper), p. 9 quoting from R. Davies’ *Memoirs of the York Press*, 1868, p. 14.

“2. John Dorne was an Oxford bookseller. His Day-book was written in 1520 and contains the names of the books sold by him, together with the prices, in his shop from day to day. His MSS. has been edited, indexed and annotated by Mr. Madan, and published by the Oxford Historical Society. *Collectanea* 1st series. It is most valuable as showing the books in circulation at the time.

“3. The 18 entries represent the sale of 54 copies. The price apparently was not quite fixed. On one occasion 24 paper A B C’s are sold for 10d. Again, at one time, 3 A B C’s are sold for 2d.; at another 2 for 2d.

“4. Representing the sale of 33 copies. 12 were sold at 1s. 2d., sometimes 2 were sold together for 3d., sometimes 4d.”

This establishes that a single bookstore in the town of Oxford sold at least 87 ABC books in a single year, at a time when there was a free market in books and no licensing. It should be remembered that many English books were printed in France at the time, because the English printers could not supply the market demand. Merchants like Dorne kept most of their records in Latin, apparently because they found it easy to do. Pre-Reformation England must have been a fairly literate place.

Watson, writing in the early twentieth century, listed on page 164 and following some very early licenses for ABC books, some of which are not mentioned elsewhere, Yet, he may be assumed to be correct, since he stated his data is taken from the *Transcript of Registers of Stationers’ Company* by Arber.

“The first mention of the licensing of the A B C is in 1557-8, when was licensed to John Waly: An abc for children in englysshe with syllables. A Latin A B C was licensed to John Tysdale in 1558-9, and an English A B C in the same year to Richard Lant. In this same year 1558-9, John Tysdale was fined for printing an edition without license. In 1561-2 Thomas Purfoot took out a licence to print an A B C for chyl dren.

“In 1553 John Daye obtained a licence to print the Catechism in English ‘with a brief of the A B C thereunto annexed.’ This was confirmed to John Daye and his son Richard in 1577. In

1582 Roger Warde was proceeded against in the Star-chamber for infringing the Patent and confessed that he had printed off 10,000 copies. In 1585 another case was brought into the Star-chamber against Thomas Dunne and Robert Robinson for printing ‘Tenn Thousand of the bookes called the A B C with the lyttel Catechisme in Englishe.’ From John Daye and Richard Daye, the Patent for printing the A B C passed in 1591 to Verney Alley. By Alley’s administrators it was assigned with other books in trust for the Company of Stationers. This assignment was eventually confirmed by King James I, March 8th, 1616. In 1620, the Company of Stationers had in their hands the monopoly of the A B C with the Catechism, the Horn A B C, the Spelling A B C, the English Schoolmaster and Primers.

“...Editions of the A B C were issued by the Company of Stationers at various dates until, as Mr. Allnutt says, 1777. These have the short catechism printed with them.”

The recorded increase in reading difficulties in England coincided with the arrival of the monopoly ABC’s and spellers of the Company of Stationers; it disappeared just about the time licensing of printing was dropped in England at the end of the seventeenth century.

Watson also discussed the printing of the hornbook, which was, in effect, the first page of the ABC (page 171):

“In the course of time, in England, the Horn-book trade became sufficiently important to be worth getting a Patent for it. Accordingly, the entry in the Stationers Register (Arber, H. p. 477) is interesting:

“1587, Nov. 6. John Wolfe. Allowed unto him for his copy the horn A B C.

“In 1605, Alice Wolfe, probably the widow of John Wolfe, was granted three pounds a year during her lifetime for relinquishing her claim to the A B C Horn-book. The monopoly thus passed into the hands of the Stationers’ Company. It is to be found in their List of School-books for 1620, along with the A B C with the Catechism, and with the Spelling A B C.”

A distinction had arisen by 1620 between the ABC (which had syllable tables) and the Spelling A B C (which had syllable tables plus word lists). By 1620, the spelling book as a separate book had clearly arrived. Yet by the mid-seventeenth century attempts to revise English spelling and complaints of reading difficulties which had briefly surfaced in the mid-sixteenth century had also returned. As will be shown, in the troubled seventeenth century, the syllable tables and spelling books for children were too often being glossed over, with resultant disabilities. Yet, by the eighteenth century, the spelling book with its syllable tables was again in wide use, and complaints of reading difficulties have not turned up in the literature.

In Chapter X, Foster Watson discussed “The Teaching of Reading.” He referred on page 179 to Thomas Johnson’s *The Pathway to Reading*, or the newest Spelling A B C of 1590 which he said preceded Edward Coote’s *The English Scholemaister* of 1596 and which he thought might have been the Spelling A B C in the list of school books owned by the Stationer’s Company in 1620. Coote’s speller was praised by John Brinsley, a grammar school teacher who wrote *Ludus Literarius* in 1612.

Brinsley was complaining that children were coming into grammar school without knowing how to read, and using up large amounts of grammar school time. This, of course, was an admission of increasing reading difficulties, because a hundred years earlier, when children had learned to read in Latin instead of English, it was customary to require that children knew how to read before reaching grammar school.

Brinsley did recommend the analytic phonic method used by Coote, and, as Watson recorded (page 180), expected it to produce real readers.

Watson said that Brinsley, who only worked with older children, expected to have a pre-grammar school child, taking about a year, by the age of six, learn in English the alphabet, the ABC including spelling (a la Coote's), the primer read twice, the psalms in metre, and the New Testament, plus the School of Virtue and the School of Good Manners. Brinsley then thought that children would be ready for the Latin accident but was concerned because parents felt children later forgot how to read English. Obviously, the six-year-olds "forgot" because they had never really learned to read English with his indigestible curriculum in English.

Watson said W. C. Hazlitt, who wrote *Schools, School Books and Schoolmasters* saw a 1610 copy of *A New Book of Spelling with Syllables*, and said it included "a series of alphabets, alphabetical arrangements of syllables, and remarks on vowels and diphthongs.... The writer then presents his readers with the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Dialogue, etc., as orthographical theses." Obviously, this was a misprint: "Dialogue" must have meant the Decalogue, or the Ten Commandments.

Watson quoted (page 181) from an autobiography of the time, which came closer than Brinsley to describing what really happened in homes of that time for pre-grammar-school children. It should be noted, however, that the child described was obviously not an average child. Watson quoted from Adam Martindale's *Autobiography*, published by the Chetham Society. Martindale was born in 1623.

"When I was near six years old, one Anne Simpkin, who was one of my sureties at the font, being grown low in the world, but not in goodness, out of a real principle of conscience to perform her promises and engagements for me at my baptism (as I verily believe), bestowed an A B C upon me; a gift in itself exceeding small and contemptible, but, in respect of the design and event, worth more than its weight in gold. For till that time I was all for childish play, and never thought of learning. But then I was frequently importunate with my mother that had laid it up (thinking I would only pull it in pieces) to give it into mine own hands, which, being so small a trifle, she accordingly did; and I, by the help of my brethren and sisters that could read, and a young man that came to court my sister, had quickly learned it and the primer also after it. Then of mine own accord I fell to reading the Bible and any other English book, and such great delight I took in it, and the praises I got by it from my parents, which preferred my reading before any other in the family, that I think I could almost have read a day together without play or meat, if breath and strength would have held out; and thus it continued to the end of the first seven years of my life."

Watson discussed (pages 182-183) Charles Hoole's "primer," written before 1660 but published in 1660, which had as its intent the arousing of children's interest. Hoole's comments show why reading difficulties were multiplying in the mid-seventeenth century: the syllabary and the spelling book were largely being ignored. Hoole said of his *New Primer*:

"In the first leaf whereof I have set the Roman capitals... and have joined therewith the pictures or images of some things whose names begin with that letter, by which a child's memory may be helped to remember how to call his letters, as A for an ape, B for a bear....

"The ordinary way to teach children to read is, after they have got some knowledge of their letters, and a smattering of some syllables and words in the hornbook, to turn them into the A B C or Primer, and therein to make them name the letters and spell the words, till by often use they can pronounce (at least) the shortest words at the first sight.

“...the A B C being now (I may say) generally thrown aside, and the ordinary primer not printed, and the very fundamentals of Christian religion (which were wont to be contained in those books, and were commonly taught children by heart before they went to school) with sundry people (almost in all places) slighted, the matter which is taught in most books now in use is not so familiar to them, and therefore not so easy for children to learn.”

Watson said Hoole accordingly included in his primer the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. For practice in early reading he suggested *The Single Psalter*, the *Psalms in Metre* and *The School of Good Manners*. Once children could read well, Hoole wanted them encouraged to continue reading English and not to begin the Latin *Accidence* too early.

Another seventeenth century text to which Watson referred approvingly (page 183-184) was *The Schoole-masters Auxiliaries....* by Richard Lloyd, London, 1654. Lloyd taught letters by comparing them to objects, and:

“He then shows the powers of the letters. This he bases on a phonetic system and bewails the ineffectiveness of the English Alphabet to express the sounds. He observes ‘it were an easy matter by coining a new figure for every letter to make their shape as well as sound suitable to their names.’ But such hieroglyphics would conduce rather to enthrall than to enlarge knowledge....

“He follows a phonetic method so as to help the pupils to read and spell...

“Thus a just account is given of every letter in the right sound thereof; and when the same is silent, or doth vary from the proper sound, which the vulgar Alphabet cannot perform, wanting convenient principles, whence the common people versed onely thereunto ever failed in Orthography; for when they write their own affairs, after much racking of their wits, it were easier to uncipher characters, than to read their riddles.”

Lloyd added his testimony to others on the preponderance of reading and spelling difficulties in mid-seventeenth century England, and the resultant great activism for a reform in English spelling.

Watson listed and also described other books which came out in the mid-seventeenth century to teach reading more effectively, such as Richard Hodges *The English Primrose....*, 1644, (also cited by Mathews who reproduced a page), *Learning’s Foundation*, by Thomas Maxey, 1651, and *The English School....* by Tobias Ellis, 1680.

It is altogether possible that the preponderance of Latin in pre-Reformation England was in response to a problem already existing in England: the impossibility of the spelling which had developed. Use of vernaculars spread far more quickly on the Continent.

Although there is testimony that ABC books were falling into disuse in the seventeenth century in England, during the sixteenth century in England printed ABC books had been in wide use and were highly profitable for printers, so much so that much litigation resulted to protect printing privileges. The records from these litigations tell a great deal about the widespread use of these books, as recorded by H. Anders in his excellent article, “The Elizabethan ABC with the Catechism.”

In Anders’ article, in addition to discussing the two surviving oldest printed ABC books in England, one probably from shortly before 1534 and one from about 1538, (both discussed elsewhere in this history), he reproduced for the first time the fragments of the Elizabethan *The ABC with the Catechism*,

which were found as binding material in a book and which are dated to about 1584. This third ABC book, therefore, is roughly fifty years younger than the other two described.

By 1584, the catechism was part of the ABC in England. It can be seen in Anders' reproduction that the 1584 ABC contained alphabets in various letters, the syllabary at least as far as "l," the catechism, the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer, and Anders assumed it contained some graces (prayers) since the very much later 1683 version, very much like it, did contain graces. In 1603, Anders records that King James granted to the Stationers' Company a patent to publish the ABC with the little Catechisme. The last copy Anders mentions their publishing is the one printed in 1683, still sixteen pages long like many others, and showing the inside of a schoolroom very like that on the 1584 fragment. A Dutch 18th century ABC to be referred to below also had a picture of a schoolroom, which may have been common on European Protestant printed ABC books from the sixteenth century onwards. Anders refers to the Stationers' Company post-Elizabethan primer of 1670, but it seems certain their later primer would have had a better market than their later ABC books. Long before the last ABC he referred to from the Stationers' Company, in 1683, ABC books in English must have largely fallen into disuse, replaced largely by the spelling books, though Tuer recorded (pages 373-374) that editions with the catechism attached were published in English as late as 1771 and 1859!

It is no accident that John Locke never mentioned ABC books in 1691, when he spoke of the usual sequence for beginners in reading as the horn book, primer and psalter. It is also possible Locke considered "primer" to be a synonym for "speller." To judge from the enormous success of Coote's speller, the ABC books in England must have begun to fall into disuse just about 1600 as the use of Coote's speller began to spread. The Anglican catechism which had been attached to the ABC and to primers was sometimes printed separately from the mid-sixteenth century on.

ABC books continued to be printed on the continent long after the Reformation. Tuer stated (apparently referring to the eighteenth century):

"A common and later form of the Dutch primer or hane-bock is a sixteen-page small octavo. The title page is faced with a woodcut illustration of children being taught in school; then on a page to itself - presumably that it may crow to its heart's content without disturbing anybody - is the effigy of the wakeful cock, which is commonly found in children's books published on the Continent. Sometimes the cock is displaced by a little bantam vigneted on the title-page. The alphabet and spelling exercises follow, and towards the end are the Lord's Prayer, the Articles, and the Commandments, the primer finishing with a series of alphabetically-arranged moral aphorisms.

"The German fibel or child's first lesson book is probably a dialectic variation of bibel. Luther's fibel, printed in 1525, has, besides the alphabet, the Paternoster, Credo and a selection of prayers. The first really German fibel was published by Valentine Ickensamer [sic] of Rothenburg, and was printed at Nuremberg, 1537."

Tuer was wrong in stating that Ickelsamer's was the first. However, note the close resemblance of Luther's early 1525 fibel to the standard pre-Reformation Latin ABC book of England before the Reformation, except for the omission of the Ave Maria. Its make-up was probably the pre-Reformation European norm.

Rudolph R. Reeder of Columbia Teachers College, in his 1900 *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, The Macmillan Co., New York, on page 10, gave a more accurate reference on the word, "fibel:"

“In fact, the German word for primer - Fibel - which first appeared in a “Kolner Glossar” in 1419, signifies a little Bible.”

He gave as his sources *Methodik des Deutschen Volksschulunterrichts*, p. 8, and E. M. Field, *The Child and His Book*, p. 118.

Schoolbooks were very commercial materials in the Europe of the fifteenth century. Theo. L. De Vinne wrote the following concerning some concrete examples, on page 187 of his book, *The Invention of Printing*, New York: Francis Hart & Co., 1876. Da Vinne referred to material from:

“a school... in Saxony dated 1418, [which] gives the names and the prices of some of these books. For an ABC and Pater Noster etc. one groschen, for a... Donatus or child’s grammar, 10 groschen, for a complete Doctrinal, one-half mark, for the first part, 8 groschen. There has also been preserved the advertisement of one Dypold Lauber, teacher and copyist of books at Hagenau in Germany, who left (a catalog)... of the fifteenth century from which we may gather a clear notion of the books that were most salable among the people....”

Da Vinne said the copyist’s advertisement mentioned some sixty works and cited as his apparent source, “Van der Linde, Haarlem, p. 23.”

The later Dutch ABC book carried a picture of a school room, just as the Elizabethan ABC from 1584 did, and so were the contents of the Dutch ABC similar to the English 1584 ABC, but quite different from the pre-Reformation ABC’s. This suggests a kind of European standardization for the Protestant vernacular versions of the ABC books, as opposed to the pre-Reformation Latin versions. Therefore, the Protestant versions were not different from the pre-Reformation ABC books solely because they were in the vernacular instead of Latin, but also because of a change in content. But the English post-Reformation, vernacular ABC book, unlike those on the Continent, appears to have been largely eclipsed by the English spelling book after about 1600.

Probably the first ABC book for beginners to learn in English instead of Latin appeared around 1530, since an ABC book in English was referred to in a 1531 trial. The first printed primer in English is known to have been printed in 1529 and the first post-Reformation primer in English appeared in 1534 (*The English Primers (1529-1545)*, by Charles C. Butterworth, Octagon Books, New York, 1971). The ABC book printed in English which has been described appeared about 1538, so probably one was available in 1534 at the same time the first post-Reformation primer in English appeared.

Therefore, many average little beginners could have been taught to read in English after 1534, but after 1545 all children were effectively forbidden to be taught to read initially in anything but English by Henry VIII’s proclamation demanding that beginners be taught their prayers in English - which prayers were the content of the ABC books. If Hart, who said he had trouble learning to read himself, had learned to read at five years of age in 1534, he would have been 22 years old when he wrote his first manuscript in 1551 on phonics. Hart is known to have been a teacher. That shows that the difficulty in the switch to English from Latin for beginners appeared IMMEDIATELY: when Hart learned to read, probably about 1534, and when he tried to teach others to learn to read, probably from about 1545. It is no accident that the first work on phonetics in the English language was written by a primary grades teacher!

Nor is it any accident that “spelling books” appeared shortly after Henry VIII’s new law which, in effect, required teaching beginning reading in English, instead of Latin. Not only did spelling books in English not exist before Henry VIII’s reign, but the very concept of “spelling books” in English had apparently never even occurred to anyone!

## The Place of the Primers and Spellers in American Reading Instruction

True primers, defined as having been originally largely prayer books which came to have the catechism attached, were not normally the beginning reading book for children in America before 1826. True primers were not the beginning book under Henry VIII in England in the sixteenth century when he mandated that the ABC was to be the beginning book, spellers having not yet been invented. Nor were they the beginning book in the seventeenth century, as shown by the quotations from William Hornebye (1622), John Bunyan (1686), and John Locke (1691). Nor were true primers the beginning book in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, except for those Protestant primers specifically printed for American Indians in their own languages.

Before about 1750 in both England and America, beginning reading was not taught by the primer, but by the syllabic horn book (the ABC book's first page) or by the syllabic spelling book. That shows children before 1750 were taught to read by "sound" and not by "meaning." The fact that very large numbers of spellers were printed before 1750 is demonstrated by an entry in Volume Four, Spelling Books, of the twelve-volume series, A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Bradford, England, by R. C. Alston. Alston had an entry for Thomas Dyche's A Guide to the English Tongue of 1707. Alston stated that the printing ledgers of Charles Ackers had recorded that between December 4, 1733, and February 1, 1748, 275,000 copies of that speller had been printed. Yet Dyche's speller was only one of a great many spellers available at the time.

From about 1750 to 1826, the spelling book became far more commonly the first step and far more common in general. However, horn books and their variant, the battledores, persisted in wide use until the turn of the next century and did not finally almost die out in both Great Britain and America until about 1830.

John Newbery published the popular variant of the hornbook in 1745, The Royal Battledore, or First Book for Children. That famous English publisher, Newbery, also published The Royal Primer, or Second Book for Children. Their very names described the sequence at that time.

According to "The Hornbook, An Invitation to Learning," by Ellen Schaffer, The Horn Book Magazine, February, 1971:

"The battledore... came into use...about 1746. The honor of its invention is given to Benjamin Collins. The battledores contained spirited engravings of assorted objects whose names began with the various letters of the alphabet and must have helped fix the letters firmly in the minds of children."

The actual date of the invention of the battledore is unclear, however. Newbery is given credit for having published his Royal Battledore in 1745, but according to Tuer the date of Collins' "invention" of the battledore was 1746. (Collins was Newbery's partner.) What appears certain is that the battledore came into use about 1746. Tuer stated concerning Collins, (page 405):

"The honour of inventing the folding cardboard battledore is claimed for Benjamin Collins, and the date 1746 is fixed by his still preserved account books. He speaks of it as "my own invention"... In ten years - that is, between 1770 and 1780 when they had become popular - Collins sold considerably over a hundred thousand..."

Except for the fact that it was a folded cardboard card instead of a horn-covered paddle, and that it had the pictures described above as helps in remembering letter sounds, it was essentially the same as the



old horn book, including the alphabet, the syllabary and the Lord's Prayer. (A copy is reproduced in Appendix A.)

Concerning definite records on The Royal Primer, which followed The Royal Battledore as the second book for children, it was advertised for sale in England on September 10, 1751, and the earliest surviving Newbery copy is dated to 1755, according to S. Roscoe's *John Newbery and his Successors 1740-1814*, Five Owls Press Ltd., Wormley, England, 1973 (pages 237 and 403).

The first American copy of The Royal Primer was made in 1753, according to *American Primers - Indian Primers - Royal Primers... Prior to 1830*, by Charles F. Heartman, 1935, "Printed for Harry B. Weiss, Highland, Park, New Jersey." Heartman's statement agrees with Merritt's statement, given later. Isaiah Thomas was among those who reprinted The Royal Primer, Thomas's editions being in 1784 and later, along with his copies of other Newbery books. Heartman showed a 1750 date for the first appearance of imported Royal Primers in American records, predating Roscoe's 1751 reference but agreeing with the information given by Merritt.

The New York Library has a copy of The Royal Primer, dated "176?" which carries the note it was "Printed for John Newbery." Its title reads, *The Royal Primer, or an Easy and Pleasant Guide to the Art of Reading. Authorized by His Majesty King George II To Be Used Throughout his Majesty's Dominions.* Opposite the title page appeared a picture of a boy and a girl at their books, and the verses:

"He who ne'er learns his ABC, forever will a Blockhead be, but he who to his Book's inclined, will soon Golden Treasure find."

The same verse appeared on the 1818 Dublin revision also in the New York Public Library, but the content of the book itself had changed. Although the early edition was also in the general form of a "spelling book" with syllabary, word lists and reading selections, the 1818 edition was more decidedly in the form of the contemporary spelling books.

The change seemed to be confirmed by the appearance on the 1818 edition of the words, *The Royal Primer, or First Book for Children*. In the eighteenth century, Newbery had advertised his primer right under the title printed on his battledore, which read: *The Royal Battledore, being the First Introductory Part of the Circle of the Sciences, &c..... Also The Royal Primer, or Second Book for Children, Price 3d.* Things had obviously changed by 1818 from about 1750 or so, when the primer first appeared. Its material had moved closer to the standard spelling book form, which also appeared to be confirmed by the title of the 1818 material: *The Royal Primer: Or, The First Book for Children, Adapted to their tender Capacities. Authorized By His Majesty George III, To Be Used Throughout His Majesty's Dominions.*

As Heartman explained on page 112 of his *American Primers, Indian Primers, Royal Primers....*, "Authoriz'd by His Majesty King George II..." had merely been "a simple form of copyright." The listing of George III referred obviously to a new edition, because the contents had greatly changed.

King Henry VIII's official adult prayer-book primer of the sixteenth century had resulted in school primer-catechism versions. Such school book versions were in use for many years and, as official school books, must have been very familiar to the purchasing public in the mid-eighteenth century when Newbery first published *The Royal Primer*. It was the primer-catechism of the Church of England which Newbery imitated, or parodied might be a better word! Newbery was certainly not imitating the New England Primer because no record exists of it in England at that date.

It should be mentioned in passing that Newbery is generally and wrongly credited as having been the first publisher of children's books. As Mary Thwaite's book, *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, makes clear, that is simply not true for books published in English. Neither is it true for other languages.

John Locke may possibly have meant the Church of England primer-catechism when Locke referred in 1691 to the ordinary road of the horn book and primer. Yet Locke may also have meant one of the many primer-speller types of that period, which were not true primers, and which were very different in purpose from the primer-catechisms. Locke certainly did not mean the *New England Primer Enlarged*, since no record exists of it before 1691, the year of Locke's comment. Although Benjamin Harris advertised the *New England Primer Enlarged* in Boston in 1691 and although a copy of his almost unknown *Protestant Tutor* of 1685 survives (originally published in London in 1679), the earliest surviving copy of the *New England Primer Enlarged* is dated 1727. Furthermore, Harris' advertisement of 1691 is the only reference to the existence of any *New England Primer Enlarged* before that 1727 copy.

The Williamsburg Foundation Library in Virginia has bound copies of the *Williamsburg Gazette* from before the American Revolution. (Those issues were one of the few places in which I found some spotty use of the printer's mark known as the asterism. As described later, the asterism turned up on two unusual materials about 1830.) In the 1760's, the *Williamsburg Gazette* advertised for sale "new" arrivals of books by ship, reading "Alex. Purdie and John Dixon, at the Post Office. ...we have imported the following books." Sometimes a list read, "for the use of schools, viz.," followed by a long list of titles. The general list of books for sale in the February 25, 1768, edition included Dilworth's spelling book, Dyche's spelling book, Fenning's spelling book, Philip Sproson's spelling book, Johnson's spelling dictionary and Johnson's dictionary, Sheridan on education, and Sheridan on elocution. A separate section showed books for children and 37 were listed, including "Primmers" with no title, Horn Books, Infant Tutor, Lilliput Magazine, Pretty Plaything, Pretty Pocketbook, Robinson Crusoe, Royal Battledores, Tom Thumb's Folio, Goody Two Shoes, etc. The children's books were apparently almost all Newbery's, plus *Exposition of the Book of Common Prayer*, *History of England*, and *Lives of the Apostles*.

It is obvious that a lively book market existed in Virginia, and it was dealing in Newbery's books, such as his *Royal Battledore*. The imported "Primmers" almost certainly, therefore, in 1768 included *The Royal Primer* and the Church of England primer-catechism but not the *New England Primer*, since the rest of the list was apparently English in origin.

In 1924, (Edward) Percival Merritt wrote a history of *The Royal Primer* as a contribution to the volume, *Bibliographical Essays, A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Merritt's essay was reprinted separately in 1925 by Harvard University Press as *The Royal Primer, Reprinted with Added Illustrations from Bibliographical Essays, A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames*. It was the 1925 illustrated volume that I saw in 1988, and, unfortunately, my shorthand notes on Merritt's essay, from the rare book collections of the New York Public Library which may not be photocopied by users, are not too clear and may have some inaccuracies.

Concerning *The Royal Primer's* origin, Merritt said:

"Now, as a matter of fact, *The Royal Primer* made its first appearance among the earlier publications of that indefatigable purveyor of books for children, John Newbery of London. The year of its publication cannot be exactly determined at the present time but it was not earlier than 1744 after he had removed from Reading [Ed. where his first material was published in 1740] to London and opened a warehouse at the Bible and Crown near Devereaux Court Without Temple Bar, with a branch at the Royal Exchange, nor later than 1750 when the first advertisement of *The Royal Primer* is found in the public press in this country. In 1745, Newbery combined both

branches and removed to the Bible and Sun at St. Paul's Churchyard where most of his famous publications were issued, and where he remained until his death in 1767.

“Newbery's biographer, Charles Welsh, implies, although his statement is not very clear, that ‘The Royal Battledore or First Book for Children was publicly advertised in 1745.’ The Royal Primer evidently followed the Royal Battledore in due course of time. An advertisement of the Battledore in 1750 is accompanied by the statement: ‘[after which the next proper Book for Children is] The Royal Primer’ which seems to establish the publication period of the primer as between 1745 and 1750.

“What was Newbery's intent and desire in his long series of children's books can best be shown by quoting what are probably his own words in the preface to the long list of ‘Books published for the Instruction and Amusement of Children,’ annexed to one of his little books: ‘THE NEWTONIAN SYSTEM OF PHILOSOPHY Adapted to the Capacities of young GENTLEMEN and LADIES, and familiarized and made entertaining by Objects with which they are intimately acquainted, BEING The Substance of SIX LECTURES read to the LILLIPUTIAN SOCIETY, by TOM TELESCOPE, A.M., 1761.’ This list comprised 20 titles of books published for the instruction and amusement of children in which The Royal Battledore and Royal Primer were Nos. 3 and 4. The preface read, ‘It has been said and said wisely that the only way to remedy these Evils is to begin with the rising Generation, and to take the Mind in its infant State, when it is uncorrupted and susceptible of any impression; to represent their [Desire] and future Interest in a Manner that shall seem rather intended to amuse than instruct, to [excite] their Desire with Images and Pictures that are familiar and pleasing; To warm their Affections with such little Histories as are capable of giving them [Delight] and of impressing on their tender minds also Sentiments of Religion, Justice, Honor, and Virtue.”

“Given his intent as indicated in this preface, [it] is well manifested in the execution of The Royal Primer; which shows all the Newbery characteristics.

“It has been found above that the Royal Primer reflected the Anglican background as contrasted with the Puritan.... [after citing other material from the Anglican background, Merritt said:] the Jubilate and third goal of morning prayer are taken almost verbatim from the Prayer Book... but the most marked difference between the two primers [Ed.: the Royal and the New England] from a theological standpoint is the fact that the youthful readers of the Royal Primer are promised as a result of the practice of virtue a mundane and not celestial reward.

“And this is quite characteristic of the Newbery juvenile books in general. (p. 9) [The] Newbery system of philosophy with regard to the reasons and rewards for youthful study is set forth in those verses which appear on the frontispiece of the Royal Primer. The page is headed, ‘A good boy and girl at their books’ and above and below a cut intended to represent a boy and girl at study in a library, are the following lines, ‘He who ne'er learns his A,B,C,, forever will a Blockhead be. But he who to his Book's inclin'd, will soon a golden Treasure find.’

“Under the picture [was] ‘Children like tender Oziers take the Bow, And as they first are fashion'd always grow, for what we learn in Youth to that alone, in age we are by second Nature prone.’

“The first set of these verses had already been used in 1745 in the Royal Battledore in a slightly different form but with an equally material reward as the price for youth's study: ‘He that n'er learns his A,B,C, forever will a Blockhead be. But he that learns these Letters fair, shall have a Coach to take the Air.’ (...Tuer's A History of the Horn Book, ii, 234)

“Referring to these verses, Mr. Ford wrote, ‘Worst of all was the insertion of a short poem which would have made the true Puritan turn in his grave for questioning in [its] teaching that letters were to be learned, that the Bible might be read, and that figures were acquired for the purpose of finding a chapter and verse in that work. It said ‘He who ne’er learns his ABC’ etc. (Ford, *The New England Primer*, 1897, p. 47). The first couplet of the second set of verses, ‘Children, like tender Oziers, take the Bow’ had also been employed as early as 1744, when it appeared in an advertisement of the *Little Pretty Pocket Book...* of June 18, 1744 (Booksellers of the Last Century p. 117, Welsh, 1885, New York). Thus it will be seen that, at the very beginning of his career as a publisher of children’s books, Newbery had proclaimed the standards which he constantly maintained thereafter.

“The Royal Primer begins with the customary alphabet in roman and italic letters and the syllabaries, but the vocabulary is made up of words of a varying number of letters instead of syllables.”

Newbery therefore had made a pronounced move from “sound” to “meaning.” Arranging word lists by the numbers of letters in words has nothing whatever to do with “sound.” It was a move toward silent “visual analysis” which is a sight-word method used for deaf-mutes. To demonstrate: compare the ease of sounding out the phonically regular five-letter word, “blunt,” to the difficulty for beginners of remembering the phonically irregular and senseless pronunciations of the three-letter words, “one,” “two,” “you,” and “the,” or the two-letter words, “of” and “to.”

The publication date of Newbery’s *The Royal Primer* was estimated by Merritt to have been between 1745 and 1750. However, although Newbery first began to publish about 1740, he had apparently been preceded in arranging words into tables based on their numbers of letters by Dilworth. Dilworth’s speller which was first published in 1740 was later massively used. In his Preface, Dilworth had said:

“In the several Praxes or Lessons of Monosyllables hitherto published in our Mother Tongue, instead of rising Step by Step, Children are taught to jump before they can go; and if they prove uncapable to take such long Strides, as reach sometimes from Monosyllables of two, to others of seven or eight letters, before they are informed of those that come between, they must be thump’d and lugg’d forward....

“Again: If it be reasonable, in the order of Words, to begin with those of one Syllable, as all Spelling authors agree; it must be also granted as reasonable, that Monosyllables, which consist of various Quantities of Letters, should be taught in the same order, proceeding gradually from Words of two Letters, to Words of three, four, five &c. Letters, as exemplified in the following Tables....

“I have first collected only Words of two Letters; then Words of three Letters; after that Words of four Letters, &c.. with short easy Lessons between each Table of Words, adapted in such a Manner, that no Lesson contains any one Word which does not belong to a preceding Table....

“Again, it must be acknowledged that the first Six Lessons do but just make English; yet, I hope, whoever considers the Difficulty of composing Sentences to be read in Lessons, wherein each Word is confined to three Letters, will readily overlook the baseness of the Language.... and all my Tables are filled with the easiest Words in our Language; even such as a Child may have some Idea of at the first Pronunciation....

“...I have consulted the Method of Spelling or dividing syllables in long Words, both according to their Sound, and to the Rules of Grammar.... you will find that whenever a word occurs that may be divided one way by Sound, and another by Grammar, the Scholar is directed both to understand the doubtful Division by this Mark (“) over the right side of the Vowel, which according to the Sound, ought to be joined with the following Consonant, which is nevertheless contrary to the Rules of Grammar....”

Like so many other authors of beginning reading materials, Dilworth had probably never taught beginners himself, or he would never have called short but phonically irregular words like “the”, “you,” “one” and “two” the “easiest Words in our Language.” However, unlike Noah Webster in 1783, Dilworth in 1740 still divided words by the old Latin “grammar” method, and that made it possible for children to pronounce phonically regular syllables by themselves. Dilworth did acknowledge that such a division did not match many English pronunciations, which is the obvious reason that Noah Webster dropped the old Latin method.

Edmund Coote in his 1597 spelling book, which was massively used for over a hundred years, arranged his syllable tables largely by numbers of letters. This was not unreasonable, because most of the two- and three-letter syllables were not solely meaning-bearing high frequency words as in Dilworth’s book but were instead only the phonically regular word parts of multi-syllable words (like ab, eb, ib, ob, ub), which memorized syllables the children would later use to work out actual words. Most of Coote’s short syllables therefore made the “sound” which they actually spelled. However, Dilworth appears to have been the first to have used the number of letters in words, instead of the number of syllables in words, as the basis for compiling his spelling lists.

Dilworth’s widely used speller, when analyzed, proves to have been a critical step downward in the move from “sound” to “meaning.” It was not only his arrangement of spelling words in tables of two-letters, three-letters, four-letters, etc., so many of which were phonically irregular (one, the, to, etc.) It was in his deliberate use of high frequency words and in his controlled vocabulary reading selections. Those selections were composed at the beginning only of unnatural two-letter word collections, and two-letter plus three-letter words collections, and so on. These most unnatural “stories” whose vocabularies were based solely on word length found their ultimate end in the silly, empty “stories” of Mrs. Barbauld and her kind at the end of the eighteenth century. Later Reading-Made-Easies also used the extremely harmful word-length approach that had been originated by Dilworth. Although it has apparently never been recognized before, it is obvious that Dilworth’s tables arranged by word length were a giant step toward training beginning readers to make a visual analysis of meaning-bearing whole words, instead of training them to make a proper sound analysis.

The Royal Primer of Newbery, published only about five years or so after Dilworth’s 1740 speller, followed Dilworth’s lead in arranging word tables by the number of letters and probably also followed Dilworth’s use of high frequency words and controlled vocabulary. It therefore clearly represented a move away from “sound” and towards “meaning.”

Merritt continued his account:

“Here the closest similarity to the New England Primer ceases. Two complete alphabets are given, one in verse beginning ‘A stands for Apple and Awl’; the other a pictorial one, ‘a Apple, b Ball,’ etc., with rather crude cuts intended to represent the objects employed. The Scripture Catechism is a brief one, simply intended to explain to the children many of the ‘principal Persons contained in the Scripture.’ The Old Testament portion contains a characteristic Newbery touch in his method of combining instruction and advertisement of his own wares. Thus: ‘Q. Who

Was David? A. The man after God's own Heart, who was raised from Shepherd to King. 'See his life in the Royal Psalter, following a hymn by Dr. Watts....'

That comment shows that Newbery's "Psalter" was not a true collection of the Bible's Psalms, as its name implied, but included other matter like hymns and biographies, presumably in place of some of the Psalms. Therefore, the horn book and primer were not the only traditional school materials being altered away from Biblical texts and in a more "worldly" direction by Newbery, even though such alterations might not seem "worldly" by today's standards. Merritt said further:

"In about the middle of the book comes the most essential characteristic, a series of cuts of some twelve animals, birds and insects, each followed by a couplet or couplets of verse with a moral lesson in prose attached. The description of the Parrot is brief and sufficiently indicative of the whole series: 'The Parrot prates he knows not what, for all he says is got by rote.'

"The primer ends with the Lord's Prayer, prayers for morning and evening, and grace before and after meat."

Because Newbery's books are wholesome, charming and innocuous in our time does not mean they were necessarily wholesome, charming and innocuous in their time or in their purpose, particularly since Newbery specifically stated - beyond any reasonable doubt - that he was trying to shape the minds of children. That was an extraordinary and unprecedented statement from a publisher, particularly since his emphasis was, as Ford pointed out, away from celestial and toward earthly rewards in a time when such an emphasis was revolutionary.

After his arrival in London, Newbery became enormously successful, and certainly his books were often delightful. Some, as in all probability *Goody Two Shoes*, were written by that genius, Oliver Goldsmith. Goldsmith worked as one of Newbery's paid hacks, just as the brilliantly gifted Nathaniel Hawthorne later worked as a hack for Samuel Goodrich in America. Goodrich's later enormous publishing success with children's books paralleled Newbery's remarkably, with Goodrich's books in heavy demand on both sides of the Atlantic, just as Newbery's had been.

Newbery, appearing on the publishing scene in London after four quiet years publishing elsewhere, may reasonably be numbered among the promoters of eighteenth-century "Enlightenment." A picture in Roscoe's book of an undated cover of Newbery's *Lilliputian* magazine for children even suggests that fact, with the following appearing under the title:

"...being the attempt to amend the World, to render the Society of Man more Amiable, and to establish the Plainness, Simplicity, Virtue & Wisdom of the GOLDEN AGE so much celebrated by the Poets and Historians, 'Man in that Age no Rule but Reason Knew, and with a native bent did Good pursue....'"

Newbery gave no source for the poem which elevated "Reason" but ignored Revelation as the source for a "Rule." Yet that message in the poem agreed with the eighteenth-century French "philosophers" like Voltaire. The magazine was published in 1751-1752, which issues Newbery later sold in bound volumes. Therefore, its saying in addition that man has a "native bent" for "Good" anticipated by ten years the same message in Rousseau's *Emile*. Rousseau's fame largely rested on his denial of the Biblical teaching that mankind is not naturally "good" but instead has a fallen nature which inclines it towards evil as well as towards good.

Merritt continued:

“Small wonder when the opportunity came to the American child as it did in 1750, the humanity, interest and [diversity] of The Royal Primer as contrasted with the austerity of the New England Primer must have made a strong appeal to normal and healthy minded children....”

Merritt said on pages 12-13:

“It is not surprising that when the Royal Primer was transplanted to this country, it first took root in the more fertile soil from a theological standpoint of Philadelphia. Miss Rosalie V. Halsey made the discovery that a long list of Newbery publications was advertised in the Pennsylvania Gazette of November 15, 1750, and reproduced the advertisement in her delightful book, *Forgotten Books of the American Nursery*, Boston, 1911....”

The high quality of Newbery’s work (apart from what appears to have been his unfortunate aim) certainly accounts for its popularity. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that Newbery could have advertised and sold his wares so widely and so successfully in such a short time. The relative speed of his success is particularly surprising since the publishing market reportedly had been already overflowing with the popular and cheap chapbooks long before Newbery arrived. The chapbooks were reportedly also widely bought for and read by children. It was the children’s market, already heavily supplied, at which Newbery clearly was aiming. Yet, only six years after arriving in London in 1744 and beginning to publish children’s books in a large way, and only ten years after Newbery first began in business elsewhere in a small way, he was consigning shipments to America of a long list of children’s books which he himself had published.

Merritt added:

“The list comprises [several] titles including *The Royal Battledore* and *the Royal Primer*.... The conclusion then would seem rather to be that Franklin and Hall (or more probably David Hall himself since Franklin by this time had given up bookselling) had imported the books on their own account or had accepted them on consignment and placed them on sale in Philadelphia. Franklin’s custom appears to have been to have his orders for books in London filled through his friend and correspondent William Strahan, and there is no indication in his published writings or letters that he ever had any direct dealings with Newbery. He may have had some acquaintance with John Newbery for in a letter to Strahan under date of November 27, 1755, he wrote, ‘My respects to Mr. Newbery of whom you give so amiable a character.’... In the issue of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of December 11, 1750, there appeared ... the list of Newbery publications.... exactly as in the issue of the *Gazette* of November 15. Apparently the Newbery books met with favor and a ready sale in Philadelphia.”

Merritt cited another advertisement on June 13, 1756, including “*Royal Primmers and Battledores*” and one for December 10, 1751, citing “useful children’s books.” On May 17, 1753, Hall was still advertising that he had for sale spelling books and “primmers.” Another bookseller, Tench Francis, Jr., advertised on July 18, 1754, that he had for sale, just imported from London, “doz. royal primers. doz. battledores.” As was made clear by an advertisement which will be referred to again later, that meant Francis was selling them by the dozen: in Boston in 1769, Fowle offered books “by the gross or dozen” including *The Royal Primer*.

Merritt stated:

“But to Philadelphia credit is due, not only of first offering the *Royal Primer* for sale in this country, but also of publishing the first American edition of it, which was issued by the Quaker bookseller, James Chatten, with the date of 1753 on the title page.”

Merritt said that in Chatten's 1753 Philadelphia edition the syllabaries, words composed of various letters, and "Easy Lessons" were "very much expanded." That certainly suggests that the original Royal Primer was defective in its emphasis on "sound" in reading.

Merritt continued:

"In Boston, the earliest known reprint of the Royal Primer is that of William McAlpine in 1768... The files of the Boston News-Letter contain various advertisements of primers beginning as early as 1752, commonly referred to as imported either from London or Scotland, but no definite conclusions can be drawn as to whether they were Royal Primers or New England Primers. In the case of the Scotch importations, however, it seems more than probable that they would be the latter."

Yet, since Heartman turned up NO London or Scottish examples anywhere in the world before 1767, it is apparent they were not New England Primers. Furthermore, it would have been a case of carrying coals to New Castle, since the New England Primer was regularly published in Boston by 1752.

The News-Letter of July 3, 1753, had an advertisement from John and Thomas Leverett "opposite to the Stationer's Arms in Cornhill," Boston, announcing that they had imported and were offering for sale a long list of books, including "Psalters, Primers, Spelling Books, &c." Merritt wrote that on July 16, 1752, William McAlpen also advertised books: "'lately imported from Scotland' among which were Psalters, Psalm Books, and primers. Another advertised on May 22, 1755, 'just imported from London - Psalters and Primers.'"

On June 10, 1756:

"Joshua Blanchard gave notice that he had just imported Primers. Thomas Leveritt, June 8, 1758, offered Primers which he had imported and [on] January 17, 1760 and January 29, 1761, John Leverett had imported Primers for sale. July 1, 1762, Philip Freeman offered Primers and on the same day William Lang announced an offering of primers imported from Glasgow."

On November 21, 1768, McAlpin advertised New England Primers and Royal Primers. The Royal Primer was specifically mentioned in an advertisement from Zechariah Fowle in the Boston News Letter of August 24, 1769. (It was Fowle to whom Isaiah Thomas was apprenticed.) Fowle offered books "by the gross or dozen" including The Royal Primer but the advertisement apparently made no mention of the New England Primer. Another edition of The Royal Primer was published in Boston by John Boyle in 1770. Boyle had also published several editions of the New England Primer.

Merritt wrote:

"In 1772, [McAlpin?] published another edition of The Royal Primer."

In 1787, Isaiah Thomas produced another Royal Primer with American changes and in 1796 one was printed and sold by Samuel Hall in Boston.

In a footnote on page 26, Merritt cited page 382 of Welsh's biography of Newbery. Welsh had stated that sales of the Newbery primer alone must have run into hundreds of thousands. Welsh gave a statement from B. Collins' Account Book that '20,000 of these were sold from October, 1771 to October, 1772' and this was over 20 years after its first appearance."



Merritt stated on page 29:

“The Huntington library has a copy of The Royal Primer published by D. Wogen, Dublin, 1813, which probably contains nineteenth century additions.... There are several copies known of The Royal Primer: Or, The First Book For Children. Adapted to their Tender Capacities. Authorized By His Majesty King George III. To be Used Throughout his Majesty’s Dominions..., Dublin, printed by William Jones, 75 Thomas Street, 1818. This edition has ninety-six pages and while it contains some of the features of the Newbery primer it is much changed....”

Jonathan Swift’s name was associated with a 1770 Dublin edition of a Royal Primer, presumably a variant of Newbery’s, to judge from the following entry from Banbury Chap Books and Nursery Toy Literature of the 18th and Early 19th Century, With Impressions from Several Hundred Original Woodcut Blocks, by Edward Pearson. Pearson’s book had first been published in 1890 and was republished in Burt Franklin Research and Source Works Series, No. 98, Burt Franklin, New York, a copy of which is now in the Williamsburg foundation library in Virginia.

The following appears on page 17:

“That quaint divine, Dean Swift of St. Patrick’s Dublin, had some curious poetry for A Royal Primer... published in the Seven Dials, of Dublin (Rainbow Court)....”

Pearson then quoted a portion of a poem which began “Ech, Ech, my deary, and Ach, Ach, my love.” Pearson said:

“This is long and curious and was greatly altered and abbreviated in early nineteenth century editions.”

On page 19 of Pearson’s book appeared prints “from Dean Swift’s Royal Primer, Dublin, circa 1770.” Therefore, some time after Sheridan first began promoting his elocutionary material, the name of his father’s friend, Swift, whose biography Sheridan had written, was associated in some fashion with a Dublin edition of The Royal Primer. The Dublin edition of about 1770 was presumably a variant of Newbery’s which had first been published by 1750 or before. Dublin editions of 1813 and 1818 have survived. The Royal Primer had been reprinted for some forty years in America, at least from the 1753 Philadelphia edition to the 1796 Boston edition by Samuel Hall which survives and which was mentioned by Merritt. Therefore, The Royal Primer might have been reprinted for many years in Ireland as well, dating from before the puzzling “circa 1770” to the known 1818 edition. The Swift-Royal Primer reference might well only mean that the Dublin circa 1770 edition, which Pearson apparently saw, or on which he saw photographs of portions, had included Swift’s poem.

As mentioned elsewhere, Dean Jonathan Swift had also written a short poem on the vowels which did suggest some interest on Swift’s part in the topic of teaching beginning reading. Swift, born in 1667, wrote Gulliver’s Travels in 1726, died in 1745 and was insane in the last years of his life. Therefore, it appears impossible that Swift could have had anything to do with writing The Royal Primer or even a Dublin version of The Royal Primer, since Newbery did not publish the original edition until about 1750 or not more than about five years before 1750. Yet The Royal Primer, at least in its early Dublin edition, may very well have drawn on some earlier work of Swift’s in addition to his poem.

In other countries in Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, the ABC book continued to be the beginning book. ABC books were used by Pennsylvania Germans to teach their children to read in German, and the story of their extensive work and numerous ABC books already fills an excellent book written by Walter Klinefelter, The ABC Books of the Pennsylvania Germans, Publications of the

Pennsylvania German Society, Volume VII, pages 2-104, The Pennsylvania German Society, Breinigsville, Pennsylvania, 1973. Klinefelter's article/book is a superb piece of work and demonstrates the great care that the Pennsylvania Germans of many religious denominations took to teach their children to read. Klinefelter's material describes religious schooling from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century, until the government schools finally succeeded in replacing the remarkably good education given by the churches of the Pennsylvania Germans. However, the emphasis of the German ABC books in the teaching of beginning reading was clearly on "sound" and not on "meaning."

In the eighteenth century, books in English were published to perfect children in "the art of reading," but these apparently were meant to develop fluency, not to be used as beginning books.

Starting about the time the Newbery books appeared, the religious content in books for children began to diminish sharply. The English spelling books, however, with lists of words for syllabic spelling, also contained practice paragraphs for reading, so that children could begin to develop fluency, and this material was sometimes religious.

The true primers in English before 1826, such as the New England Primer, were only incidentally spelling books. They remained largely prayer or devotional books and included the catechism. Although after the sixteenth century such true primers had also started with the alphabet, syllabarium and spelling lists like the spelling books, the evidence indicates that true English primers were not the first book given to children but the second book, if, indeed, they were given at all.

Comments on the New England Primer appear in The Franklin Family Primer published in Boston in 1807, and first issued in 1802, which will be discussed at length later. The 1807 copy is in the Library of Congress. That primer said in its introduction:

"Considering it of primary importance in the education of Children, to endeavor to inculcate upon their tender minds a sense of morality and piety... but above all their duty to their Creator; has induced the compiler to issue this publication as a substitute for the old Primer, which has of late almost become obsolete."

Yet, despite that curious statement, the true primer was not obsolete in New England until long, long after 1803. What the statement does confirm is that the true primers at that time were used primarily as catechisms. Note that the Primer's purpose is described by its imitator as being solely religious, even though the imitator also included syllable tables and spelling in his own book.

The New England Primer Enlarged is never referred to in any sources of the period as being in actual use as a school reading text. Significantly, Noah Webster himself prepared a version of the New England Primer Enlarged after 1800 in an attempt to make it suitable for school use, which is a clear admission that the New England Primer Enlarged was not being used in schools! Heartman's checklist of New England Primer Enlarged editions lists Webster's edition.

Heartman shows in his bibliographical check list the widespread (and undoubtedly vast) printing of the New England Primer Enlarged after the mid-eighteenth century. It even turned up in editions in England and Scotland in the later eighteenth century. A man of the stature of President John Adams, according to R. R. Reeder in his history of reading, always carried a copy of the New England Primer Enlarged with him, but obviously as a devout practice because of its catechism, since John Adams certainly was not using it as a beginning reading book!

Although no edition of the New England Primer Enlarged even survives from before 1727, actual copies of George Fox's and Ellis Hooke's Quaker materials from long before that date have survived. The

1670 London edition of Fox's and Hooke's "A primmer and catechism for children; or a plain and easie way for children to learn to spell and read..." is still in existence as are other seventeenth century English editions of the Fox materials. An American edition printed in Philadelphia in 1702 survives. Even Benjamin Franklin printed a Fox speller in Philadelphia in 1737 which survives, and a 1726 copy survives which was printed in Dublin, Ireland.

Yet no one today has ever heard of the vast use of these still-surviving Fox spellers, from the late seventeenth century. Instead, we hear of the presumed massive use before 1740 or so of the elusive New England Primer Enlarged, even though no copy survived until the 1727 copy, only six more survived between 1735 and 1749, and only nine from the decade of the 1750's. However, twenty copies survived from the decade of the 1760's, showing its use began greatly to increase in that decade. Yet the twenty copies that survived from the ten years of the 1760's exceeded the sixteen copies that survived from the entire previous sixty-eight-years history of The New England Primer Enlarged.

Benjamin Harris advertised an edition in the almanac entitled *News from the Stars*, published in Boston in 1691. His advertisement is the only surviving American reference to the New England Primer before the 1727 copy which is now in the New York Public Library, which surfaced about a century ago. The New England Primer Enlarged advertised by Harris in 1691 is presumed to have been put together by him while he was in Boston for about ten years before he returned to England. Harris's Boston imprints of other books are dutifully reported in Evans' American bibliography, since records of Harris' other work here survives, but no record exists of his presumed American edition of his advertised New England Primer Enlarged. Harris is presumed to have written *The Protestant Tutor*, printed in Boston in 1685, which was never widely used, and yet a copy nevertheless survives in the American Antiquarian Society collections in Worcester, Massachusetts.

In her book, *American Reading Instruction*, on page 18, Nila Banton Smith described the 1685 *The Protestant Tutor*:

"The principal contents were the 'Roman Small Letters,' the Syllabarium, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, John Rogers's biography and verses, words of from two to seven syllables, the 'Proper Names' (from Scripture), a catechism, and other religious selections."

Yet, as discussed in Appendix B under the entry for *The Protestant Tutor*, that in no way describes the 1685 book, which is only a very peculiar "catechism" plus the verses of "Mr. Rogers." As Alston shows, Harris had printed a spelling book also called "The Protestant Tutor Instructing children to spel and read English..." in London in 1679 (which was not the same as the Boston text with the name of *The Protestant Tutor*) and then, after having obviously returned to London, printed in 1707 another version of that 1679 speller, "The Protestant Tutor Enlarg'd: or, a new school-book...". Harris reprinted the speller again in London in 1716 and two other editions appeared in London in 1716 and 1720 (?). All of these London editions of Harris's speller (1679, 1707, 1716, 1720 (?)) have surviving copies, as does the 1685 Boston catechism version, and relatively large numbers of pre-1720 Fox spellers have survived. Yet the EARLIEST surviving copy of the elusive New England Primer Enlarged dates only from 1727, and the only record anywhere of its existence in America prior to that is the 1691 Boston advertisement. Since the beginning of this century, and despite vast publicity on the New England Primer, no one has ever found a New England Primer of any kind earlier than 1727. It seems abundantly clear that the New England Primer Enlarged was massively popular only from about 1760. The New England Primer Enlarged does not have surviving copies before 1727 apparently because it was little used at that time, if at all.

The huge popularity of the New England Primer Enlarged after about 1760 most probably resulted from the great religious revival promoted from about 1740 and until his death in 1770 by the English preacher, Mr. Whitefield, who traveled to America and Scotland over a period of years. It was the

catechism content of the New England Primer Enlarged which was important in a religious sense, and it was not normally used as a beginning school book. Clear confirmation on the kind of use it received, as a catechism for children since it contained the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and as a religious manual for adults, appears on the 1843 Hartford, Connecticut, reprint of a 1770 edition, which reprint is currently in the library of the Department of Education in Washington, D. C. A page headed "Advertisement" before the actual reproduction of this 1770 edition reads:

"A society of ladies was formed in Boston, in the time of Mr. Whitefield, for improvement in personal piety, and to pray for extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom. The Society met weekly for prayer, 'reading some sound and serious book,' singing, and other exercises adapted to 'spiritual edification.' 'We also agree,' say they, 'once a quarter... the exercises shall be so shortened, as to have room to ask ourselves the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, that so we may keep in our minds that excellent form of sound words.' This edition of the New England Primer, is a reprint and fac-simile of one of those owned and used by that Society.... N.B. This statement is from a lady who was a member of the above Society, and from the documents of the Society in her possession."

Heartman's well-known checklist on the New England Primer was done with the greatest care, in three editions: 1916, 1922, and 1934. Over that eighteen-year period, when the New England Primer Enlarged was famous and copies were often worth a great deal of money, no one in Europe or America located ANY editions published outside America before 1767. An edition is known to have been published in London in that year. Clearly, it is therefore unlikely that the New England Primer Enlarged was published abroad much before 1767. On page 14, Nila Banton Smith quoted a New York advertisement from 1744 advertising Bibles, Testaments, Psalters and Primers imported from London. Those primers obviously could not have been the New England Primer Enlarged, and the names of the other books being sold with them powerfully suggest the "Primers" being sold were primarily religious books and not beginning reading texts.

Heartman's final 1934 checklist is of copies of New England Primers whose existence has been documented. When his entries are listed chronologically, they produce an interesting summary:

<u>Date of Publication</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<u>Before 1727:</u>	None	
1727	Boston	S. Kneeland and T. Green, Printers
<u>From 1727 through 1739:</u>		
1735	Boston	
1737	Boston	
1738	Boston	
<u>From 1740 through 1749:</u>		
1744	Boston	
1746	Boston	
1749	Boston	
<u>From 1750 through 1759:</u>		
1750	Boston	
1750	Boston	

1750	New York City	The first outside Boston
1751	Boston	
1754	Germantown, Pa.	
1754	Boston	
1757	Boston	
1757	Boston	
1757	Philadelphia	
<u>From 1760 through 1769:</u>		
1761	Boston	
1760-64?	Boston	
1762	Boston	
1762	Boston	
1763	Boston	
1763	Philadelphia	
1764	Boston	
1764	Germantown, Pa.	
1764	Philadelphia	By Benjamin Franklin & D.Hall
1764	Boston	
1766	Boston	
1767	Boston (4 copies)	
1767	London	The first foreign edition
1768	Boston (3 copies)	
1769	Philadelphia	D. Hall, Franklin's successor
<u>From 1770 through 1779:</u>		
1770	Boston (4 copies)	
1770	Germantown, Pa.	
1770	Philadelphia	
1771	Boston (4 copies)	
1771	Philadelphia	
1771	London	The second foreign edition
1771	Germantown	
1772	Boston	
1773	Philadelphia	
1773	Boston	
1773	London	The third foreign edition
1774	Boston (2 copies)	
1774	Norwich	
1775	Providence (2 copies)	
1776	Boston	
1776	Paisley	The FIRST Scottish edition
1777	Boston	
1777	Hartford	
1777	Philadelphia	
1779	Boston (3 copies)	
1779	Philadelphia (3 copies)	
<u>From 1780 to 1789:</u>		
1780	Trenton	
1780	Philadelphia	

1780	Glasgow	The SECOND Scottish edition
1781	Hartford (2 copies)	
1781	Boston	
1781	Philadelphia	
1781	Paisley	The THIRD Scottish edition
1781	Glasgow	The FOURTH Scottish edition
1782	New Hampshire	
1782	Boston	
1782	Providence	
1782	Chatham	
1782	Philadelphia (2 copies)	
1783	Newburyport	
1784	Salem	
1784	Boston (3 copies)	
1784	Glasgow	The FIFTH Scottish edition
1785	Plymouth	England or Massachusetts?
1785	Glasgow	The SIXTH Scottish edition
1785	Providence	
1786	Glasgow	The SEVENTH Scottish edition
1786	Norwich	
1786	Plymouth	England or Massachusetts?
1786	Middletown	
1786	Philadelphia	
1787	Boston (2 copies)	
1787	New York City	
1787	Philadelphia (2 copies)	
1788	Boston (4 copies?)	
1788	Hartford	
1788	New York City	
1788	New Haven	
1789	Boston (3 copies)	
1789	New York City	
1789	Glasgow	The EIGHTH Scottish edition
1789	Hartford (2 copies)	

The decade of the 1790's produced even more surviving copies, as did the early part of the nineteenth century. Other surviving copies demonstrate that The New England Primer Enlarged continued to be widely printed into the 1820's and did not die out generally until about 1830. It died out, curiously, at the same time that the government schools began to spread, although the record clearly establishes that the New England Primer was not normally used as a school book. Its dying out apparently reflected a cultural change.

What is absolutely astonishing is that Heartman's highly reliable checklist has been interpreted by Heartman and others as supporting the New England Primer myth, instead of demolishing it. Heartman began his checklist about 1916, almost two hundred years after the printing of the earliest surviving copy of the New England Primer, dated to 1727. The New England Primer had been well known before Heartman's first check list in 1916, and even before that date its fame had been assured by Paul Leicester Ford's very faulty account, *The New-England Primer, A History of Its Origin and Development*, New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1897. However, as the fame of the Primer increased after Heartman's 1916 checklist, more copies turned up for the second edition of his checklist in 1922 and more turned up for the third in 1934. Yet those newly discovered copies were not scattered over all the decades in the

eighteenth century and the first few decades of the nineteenth century, as chance should have dictated if the primer had been widely popular in America and Great Britain, since its first mention in Harris's 1691 advertisement until the first few decades of the nineteenth century. Instead, the newly-found copies were largely after the decade of the 1760's, just like the previously found copies.

If the myth of the widespread use of the primer in both Great Britain and America from about 1691 were true, there should not have been only three copies surviving for the decade of the 1740's which were all printed in Boston, while for the decade of the 1780's, only forty years later, 48 copies survived which were printed in 18 different cities including two and possibly three cities in Great Britain. If the Primer had been printed in Great Britain in the first half of the eighteenth century, which is implied in so many reference works, why then were all the seven surviving copies before 1750 printed in Boston? Furthermore, in the next decade of the 1750's, why did two-thirds of the surviving nine copies originate in Boston, with no foreign editions at all? Also, why should that single decade, the 1750's, have nine surviving copies, when for all the previous 60 years or so of the Primer's reported existence only seven copies survived? In the decade of the 1760's, surviving copies increased again, but three-quarters of those twenty surviving copies still originated in Boston. Benjamin Franklin and his partner, D. Hall, finally printed a copy in Philadelphia in 1764, obviously capitalizing on increasing market demand, but it was not until the date of 1767 that the first foreign copy appeared with a London imprint. The decade of the 1760's produced 20 copies printed in four cities, one foreign, but the decade of the 1770's produced 33 copies from eight cities, two foreign, and the decade of the 1780's produced 48 copies from eighteen cities, with two and possibly three or more foreign.

Something is demonstrated beyond any reasonable doubts by the dates and the places of printing on the surviving copies of Primers. What is demonstrated is that a use of the Primers occurred in Boston about 1727. An increased but moderate and regular use occurred in the Boston area through the 1730's and 1740's, each decade producing exactly three surviving copies. In the 1750's, coinciding with Whitefield's widespread preaching, usage began to increase and spread. By the decade of the 1760's, usage greatly increased and so did the numbers of printers outside Boston, with a London edition finally appearing in 1767. By the 1770's, almost half of the surviving 33 copies came from cities other than Boston, and by the 1780's, three-quarters of the surviving copies of Primers came from cities other than Boston. The trend intensified in the decade of the 1790's, which figures are not shown above. The New England Primer, therefore, began to be a publishing wonder, with widespread use in America and Great Britain, only AFTER 1760, and it became a publishing wonder because it was a religious catechism. It was not normally a schoolbook. Therefore, the myth that The New England Primer was the book by which American children learned to read before 1760 should be permanently removed from reference works.

The New England Primer Enlarged was not the first book for children in the last half of the eighteenth century, nor were other true religious primer-catechisms used as beginning reading books. The speller, or at least the horn book, was the first book, as Noah Webster's comments confirm. On March 10, 1840, Noah Webster (1758-1843) wrote a letter to Henry B. Barnard, publisher of the American Journal of Education, in which he said:

“When I was young, the books used were chiefly or wholly Dilworth's Spelling Books, the Psalter, Testament and Bible.”

Noah Webster would have been a five-year-old beginning school in 1763, so his testimony can reasonably be said to cover practices in New England, or at least Connecticut, in the 1760's.

Reviewing records of books actually published by the Puritans in New England in the seventeenth century does a great deal to clarify the background of the famous New England Primer Enlarged and to

account for its popularity in New England as a catechism. It also suggests that the original New England Primer was itself only one of the numerous catechisms printed before 1683 by the Puritans. In that year the title showed up in England, as discussed in Appendix B, and it most likely represented the licensing of a book for sale in England which had been imported from Boston. That reference from England is the only reference to a New England Primer before the enigmatic advertisement by Harris in 1691, claiming he had “enlarged” it. The third occurrence is the still-existing 1727 copy of *The New England Primer Enlarged* now in the New York Public Library.

Books were published in New England in the seventeenth century by the Puritans’ printing press. It was the second printing press in North America and began its publishing work in 1639.

The first printing press in North America had started operation exactly a hundred years before in 1539 in Mexico City, according to *Annals of Printing* by W. Turner Berry and H. Edmund Poole, London: Blandford Press, 1966. The history of the Mexican press was given on page 86:

“1539... Juan Pablos (or Giovanni Paoli) set up a press in Mexico City. It is generally agreed that he was the first printer in the New World....

“Juan Cromberger, the leading printer in Seville (Spain), had been asked by the Spanish Archbishop in Mexico, Zumarraga, to print a catechism in the language of the Nahuatl. Work on the project started in Seville, but Cromberger felt that it would be better done by a printer in immediate contact with the people who spoke the language.

“As a result, he entered into a contract (12 June 1539) with Juan Pablos, an Italian printer... to go to Mexico and set up a press. A contract was made also with Gil Barbero ... as pressman. Pablos’s wife [was] to do the housekeeping, a Negro was to be recruited as an assistant. Among the many stringent requirements of the contract Pablos was bound to turn out 3,000 sheets daily.

“Pablos arrived in September, and it is generally accepted that the first productions of his press were primers, though none has survived.

Berry and Poole said that before the year ended Pablos had printed in both the Mexican language and Spanish a text with the name *Breve y mas compendiosa doctrina christiana* (obviously a catechism). It was paid for by Archbishop Zumarraga.

However, the “primer” which was printed first in 1539 was obviously an ABC book, and then followed in 1539 by what was obviously a catechism. Considering the printing of 3,000 sheets a day, the output must have been prodigious, resulting in many ABC books and catechisms in the Indian language. What is noteworthy, however, is that the first material printed was a simple book for teaching Indians to read, so that they would be able to read the catechism when it was printed.

Information on the products of that Mexican press is also given in John Clyde Oswald’s *Printing in the Americas*. On page 529, Oswald lists a 1544 edition of *Doctrina Cristiana*, crediting Juan Zumarraga as the author, and stating the 1544 copy is in the New York Public Library, along with *Tripartito* by Jean Gerson (“Sr. Juan Gerson”). Oswald stated that *Doctrina* is the first complete volume published in the Western World (presumably because the Mexican ABC, mentioned above, was begun in Spain). Oswald said *Tripartito* contains a picture, “Adoration of the Virgin,” which makes it the first American illustrated book. Oswald also listed a work published in Mexico in 1557 on physical science, *Physica Speculatio* by Alonso de la Vera Cruz.



Susan Steinfirst, in her interesting unpublished dissertation, *The Origin and Development of the ABC Book in English from the Middle Ages through the Nineteenth Century*, University of Pittsburgh, 1976, referred to an article in 1916 which is of interest, concerning the products of that first Mexican press. She said that the Proceedings of the Antiquarian Society for 1916 included this material: "The Marks of Merit, with an Article by G. A. Plimpton on Hornbooks and Their Use in America." That reference reportedly made the claim that G. A. Plimpton owned "an early 16th century Mexican hornbook, believed to be the first on this continent." If Plimpton were correct in his identification of that material, perhaps it was from the output of the first Mexican press.

Like the Spanish in Mexico in the sixteenth century, the Puritans in Massachusetts in the seventeenth century showed their high regard for literacy by their importation of a printing press and paper into the American wilderness, and by its active use, and not long after by their teaching reading and a catechism to the Indians just as Archbishop Zumarraga had done. The initial product of their printing press appeared in 1639, which was, relatively speaking, only a very short time after the Puritans' arrival in 1620. The Puritans were only a tiny colony and their printed materials were apparently initially only for their own use, which suggests they were almost all literate.

The record of the products of that press, the first in what is now the United States, and of later American presses, are given in *American Bibliography* by Charles Evans, New York: Peter Smith, 1941. Volume I - 1639-1729 begins with the historical evidence for the products of the Puritans' press.

The Dunster manuscripts at Harvard provide the documentation for the thirteenth item, printed in 1643. It was *A Spelling Book*, Cambridge, printed by Stephen Day, providing mute testimony to the Puritans' regard for literacy. However, its nature is unknown. It may have been meant primarily as a "dictionary" to provide help for adults, at that period when true English dictionaries did not yet exist, or it may have been meant primarily as a book to teach children reading like Edward Coote's 1596 *The English Schoole-maister* speller and catechism which was so popular in England for well over a hundred years. It could, of course, have been used for both children and adults, but that any kind of spelling book was produced only 23 years after the immigrants had set foot in the wilderness is extraordinary. This is particularly so since it is obvious that they could easily have imported a few copies of spelling books from England, if a few copies were all they wanted.

John Clyde Oswald's *Printing in the Americas* states on pages 57 and 58 that Samuel Green was the successor to Mathew Day, who was the actual operator of the press, when Mathew Day died, apparently in May, 1649. (Mathew Day was the son of Stephen Day who owned the press but apparently did not operate it). Green had been born in England and had come to America with Governor Winthrop in June, 1630. Green, who died at the age of 87, was the founder of a family of printers, operating in the colonies and later in the states for almost 200 years, a record surpassed by only one other family, the Didot family of France. Samuel Green had 19 children [from two wives], and three of his sons, Samuel Jr., Bartholomew, and Timothy learned the printing trade in America.

As cited elsewhere, records exist which prove the Puritans did import horn books in the seventeenth century, and quotations cited earlier proved the horn books were used by the Puritans to teach beginning reading.

Evans' Item 36 was astonishing. It had been written by John Eliot and was entitled *A Primer or Catechism*, in the Massachusetts Indian Language, printed in 1654 by Samuel Green who had taken over from Stephen Day. The Evans comment reads:

"Of an edition of five hundred, or a thousand copies, printed, no copy is known to exist."

The Indian Primer or Catechism had been preceded by the printing of three catechisms in English in Cambridge, copies of which no longer exist. One was A Catechism by Edward Norris printed by Stephen Day in 1648. One was by Richard Mathew, A Catechism..., printed by Samuel Green in 1650. One was A Catechism by Samuel Danforth, printed by Samuel Green in 1651. Other catechisms appeared after the Indian primer. Presumably, they were all in accord with the Westminster Assembly's catechism of 1648 in its Shorter Version, the one in general use with the Presbyterians and Puritans. Therefore, catechisms and a spelling book had been printed in Cambridge before the first "primer."

When the first "primer" appeared in 1654, it was for Indians in the Indian language and was called A Primer or Catechism. The use of the word, "or," obviously meant the two words could be considered synonymous in Cambridge in 1654. (The same "primer or catechism" wording appeared on the Church of England material.) That the words "primer" and "catechism" were synonymous is suggested further by the fact the Primer or Catechism for the Indians was preceded by the three catechisms for the settlers themselves, and they certainly would have provided as complete material for their own children as they provided for the Indians. The large numbers printed in 1654 for the Indians (500 or a thousand) suggest that large numbers had also previously been printed of the three English catechisms for the use of the settlers, and possibly relatively large numbers of the speller had been printed. In 1662, Evans entry No. 70 shows that another fifteen hundred copies were printed of John Eliot's A Primer or Catechism in the Massachusetts Indian Language, and it was reprinted again in 1669.

Astonishingly, in 1663, even the Bible was printed in the Indian language in an edition of one thousand or fifteen hundred copies. Many of these Indian Bibles still exist, but no copies of the 1654 and 1662 Indian primers have survived. However, Evans noted on page 12 that John Small reproduced the 1669 edition of Eliot's Indian primer at Edinburgh in 1880, so that survived. Actually, a John Small reproduction under the date of 1877 is in the New York Public Library. It shows that Eliot preceded his catechism not only with the alphabet in capital and small letters, but with elaborate syllabary materials. It was obviously Eliot's intent to teach the Indians to read their language by "sound."

The Puritans' publishing work and their educational work with the Indians in the seventeenth century were monumental achievements. Thirty-four years after arriving in the forbidding Massachusetts wilderness, and after initially almost dying out from disease, the winter cold, and starvation, the settlers not only had a functioning press but were distributing relatively massive copies of religious literature to the Indians. (However, much of the financial cost was borne by supporters in England.) Yet Indians were the settlers' potentially implacable enemies as "King Philip's" bloody war soon demonstrated.

A great deal has been written about the priggishness of the Pilgrims, but I have seen nothing remarking on this extraordinary and charitable concern for the eternal well-being of their potential enemies, just as I have seen nothing remarking on Archbishop Zumarraga's extraordinary catechetical work for the Indians in their own language in Mexico. Nor have I seen any reference to Evans' documentation of the Puritan settlers' concern for the basic literacy of the Indians (nor the obvious concern of Archbishop Zumarraga for the literacy of the Indians).

If the Puritans printed 2,000 to 2,500 copies of the Primer or Catechism in the Indian Language, they obviously were attempting and possibly succeeding in teaching at least 2,000 or 2,500 Indians to read their own language, obviously with the fe, fi, fo, fum sound-method syllabary. Logically, the syllabary (probably plus lists of the word spelling patterns necessary to read English) must also have been included in the three earlier Puritan English-language catechisms since they almost certainly had been used as models for the Indian-language version. (The Puritans are recorded to have imported horn books, with which their children would have initially learned to read.) That the Puritan catechisms also included syllabaries (and word lists like those on the New England Primer Enlarged) appears particularly likely since the catechism titles appear to be synonymous in meaning to the title for the Indian text.

The effort involved in translating and printing one of their earlier English catechisms in the Indian language was great and impressive. However, that the Puritans translated and then printed their entire English Bible in the Indian language is nothing short of a monumental achievement, given their tiny resources.

These seventeenth century Puritan catechisms, and the fe, fi, fum syllabaries in the Indian primer-catechism, are unacknowledged roots of the New England Primer Enlarged, the first surviving copy of which was printed in 1727 and which included the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism. The only earlier record of a New England Primer Enlarged is Benjamin Harris's advertisement in 1691, but that 1691 copy is not recorded as having included a "catechism" but only the earlier so-called "primer." The 1691 material as advertised by Harris appears only to have been an amalgamation of the "Mr. Rogers" material from *The Protestant Tutor* of 1685 by Benjamin Harris and of an earlier, unlocatable New England Primer which Harris claimed to have "enlarged," presumably the one registered in England in 1683, which will be described shortly. Yet that earlier material was probably only a catechism itself, since the words "primer" and "catechism" were apparently synonymous in New England at the time.

In Nila Banton Smith's *American Reading Instruction*, 1934, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1965, pages 18-25, she discussed *The New England Primer*. She said the following on pages 18 and 19, citing Heartman's 1922 checklist, which she referred to only as: "Heartman, Charles F. A pamphlet on *The New England Primer*, Metuchen, N. J., 1922." She failed to give the proper title to Heartman's book or to refer to the fact that it had appeared in three editions of 1916, 1922 and 1934. Her treatment certainly deflated the importance of Heartman's extraordinary work, but she nevertheless conveniently drew upon its research establishing a 1683 reference:

"...the first edition of this book was probably printed in England. In the Stationer's Register in London under the date of October 5, 1683, a certain John Gaine entered a title in accordance with the statute requiring the registration of all books for sale. This entry reads:

"Mr. John Gaine

Eodem Die et Anno. Entred then for his Book or copy Entituled the New England Primer or Milk for Babes with Wm. Scoresby.

Jno. Gaine"

All that this establishes is that two men in England named John Gaine and William Scoresby were selling a book in England in the year 1683 called "New England Primer or Milk for Babes." There is no indication that they either wrote it or printed it. Furthermore, it would have been very odd indeed for someone in England to put the title "New England" on his own work. The copies they were registering for sale in England might very well have come over by ship from Boston, since copies of the Indian texts are known to have done so even earlier! Furthermore, "Milk for Babes" was a term for catechism - and so was "primer!" Of course, the two men may also have reprinted a New England original for the English market. Therefore, instead of this entry's suggesting an English origin, it instead tends to confirm the American origin of the *New England Primer* and to suggest strongly that it was only a simple catechism, or "Milk for Babes."

However, the possibility must be considered that one of the "catechisms" listed by Evans may have been the forerunner of the 1691 "New England" "primer"-catechism advertised by Harris, but carrying a different name. Harris had *The Protestant Tutor* published in America apparently as soon as he arrived in 1685, and a copy is still in existence. Evans showed under No. 387 *The Protestant Tutor*, by "Benjamin Keach," printed by Samuel Green in 1685, and added, "Benjamin Harris, the printer of the first London

edition of 1679, is also said to be the author,” but as Alston recorded, Harris’s 1679 and 1685 books were the same only in their titles.

Evans recorded under No. 573 the following concerning the 1691 advertisement for The New England Primer Enlarged of which no copy has ever been located.

“The New England Primer Enlarged. To Which Is Added, More Directions for Spelling: The Prayer of K. Edward the 6th, and Verses Made by Mr. Rogers the Martyr, Left as a Legacy to His Children. A Second Impression. (Printed by R. Pierce for, and sold by Benjamin Harris, at the London Coffee-House in Boston. 1691,)”

No copy of that primer or of any New England Primer earlier than 1727 has ever been located. That is not too surprising, but what is surprising is that no RECORD has appeared ANYWHERE that it was ever printed after 1691, until a copy turned up which had been printed in 1727 and which contained the Westminster Assembly’s Shorter Catechism. That powerfully suggests a great publishing hiatus between Harris’s conceiving of an “enlarged” primer and the primer’s actual arrival in 1727.

It was the Westminster Assembly’s Shorter Catechism which gave the New England Primer Enlarged its importance after 1727. It is therefore possible that the unlocatable “First Impression” of the New England Primer which Harris “enlarged,” presumably the one registered in England, may well have been only a catechism itself. Harris would have felt no need to mention the word, “catechism,” in his 1691 advertisement, since the words “catechism” and “primer” had become synonymous in New England, as in the “Primer or Catechism” for the Indians. Therefore, could the origin of the “New England Primer” to which Harris referred have been in those earlier New England catechisms listed by Evans? Evans did not apparently show complete titles for those catechisms, and probably did not have them. Could one of these earlier and unlocatable catechisms have also included the words, “New England Primer” or even “New England Primer Enlarged” in its complete title, just as the Indian work included the word, “primer,” in its title?

Benjamin Harris produced books in America only until 1695, when he returned to England and printed books there, for which a clear record exists. Yet Harris apparently never printed The New England Primer Enlarged in England, so America was not importing any primers from him. The fact that Harris apparently did not even bother to reprint The New England Primer Enlarged when he got back to England suggests he thought it was of no great importance or was not very marketable.

A copy of the 1727 edition survives, and the “primer” began to grow in fame after 1750 until it finally resulted in a publishing flood in the last half of the eighteenth century. Yet the real source of the primer’s fame was the Shorter Catechism, and not the beginning portions which receive so much attention today. It should be a simple thing to prove that the important material was the catechism. Just ask any group of highly conservative Protestant Christians, the group most like the old New Englanders, to review the New England Primer Enlarged and to mark those pages which they feel are most worth reprinting. Those pages will turn out to be the Westminster Assembly’s Shorter Catechism.

Therefore, the real roots of that late eighteenth-century publishing wonder, The New England Primer Enlarged, very possibly lay in the seventeenth century “catechisms” that were published by and for the Puritans. (Considerably more historical background on The New England Primer is given in related entries in Appendix B under the dates of 1679, 1683, 1691 and 1727.)

Concerning the seventeenth-century Swedish settlers in America, there can be no doubt that they also valued literacy highly, just as the Puritans and the Pennsylvania Germans did. In James Pyle Wickersham’s History of Education in Pennsylvania... From the Time the Swedish Settled on the

Delaware to the Present Day, Inquirer Publishing Company, 1886, he told of the Swedish colonists requesting books from Sweden and being willing to pay for them even if they were lost in transit. The settler's request was for 12 Bibles, 200 catechisms and 200 ABC books. In 1690, they were sent 400 "primers" and 500 catechisms. However, it is evident that whoever Wickersham was quoting was confusing ABC books and primers, since the word, "primer," and its application to children's books is purely an English-language usage. The settlers had requested Swedish ABC books, and obviously what they got were Swedish ABC books, not English "primers." Wickersham quoted a further statement, citing "Hazard's Register," but giving no date:

"There seems to have been a great need of books as the missionaries on their arrival found only three in the whole colony, but yet so anxious were the people for the improvement of their children that these had been lent from one to another so that all could read."

It seems probable with the reference to "the improvement of their children" that the "only three" books were ABC books. This is particularly so since it is inconceivable that almost all those old Lutheran settlers could have left Sweden for the unknown dangers of the far-away American wilderness of the seventeenth century without having carried their beloved Bibles for comfort!

With this as a background, it seems reasonable that the settlers had asked for 200 catechisms and 200 ABC books because they had, or expected soon to have, 200 to 400 school-age children. That seems reasonable, because, with perhaps about four children in each family by that time, there would have been from about fifty to a hundred families of settlers. There also would have been close to fifty or a hundred Bibles already with them along the Delaware River by the 1690's, and not just three, or the settlers would hardly have requested only twelve Bibles from Sweden at the same time that they requested 200 catechisms!

Concerning literacy among the English in Pennsylvania, presumably the English Quakers, Wickersham also quoted a legal document from 1678 awarding payment to a man who had taught another man's children to read the Bible in one year. If even one such instance of tutoring for pay ended up in the Pennsylvania courts in 1678, it implies there were many other such cases of tutoring for pay in Pennsylvania which did not need to reach the courts. That suggests a widespread concern for literacy among the seventeenth century English settlers in Pennsylvania, just as records so clearly show was the case in New England.

Wickersham gave concrete testimony on beginning reading methods used by the Episcopal English in Pennsylvania about 1730, quoting from a letter by Rowland Jones, who Wickersham said was most likely either Welsh or English. Wickersham said:

"He taught the schools connected with the Episcopal churches at Chester and Radner about 1730.... In a letter to Rev. Dr. David Humphrey, he gave the following account of his method of teaching: 'Sir, you required an account of my method of instruction in school. I endeavor for beginners to get Primers with syllables, viz., from one to 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8.... when they get the Primer pretty well I serve them so in the Psalter, and we have some Psalters with the Proverbs at the latter end.... Then I move them into such places as I judge they are fit for, either in the New or Old Testament....'"

Jones was writing only about forty years after John Locke, and gave the same textbook sequence that Locke did but omitting the horn book: from the primer to the Psalter. Yet Rowland Jones obviously was not limited to just one "primer" but was selecting from a list of possible primers. However, since he specified "syllables," it is possible he was really referring to a spelling book and not a true primer, and so

very likely was John Locke. The fact that Jones used a “primer” first certainly suggests it was only a speller.

Henry VIII’s sixteenth century Church of England or Episcopal primer had obviously been superseded by newer official Church of England primers, and some were published in America. The reference below to the Book of Common Prayer, which was not prepared until after Henry VIII’s death, is proof that these primers were newer. Evans showed the two American reprints listed below for 1746 and 1749. They were apparently the same version, since an edition from England referred to later used all the wording given in both titles:

“1746 - The Primer or Catechism, England, Church of, Containing Goodly Prayers and Graces, Authorized by the King to be Used Throughout His Dominions”

“1749 - England, Church of, The Primer or Catechism Set Forth Agreeable to the Book of Common Prayer. Boston. Reprinted and sold by T. Rand, 1749”

This authorized “Primer or Catechism” version continued to be printed in England after the advent of The Royal Primer, as shown by the following entry No. 143 by Heartman:

“The Primer, or Catechism, Set forth agreeable to the Book of Common Prayer, Authorized by the King; to be used throughout his Dominions. Containing goodly Prayers and Graces London: Printed for the Company of Stationers, 1777.”

Evans has two entries for primers printed by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia between 1749 and 1767. The primer is unnamed, and the entries suggest a declining use from 1765 to 1767, so it could not have been the New England Primer Enlarged, since it was increasing in use. Nor is it likely to have been Newbery’s Royal Primer, whose history is discussed elsewhere. Since the Primer or Catechism of the Church of England had been reprinted elsewhere in America in 1746 and 1749 as shown by the entries by Evans, it may have been that book that Franklin was printing, or it may have been like one of the many primer-spellers Alston listed which were available in England before 1749. However, considering the fact that Franklin’s primer was printed in Philadelphia and that its editions showed a declining usage with the passage of time, it most probably was a reprint of the 1670 Quaker primer-speller by Fox and Hooke, A Primmer and Catechism for Children; or a Plain and Easie Way for Children to Learn to Spell and Read. An American edition of the Fox speller printed in Philadelphia in 1702 still survives, and so does one known to be printed by Franklin in Philadelphia in 1737. Therefore, particularly since the title begins the same way, “A Primer,” and not “The Primer,” the Evans entries for Franklin given below probably refer to a Fox speller.

9801 - 1764 A Primer, Philadelphia, printed by B. Franklin and D. Hall. “Over 35,000 copies of the primer were printed between the years 1749 and 1765.”

10147 - A Primer, B. Franklin and D. Hall, Between March 1765 and February, 1767, 2,000 copies

Further concerning high American standards of literacy in the eighteenth century and materials to teach beginning reading, Wickersham told on page 216 of the work of Anthony Benezet who had spent nearly half a century in Pennsylvania in the work of teaching.

“Benezet was born in France but having joined the Society of Friends [Ed.: Quakers] in England he came to Philadelphia in 1731, aged 18. In 1739 he taught school in Germantown. In 1742 he became English tutor in the Friends public school, Philadelphia. In 1755 he established a

school for girls which, owing to its literary and moral excellence was largely patronized by the best class of citizens for many years. About 1750 he began to give in the evenings in addition ... in connection with his own school gratuitous instruction to negroes. He continued these self sacrificing efforts in behalf of a downtrodden people until the Friends in good measure through his influence established their free school for colored people. Of this school he took charge .... the last years of his life giving instruction in it and dying bequeathed to it his little fortune.”

Concerning Benezet’s work teaching Blacks and Caucasians in his Quaker school for so very many years, he testified that he had found no difference between the groups as both learned very well, but he added some bitter words concerning slave-owners. However, Benezet, who wrote and used a “sound” speller to teach beginning reading, had effectively testified that it was possible for both Blacks and women to receive a real education in the Pennsylvania of the eighteenth century. Yet Puritan New England, like Scotland and England but unlike France, was very remiss in the education of women beyond simple literacy until the nineteenth century.

Wickersham cited an American edition of Dilworth’s speller printed by Francis Bailey at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1778. Wickersham said, “This was at the darkest period of the Revolutionary War....” and he quoted from the publisher’s preface:

“At the beginning of the contest between the Tyrant and the States, it was boasted by our [unnatural?] enemy that if nothing more they could at least shut up our ports by their navy and prevent the importation of Books and Paper so that, in a few years after, [we] sink down into barbarity and ignorance, and be fit companions for the Indians, our neighbors to the westward.”

This is evidence of the high regard for literacy in America in the 1770’s, which high regard was recognized by its then-enemy, Great Britain. Curiously, however, it also reflected a belief that had been prevalent among the “elite” in Great Britain for over a hundred years: the desirability of withholding literacy from subject groups in order to dominate them. For instance, the purpose of the penal laws in place throughout the eighteenth century in Ireland which outlawed not only Catholic priests but Catholic schoolmasters was to subjugate the Catholic Irish. Knowledge is, indeed, power, and that fact was clearly recognized in the eighteenth century.

Quotations cited by Professor Lawrence Stone of Princeton testify to the long-standing existence of a motive to repress literacy in Great Britain. However, in many other respects, Stone’s article was highly inadequate. It was entitled “Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900” and appeared in *Past and Present*, Number 42, 1969, the periodical of the Past and Present Society, Oxford, England. Its content made it obvious that Stone had either never heard of or never read the 1920 work of Albert William Parry, Principal of the Training College at Carmarthen, entitled *Education in England in the Middle Ages*, published by University Tutorial Press, Ltd., W. B. Clive, London. Stone had apparently also never heard of earlier authorities on whom Parry drew, such as Brother Azarius in his many works, including *Essays Educational*, Chicago: D. H. McBride & Co., 1896. Azarius had cited L’Abbaye Allain who wrote *L’Instruction Primaire en France Avant la Revolution*, Paris: 1881; Armand Ravelet, who wrote *L’Instruction Primaire Dans les Campagnes Avant 1789*, Troyes: 1875; and Babeau who wrote *L’Instruction Primaire*, 1875. Others Azarius cited were listed on page 172 in his chapter, “Primary School.”

Stone had obviously never read any of those works concerning pre-Reformation education, because his misstatements concerning pre-Reformation education were positively astonishing. Stone also wasted ink quoting on pages 83 and 84 a disgusting statement by Claude Levi-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, New York, 1965, pages 292-3:

“...the primary function of writing, as a means of communication, is to facilitate the enslavement of other human beings.... The struggle against illiteracy is indistinguishable, at times, from the increased power exerted over the individual citizen by the central authority.”

Yet Stone’s article does contain considerable factual material concerning the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including the following on page 84 on which he cited John McFarlan, *Inquiries Concerning the Poor*, Edinburgh, 1782, page 245, and S. M. Elkins, *Slavery*, New York 1963, p. 60. Stone noted that literacy was sometimes forbidden by law for some groups of people, recording the horrendous fact that it was illegal in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in some places in America to teach slaves how to read and write. Stone quoted this comment from the period:

“...teaching slaves to read and write tends to dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion.”

Stone said that, after the Civil War in England, Hobbes and those with property placed the blame for the war on the fact that education had been widespread before it. Stone said that, between the years of 1660 and 1790, the belief was widespread that to give the poor a little learning was very dangerous, since it made them want to improve their lot. That threatened the control by the elite.

Stone cited Christopher Wase, who wrote *Considerations Concerning Free Schools*, Oxford, 1678, as the source for this appalling statement:

“Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion and Obedience.”

Stone commented that the 1678 viewpoint was long-lived, and cited the fact that, in the early 1700’s, Bernard Mandeville remarked:

“...should a Horse know as much as a Man, I should not like to be his Rider.”

Stone cited a 1757 comment of Soane Jenyn concerning ignorance among the poor, Jenyn calling it:

“...a cordial administered by the gracious hand of providence.”

Stone said that Bishop Beilby Porteous of London, as late as 1803, had remarked that:

“...men of considerable ability say that it is safest for both the Government and the religion of the country to let the lower classes remain in that state of ignorance in which nature has originally placed them.”

Yet the hostility to the education of the poor in England existed in a period when large numbers of the poorer classes were surprisingly literate. Stone quoted on page 85 a comment of a continental visitor to England in 1726, who said:

“All Englishmen are great newsmongers. Workmen habitually begin the day by going to coffee-rooms in order to read the latest news. I have often seen shoe-blacks and persons of that class club together to purchase a farthing newspaper.”

Widespread literacy also existed in Scotland, as mentioned by Stone, although he also stated that the manufacturing areas in England did not do so well as other English regions.



Stone wrote that toward the end of the eighteenth century the literate working class was reading texts from the political radical, Tom Paine (which obviously required very high “reading comprehension”), and he cited the following two remarks. Apparently both were made by Dr. Currie of Liverpool:

“Our peasantry now read the Rights of Man on mountains and moorside and by the wayside.”

“The cause why Paine takes so much in Scotland is simply because the bodies can all read. Among the manufacturers of Manchester and Birmingham, not one in a hundred of whom know their alphabet, Paine has hitherto done little harm, though I am told he now begins to operate.”

Then he quoted Professor Plumb:

“...the terrible spectre of a literate, politically minded, working class began to stalk the land.”

Stone commented that the French Revolution, like the earlier English Revolution, only tended to confirm the belief of the propertied classes that education of the poor was undesirable. The bishop of Rochester in 1800 actually called the Charity Schools and the Sunday Schools which taught the poor to read:

“...schools of Jacobinical rebellion”

Therefore, Stone had produced historical proof of the desire of “elites” to control others by withholding literacy, and he had produced concrete proof of it as late as 1803. That was not long before the “meaning” method in teaching beginning reading in English began to replace “sound.” The “meaning” method first surfaced in England in the monitorial schools, and those monitorial schools had been the special enthusiasm of the “elite.” In 1818 in Parliament, Brougham first sought government funds for the support of the so-called infant schools, which were nursery schools run on the monitorial principle. The monitorial schools, after a convoluted history, eventually resulted in the establishment of government-controlled schools in England and contributed to their establishment in America. However, the idea of government-controlled schools, just like the “meaning” method itself, both of which were being promoted in England and America in the early nineteenth century, had originated in eighteenth-century France, as will be discussed.

Except from about 1900-1930 in America and from about 1900-1940 in England, most government schools have consistently taught children to read English by “meaning.” Historically speaking, the “meaning” method has been the siamese twin to the idea of government-controlled schools. The “meaning” method after about 1818 in Andrew Bell’s monitorial schools and after about 1826 elsewhere began to produce that brand-new disease known as functional illiteracy. No matter how much time functionally illiterate children spend in school, they can never be really educated because they are essentially limited to reading only a few hundred or a thousand or so whole words out of the half million or so in English. Therefore, functional illiterates can never read with the “comprehension” of ordinary English boot-blacks in 1726, whose minds in 1726 were not safely under the control of their “betters.”

The “elite” whom Stone cited from the eighteenth century might have considered twentieth century “functional illiteracy” in its various gradations of disability to be proof of enormous success, rather than proof of enormous failure. That is because true literacy has finally and successfully been withheld from the majority of the population, just as the “elite” had so futilely desired in eighteenth-century England when the dame schools were producing such a disturbingly (to the “elite”) high degree of true literacy among the poor. At that time, the poor were the bulk of the English population, and yet it was acknowledged (with distress, by the “elite”) that the poor were capable of reading the heavy philosophy

of Tom Paine with great ease. That is the same kind of ease that today, for most people, is limited to the reading of the comic strips.

Charles F. Heartman, a bookman and a prolific writer on books, published in America in 1934 his third edition of his Bibliographical Check List of the New England Primer. Soon after, in 1935, he had 300 copies printed for Harry B. Weiss of his American Primers, Indian Primers, Royal Primers and 37 Other Types of Non-New England Primers Issued Prior to 1830. (His very title demonstrates that the New England Primer was not dominant!) Heartman made the interesting remark in his preface to this very limited edition:

“This is my second attempt to compile a bibliographical check list of Non-New England Primers. The first was in 1922 but I gave up in disgust. However, after the appearance of the last edition of my Bibliographical Checklist of the New England Primer, published by the R. R. Bowker Company in New York last fall, something seemed to be pulling at my sleeves constantly, trying to tell me: ‘Go ahead now. It has to be done.’ Here it is.”

That Heartman saved many titles from oblivion is obvious, as almost none of his titles show up on the U. S. Department of Education publications on early American textbooks, Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education, and Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900. Many are not in the Harvard textbook collection which is the most extensive in America. In addition, Heartman’s tiny edition of only 300 copies, reproduced from a typewritten original and not even type-set and which he felt nagged to publish, has for the past fifty-five years provided the ONLY reference in America to non-New England primers before 1830.

As a professional bookman and authority on rare books, Heartman was puzzled by such a lack of material on primers. Heartman commented that very little had been written about primers in books concerning children’s literature. He noted, as exceptions, material by Clifton Johnson, Alice Morse Earle and Miss Halsey, but he said they only repeated what had been said by Paul Leicester or slightly increased what he said. Heartman also noted that primers are only mentioned in passing in education histories. Heartman cited as a possible exception material by D. G. E. Littlefield, but he still felt that Littlefield did not adequately emphasize what Heartman believed was the importance of primers. Heartman commented that many collectors did not, however, think that primers were children’s books. Heartman then said:

“At any rate, there is a wide field of research open.”

He was certainly correct about that.

Clifton Johnson wrote *Old-Time Schools and School-Books*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904; Alice Morse Earle wrote *Child Life in Colonial Days*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899; Rosalie V. Halsey wrote *Forgotten Books of the American Nursery*, Boston, 1911; and Paul Leicester Ford wrote *The New-England Primer, A History of Its Origin and Development*, New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1897. Heartman did not mention in the above A. W. Rosenbach, a famous book collector in Philadelphia, who wrote *Early American Children’s Books - 1682 -1836*, and whose material and comments are of great general interest, even if not specifically on primers. However, Heartman did sometimes cite Rosenbach in his actual book listings.

Heartman’s *American Primers, Indian Primers, Royal Primers...* contains an unhappy fact, although he made no comment about it. His check list showed that some very rare and very old primers, some dating back to the eighteenth century, are at present in the Library of Congress with only their title pages remaining, the rest of the books having been removed. They were all printed in Pennsylvania, or else

showed no place of origin. Some carried notes that suggested they were editions that had been filed for copyright, which was at that time done through offices in each state. The latest was 1830, the cut-off date for Heartman's list. Therefore, it is obvious that someone in Pennsylvania who had charge of the collection of official copyright copies filed in Pennsylvania, at some point in time after 1830 threw away all or most of the primer-spellers and sent only their title pages to Washington as some lunatic kind of record! For instance, Heartman showed the following:

“YOUNG CHILD’S PRIMER

“No copy of this title has been preserved. It is therefore, useless to speculate about the contents or the individuality of this Primer.

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“The Young Child’s Primer, or Introductory Spelling Book. No place, No date. Copies: LC [Library of Congress]. Title page only. Writing on verso: Filed March 12, 1819.”

This was apparently the original copy filed for official copyright, and yet all of the book except its title page has been thrown away. Heartman lists many other primers apparently all originating in Pennsylvania on which only the title page survived at the Library of Congress, including the following:

“The American Primer; or, an easy introduction to Spelling and Reading. Philadelphia: Printed for Mathew Carey, No. 118, High Street, 1800”

According to Alston, only two copies survive in the world of Mathew Carey’s The Columbian Spelling and Reading Book, tentatively dated to 1798. Yet Alston stated that no copy exists anywhere in the world of Carey’s 1800 edition of The American Primer; or an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading. Alston had canvassed libraries all over the world to find spelling books from 1800 and before but none had a copy of Carey’s 1800 American Primer although later editions are available. It is obvious that someone in Pennsylvania, at some point in time almost certainly after 1830, probably to make room on bookshelves, threw away all of Carey’s rare 1800 speller except its title page!

Another title on which there is no other record makes it clear that the mangled texts must all have been copyright deposits, up to at least 1830:

“An Easy Primer... By Charles C. Guenther. No place. 1830. “Title page only with Mss. entry on verso: 1830, Oct. 7. Deposited by Chas. C. Guenther as author.”

As Heartman had never been concerned with methods of teaching in the primary grades and the history of teaching reading, Heartman does not seem to have realized that many of the books he was labeling “primers” were only spellers. Nor, possibly, did Alston realize the same thing, perhaps omitting many spellers from his list from 1800 and before because they were titled, “primers.” But Heartman very possibly realized something critical: that the cut-off date he chose of 1830 did separate the old kind of true primer, the prayer book/catechism version meant as a second book for children, from something that was new and completely different. Actually, the cut-off date was 1826, and not 1830.

At that critical point, because of work by activists, primers ceased to be largely religious materials meant as children’s SECOND book, if used as school books at all, and became, instead, non-religious material, meant to be children’s FIRST book. The new kind of primer was meant to displace the spellers as the beginning book and was meant to be the book from which children would be initially taught to read. Children would learn to read by memorizing meaning-bearing whole words with the aid of context

guessing and with little or no reference to letter sounds, instead of learning to read by the sounds of syllables as they had done in the old spellers, horn books and battledores.

The horn books and battledores became extinct and the spelling books were moved ahead to be used by older children long after the children's conditioned reflexes in reading had been firmly formed by the new so-called "primers." By that time, the children would have become permanent Kanji-type readers of "meaning-bearing" whole words and would have become largely immune to the "sound" effect of the spellers.

## Chapter 4

# The Methods Used to Teach Reading From These Materials in the Past, Why The Methods and Materials Developed as They Did, and Some General History as a Framework

In the late seventeenth century, primers in English were still in use as the second book for teaching children to read, but whether what were called “primers” in the sources from that period were true primers or only spelling books is very uncertain. John Locke referred in his *Some Thoughts on Education*, in 1691, to practices then prevalent in England in teaching reading, as the “ordinary road of the horn book, primer, psalter, Testament and Bible.”

Most hornbooks, of course, like the ABC book, whose first page was its model, gave practice on a sample syllabarium, and Locke testified that the hornbook preceded the English primers in the 17th century. So did the true primers at that point include a syllabarium, and, of course, so did the spellers. It is, of course, highly possible that Locke’s reference to a “primer” was really a reference to a speller and not to a true primer.

The printed syllabarium on the English hornbook page was a very unsatisfactory thing. In contrast, copies of a *TABULAE ABCDARIAE* (shown in Appendix A) were found in a German cellar dated to about 1530, one copy of which is presently available in the New York Public Library. On this single sheet, the syllable table precedes the Pater Noster, as on the hornbook, but the Latin prayer is divided into syllables for ease of pronunciation. Also, unlike the syllable table on the English hornbook, the syllable table on the German copy is set up to give every possible letter combination with which to form Latin syllables. The column on the left shows all the consonants and their possible blends, the center column shows all the vowels and diphthongs, and the column on the right shows again all possible consonants and blends.

It is obvious that a child worked his way down the columns, obviously under an adult’s direction, pronouncing the syllables aloud, by combining each consonant with every possible vowel and consonant in turn, almost certainly with a fescue or pointer. When he finished, he would have probably pronounced aloud every possible Latin syllable. After the child had worked his way through that syllable table and memorized the sounds of the syllables, he obviously later picked out and pronounced in the Latin Pater Noster the sounds of the syllables he had just learned.

That arrangement - combining each item in the first column in turn with each item in the center and then the final columns - is strangely reminiscent of the Descartes multiplication “pairs” that appeared in an Addison Wesley third-grade text which my school system used when I was teaching third grade. The material ran roughly like this: ABC lined up on one side was to be matched to DEF on the other. Nine (3 x 3) distinctly different pairs were therefore systematically produced - AD, AE, AF; BD, BE, BF; CD, CE, CF. Is it possible that Descartes in the seventeenth century produced the mathematical concept of numbers of unique multiplication pairs, each one different from every other one, because he had as a little child been taught by some syllabary like the sixteenth-century German one, in which a child was supposed to work his way down the columns and produce all possible different items? Could that rough framework have remained buried in Descartes’ memory, to surface later for his creative use in mathematics?

Yet all that the abbreviated English hornbook syllabary showed as a pattern was “ab, eb, ib, ob, ub - ba, be, bi, bo, bu” - followed by “ac,” etc., “ad,” etc., and sometimes “af”, etc. English fairy tales

apparently used “fe, fi, fo, fum,” because “f” is about where the printed syllables often ended on the English hornbook (with fu instead of fum, of course). That stage must have been burned into the consciousness of little English children, who were usually being taught to read in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at the ridiculous young age of three.. Many little children must have been stalled at the “f” step for a long time, finding it difficult to construct the next series of syllables for themselves without a printed copy as a guide.

Without seeing the actual syllables in front of him in print after the “f” series (af, ef, if, of, uf - fa, fe, fi, fo, fu), it is obvious that the English child was supposed to point with his fescue to the consonants in the complete alphabet after “f” at the top of the hornbook and then to combine them to construct syllables with each of the vowels which were also listed apart from the complete alphabet at the top of the hornbook. He combined and pronounced aloud each of the rest of the consonants to form open syllables with long vowels (ga, ge, gi, go, gu) and closed syllables with short vowels (ag, eg, ig, og, ug).

Although the vowels a, e, i, o and u were shown at the top of the hornbook page again under the complete alphabet, obviously for use in constructing syllables, the diphthongs oi, au, ou, and special vowels oo, etc., were not shown, and that obviously was an enormous omission.

However, the English spelling books like Coote’s after 1596 were widespread and often included complete syllabaries and vowel lists. For those English children unfortunate enough in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries to be given the hornbook instead of a spelling book, however, the primers into which they moved next did normally have complete syllabaries.

Apparently, ABC books, probably some with syllable tables, were prevalent in Europe in large numbers not long before the printing press arrived. An eight-page Abecedarium from the fifteenth century was discovered by Johann Enschede in 1751. It was obviously printed to meet a pre-existing demand and may be the earliest printed ABC book. It is referred to as the Enschede Abecedarium in *The Invention of Printing* by Theo. L. De Vinne, New York: Francis Hart & Co., 1876. De Vinne estimated its date as the last quarter of the fifteenth century, although others suggested an earlier date. De Vinne said on page 289:

“It is described by some as an Horarium, or little book of prayers; by others as an abecedarium or a child’s primer. It contains the alphabet (all the small letters but not the capitals), the Lord’s Prayer, the Ave Maria, the Apostles’ Creed, and two prayers.... the types seem to have been made for the Dutch language.... This little tract was discovered in 1751 by the celebrated founder, Enschede, of Haarlem in a manuscript breviary of the fifteenth century, among the books of the descendants of John Van Zwan, printer of Haarlem, 1561....”

De Vinne described its first page, crediting “Holtrop” as his source. The alphabet in lower case letters was preceded with a capital A. The Lord’s Prayer followed in Latin, as far as “Fiat voluntas” at the bottom of that first page, and obviously the prayer continued on the second page. If the printed syllabary were not included (though the fact it was included is sometimes omitted when “alphabets” are reported on such materials), then the probability is that the child would use a “fescue” to construct the syllabary for himself. He would point to the vowels, a, e, i, o, and u, and then join them with each letter in turn, producing such combinations as ab, eb, ib, ob, ub for closed syllables, and ba, be bi, bo, bu, for open syllables.

Paul Leicester Ford also referred to the Enschede Abecedarium on page 4 of his *The New England Primer*, citing his information source as De Vinne’s *Invention of Printing*, page 290:

“The Enschede Abecedarium, which has even been claimed to be the first specimen of printing with type, and which certainly was printed in the fifteenth century, contained besides the

alphabet, the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, the Credo and two prayers, being the (elemental) book.”

These ABC books with prayers in Latin (the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Credo) undoubtedly used the same teaching technique for forming phonetically regular open and closed syllables (such as ba, be, bi, bo, bu and ab, eb, ib, ob, ub) as were to be found on the Papyrus Gueraud-Jouguet, the third century, B. C. teacher’s guide in Greek found in the sands of North Africa in 1939, which Marrou cited, as discussed previously. That the method surfaced almost two thousand years later, essentially unchanged, testifies that the syllable “fe, fi, fo, fum” approach was considered for two thousand years to be so simple and so self-evident that it did not require any more formal, written discussion than how to spin flax or how to cut hay. It most probably was the gradual decline in the use of wax writing tablets which had been in wide use all through antiquity and until about the fourteenth century, and the emergence of cheap paper which resulted in the proliferation of ABC books with syllabariums in Europe at the time printing arrived. With wax tablets, no ABC books or syllabarium had been needed, but only a teacher who, himself, knew how to form the phonetically regular syllables of the syllabarium from the alphabet, the look and sounds of which written syllables the child then had to associate and memorize as the teacher demonstrated them.

It is known from the ancient stories of Irish saints, in the period roughly from 500 to 800 A.D., from the sparse references to beginning reading methods, that the first written texts little children were given to read at that time were the Latin Psalms, and that they were written on wax tablets to be studied and memorized. The first step for the children before being given the Psalms obviously would have been an instructor’s writing out the alphabet and then the syllabarium on those same wax tablets.

In Andrew W. Tuer’s History of the Horn Book, he wrote on page 2:

“In his English-Irish Dictionary (1732) Hugh Mac-Curtin, who devoted himself to the study of the early history of Ireland, gives Clairin, lit. a little board or tablet, as the equivalent for horn-book.”

Mac-Curtin’s “little board or tablet” certainly agrees in part with descriptions from early Irish sources, but the boards or tablets were multiple and tied together with leather thongs. However, his definition omits the very pertinent fact that the little boards or tablets were covered with re-usable wax. That made them very different teaching instruments from the horn book, with its already written-upon sheet covered with horn so that nothing else could ever be demonstrated on its surface.

#### Evidence of Beginning Reading Methods and Curriculum in Ancient Ireland, from Texts of Saints Lives

An article appeared in the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Vol. 50, 1920, page 160, concerning the Springmount tablets found in the Springmount Bog, County Antrim, on which waxed tablets some Psalms had been written, obviously by an adult. These tablets have been dated to the sixth century. The article stated on page 166, as an explanation for the tablets and their contents:

“From various references in the lives of Saints it would appear that the Psalms were the first text-book studied by ecclesiastical students. These were written on waxen tablets by their instructors.”

The article further referred to a legend in the life of one Irish saint in which the boy wrote from dictation which was then corrected, so the tablets obviously had a dual purpose for children: reading and writing.

Only a few of the saints' lives were written during the lifetimes of those who knew them. Most of the content of these earliest biographies has been shown to be true. Yet, the later the authorship of the lives, the greater the exaggeration becomes. This late authorship accounts for the mythical elements in so many of the biographies. The marvelous has obviously been inserted for dramatic effect because no one from the period when the saint was living was still surviving to argue about it. Occasional sardonic comments are found elsewhere in early writings which suggest that these tall tales were not always believed. This is amusingly shown in an early Irish poem quoted at length by John Morris in *The Age of Arthur*.

It is also entirely possible that no one in that period of time really expected such "marvelous elements" to be taken very seriously, as they may have been considered a kind of poet's license. This is supported by the fact that the *Irish Annals*, kept in the same period of time and meant to be historical documents, were scrupulously precise about factual details.

It is supported further by an amusing comment made by an Irish monk about 700 A.D. when transcribing outlandish pagan Celtic stories and myths, which by then were many centuries old. A delightful sidewalk pocket park and plaza is presently in Dublin, with two walls decorated by mosaic murals. On one wall is a colorful impressionist mosaic picture of such pagan Celtic myths, and on the other wall in large mosaic lettering are the ancient Christian monk's comments about those pagan tales. The sun was in my eyes when I took a picture of that wall, so I missed the first two or three lines, but those remaining read:

"Do not credit the details of the story or fantasy. Some things in it are devilish lies or some poetical figments. Some seem possible and others not. Some are for the enjoyment of idiots."

That ancient monk's comments could have been written today! The same matter-of-fact realism that he applied to the Celtic myths about 700 A. D. was undoubtedly also applied to the mythic lives of saints written in the same general period. The poem Morris quoted, written about the same time, is proof that realism was sometimes applied to the some of the outlandish tales written in the early Christian era.

However, the background data in all of these tales of the saints concerning the ordinary routines of daily life can be considered to be accidental but reliable indicators of ordinary practices. Such factual background elements are to be found in all folk stories and are very reliable historical sources. This fact makes the few passing references in the tales to methods used in the teaching of reading highly reliable.

The following transcriptions are from rough pencil notes I took on two relatively rare volumes from 1890 and 1914 in the New York Public Library. As a result, there may be some errors in transcription. The material is of interest, however, because it shows the sequence followed by students in Ireland in the period roughly from 500 A. D. to 800 A. D. It should be remembered that the Irish missionaries carried their practices first to England and then to the Continent after 600 A. D. Then both the English and the Irish missionaries carried their practices to the Continent after about 700 A. D., teaching barbarians who had become Christians in some parts of the Continent, and lapsed Christians in other parts of the Continent. The methods described in these early Irish saints' lives, then, can be assumed to have been similar to those used in Great Britain and on the Continent until the period when the wax tablets went out of general use for beginners some time after 1300.

These early Irish saints' lives show that first the alphabet (which must have included the syllabarium) was written on wax tablets by a tutor for an individual child who might have been a boy or a girl. The child was also taught to write, obviously on the wax tablets. The next step was the writing of the Psalms on the same tablets, in Latin, which were first read aloud by the tutor and then practiced aloud by the student (obviously in a very loud voice, and chanted.) The Psalms were memorized, which was an extraordinary achievement! All of this would have been done before the student was about twelve years



old. The individual tutor/pupil relationship, and the wax tablets, were then dropped and the student joined a large class of other students, who were using books, not wax tablets, under an instructor. The book they were studying was the New Testament, in Latin. Apparently the whole Bible was eventually studied. All of these facts can be picked out from the following excerpts.

These notes are from Lives of the Saints from the Book of Lismore, edited with a translation, notes and index by Whitley Stokes, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press: 1890.

Columb Cille (page 172-173) “Not long thereafter, Columb Cille and his fosterer went at Christmas to... the ramparts of Enna, in Ti Enda. It was entrusted to his fosterer, the cleric, to perform a priest’s duties in that place at the hightide. But bashfulness seized him, so that he was unable to chant the Psalm that came to him; Misericordias Dei was that Psalm. Howbeit... Colomb Cille, chanted the Psalm in his behalf, and yet he had not read till then aught save an alphabet. God’s name and Colomb Cille’s were magnified by that miracle... At another time he and his fosterer went to visit a sick person. As they were winding through a wood, the cleric’s foot slips on the rock so that he fell and died suddenly. Colomb Cille put his cowl under the cleric’s head for he knew not that he was not asleep, and he began rehearsing his lessons so that certain nuns heard his reading aloud as far as their chapel....”

Note the phrase, “...he had not read till then aught save an alphabet.” Yet no one “reads” an alphabet. One “recites” it. One does “read” a syllabarium. The choice of the word, “read,” if accurate in the translation, certainly suggests that the meaning for “alphabet” was “syllabarium.”

Life of Brennan (page 249) “At the end of a year the Bishop Eirc took him with him to his own foster mother, even Ita, and Brennan remained five years with Ita.... Thereafter to the end of five years, he constantly read his Psalms with Bishop Eirc and it seemed long to Ita to be apart from him... On a certain day Bishop Eirc went to preach the word of God. Brennan who was then aged ten years went with him into the chariot... Brennan sat down in the cave and therein he began his Psalms and his hymns of praise to the Lord.... Now the sound of Brennan’s voice singing his Psalms was heard a thousand paces at each side. The sound of the voice of Columb Cille was heard to the same distance when he was chanting his Psalms and his hymns.... Now after Brennan had learned the Canon and the Old Law and the New Testament, he desired... to learn the Rules of the saints of Ireland. So Bishop Eirc consented that he should go and learn those rules....”

The Life of Ciaran of Clonmacnois (page 266) “After that there came to pass something marvelous at Rath Cremthainn in Magh Ai while he was keeping the cattle of his foster father, Deacon Justin at Fidarta, and there was a long distance between them. Howbeit, he used to hear what his tutor had to say as if they had been side by side. Then came a fox to Ciaran out of the wood and Ciaran dealt gently with it and it used to visit him often, until at last he enjoined upon it to do him a service, namely, to carry his Psalter between him and his tutor, Deacon Justin. For when it was said at Fidarta “Say this in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen,” Ciaran at Rath Cremthainn used to hear from that to the end of the lesson. And the fox used to be humbly attending the lesson till the writing of it on wax came to an end, and he then did take it with him to Ciaran. But once his natural malice broke through the fox and he began to eat the book for he was greedy about the leathern bands that were about it on the outside. While he was eating the book, then came Oengus, son of Cremthainn to him with a band of men and with greyhounds. And they hunted him and he found not shelter in any place till he came under Ciaran’s cowl. God’s name and Ciaran’s were magnified by saving the book from the fox, and by saving the fox from the hounds. And that book is today called Ciaran’s tablets.”

(page 267) “After these things then it was time for Ciaran to go as a scholar to Findian of Clonard to learn wisdom ... ..the king of Cualann’s daughter was brought to Findian to read her Psalms after having dedicated her maidenhood to God. Findian entrusted the girl to Ciaran and with him she used to read her Psalms. Now so long as they remained together, Ciaran saw nothing of the girl’s body save only her feet.... In this school, moreover, a stag used to visit Ciaran and he used to put his book on the deer’s horns.”

(page 268) “Into that school then came Nennid Slant Eye of Locha Eirne to read with Findian and he had no book. ‘Ask for a book,’ saith Findian. Nennid made the round of the school, and got no book from any of the scholars. ‘Hast thou gone to the tender youth who is in the north of the green?’ saith Findian. ‘I will go now,’ saith Nennid. So when Nennid came, Ciaran had arrived at the middle text of Mathew’s Gospel, *Omnia quaecumque nultis ut faciant homines nobis ita et nos faciatis illes*. ‘I have come to borrow a book,’ says Nennid. ‘Mercy come to you!’ saith Ciaran, ‘It is for this I read and this the text saith to me: that I should do unto everyone what I desire to be done to me. Take the book,’ saith Ciaran. His companions asked him on the morrow while doing the lesson where was his book? ‘He gave it to me,’ saith Nennid. Saith one of the school: ‘Let “Ciaran Half Mathew” be his name.’ ‘Nay,’ saith Findian, but “Ciaran Half Ireland,” for half of Ireland will be his, and ours will be the other half.’”

Maeda (page 232) “Another time Maeda and an immature young child were by a cross which then was in the monastery at Ferns....Presently, Maeda wrote a Psalm for the child. The child saw him mount a golden ladder which reached from earth to heaven and when he descended later, the child could not look in his face for the great brilliance.” (The text said Maeda had seen St. Colum Cille, who had just died, enter heaven).

Barre “...and then Barre read his Psalms... and then came a heavy fall of snow so that there was a hood of snow around the hut in which Barre was doing his lesson. Barre said to his tutor, ‘I should like this hood to remain across my hut till I shall be finished my Psalms.’ God did so; for the snow melted from the earth but the hood of snow remained round the hut till Barre had finished his Psalms.”

These notes are from the *Life of St. Declan of Ardmore and Life of St. Mochuda of Lismore*, with Introduction, Translation and Notes by Rev. P. Powers, London: Irish Texts Society, 1914.

Life of St. Mochuda (page 79) “One day as Mochuda was keeping his herd as usual beside the river already alluded to, he heard the bishop and his clerics pass by chanting Psalms as they went along. The Spirit of God touched the boy’s heart and, leaving his pigs, Mochuda followed the procession as far as the monastery called Tuaine. And as the Bishop and his household sat down to eat, Mochuda ....concealed himself, sitting in the shadow of the doorway. Meanwhile, the king, Maoltuile, was troubled about the boy, noticing his absence... and sent messengers to seek the youth ... and one of these found him... the messenger took Mochuda with him back to the king. The latter questioned him: - ‘My child, why have you stayed away in this manner?’ Mochuda replied, ‘Sire, this is why I have stayed away.... I have never heard anything so beautiful as this; (they) sang as they went along the whole way before me; they sang until they arrived at their house; and thenceforth they sang till they went to sleep... and I wish, O king, that I might learn their Psalms and ritual... I do not long for anything on earth - only that I be allowed to learn the Psalms of the clerics which I heard them sing.’ ...shortly afterward, the Bishop Carthach whom we have mentioned as sent for by the king arrived and to him the latter entrusted Mochuda to be instructed in reading and writing....”

An excellent general bibliography which includes references to ancient texts of saints' lives is given in the fine text, *Education in Ancient and Medieval Ireland*, by Fergal McGrath, S. J., Studies "Special Publications" Dublin, Ireland: 1979. Although the book was out of print when I tried to buy it, I found a copy in the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C. John Morris's superb *The Age of Arthur, A History of the British Isles from 350 to 650*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York: 1973, is a gold mine of information on the period and has a priceless bibliography including sources for ancient writings on saints' lives. Another fine source is *Ireland, Harbinger of the Middle Ages*, by Ludwig Bieler, Oxford University Press, London: 1963 (first published in German by Urs Graf Verlag Olten, Lausanne and Freiburg I. Br., 1961)

However, H. I. Marrou's 1948 *A History of Education in Antiquity*, first published in France, is not only slight for the period after 350 A. D. but is actually misleading, probably reflecting the anti-clerical and anti-religious bias of French intellectuals of the period. Furthermore, Marrou had the audacity to belittle (page 578) the conclusions of Father Paul Grosjean of Belgium, who was writing in *Analecta Bollandiana*, Vol. LXIV (1946), page 323, concerning the period after 350 A. D. Grosjean was a major researcher and authority on the manuscripts of ancient Ireland. Marrou's otherwise generally useful work, however, appears largely to be a cut-and-paste rearrangement and retelling of earlier original research done by Germans concerning education in classical times.

As mentioned previously, a curious by-product of intensive early study of the Latin Psalms was bilingualism (defined as equal proficiency in the use of two languages). The Gaelic glosses, or marginal notes, written on the Latin manuscripts of the Priscian grammar from St. Gall monastery in Switzerland, and on other manuscripts in Latin, which date roughly to the period before the Viking invasions began about 800 A. D., suggest that the Irish monks writing the glosses were equally fluent in Latin and Gaelic. Written in Gaelic in the margin of these Latin parchments from St. Gall monastery dating back to the 700's are such comments as, "I am very cold," "The parchment is rough and the writing," "Oh, my hand!" and "Night fall and time for supper."

The German, Zeuss, author of *Grammatica Celtica*, 1853, is referred to in Joyce's *Short History of Ireland*. Joyce said (page 3) that Zeuss:

"...labored incessantly visiting the libraries of St. Gall, Wurzburg, Milan, Carlsruhe, Cambrai and several other cities in all of which there are manuscript books in the Celtic dialects.... He found the Irish glosses the most ancient, extensive and important of all. Most of them belonged to the eighth century."

The Priscian grammars in Latin on which many of these glosses appeared followed the Donat in the study of Latin in the curriculum sequence in those early days, and, since the Priscian grammars had vast numbers of Latin quotations from classical authors to demonstrate grammatical teaching, the effect was to acquaint students with many of the Latin classics. The Priscian grammars are discussed in Volume 18, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1963 (page 513).

The article stated that Priscian's full name was Priscianus Caesariensis, and that he lived about 500 A.D. That he lived so late is rather surprising, but he is considered to be the most known of the Latin grammarians. His work, the *Institutiones grammaticae*, along with that of Aelius Donatus, were enormously influential on the teaching of grammar, and of Latin, in Europe until the Renaissance. Priscian's birthplace was Caesarea in Mauretania, which is known today as Cherchel, Algeria. However, he did not teach there but in Constantinople.

His *Institutiones grammaticae*, which can be translated as *Grammatical Foundations*, is a series of 18 books, which systematically treat the grammar of Latin. It is certainly interesting that the first 16 are

concerned for the most part with sounds and the formation and inflexion of words. That certainly puts “sound” in teaching in its proper place. It certainly demotes the “meaning” approach to the teaching of reading that is propounded by current “experts” like Kenneth Goodman. However, almost one-third of the total material is contained in the last two of Priscian’s books, and they concern syntax.

The Encyclopedia Britannica article said that, as much as possible, Priscian had used the Greek grammar written by Apollonius Dyscolus as a guide, and that he used as illustrations many quotations from earlier Latin authors. The happy accidental effect of his having done so saved many Latin quotations which otherwise would have vanished. Priscian’s work was highly respected by Christian authors from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> century and later. It was quoted by Aldhelm, Bede, Alcuin, and Rabanus Maurus and was a standard textbook used to teach grammar in medieval schools. The article stated that perhaps 1,000 Priscian manuscripts survive, most with only books i-xvi, Priscianus major, but some with books xvii and xviii, Priscianus minor, although a few contain all 18 books. Other than fragments, the oldest are from the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and the first printed work was produced in Venice, in 1470.

As already mentioned, the massively used Priscian grammars contained numerous excerpts from classical Latin authors, and students at that time studied those excerpts. Concerning the presumed cultural darkness of that period in comparison to ours, how many students today have a real grasp of grammar, as the Priscian students did, and how many today can quote, verbatim, in Latin, from classical authors, as ordinary students of Priscian in the “Dark Ages” did?

Yet the influence of writings in the so-called “Dark Ages” lingers on in ways rarely acknowledged. The evidence even suggests that some “Dark Age” authors provided the literary material on which later authors built famous works. For instance, the Irish monk, “St. Fursa of the Visions” who died in 648 in Peronne, France, and whose writings were enormously popular after his death, is the purported source for Dante’s Divine Comedy. Another early and highly successful author, mentioned in Bede’s Ecclesiastical History which was written in the eighth century, was the poet Caedmon, whose Celtic name has been assumed to suggest he was a British Celt and not an Anglo-Saxon, even though his poetry was in Anglo-Saxon. Caedmon died at Whitby about 678, according to the Age of Arthur, only about fifty years before Bede wrote. The Catholic Encyclopedia p. 131 vol. III, stated that according to Bede’s Hist. Eccles. Bk. IV ch xxiv, Caedmon:

“was at first attached as a laborer to the double monastery of Whitby (Streoneshalh) founded in 657 by St. Hilda, a friend of St. Aidan.”

Caedmon refused the harp being passed around the table and left embarrassed because he could not sing. In a dream while sleeping in the stables, he was told to sing. He began to sing in praise of God verses he had never heard before.

“In the morning Caedmon recited his story and his verses to Hilda and the learned men of the monastery, and all agreed that he had received a Divine gift.”

Caedmon’s poetry is possibly the earliest in English, and has been cited as the source for Milton’s Paradise Lost.

Fursa and Caedmon’s work survived because they composed it in a literate period: the so-called “Dark Ages.”

A brief encyclopedia biography on a seventh century saint sheds a great deal of light on those times, even mentioning the brothers of St. Fursa. This brief entry from the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913) is inserted here as background material, including a reference to one of the double monasteries of the time,

to the literacy of monks and nuns who were students of Holy Scripture, and to the widespread travel of the time, which certainly suggests a considerably higher level of culture than the words, “Dark Ages.”

“Gertrude of Nivelles, Saint, Virgin, and Abbess of the Benedictine monastery of Nivelles near Brussels, b. in 626; d. 17 March, 659. She was a daughter of Pepin I of Landen, and a younger sister of St. Begga, Abbess of Andenne.... After the death of her father in 639, her mother Itta, following the advice of St. Amandus, Bishop of Maestricht, erected a double monastery, one for men, the other for women, at Nivelles. She appointed her daughter Gertrude as its first abbess, while she herself lived there as a nun, assisting the young abbess by her advice. Among the numerous pilgrims that visited the monastery of Nivelles, there were the two brothers St. Foillan and St. Ultan, both of whom were Irish monks and were on their way from Rome to Peronne, where their brother, St. Furseus, lay buried. Gertrude and her mother gave them a tract of land called Fosse on which they built a monastery. Ultan was made superior of the new house, while Foillan remained at Nivelles, instructing the monks and nuns in Holy Scripture. After the death of Itta in 652. Gertrude entrusted the interior management of her monastery to a few pious nuns, and appointed some capable monks to attend to the other affairs, in order that she might gain more time for the study of Holy Scripture, which she almost knew by heart. The large property left by her mother she used for building churches, monasteries and hospices....”

Evidence on beginning reading practices in that period, by which practices these old monks and nuns became so literate, is given by the Springmount tablets, referred to previously. They are in the form of a leather-bound folding book of wax tablets and are in the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin.

These tablets are exhibited in the same museum room with a fascinating collection of other ancient Irish materials. Some are pure gold items from Ireland’s Celtic pagan past such as ornamental neck torques. Pure gold pieces from almost four thousand years ago are also exhibited, predating the arrival of the Celts in Ireland.

Yet even those are known to be preceded by Newgrange, the large solar monument on the banks of the Boyne River, which is dated to about 3,000 B. C., and, like Stonehenge in England is assumed to have had a religious connection, since the sun on the shortest day of the year reaches directly to its inmost stones. The beehive stone construction of Newgrange about 3,000 B. C. was duplicated in the beehive stone huts of the Irish monks in the sixth century A. D., and the intricate geometric designs on the Newgrange stonework are suggestive of the interlacings on the Book of Kells, exhibited at Trinity College, Dublin. The fact that the sun reached to the depths of the Newgrange monument on the shortest day of the year was written down by the early Irish monks as an old oral legend, over three thousand years after Newgrange had been built. It is only recently that excavations proved that ancient oral legend to be true. Such a persistence of cultural knowledge in a spoken, and not written, tradition is an astonishing thing. The “beehive” constructions of the monks, as well as the geometric designs that they used may have been part of that over-three-thousand-years-old oral tradition.

The museum also has examples of the elaborate metal work of Ireland’s early Christian era such as on bell shrines. Those shrines have the same kind of designs as on the Book of Kells from the eighth century. What is pertinent to this history is that the museum also contains the elaborately worked container, a “shrine,” for the famous Cathach of St. Columba. The Cathach was the copy written by St. Columba of the St. Jerome translation of the Psalms when they first reached Ireland in the sixth century. It was kept in his family for over twelve hundred years before it was donated for museum use in the last century. That demonstrates that the St. Jerome translation of the Psalms had reached Ireland by the end of the sixth century. It also demonstrates that the Springmount tablets probably could not be any newer since they contain the Psalms in the Old Latin which was in use in Ireland before the spread of the St. Jerome’s “new” Vulgate translation of the Bible, from a portion of which St. Columba made what was perhaps the

first Irish copy. The Springmount tablets have been officially dated to the sixth century, the century in which St. Columba lived. The Psalms on the Springmount tablets were obviously written by a literate adult, so were presumably for study.

The waxen, wooden, originally leather-bound “book,” with the leather portions long gone, was retrieved from the Springmount bog in County Antrim, Ireland, near the very ancient monastery of Drumakeely. The wooden “book” of wax tablets with the writing on the wax still legible was found in or before 1914 by W. Gregg who sold it in 1914 to the National Museum.

The child who was presumably supposed to be studying and probably memorizing the Psalms on that book of wax tablets written by an adult, before the child dropped it into the lake which since turned into a bog, most probably had the alphabet and syllables previously written on those same wax tablets to study as his first step. Therefore, he - or she - would have had no need of an ABC book.

Among the sparse references to beginning reading practices in those ancient Irish stories of saints’ lives are references to girls being taught to read. Literacy among women in religious life was the norm in the so-called Dark Ages before the eleventh century, just as it had been for the religious women in St. Jerome’s circle in the fourth century A. D. For instance, on page 12 of *Christian Education in the Dark Ages*, which was written by Rev. Eugene Magevney, S. J., and published in New York in 1892, Father Magevney stated:

“It is noteworthy that some of the most proficient Greek scholars of the medieval times were women.”

Magevney was referring to the early period, the so-called “Dark Ages.”

Earlier Christian concern for the education of women is apparent from St. Jerome’s matter-of-fact correspondence with a Christian woman concerning teaching reading to her little girl. On page 71 of Davies’ book, he wrote that very little evidence exists from early times on the teaching of reading. He said that some such evidence does appear in the letter that St. Jerome wrote to the little girl, Pacatula (obviously under cover of a letter to her mother, Laeta), some time before 400 A. D.

St. Jerome told the little girl, Pacatula, that before she could read she had to learn her alphabet, spelling and grammar. “Spelling” originally meant what we mean today when we say a child is learning to read. After memorizing the syllabary by spelling the syllables aloud, beginners then “spelled” (recited) the syllables in any text they were trying to read, naming the letters in each syllable before they pronounced it. Aided by their new-found knowledge of “grammar” (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.) they were able to pronounce aloud the texts of that period which were run together, with no separation between words, and with no capitals and punctuation to define where sentences began and ended. With their new-found knowledge of “spelling” and “grammar,” beginners like Pacatula could then recreate the “whole language” that had been recorded in the run-together text. That method, of course, is the antithesis of what is today called the “whole language” method!

In another letter to Pacatula’s mother, Laeta, St. Jerome suggested that the child initially be given boxwood or ivory letters to help her to learn the alphabet.

Davies said that St. Jerome’s comments in the fourth century about teaching beginning reading differed very little from the comments made about the subject by Quintilian in the first century. Like Quintilian, St. Jerome suggested rewarding the student with a little gift. St. Jerome thought that suitable items would be a honey cake, a flower, a toy, or a pretty doll.

Since there were no such things as “word lists” except for proper names at that time, the “spelling” obviously had to be of the syllables, which Quintilian had said earlier must be learned in their entirety, including the most difficult ones.

In *Christian Schools and Scholars*, Volume I, by Augusta Theodosia Drane, London, 1867, on page 61, she quoted from the ancient writings of Nennius (Nenn. Camb. Msc. 57), concerning the life of St. Patrick, in which Nennius referred to Mochoe, to whom Patrick also taught the Roman alphabet. She said,

“Nennius indeed affirms that (Patrick) wrote no less than 365 alphabets, but, as Bishop Lloyd quaintly remarks, the writers of those times, when they were upon the pin of multiplying, used generally to say that things were as many as the days of the year. It is quite certain, however, that this teaching of the Roman alphabet, the first step necessary for acquiring a knowledge of Latin, formed a very common item in the instruction of Irish converts.”

In the ancient manuscript from Nennius, from which she quoted, the alphabet was referred to as “scripsit Abegetoria.” In Noah Webster’s 1828 dictionary, he defined “abecedary” as “pertaining to, or formed by the letters of the alphabet.” By this definition, “pertaining to... the alphabet,” St. Patrick’s numerous alphabetic writings could have been syllabaries, like that of the Etruscans in the 6th century B. C. referred to by H. I. Marrou in *A History of Education in Antiquity* (page 136, Paris, 1948, New York, 1964). But the Etruscans, like the Romans who took their alphabet from the Etruscans, would have written “abecedaria” (ABC) or conceivably “abecetoria,” since the third letter in their alphabet was “C,” not “G,” gamma, as in the Greek alphabet. Nennius obviously knew of more than one alphabet. His term, “abegetoria,” (ABG) tells us that the other alphabet of which he knew was Greek.

Concerning Celtic use of Greek, W. J. Frank Davies, in *Teaching Reading in Early England*, quoted from Julius Caesar’s *Gallic Wars* (VI. 13, 14) concerning the Celts and their Druids in what is now France. Julius Caesar said the Druids:

“are concerned with sacred matters. They look after the public and private sacrifices and expound points of religion. A large number of young men gather around them for the purposes of education, and they hold the Druids in great esteem.... Many come to them for such instruction of their own accord or are sent there by their parents and relatives. Once there, they are said to learn off by heart a great number of verses, and some pursue this training for twenty years. They do not consider it proper to commit these particular subjects to writing, although for most other affairs, both of a public and private nature, they use Greek letters.... It often happens that when a person begins to place reliance on writing, he grows slack about the necessity of learning a thing thoroughly for the purposes of memorization.”

It might seem more probable that instead of Greek the Celtic Gauls would have used the Germanic runes of their neighbors, which runes had already been in use for perhaps two hundred years by the time Caesar wrote. Yet, in his reporting Celtic use of Greek letters, Caesar certainly could not have been wrongly identifying Germanic runes as Greek letters. After all, as educated Romans, Caesar and his whole administrative staff undoubtedly were proficient in Greek. Furthermore, as the head of the whole Roman Empire, Caesar must also have been acquainted with Germanic runes since occasional reports must have come in that had been written in the widespread Germanic runes of the north.

The schools Caesar described from Celtic Gaul about 40 B.C. persisted in Christian Celtic Ireland in highly organized fashion as lay schools, apart from the clerical schools, until after the Viking invasions starting about 800 A. D. and in a varied form as lay schools into the 1600’s. The Englishman, St. Edmund Campion, in his largely hostile 1571 *Historie of Ireland*, described what he saw in such schools in 1571:

“...they speake Latin like a vulgar language learned in their common schooles of leach-craft and law where they begin children and hold on sixteen or twentie years.”

Those lay schools of medicine and law still in operation in the sixteenth century dated back to long before Julius Caesar’s day.

The fascinating *Hisperica Famina* from about 650 A. D., translated with a commentary by Michael Herren<sup>12</sup>, was composed so as to use a very heavy concentration of low-frequency, elegant Latin words and is assumed to have been used as a text-book to demonstrate how to write elegant Latin in lay schools. (That book was, of course, the exact antithesis of the Gates and Gray controlled-vocabulary, high-frequency word readers of 1930!) The content of the *Hisperica Famina* described the everyday activities of lay schools in Ireland in the seventh century. Since these highly organized schools survived for at least a thousand years, from before Julius Caesar’s day to the Viking invasions, and in a revised form for more than another five hundred years, it is only reasonable to assume that the knowledge of Greek also may have survived in the Irish Celtic culture until Latin letters arrived with St. Patrick in the fifth century, A. D. St. Patrick apparently found it necessary to replace the Greek with the Latin alphabet so the Irish could read the Scriptures he brought with him.

As stated, Greek letters, not runes or the Latin alphabet, are known to have been used to a considerable extent for practical purposes by the pagan Celtic Gauls in the first century B. C., by the testimony of Julius Caesar himself. Celtic culture appears to have been remarkably uniform from Gaul on the continent to Ireland. It is probable that ogham writing invented in pagan Celtic Ireland in the third century A. D. preceded St. Patrick’s arrival by about two centuries. One of the more reliable facts concerning St. Patrick’s activities when he arrived in Ireland in the fifth century A. D. is that he was very busy writing out Latin alphabets for the Irish pagans because they did not know the Latin alphabet. It is therefore certain that knowledge of the Latin alphabet was woefully lacking in Ireland in the fifth century A. D. Because of these documented facts concerning Celtic knowledge of Greek and Latin, it is puzzling indeed that the pagan Irish ogham alphabet of the third century A. D. is considered to have been derived from Latin instead of from Greek letters.

Ogham writing consisting of various straight and slanted lines survived in Ireland for many years after its invention and was used to write Gaelic on numerous tomb stones. The ogham alphabet was clearly partially inspired by runic writing but matches the Greek more than the Latin alphabet. In illustrations of various alphabets, as in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), a reader can study the resemblances among the Latin, runic, Greek, and ogham alphabets.

However, some of the explanations given in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* to account for the origin of their different letters may well be questioned. For instance, the Latin, runic, and Greek alphabets do not contain “V” although it is present in today’s alphabet. Yet the *Encyclopedia Britannica* interpreter of the ancient ogham code claimed that one of the ogham letters was meant to stand for “V,” which seems hardly likely. (What looks like a “V” in the Latin alphabet actually stands for the vowel, “U”.) More probably, the ogham mark credited as standing for “V” actually stands for “F,” and the mark credited as standing for “F” actually stands for “Z.” The record shows a confusion of “F” and “V” sounds for the Irish, as with the names of Fergal and Virgil.

Also, the third letter in the Greek alphabet is gamma and might reasonably be equated with “G.” If that is done, then the Greek alphabet would not show “G” altogether missing, as indicated in the

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<sup>12</sup> The *Hisperica Famina*: I. The A-Text, by Michael W. Herren, Associate Professor of Humanities and Classics, Atkinson College, York University, Toronto, published by Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1974.



tabulation, and the presence of “G” in the ogham writing might be assumed to have come from the third letter of the Greek alphabet, gamma, and not from the “G” of the Latin alphabet.

The twenty-four runes are arranged in three groups of eight; the twenty ogham characters in four groups of five. The Latin and Greek alphabets have no pattern, despite claims to the contrary. The ogham system apparently was inspired by runes to the degree that it dropped the common ABC order and collected its letters in equal groups. Yet its choice of letters was not the same as the runic alphabet, since it included “a”, not in the runes but in the Greek alphabet. It also included “ng,” not in the Latin but in both the Greek and the runic alphabets.

Many alphabets which descended from the Phoenician, including the Greek and the Latin, appear to have followed the seemingly meaningless ABC order, but the runic and the ogham alphabets did not. No convincing evidence exists that there had ever been any meaningful pattern in that common ABC order, nor was there a pattern apart from equal numerical groups in the runic order. However, a very meaningful pattern apart from the arrangement in equal groups did exist in the ogham order, as will be shown.

W. M. Flinders Petrie attempted to show a pattern in the ABC order, on pages 17 to 19 of Chapter VIII, “The Order of the Alphabet,” In *The Formation of the Alphabet*, British School of Archaeology in Egypt, Studies Series, Vol. III, Macmillan and Co., London, 1912. Petrie said:

“It had long ago been noticed by Lepsius, Donaldson and Taylor that, embedded in the Phoenician, Greek and Italian alphabets there is a sequence of letters, - vowel, labial, guttural and dental. What has, however, been ignored is that this system is extended a whole series further in the Greek than in the Phoenician alphabet, forming a fifth row [Ed.: under those column headings] and the beginning of a sixth. The liquids and sibilants were added later and form no part of such a scheme.”

Petrie then attempted to reconstruct those patterned columns, vowel, labial, guttural and dental, but he had an appreciable portion of blank spaces in his grid, and he had four left-over Greek letters. Petrie’s highly speculative conclusion is very unconvincing. This is particularly so because it assumed the existence of “vowels” as part of the pattern in the ancient Phoenician alphabet, even though it is a fact that, although it began with a letter shaped like A, the Phoenician alphabet had no vowels.

The intriguing, long-lasting and unexplainable abc (or abg) order that is seen as long ago as in the Phoenician alphabet disappeared with the advent of Germanic runic writing about 250 B. C., although the runic order apart from the arrangement in equal groups was also apparently meaningless. The ABC order also disappeared with the advent of the pagan Celtic Irish ogham writing about 200 A. D., which it has been suggested had been partially inspired by runic writing. Yet the order of the ogham letters is decidedly not meaningless, because a highly sophisticated order emerged.

In contrast to the runes, there can be absolutely no doubt that the sequential pattern of ogham letters was based on different sound categories. In the abbreviated ogham alphabet of 20 letters, ten are consonants, and they appear in two groups of five, written in one kind of pattern. A different pattern is then used for two additional groups of five letters each. In that different pattern, the first five letters were obviously considered semi-vowels, and only one of them is not today a semi-vowel. The second group of five letters in that different pattern are the five true vowels.

Whoever the pagan Irishman was who composed this ogham sequence for his 20-letter alphabet some two hundred years before Patrick arrived in Ireland, bringing the Latin alphabet with him, that old pagan (very likely a Druid) had a clear and astonishing understanding of the nature of speech sounds. He was able not only to distinguish vowels from consonants, which obviously must have been ancient knowledge,

as we know from the existence of written syllabaries. He was also able to distinguish semi-vowels from letters normally considered consonants, and that is startling indeed! The fact that he was able to do so certainly suggests he was associated with the highly educated bardic class, who were charged with entertaining others in pagan Ireland by reciting aloud poetry and sagas. Certainly some kind of elocution must have entered into that bardic training, and perhaps that is what gave rise to a clearer understanding on how speech sounds are formed.

Available references on runes and ogham writing demonstrate that both were more important and more widespread than has normally been recognized. In the article "Druidism" in the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Volume V, p. 162-164, this appears:

"...information concerning the druids of Ireland... can be gathered from the casual references to them in the epic literature of Ireland... it is clear that there were the most striking resemblances between the druids of Ireland and those of Gaul. In both lands they appear as magicians, diviners, physicians and teachers, and not as the representatives of a certain religion. In the saga tales of Ireland they are most often found in the service of kings, who employed them as advisers because of their power in magic. In the exercise of this they made use of wands of yew, upon which they wrote in a secret character called ogham. This was called their 'keys of wisdom'. In Ireland, as in Gaul, they enjoyed a high reputation for learning..."

That article confirming the wide use of ogham inscribed on sticks was written by Joseph Dunn, Ph. D., Professor of Celtic Languages and Literature at the Catholic University of America in Washington. Dunn certainly qualifies as a reliable source. While such sticks would normally long since have rotted, it is of interest to read the following in an August 8, 1993, newspaper article reporting comments of Marit Ahlen, a rune expert at Stockholm's Historical Museum in Sweden, which article will be referred to again shortly:

"Most of the early wooden runes have perished, but at Bergen, on Norway's west coast, hundreds of message sticks were dug out of the clay where they lay preserved for hundreds of years after a wooden jetty collapsed. 'One of them was from an inland trader saying he had not managed to get ale and also failed to obtain fish. But he said he shouldn't complain and was worried about how his wife was getting on back home,' said Ahlen."

That certainly establishes that runes were also written on sticks, and even that they constituted a Norwegian version of the U. S. Mail. That also tends to confirm the ancient reports that ogham characters were also written on sticks, which were far more easy to obtain than parchment, even though none of the ogham sticks have survived.

In Volume VIII of the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), in the article "Irish Literature," pages 116 and following, this appears on page 116:

"...This ogham script, as it is called, consists of lines, straight or slanting, long or short, drawn either over, under, or through a given straight line, which straight line is in lapidary inscriptions usually formed by the angular edge of a rectangular upright stone.... None even of the oldest Irish manuscripts preserved to us is anything like as ancient as these lapidary inscriptions. The language of the ogham stones is in fact centuries older than that of the very oldest vellums.... Early Irish literature and the sagas relating to the pre-Christian period of Irish history abound with references to ogham writing, which was almost certainly of pagan origin, and which continued to be employed until the Christianization of the island... but isolated ogham inscriptions exist on grave stones erected as late as the year 600. When the script was introduced into Ireland is uncertain, but it was probably about the second century.... it was too cumbrous an invention for

the facile creation of a literature, though a professional poet may well have carried about with him on his 'tablet-staves', as the manuscripts call them, the catchwords of many poems, sagas, and genealogies. Over a couple of hundred inscribed ogham stones still exist, mostly in the south-west of Ireland, but... sporadically... in Scotland, Wales, Devonshire and even farther east."

The article, "Ireland," in Volume 12, page 596, of the Encyclopedia Britannica stated that ancient Ogham writings demonstrate some early usages in the Irish language, even though the Ogham writings are very brief. The article said further that Ogham is actually a code, an abbreviated alphabet. However, it also stated that the alphabet on which Ogham was based was the Roman alphabet. Yet, as commented previously, that conclusion must be in error. One of the reasons for concluding that the alphabet on which Ogham was based was the Greek alphabet, and not the Roman alphabet, is the fact that the pagan Celts are known to have used the Greek alphabet. That fact is based on the testimony of Julius Caesar, himself.

The authors of the Encyclopedia Britannica article were convinced that Ogham had originated as a secret finger code, and had not been meant initially for writing. They pointed out that the Ogham marks can represent the fingers, since they are composed of series of lines from one to five. The article was written by true authorities: Robert Alexander Stewart Macalister, Professor of Celtic Archaeology, University College, Dublin, 1909-1943, and Anthony Thomas Lucas, Director (presumably about 1963) of the National Museum of Ireland in Dublin.

According to the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Volume V, page 316 in the article, "Education of the Deaf and Dumb":

"... Venerable Bede... in his 'De Loquela per gestum digitorum' describes a manual alphabet."

It is surprising to find that the testimony of the twentieth century scholars quoted above, concerning the use of a finger alphabet in the British Isles in the third century A. D., provides confirmation for Bede's testimony concerning people manually signing the alphabet in the British Isles in the eighth century A. D. Perhaps the use of alphabetic hand signs as Bede saw it originated with the Ogham alphabet.

Other alphabets have more than twenty letters, but the five fingers can most easily produce only twenty combinations of lines. That is the best explanation for the peculiarly abbreviated 20-letter Ogham finger alphabet. Since the written Ogham was arranged in varying straight lines in groups of fives, it might well have been meant originally to represent finger positions, as implied by the scholars quoted. Perhaps straight vertical lines on one side of the dividing horizontal line meant the five fingers on the left hand, and those on the other side of the horizontal line meant the five fingers on the right hand. The written ogham vowels and semi-vowels were shown with lines on both sides of the horizontal dividing line, and that might have meant the use of the fingers on both hands. The slanted lines for the semi-vowels on both sides of the horizontal dividing line might have meant showing those letters by slanting the positions of both hands.

Ogham writing was indeed an abbreviated 20-letter code, but it presupposed the existence of an alphabet on which it was based. The historical record suggests that the alphabet on which it was based was the Greek alphabet, and not the Latin alphabet, as is usually assumed. The historical record also suggests that ogham writing dropped the customary the ABC order because it had been influenced by the already-existing runic alphabet.

Changes in the Irish language over the years produced four distinct forms of that language, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, 1963, Volume 12, in the article, "Irish Language." The first period ran

from 300 to 500 A.D, the time of the Ogham inscriptions. The other periods were Old Irish, 600-900, Middle Irish, 900-1200, and Modern Irish, 1200 to the present.

By the time the Old Irish period began, the Latin alphabet had become the norm, but it is curious that reports on the occasional use of Greek in Ireland for many centuries afterwards occasionally turn up in the literature. Perhaps there is more truth to those reports than is normally credited. However, concerning the use of the Latin alphabet, Volume V of Encyclopedia Britannica, 1963, in the article, "Celtic Languages - Irish," stated that it was in the 400's that the Latin alphabet arrived in Ireland, and by the 500's the Latin alphabet was used for writing, not just Latin, but the Irish language as well. Ogham writing appears to have been displaced by the use of Latin, which fact appears to be additional evidence that the Ogham alphabet was not based on the Latin alphabet.

Although the history of Ogham writing is obscured today, the history of the runic alphabet is obscured even more, despite the fact that runes were in widespread use in pagan Europe for well over a thousand years. With such an acknowledged massive and widespread use, it is astonishing that so little attention has been paid to their history. In Volume 1 of Encyclopedia Britannica, 1963, in the article, "Alphabet," on page 668, appeared Figure 5, "Comparison of Latin, Greek, Slavonic, and Runic Alphabets". A comparison of those alphabets demonstrates that the runic alphabet, which had various forms, has similarities to both the Latin and the Greek. The article, "Rune," in Volume 19, of the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), said that the runes originated perhaps about 250 B. C. from an Etruscan alphabet from the eastern Alps. The article cited the 1928 work of the Norwegian, C. J. S. Marstrand, as its authority.

The existence of the sophisticated Ogham and runic alphabets in pagan Europe raises grave doubts concerning the presumed illiteracy of ancient times, including ancient pagan times. The pagan users of the runic and Ogham scripts were not even members of the Roman Empire, and yet they clearly knew how to communicate by writing. Ogham writing may have been limited to the bardic classes, but we have no way of knowing that. The only surviving Ogham writing is on long-lasting grave stones. Yet Ogham was not invented to write grave stones! Ogham was used, as mentioned elsewhere, on portable sticks, and it may well have been used also on such things as thin board sheets or bark. Such sticks with Ogham writing (or such thin board sheets or bark) would have disappeared long ago, just as runic writings (or Celtic use of Greek?) on such materials would have disappeared long ago. (However, as discussed earlier, some wafer-thin wooden sheets from the first century, A.D., containing messages in Latin in the Latin alphabet, have been found at the site of Hadrian's Wall in Britain.)

Although we do not know how widespread literacy was among the pagan Irish, we know that runic literacy was widespread among the pagan Vikings. Accounts of wandering Vikings report their writing runic graffiti all over Europe, from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean. Writing is supposed to be a skill that was largely limited in the ancient world to the upper classes, and to the "intellectuals." Are we supposed to believe that those wild old Vikings who rampaged all over Europe, often leaving written messages after them, were at heart really "intellectual" types?

Thousands of rough-hewn giant granite slabs in Sweden carry runes, telling stories of the Vikings, according to an article in The Star-Ledger of Newark, New Jersey, on Sunday, August 8, 1993, Section 8, Page 8. The article drew on information from the Reuters news agency. The article told of Vikings spreading the runic alphabet from the British Isles to the Bosphorus. Stockholm's Historical Museum now organizes day trips to Swedish runestones, about 3,000 of which are in central and southern Sweden. Another 300 are in Denmark and 50 are in Norway. The runic monuments date from about 500 A. D. to 1000 A. D.

Marit Ahlen, a rune expert at the Museum, said:

“The runestones are Sweden’s oldest written documents. They give us poetry, names, places and events, but they are also works of art. And the stones stand in some of the most beautiful countryside.”

The article stated:

“Proud relatives of Viking seafarers erected many runestones to record their adventures and deaths far from home. Sven’s five brothers erected a stone in Uppland to report he had been about to raid England but died in Jutland first, adding with a curious twist, ‘May God and God’s mother help his spirit and soul better than he deserved.’ Viking adventurers etched their runic messages in stone as far afield as Athens and Istanbul, and one crew shipwrecked or delayed in Orkney spent the time carving their names and boasting of their attractiveness to women. ‘The runes were like the graffiti of the Viking age,’ Ahlen said. ‘But it was also a living language in use as recently as 100 years ago in parts of rural Sweden.’

“The Viking culture died out as Christianity spread northwards after 900 A. D., but northerners hedged their bets by raising runestones with Christian symbols to the memory of dead kinsmen, often testifying to deathbed conversions.

“Ahlen says the museum’s runestone trips have been a sellout, even in bad weather.... ‘It stimulates the imagination to look at these huge monuments and think of the Vikings crouched there with hammer and chisel.’”

All those Vikings with their hammers and chisels from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean and beyond were not members of some intellectual aristocracy, any more than the readers of the many millions of cheap chapbooks in eighteenth century England were members of an intellectual aristocracy. Why, then, is there the constantly recurring fable of enormous illiteracy in the Western world from ancient times almost until the twentieth century, when the facts so often disprove the fable, as with the Vikings? It is not hard to find a source for the fable. Government schools really began to spread in the Western world starting about the mid-nineteenth century, and government schools only came into existence to cure “illiteracy.” Yet if there had been no massive disease called “illiteracy” in the Western world, there never would have been any excuse for starting those government schools.

New writing systems to rival the Ogham and runic approaches are still being invented when the need calls for them and when clever men are able to meet that need. A remarkable example is described in *When Hell Was in Session*, Traditional Press, Mobile, Alabama, 1982, by Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr., a United States Senator in 1982. Denton had been a Naval pilot and flight leader when he was shot down and became a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. Denton’s imprisonment lasted from 1965 to 1973, during which long years he was usually in solitary confinement and was subjected to horrible tortures.

In a staged television interview which the North Vietnamese were trying to use for propaganda, Denton managed to use the already existing Morse code to outwit his captors and to communicate a message to the whole world. Looking directly at the television camera, Denton blinked the letters for the single word, “Torture.”

But the Morse code was not the method usually used for communication between the prisoners in the North Vietnam prison camps where men were usually held in solitary confinement for years. On page 21 of Denton’s harrowing but inspiring book, he said:

“Communications remained the heart of our existence. Without that slender and infrequent link with the others, I think I would have lost my mind.”

Within the prison camp, the isolated prisoners developed a superior code, a simple tap code for 25 letters of the alphabet, omitting K. It presumed a chart with a vertical line numbered going down from one to five and a horizontal line going across the top numbered from one to five. When the alphabet was inserted in the boxed grid that resulted, it produced letter names with two digits. Some examples are A as 1-1, M as 3-2, and Z as 5-5. The prisoners used the code by tapping on the walls between their solitary cells.

Denton said in his Preface:

“The numbers could be tapped, waved, scraped, swept, or whatever. The prisoners standardized numerous abbreviations, and with practice, they could send messages quite rapidly.”

That is certainly a tribute to the remarkable human brain. Under the most adverse conditions, these men were approaching “automaticity” in their use of their new “writing” system! It is only reasonable to assume that those who were sending and receiving Ogham and runic messages over a thousand years before had also approached or reached automaticity, because the human brain has not changed.

Irish children in the sixth century using wax tablets such as the Springmount tablets to write in the Latin alphabet were undoubtedly still learning to read as the ancient Romans and Greeks learned to read: by syllables. The ancient Greek Dionysius of Halicarnassus writing about 20 B.C. is quoted by Mitford Mathews, pages 6 and 7 of *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1966. Mathews took the quotation by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, from W. Rhys Roberts, book, *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, London, 1910, page 269:

“When we are taught to read, first we learn off the names of the letters, then their forms and their values, then in due course syllables and their modifications, and finally words and their properties, viz. lengthenings and shortenings, accents, and the like. After acquiring the knowledge of these things, we begin to write and read, syllable by syllable and slowly at first. And when the lapse of a considerable time has implanted the forms of words firmly in our minds, then we deal with them without the least difficulty, and whenever any book is placed in our hands we go through it without stumbling and with incredible facility and speed.”

Much has been written recently concerning the literacy levels in the ancient world. The assumption is generally made that only a thin layer at the top of society was literate. This is hard to reconcile with the fact that Pontius Pilate had “The King of the Jews,” written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin on the cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified. Pilate obviously expected the words to be read in all three languages by numbers of ordinary people. It is generally acknowledged that the Jews were highly literate in their own languages because of their intense devotion to the Sacred Scriptures. Yet, since Pilate also used Greek and Latin, Pilate must have known there were appreciable numbers of people around Jerusalem who were not Jews but who were nevertheless literate in either Greek or Latin.

The elaborately written-out Greek syllabary found in the sands of Egypt shortly before World War II (the Papyrus Gueraud Jouguet discussed by Marrou, mentioned previously) dated from the third century B. C. and proved that children were taught by the syllable method at that time. It should be emphasized again that learning to read by the syllabary in Latin and Greek (or in any alphabet containing vowels) is a relatively easy and rapid process. Since literacy was so easily attainable, it was not beyond the reach of even simple and poor people, who were capable of teaching others, once they themselves knew how to read.

The syllabary method showed up again on a Greek papyrus in the third century A. D., essentially unchanged, which Tuer mentioned on page 387:

“In the State Museum of Antiquities at Leyden there is a Greek Abecedarium of about the third century A.D. on papyrus, in which the vowels and their combinations with consonants in horn-book fashion are in columns....”

Tuer reproduced the papyrus from the third century A. D. (Cut 173, page 388). The copy is badly scrawled, which suggests it is a learner’s copy, but it is clearly the beginning part of the syllabarium in Greek.

Neither did the ancient practice of beginners’ dividing texts into syllables disappear. It showed up on a seventh century A. D. text.

Tuer stated, on page 388:

“In part of an interesting papyrus fragment of the Greek Psalter, probably of the seventh century, lately acquired by the British Museum, the syllables are marked off by dots for the purpose of teaching scholars to read.”

The fact that the papyrus was divided into syllables, not words, is clear proof that “sound” and not “meaning” was the method used in teaching reading in Greek in the seventh century A. D. Yet, before the advent of the vowels, which first appeared about 800 B. C. in Greece, as discussed elsewhere in this text, it was not possible to read alphabetic scripts by syllables as “sound” but only by words as “meaning.”

The alphabet used by the ancient Jews lacked vowels and so could not construct sound-bearing syllables but only whole meaning-bearing words. As discussed elsewhere, that meant that the right, global-picture side of the brain was probably used instead of the left, sequential-sound side. Scripts lacking vowels correspondingly might be expected to run from right to left, since, as discussed elsewhere, eye movements controlled by the right side of the brain move from right to left, while those controlled by the left side move from left to right.

An article in the New York Times of November 16, 1993 (page 9), implicitly confirmed that ancient alphabets which lacked vowels, such as the one used by the ancient Jews, did produce “word” readers, and not “syllable” readers, and that such alphabets were read by the right, global-picture side of the brain. The article concerned the finding of a foot-high piece of stone, apparently in Israel, dated to the ninth century, B. C., in which phonetic letters spelled “House of David.” Yet those phonetic letters were not written from left to right, as might be expected if they were to be read by the left, sequential-sound side of the brain which produces eye movements from the left to the right. Instead the letters from written from the right to the left.. Furthermore, dots were used to separate the words, further confirming that the script was perceived as a series of meaning-bearing words, and not as a stream of sound.

Therefore, the Jewish alphabet without vowels in about the ninth century B. C. produced a script which ran from right to left, to be read by whole-word “meaning,” even though that meaning had to be derived from the sounds of consonants. (A modern example is, “Th cw jmpd vr th mn.”) Yet, shortly after the vowels were invented as additions to the developing Greek alphabet about 800 B. C., the direction of script changed, running from left to right which apparently had never happened before with any script. That is obviously because the addition of the vowels made it possible to read script as a stream of syllable sounds, and streams of syllable sounds are obviously to be read by the left, sequential-sound side of the

brain which produces eye movements that go from the left to the right. In changing the direction of their script, the ancient Greeks were simply reacting to that totally unsuspected “pull” from their own brains.

In obvious contrast to the ancient Jewish text which was divided between words, the ancient Greek Dionysius of Halicarnassus writing about 20 B. C. and the Roman, Quintilian, in the first century A. D. stated that children in those times were taught to separate texts into syllables, not words. The fact that children were taught to separate Greek texts into syllables as late as the seventh century A. D., is shown by the surviving fragment of the Greek Psalter from the seventh century A. D., cited by Andrew Tuer, which was mentioned previously.

Children in the ancient world had been taught by simple rules how to divide written texts into syllables, to make them pronounceable. Written texts were run together in the ancient world, with no division between either words or syllables. The same practice showed up on that Greek text of the seventh century A. D., which would also have been run-together, because texts at that time were still not divided into words. Yet the seventh century A. D. Greek children were working with the Psalms, and not the classics. Irish children are known also to have learned to read with the Psalms, but in Latin, from the fifth century. It is obvious that the Irish children also had to learn how to divide the Psalms into syllables, to make them pronounceable, which was actually a very easy thing to do in Latin or Greek.

It should be apparent, however, that there would have been no point to divide a text into syllables if the sounds of the syllables had not been learned first. Certainly, therefore, the seventh century A. D. Greek children must have been given the syllable tables first, just as the third century A. D. children had been, or the exercise of dividing their run-together text into syllables would have been futile. So must the Irish children have been taught the syllable tables first from the fifth century onwards. The first step for these third, fifth, and seventh century A. D. children would therefore have been identical to the first step for the north African children in 300 B.C., who were taught from that papyrus roll from 300 B. C. that was found in the sands of north Africa just before World War II. The ancient Greek syllabary was outlined in full on that papyrus roll from about 300 B. C. Marrou presumed it had been a teacher’s guide, and not a pupil’s text (*Un Livre d’Ecolier*), which had been the interpretation given by the 1938 title of the book by O. Gueraud and P. Jouguet, *Un Livre d’Ecolier du IIIe Siecle Avant Jesus Christ*.

The fact that the Greek remnant from the third century A. D. is the latest surviving sample of an ancient syllabary is not surprising. Such practice sheets had no value in themselves, as texts did, and most practice would obviously have been on reusable wax tablets, and not on expensive papyrus, particularly as papyrus became harder to get, before its use effectively died out in Europe after the Moslem conquests. Teaching of poor children was also very probably commonly done on sand. Andrew Bell’s great eighteenth century “discovery” was the use of sand trays for teaching in India. Yet writing on sand was probably widespread in the ancient world, from the Mediterranean to Asia. The writing on sand even showed up in the New Testament. In the Gospel telling of the woman taken in adultery whom the self-righteous men were going to stone, Jesus said that the man among them who was without sin should cast the first stone. Jesus then wrote on the sand in front of him, and, as he did so, the men all drifted away and the woman was spared. It seems apparent Jesus was writing for a literate audience.

In any event, except for names, neither Greek nor Irish children in those centuries could have been given “words” first because almost no texts were divided into “words” (which are actually parts of speech) until the ninth century.

Tuer stated on page 389:



“In a very old work, Higden’s (died 1364) Polychronicon, Lanfranc shrewdly suspects from a man’s first utterance that he is almost ignorant, and places before him a copy of the Abecedarium (alphabet) to be explained.”

It should be noted Lanfranc did not say “recite,” as in reciting the alphabet, but “explain,” most likely the use of letters in forming syllables:

“Tunc Lanfrancus ex prima hominis colloctione perpendens quod prope nihil sciret, abecedarium litterarum illi apposuit expediendum.”

Lanfranc lived in the eleventh century, and Higden in the thirteenth and fourteenth. The syllable tables were still most probably the introduction to reading, just as they had clearly continued to be in Greek in the third and seventh centuries A. D., and most probably continued to be in Latin in the fifth century and later. However, that Lanfranc presented an alphabet to be “explained” in the eleventh century suggests the whole syllable tables themselves were not written out, but that the learner was shown how to construct them from the alphabet table.

What Lanfranc probably expected to hear from the man, if he were truly literate, as an “explanation” of the alphabet, would be something like this:

“The vowels are a, e, i, o, and u, and the rest of the letters are the consonants. The first consonant is taken and put after each vowel in turn and makes these closed syllable sounds: ab, eb, ib, ob, ub. It is then put before each vowel in turn and makes these open syllable sounds: ba, be, bi, bo, bu. The same thing is done with all the consonants. To divide a text into these syllables, if one consonant comes after a vowel, it goes with the next syllable. If more than one consonant comes after a vowel, the first consonant stays with the first syllable.”

That is about all there was to teaching children to read in Latin in those days, except for the fact that some consonant blends, instead of single consonants, can be used before and after the vowels (such as bla, ble, bli, blo, blu, ... ant, ent, int, ont, unt, etc.). Even after explaining about the existence of consonant blends, it certainly made a very short “teacher’s guide.”

Learning the “fine points” of words that were irregular (which means they did not produce the sound they actually spelled) would come later as the children read the Psalms out loud.

The apparent reason that the later English horn book only included the syllables up to about “fe, fi, fo...” was that these first few syllables were written out to demonstrate to the children the nature of their task. That “visual aid” of sample syllables, already constructed, on the hornbook (the first page of the ABC book) was apparently not present in Lanfranc’s day in England, since the ABC book had not arrived. In Lanfranc’s day, the instructor must have demonstrated how to construct syllables by writing them on a wax tablet. Yet, with the hornbook, children were obviously taught how to construct syllables from the sample examples. They were obviously expected to complete the syllabarium by using the vowel row at the top of the hornbook, picking out each consonant in turn from the whole alphabet which was also written at the top of the hornbook. They were obviously expected to use their fescue as a pointer when doing so.

### The Beginning of the Shift from Sound to Meaning in the Latin Alphabet

Children in the ancient world practiced manually dividing up written matter into syllables until the ability to do so when reading orally became automatic. Word divisions were not normally used in Greece and Rome except on such things as monuments. The ability to syllabicate run-together print

automatically, however, is an ability which we lack today, since we have been trained on word-separated print. Lacking most of the ability to syllabicate automatically, we commonly slow down when meeting a new, multi-syllable word. Our script is divided into words and has by that fact moved closer to a meaning-bearing instead of a sound-bearing system. When word divisions became common about the ninth century, the first shift had been made in our writing system from “sound” to “meaning” and it resulted in our no longer being able to read run-together print “with incredible facility and speed” as was done in Dionysius’ day.

To understand that shift from “sound” to “meaning,” it is necessary to consider the nature of visual writing systems. Only two possible visual writing systems can exist: one in which symbols are made to stand for ideas, as in the Chinese character system, and one in which symbols stand for sound, as in syllabic systems (and in music notation). The alphabet, when used to produce sound, is actually a variant syllabic system.

As discussed elsewhere, the two types of writing systems are based on the structure of the human brain: one side of the brain normally is able to handle simultaneously perceived pictures, and the other side is normally able to handle sequentially perceived sound. Both writing systems can be read automatically, as can be shown by the fact that both can be handled by computers. It is only conscious “reading” based on “psycholinguistic guessing” which cannot be handled by computers. That proves, of course, that “psycholinguistic guessing” is actually a crippling disability and is the result of mixed and pathetically incomplete conditioned reflexes. Unlike “psycholinguistic guessing,” unimpaired conditioned reflexes do not require consciousness to operate and are apparently essentially the same in the human brain and in computers.

The Russian psychologist, D. B. Elkonin, obviously recognized this, when he said:

“Understanding, which is often considered as the basic content of the process of reading arises as a result of correct recreation of the sound forms of words. He who, independently of the level of understanding of words, can correctly recreate their sound forms is able to read.”

This quotation is from page 165 of Brian and Joan Simon’s *Educational Psychology in the USSR*, 1963, which reproduces Elkonin’s article.

Speech is a series of sequentially uttered syllables which automatically generate syntax, which syntax then automatically generates meaning-bearing parts-of-speech (words). In many languages, morphemes are modified according to their use in syntax, which clearly shows the resultant words are the PRODUCTS instead of the building-blocks of syntax. But words in English have largely been stripped of most of these additions, so English syntax is instead shown by word order. (“Dog bites man,” is different in meaning in English from “Man bites dog,” but not in many other languages, where the subject, “dog,” would terminate with one word ending, and the object, “man,” would terminate with a different one so that changing the word order would not change the meaning.) As a result, we have lost the awareness the ancients obviously had that words are the END-PRODUCT of language: syllables/syntax/words.

The ancient peoples in the Near East learned that language could be recorded either by syllables (the building block of language) or by words (the end product of language). No other way was possible.

Language may be considered to have three levels: first syllables, then syntax-generating-words, and then meaning. Syllable sounds appear to be handled by the brain’s computer in Broca’s area in the left hemisphere, and syntax and the names of words by the brain’s computer in Wernicke’s area, also in the left hemisphere. Meaning appears to be handled in the front, conscious-bearing portion of the brain. However, although language is normally handled only by the left side of the brain, the initial perception

of print (and that includes the initial perception of printed language) can involve either the left or the right sides, either the left angular gyrus area or the right angular gyrus area in the back of the brain.

The left side of the brain is considered to be the language side, and the right side of the brain is considered to be the spatial (“picture”) side. Sound-bearing syllable writing would therefore initially be processed through the angular gyrus on the left side, but meaning-bearing picture writing through the angular gyrus on the right side. However, even though that initial perception step may have been done by either the right or left side, the next steps, turning that initial perception of print into actual language, would normally be handled only by the left, language side of the brain.

When meaning-bearing pictures are initially read by the right side (presumably by the right angular gyrus area) and their meaning is perceived, they are devoid of names until Wernicke’s area on the left side is activated to label them with names. This is how Japanese Kanji writing is apparently handled. First the meaning is “read” and perceived by the right side of the brain. Only afterwards is a word name attached to the meaning by Wernicke’s on the left side, and only afterwards are the syllables pronounced by Broca’s on the left side. Yet with Japanese Kana syllables, the sequence is apparently reversed: first the syllable sounds are pronounced by Broca’s, then the word-name is attached by Wernicke’s, and lastly the meaning is perceived by the conscious part of the brain. This reconstruction of what must happen in the reading act is my own, drawn from several sources describing various portions of the sequence, since I have never seen any completed sequential explanation in print of what actually happens when we read. Surely this is enormously curious.

In the ancient Near East, about five thousand years ago, Egyptians were forming their hieroglyphic-character, meaning-bearing “word” system with some sound signs for consonants. Nearby Sumeria was inventing a sound-bearing “syllable” system which also contained some meaning-bearing characters. Egyptian writing became dominantly meaning-bearing (“words”), while Sumerian became dominantly syllabic or sound-bearing.<sup>13</sup>

Yet, as I. J. Gelb explained in his writings, (as in his article “Logogram and Syllabary,” page 334A of Volume 14, in the 1963 Encyclopedia Britannica), the Egyptian “consonant” signs should not be considered as consonants, because they were really an abbreviated syllable system. “B,” for instance, stood for any syllable formed with b: ba, be, bi, bo, bu, etc. After a thousand years or so, the Protosinaitic syllabary developed out of these Egyptian influences (Davies, p. 42f). It was this abbreviated syllable system which was used in the ancient Canaanite/ Phoenician syllabary, and it is presumed it may have developed from the Protosinaitic syllabary.

The left side of the brain scans from left to right, but the right side of the brain scans from right to left (“Lateral Eye Movements (LEMs)” as discussed by Sid J. Segalowitz in his book, *Two Sides of the Brain*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1983, pages 80-81). The right side of the brain should be used for reading meaning-bearing symbols, as it is the right side of the brain which deals with pictures. The question arises, then: why did the Phoenicians write from right to left in their script, since their script was sound-bearing like the Protosinaitic from which it was derived? The obvious answer is that, lacking the vowels, Phoenician could not be read back as sound-bearing syllables but only as meaning-bearing whole words (sight-words). Therefore, with their letters, they could consciously spell - and read back - only meaning-bearing whole words, never syllables.

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<sup>13</sup> Egyptian Hieroglyphs, (particularly page 40) by W. V. Davies, University of California Press/British Museum, 1987, and Cuneiform, by C. B. F. Walker, University of California Press/British Museum, 1987.

When the Greeks, between probably 800 and 700 B. C., invented the vowels, they reduced the newly completed alphabet to a purely syllabic system. As William A. Mason said in *A History of the Art of Writing* (The Macmillan Company, 1920, 1928, page 343):

“The early Greeks also may be credited with other substantial contributions to the alphabet. At the time when the earliest known Thera inscriptions were written there already had been evolved out of the Phoenician characters five true vowels: alpha, epsilon, iota, omicron, and upsilon....”

Now that writing was purely sound-bearing, it could be read by the left or language side of the brain, understanding (meaning) arising only as a result of the recreation of the sound forms of words, as the Russian D. B. Elkonin described alphabetic reading (quoted in Brian and Joan Simon’s *Educational Psychology in the USSR*, 1963, page 165.) It is rather amusing to see what this switch from the right side to the left side of the brain caused in these early writing systems. When vowels first arrived in Greece, writing ceased to move from right to left, but the direction of their writing showed the great puzzlement caused to these ancients by the totally unsuspected “pull” from their brains. They now had to be using the left side of the brain to read their sound-bearing syllabic print, and eye movements dominated by the left side move from left to right. Therefore, they stopped writing consistently from right to left but showed great initial confusion. As William A. Mason said in his 1920 book, page 340:

“Strange as it may seem to us today many queer experiments were tried by the early Greek scribes before they finally adopted the consecutive left-to-right writing of each succeeding line. A strong predilection was manifest for continuous and uninterrupted writing. This was carried out in a variety of ways before the writing became standardized. Sometimes the writing was boustrophedon (Ed.: meaning as the ox plows) with the letters reversed in the alternate lines, sometimes the boustrophedon lines were written in inverted characters, and sometimes the writing proceeded spirally from the middle, at times rightward, again leftward.”

This confusion did not last long, and the ancient Greeks responded to the pull of their brains by switching the direction of alphabetic writing, now that it was sound-bearing and not meaning-bearing, from the left to the right.

Happily, mankind now had a totally syllabic and efficient system of writing which was sound-based. The ancients learned to read this syllabic writing with great ease, as shown by the quotation from Dionysius of Halicarnassus. No separation existed between the written syllables which were generating syntax as they were read aloud. (Oral reading was the norm as late as the time of St. Augustine of Hippo in the fourth century. W. J. Frank Davies reported about St. Augustine’s surprised comments on seeing St. Ambrose reading silently, in *Teaching Reading in Early England*, Pitman Publishing, London, 1973, page 78.) It was Alcuin, the English monk in the court of Charlemagne about the year 800, who “improved” this ancient system of continuous text by making it standard to show separations between parts of speech, or “words,” which had previously only been done on such things as monuments. What Alcuin actually did was to take the first step to change a sound-bearing system into a meaning-bearing system.

However, in the very literary culture in Ireland from about 500 to 800 A. D., before the Viking invasions and wars which lasted till almost 1100 A.D., no word separation normally existed on texts.

Of course, Latin, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, Cyrillic and other scripts, which are variations of the alphabetic system, are not the only kinds of writing on earth. The other most common writing system on earth is the Chinese, and its adaptations as in Japanese. Chinese script is assumed originally to have been a syllabic sound-bearing system but very rapidly became meaning-bearing because of the nature of Chinese syllables and the many dialects in Chinese. It was only in the 1950’s after the Communists had

taken over in China that Pinyin alphabetic characters were added to Chinese script, obviously to improve it by adding “sound.” However, the Japanese, because of the nature of their language, added syllable “Kana” characters to the Chinese “Kanji” characters many centuries ago to make the script adaptable to the Japanese language.

As has been discussed, all writing in the world is either meaning-bearing, like Chinese and the Japanese Kanji characters, or syllabic and sound-bearing like the Japanese Kana characters and alphabetic print. Many writing systems, like the Japanese, have used both meaning-bearing characters and sound-bearing characters. As has also been discussed, alphabetic writing is only an extended, economical form of syllabic sound-bearing writing and had its origin in some of the Egyptian characters which were sound-bearing. Although the Sumerian types of writing systems were predominantly sound-bearing syllabaries, they nevertheless died out and it was a small portion of Egyptian material which survived to evolve into alphabets. Early alphabetic writing has had numerous other descendants besides the Greek and Roman alphabets, such as the Arabic and Hebrew alphabets.

Despite the widespread use of Chinese “meaning-bearing” characters, it is alphabetic “sound-bearing” writing which has become overwhelmingly the dominant form of writing on earth. Specific information on the history of the world’s major writing systems is given in the remarkable works of I. J. Gelb, for those who wish to check further.

The incredible utility of the mere twenty-six letters of the present-day sound-bearing alphabet, when used sequentially to reproduce syllables, is matched by the incredible utility of the mere 10 Arabic meaning-bearing digits: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, when written sequentially to show place value. It is really astonishing that with only these thirty-six symbols, used in very specific sequential fashions, mankind has developed the ability to record and to transmit to future generations almost any thought of which mankind is capable! However, if the proper sequential use of either alphabetic letters or Arabic numerals is lost, so will the utility of either be lost. If the Arabic digit numerical system were to lose most of its meaning-bearing nature by abandoning its place value notation, the system would become largely worthless. Correspondingly, when the alphabet is permitted to lose most of its sound-bearing nature by ignoring the sounds of the syllables formed by it, it also becomes largely worthless!

### The Persistence of Culture

The persistence of cultural customs is quite astonishing. That Irish child in the sixth century who was probably the user of the Springmount wax tablets went from the alphabet and its mysteries to the Psalms in Latin as the second step. Locke 1,100 years later said the ordinary route in reading in the late 17th century was the horn book (alphabet, syllabarium and the Lord’s Prayer), primer and then the Psalms in English as the third step. Noah Webster testified that in the mid-eighteenth century when he was a boy the second step in reading was the Psalms in English. While government schools certainly did not include the Psalms in teaching reading, many still at least included the reading of a portion of a Psalm in each day’s opening exercises until the U. S. Supreme Court decision outlawing prayer in schools about 1963. When I started teaching in Wayne, New Jersey in 1963, I found a Bible in the bottom desk drawer of the teacher’s desk that was in my classroom. Yet no part of that Bible including its Psalms could even be read to children in September, 1963, in any government school. Culture is far more likely to be tailored rapidly by change-agents to their liking than to persist in government schools.

A comparable cultural persistence to that of reading the Psalms in schools is shown by the use of the “Donat,” the Ars Minor or small Latin grammar widely used from the time St. Jerome was a schoolboy in the fourth century until the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and to some extent after that. It was still being used in some Italian schools as late as the twentieth century! In The Ars Minor of Donatus, by

Wayland Johnson Chase, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1926, Chase stated (page 10) that in Italy:

“...it is reported to be still employed in some of the schools.”

It should be noted here that, like the reading of the Psalms, effective teaching of English grammar has been swept from American schools by “experts.”

The one-thousand-five-hundred-years-long use of the Latin “Donat” grammar, of course, argues for a similar persistence in the unchanged systematic teaching of the syllabarium, which, it should be noted, the first century Latin teacher, Quintilian, felt was essential. Quintilian’s comments to that effect are quoted, in translation, elsewhere in this text. (The original Latin can be seen in *The Institutio Oratoria* of Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, With an English Summary and Concordance, by Charles Edgar Little, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, in Two Volumes, printed for George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1951. Volume I, which work was only completed after Little’s death. On pages 26 and 27 appears that work’s translation of Quintilian’s comments on the syllabarium, which is very inferior and incomplete in comparison to the translation quoted elsewhere in this text. Nevertheless, on the opposite pages appears the full original Latin: “Syllabus nullum compendium est, perdiscendae omnes nec, ut fic plerumque, difficillima quaeque earum differenda, ut in nominibus scribendis deprehendantur.” Etc.)

### The Utility of Written Latin

In Europe, after the fall of the Roman Empire in the early fifth century, and until the Reformation in the sixteenth century, Latin remained the language of most written communication and most books.

In *Teaching Reading in Early England*, Pitman Publishing Company, London, 1973, Davies wrote (page 140):

“Today we might underestimate the place and extent of Latin in the life and business of (England) in the Middle Ages. Though the English peasant conducted the affairs of his everyday life in his own vernacular, he could not escape being exposed to Latin. Every man had to attend church, and every man from childhood had to participate in prayers.... According to Giraldus Cambrensis, when Archbishop Baldwin was journeying through Wales, c. 1200, he found he was best understood when he was using Latin as his preaching medium....

“Latin remained the language of international communication throughout the whole of this period.... it was also the recording medium for most merchants, accountants and lawyers, with tallies, charters, wills, agreements and other documents being drawn up in it. Right into the sixteenth century traders and shopkeepers kept their accounts in it, and most of the entries in the Day Book of John Dorne (1520), a sort of catalogue of books of the period, were written in Latin.”

It is difficult for people today to realize how unstable and changeable most European languages were when they were largely oral, before the arrival of the printing press. In addition, these volatile languages had many shifting dialects. By contrast, modern European languages are relatively stable, their stability assured by a vast amount of written literature and by standard dictionaries with “correct” pronunciations and meanings.

In his book, *The Story of Language*, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia: 1945, and Mentor Books, New York: 1960, Dr. Mario Pei said on page 73:

“The symbolic character of writing has been partly lost sight of in the most advanced systems, which strive to make characters correspond to spoken sounds, while it stands out most starkly in the more primitive systems, where the spoken-tongue intermediary is omitted, and the character is symbolical not of a sound, but of a thought-concept.

“When a written form is achieved, the result is generally greater stability in the spoken tongue. Many languages of primitive groups are unwritten and consequently highly fluctuating, with many dialects, a rapid rate of change, and an undetermined standard form. Similar high variability in the spoken language is to be observed in tongues like Chinese, in which the written symbol for the thought rather than for the sound still persists. An ideographic system of writing places little restraint upon the spoken language. A phonetic system constricts the spoken tongue into a mold, forces the speakers, to a certain extent, to follow the traditional pronunciation, as indicated in the equally traditional orthography, rather than their own whimsical bent, and gives rise to ‘correct’ and ‘incorrect’ forms of speech which, were the spoken language unrestrained by a written form, would be equally ‘correct’ variants or, at the most, conservative or innovating forms.”

In this excerpt, Dr. Pei explained most lucidly why most European vernaculars were so highly changeable before they were recorded in writing, and why Latin during the same period, because it was written, remained relatively so very stable.

Of course, Latin had once been a second vernacular language for the common people, as well as a literary language for the literate, within the boundaries of the old Roman Empire. John Morris, who wrote *The Age of Arthur, A History of the British Isles from 350 to 650*, (Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York: 1973), claimed that spoken Latin died out in Britain among the common people after the fall of the Roman Empire, at which time “British turned into Welsh.” Yet perhaps spoken Latin never really died out among the common British people in what is now Wales, since spoken Latin is known to have been widely understood in Wales about 1200. (In contrast, in Charlemagne’s France, it was acknowledged that the common people could not understand spoken Latin about 800 A. D. Nor could they in King Alfred’s England not long after.) The Church and its official use of spoken Latin took over in Britain after the Roman Empire and its official use of spoken Latin disappeared about 400 A. D. Yet spoken Latin could well have remained a living second language for most of the Welsh instead of dying out, since almost all of them regularly attended the Latin services in church throughout all those long years from about 400 to after 1200. In contrast, there was no such spoken Latin tradition among the Anglo-Saxon ancestors of King Alfred’s subjects. The turmoil over the years in the land that became Charlemagne’s realm was certainly sufficient to wipe out a good part of the vestiges of Roman culture there, such as spoken Latin.

Yet, for those who were literate in all European countries, written and spoken Latin during those long centuries provided the means to bridge language differences, and the means for accumulated learning to bridge those centuries, as well. Such Europeans who could not have understood each other’s spoken dialects understood each other very well when they spoke Latin. Latin was a living, not a dead language, for the literate in those schools and countries. In addition, the students understood the Latin authors they were given to study, just as they understood the Latin Bible. To read and write during those long centuries from about 400 to well after 1200 meant, for the most part, to read and write in Latin.

## **Chapter 5**

### **A Comparison of the Early with the Late Middle Ages, with a Discussion of the Generally Unacknowledged Drop in the Cultural Level and Its Effect on Literacy**

In the later Middle Ages, after about 1150 A.D., it is evident from an unbiased reading of source material, without any preconceptions, that a sharp cultural and religious decline set in, in the British Isles and elsewhere. This was despite increased material prosperity that had accompanied an increase in population. (However, the population was abruptly decreased and the economy greatly but relatively briefly disrupted in the mid-fourteenth century when the Black Death or bubonic plague had wiped out one-third of the European population.) In the degenerate period of the later Middle Ages, the quality and extent of spoken and written Latin declined.

The cultural loss (in addition to the population loss) from the Viking raids on Britain, Ireland and the continent had been enormous. The raids lasted close to three hundred years, from shortly before 800 A. D. until well after 1000 A. D.

Christopher Dawson told of the terrible times of the Viking invasions in his book, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh 1948-1949, Sheed & Ward, Inc. 1950, Image Books, Doubleday: New York, 1958. He wrote (page 87):

“...in 885-86 [the Danish army] was concentrating its efforts on the siege of Paris, where the forces of Christendom made a last desperate stand.

“It is of these dark years that the chronicler of St. Vedast [Annal. Vedast ann. 884] writes, ‘The Northmen cease not to slay and carry into captivity the Christian people, to destroy the churches and to burn the towns. Everywhere there is nothing but dead bodies - clergy and laymen, nobles and common people, women and children. There is no road or place where the ground is not covered with corpses. We live in distress and anguish before this spectacle of the destruction of the Christian people’....

“The Vikings once more diverted their efforts against King Alfred in the great invasion of 892-96, which is so fully described in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle, from which Wessex finally emerged battered but undefeated....”

The Vikings had not ceased their attacks with their defeat by King Alfred. A century later, the attacks were even worse. Dawson wrote on pages 93-94:

“Again for the last time the Viking fleets were launched against the West, and a new age of barbarian conquest began.... It was, however, England rather than the Continent that was the chief victim of the new Viking attack. The restored Christian kingdom of the house of Alfred, which had attained its zenith under King Edgar (959-75), had now fallen on evil times, and under the pressure of invasion it collapsed in blood and ruin. For twenty-five years England was plundered from end to end and drained of immense sums of money, relics of which are still found in graves and hoards and in runic inscriptions from one end of Scandinavia to the other. Finally, in 1016, Canute, the son of the leader of the pagan reaction, was recognized as king of England, thus becoming the founder of an Anglo-Scandinavian empire.”



A prayer which it is reported as common at the time of the Viking raids and invasions was, "From the fury of the Norsemen, oh Lord, deliver us!" Besides running a massive slave trade, selling captured Christians into slavery to the Spanish Arabs and eastern Islam (described in Michael Wood's *In Search of the Dark Ages*, Facts on File Publications, New York, New York, and Oxford, England, 1987, pages 167-170), the early Vikings, before their own conversion to Christianity, exhibited a curious hatred toward the Christians' books, often throwing them into rivers or lakes when raiding monasteries. The following, reported in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. II, Dublin, 1844, (page 311?) is witness to the massive destruction of manuscripts in Ireland during that period:

"Mr. Petrie exhibited a drawing... of an ancient inscribed grave stone at Clonmacnoise... as a characteristic example of the usual sepulchral memorials of the Irish, from the sixth to the twelfth century... but also as a monumental record of a person very eminently distinguished for his learning in Ireland in the ninth century,...'Suibhne, the son of Mailaehumai.'

"Of the celebrity, in his day, of the person who is thus recorded, the Irish Annals, as well as those of England and Wales, bear abundant evidence. In the *Chronicon Scotorum* his death is thus recorded in the year 890.... in the *Annals of Ulster*... more correctly 891...

"Sir James Ware, in his *Irish Writers*, tells us, that 'his works, and the titles of them, are lost.'"

So, all that is left now of a ninth century scholar and author who was famous in his day is his grave stone. Presumably his works were "drowned," as Fergal McGrath, S. J., explains in *Education in Ancient and Medieval Ireland*, (Studies "Special Publications," Dublin, Ireland, 1979, page 123):

#### "DROWNING OF BOOKS

"A special menace to culture was the destruction of manuscripts by the Norse invader. There is frequent mention of the pitching of books, with other unwanted articles, into the nearest lake or river. Thus, in 922, 'there came after that a fleet on Lough Dergderch, and they plundered Inis Celtra, and they drowned its shrines, its relicks and its books.' This destruction of books may have been in some cases motivated by hatred for the religious character of most of them, but probably more often it was due to simple contempt for what appeared to be useless lumber. These Norse pirates were not indeed mere uncultured savages.... But the Norse were illiterate."

Yet many Norse were not illiterate, in the true meaning of the word, which would be that they were without "letters," because the Vikings did have a true alphabet, the runes, as discussed earlier. Runes had spread to Scandinavia and been in use there for at least several hundred years when the Vikings started their raids about 800 A. D., having originated among Germanic peoples to the north of the Alps about 250 B. C. Runic letters were, however, very different in appearance from the Latin letters written in Irish script, and it is almost certain the pagan Norse were "illiterate" in those texts. The "shrines" referred to were often elaborate and costly containers made to hold special bells which had a religious history and which were highly prized (The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume II, 1913, page 419) or made to hold texts such as the Cathach of St. Columba.

The latter is the copy of the Psalms from the St. Jerome Latin translation which St. Columba personally copied about 560 A. D. when St. Jerome's translation first reached Ireland. The Cathach is still in existence, preserved in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, to which organization it had been donated in the nineteenth century by a descendant of St. Columba's family. It had been held in his family for those thirteen centuries. Its far newer eleventh century Silver Shrine is in the National Museum of Ireland (R. I. A. Collection), Dublin.

Yet, as a result of losses from Viking raids and other influences such as the Normans, much of the “Insular” (Irish, English, Welsh and Scots) past has, indeed, been drowned. As recently as the beginning of the nineteenth century, in 1810, the excellent English church historian, John Lingard, who wrote *Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, seemed unaware of the strong link between England and Ireland in the early days of Christianity. Only recently have excellent scholars such as John Morris, who wrote *The Age of Arthur, A History of the British Isles from 350 to 650*, (Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York: 1973) been piecing together the history from what writings remain. Yet the English language itself confirms the existence of the religious and cultural links between the English and the Irish in that period.

Roland G. Kent, in *Language & Philology*, (Longmans, Green and Co., New York: 1923, 1934, pages 27-28) wrote:

“Other Latin words came into Anglo-Saxon, or Old English, with the missionary work of St. Augustine, who landed in Britain in 597. The language lacked most of the words necessary to express the technical ideas of Christianity, and the gaps had to be filled by borrowings.... A few words of this period seem to have been taken first into Irish, and then brought by Irish missionaries to England: such are the words Christ, alms, monk, which start as Greek. These words are recognized as having passed through Irish, by some peculiar development in the sounds, as for example the long vowel in the name Christ....”

Kent listed many words which he attributed to St. Augustine, presumably because they lacked specifically Irish phonemes:

“...church, devil, minster, school, clerk, deacon, synod, stole, anthem, organ, pope, priest, all taken from Greek into Latin before they passed into Anglo-Saxon; abbot, from a Semitic dialect (Syriac) and angel, from Persian, passing through Greek and Latin into Anglo-Saxon; alb, cope, nun, shrine, mass, font, shrove (in Shrove Tuesday) and shrive, which are from pure Latin, or at any rate not traceable beyond Latin.”

There is no guarantee, of course, that such words came from Canterbury (Italian) and not York (Irish) influences simply because they lack specific Irish accents. It is noteworthy that the most important word of all, “Christ,” can be tied to the influence of the Irish monks through its accent. Kent listed as words with Irish accents Christ, alms, monk, tunic, ass, verse, fiddle, fan (for winnowing), and kiln. A sentence can be made of three of the words with such definite Irish accents: “Monks preached the giving of alms in the name of Christ.” But, the monks were not taking such alms themselves, as John Morris wrote in *The Age of Arthur*, pages 391 and following, quoting the eighth century English historian Bede.

With Bede’s history as his source, Morris told of Aedan, an early Bishop in Northumbria, England, who came there from Iona, which was the island monastery just off the western coast of Scotland, close to Loch Ness, founded in the sixth century by St. Columba of Ireland. Morris then quoted Bede who was writing about Aedan:

“What chiefly won men to his teaching was that he lived with his monks the life that he preached. He made no efforts to acquire worldly advantage.... all that kings or rich men gave him he cheerfully gave away to the first poor man he met. He travelled everywhere... on foot, never on horseback unless he had to.... Timidity or obsequiousness never restrained him from criticising the sins of the rich, and he never gave money to great men.”

Morris continued:

“Aedan’s church was spread by the conquering armies of Northumbria, who made themselves masters of England. When the West Saxon king was persuaded to accept Christianity, his Northumbrian suzerain stood sponsor at his baptism; the kings of the East Saxons and the Mercians went north for baptism by the banks of the Tyne. In the south and the midlands, as well as as in the north, monasteries modelled on Iona proliferated, often double houses, for women and for men... and Irish teachers established themselves in ruined Roman forts or towns....”

In 731 A. D., Bede (673-735 A. D.) wrote *A History of the English Church and People* (translated by Leo Sherley-Price, Dorset Press, N. Y.: 1985). Bede told (pages 195-196) of these teachers in Ireland in 664 A. D.

“At this period there were many English nobles and lesser folk in England who had left their own land... either to pursue religious studies or to lead a life of stricter discipline. Some of these soon devoted themselves to the monastic life, while others preferred to travel, studying under various teachers in turn. The Scots (Ed.: at that time, a synonym for Irish) welcomed them all kindly, and, without asking for any payment, provided them with daily food, books, and instruction.”

Morris continued:

“...the ecclesiastical centre of Northumbria was established on the island of Lindisfarne, where the concepts of Iona more easily endured. Bede observed that even in the second generation the monks of Lindisfarne:

“owned no money and no cattle.... They refused to accept land or estates for the building of monasteries, unless constrained thereto by the secular government. This custom continued in the churches of Northumbria for a long time after.’

“The Irish founded the Northumbrian church, but the English organized it, under the guidance of archbishop Theodore (of Canterbury, an elderly Greek who arrived from Rome in 669); and the Northumbrian church was the principal influence in the conversion of the rest of England, outside of Kent.... “

Bede’s history, despite the reference to the “conquering armies of Northumbria,” tells of a gentler and far more cultured (and overwhelmingly more religious) time than the late Middle Ages. It goes far to explain why the English and the Irish were the most literate and cultivated people in Europe in the time of Charlemagne, about 800 A. D. and why the semi-barbaric Charlemagne sent over to those “insular isles” for the scholars he needed. As Morris said somewhere in his book, in words to this effect, the “Dark Ages” are called “dark” only because of darkness at our end of the time tunnel, not theirs. There certainly was no “Dark Age” in the British Isles before the Viking raids started about 800.

King Alfred in the late ninth century had managed to repel the Viking raids. He tried to rebuild the earlier Anglo-Saxon literary culture from the days of the Venerable Bede and Alcuin that had been swamped under the Viking attacks. In his book, *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh 1948-1949, Christopher Dawson referred to King Alfred’s ninth century further wish for the establishment of universal literacy in the free classes in what is now England. On pages 89 and 90, Dawson reproduced King Alfred’s words in the preface to King Alfred’s translation into Anglo-Saxon of St. Gregory’s treatise on Pastoral Care or *Cura Pastoralis*. King Alfred’s Anglo-Saxon was translated into modern English by M. Williams:

“For it seems well to me that we also change into the tongue that we all know the books that are most needful to be known by all men; and we will bring it about as we very well may, if we have peace, that all the youth of free men of England, those that have the opportunity to give themselves to it, should be bound to learning, while they can be bound to no other usefulness, until the time when they all know how to read English writing. Let them further learn the Latin tongue who desire to learn it and to rise to a higher state.”

The position of women was high in King Alfred’s day, so his use of the word, “men,” as translated from the Anglo-Saxon, most probably meant “mankind,” or both sexes. What King Alfred was proposing, therefore, was universal literacy in the vernacular for the free classes. To the degree that he found possible, King Alfred tried to restore and even to improve on the pre-Viking Anglo-Saxon cultural level.

Much of the last traces of that cultured and gentle pre-Norman time in the British Isles which might have lingered on the bookshelves of monastery libraries of England were wiped out by Henry VIII. Henry raided the monasteries for their wealth and most of their books silently disappeared.

In *Insight*, April 2, 1990, in “Restoring Volumes Bound for Ruin,” by Cathryn Donohoe, the story is told of book conservator Frank Mowery’s experience in 1984 at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D. C. Mowery started to repair two tattered 16th century medical texts bound in a single vellum cover. (The quotation is reprinted with permission of *Insight*. Copyright 1990, News World Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.)

“Sixteenth century binders used to recycle fragments of old texts that they thought were useless and make covers of them,” Mowery explains, his voice alive with the remembered thrill of discovery...

“On that day in October 1984, as the layers of paper came away from the vellum cover in his hands, Mowery caught glimpses of Latin words in dark brown ink and a script - Irish half uncial - known to be the earliest form of Irish writing....

“In fact, the cover was an entire double page from what turned out to be a manuscript copy of a church history translation from about 625. That means it predates the eighth century Book of Kells and even Bede’s “Ecclesiastical History of the English People.”

“It had lain for centuries in one of England’s monasteries, scholars think and had become cover scrap when Henry VIII ransacked the cloisters and doomed their collections to binders’ shops or worse.

“...today this double page - famed among book lovers as a fragment from Rufinus’s Latin translation of Eusebius of Caesarea’s fourth century ‘Ecclesiastical History’ - sits in Dublin with the Book of Kells.”

That seventh century Irish work which had managed to survive the Viking looters did not survive the violence of their descendant, the Tudor King Henry VIII. In *The Library*, Fourth Series, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, June 1942, Neil R. Ker wrote an article, “The Migration of Manuscripts from the English Medieval Libraries.” He said (page 1)

“Most of the medieval manuscripts in recently formed British and American collections, and especially the more ancient and interesting of them, are continental in origin.... Of the thousands of manuscripts described in the Census of medieval and renaissance manuscripts in the United

States and Canada. not many more than a hundred are likely ever to have been on the shelves of an English religious house.

“... (pages 5, 6, 7) The crisis in the history of the libraries of English religious houses came at the moment of the Dissolution. We have little definite knowledge of what happened to books at that time.... We see that the lists of extant books are no guide whatever to the actual contents of the medieval libraries. We see also that the kinds of books which had on the whole the best chance of surviving were historical, patristic, and biblical, and mainly of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and that the kinds of books which had the least chance of surviving were those containing the scholastic theology and philosophy of the later Middle Ages, and the law-books. Manuscripts of this sort were destroyed wholesale. Thousands of leaves of them exist still in the covers of books bound in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

“What happened at St. Augustine’s, Canterbury, can be illustrated in some detail from the medieval catalogue and from the list of extant books. The catalogue, compiled at the end of the fifteenth century and arranged in a subject order, describes more than 1,800 volumes, of which the comparatively large number of 165, or, on an average, 1 in every 11 survive. Evidently the survivors are not a chance residue, but, in the main, a deliberate selection....

“The destruction of books was much more complete in the libraries of the smaller houses...the contents of which are known to us from late medieval catalogues....”

It was about the year 1000 that the lights of civilization in Europe had finally flickered and almost gone out under the latest wave of barbarian invasions, that of the Vikings. Europe had been subject to barbarian invasions since before the fall of the Roman Empire in the early fifth century. The year 410 A. D. marked the end of Pax Romana, that centuries-long Peace of Rome which was guaranteed throughout the vast Roman Empire by the Roman armies. But Celtic Ireland, as an island on the fringe of Europe, had been outside not only the Roman Empire but outside the range of those waves of wandering barbarians to the north of Rome. To describe the centuries-long and exceedingly complicated barbarian turmoil on the European continent, from about 200 A. D. until after 1,000 A. D., which turmoil gave rise to the term, the Dark Ages, would require volumes. However, Ireland remained largely untouched by the fall of Rome, and by that centuries-long and complicated barbarian activity, until the terrible arrival of the Vikings about 800 A. D. In their “insular” relative calm, and despite sporadic internal wars, Christianity and learning prospered in Ireland in the long centuries from about 450 to after 800 A. D.

In the Age of Arthur, John Morris told of the spread of the monasteries with their Latin learning from Illtud’s fifth century Celtic Britain to Ireland. (St. Patrick is also generally considered to have come from Celtic Britain, near the Severn River, slightly earlier.) About a century after Celtic Britain had ceased to be part of the Roman Empire, Illtud’s Celtic British school had retained the general form of Roman schools. This, of course, by itself and independently of the contact with Coptic centers which is discussed elsewhere, is an argument supporting the continued use of the syllabarium to teach beginning reading in the early Irish schools, which later had such an influence on the Continental schools. After all, the famous Roman educator, Quintilian, had said:

“For learning syllables there is no short way; they must all be learned throughout. Nor are the most difficult of them, as is the general practice, to be postponed, that children may be at a loss, forsooth, in writing words. Moreover, we must not even trust to the first learning by heart; it will be better to have syllables repeated, and to impress them long upon the memory; and in reading too, not to hurry on, in order to make it continuous or quick, until the clear and certain connection of the letters become familiar, without at least any necessity to stop for recollection. Let the pupil then begin to form words from syllables, and to join phrases together from words. It is incredible

how much retardation is caused to reading by haste; for hence arise hesitation, interruption, and repetition, as children attempt more than they can manage; and then, after making mistakes, they become distrustful even of what they know. Let reading, therefore, be at first sure, then continuous, and for a long time slow, until, by exercise, a correct quickness is gained.”

Quintilian would have been horrified by the “whole language” approach of today for beginners which results in all those things which Quintilian said should be avoided.

The above translation of the most pertinent Quintilian section on reading, which Barnard printed in his *American Journal of Education* article, “Quintilian on Education.” (1863-1864?, page 113) is the best that I have seen. From Mitford Mathews’ quotation of a portion of the same excerpt and with almost the same wording, for which translation Mathews cited the 1875-76 work of John Selby Watson, London, it seems probable that Barnard about 1863 was quoting from an earlier Watson translation.

Morris told of the subsequent flowering of Latin studies in the monasteries in Ireland in the sixth century. By the seventh century or earlier according to some sources, Gaelic was being written in Ireland as well as Latin. In the seventh century, the English (or Anglo-Saxons, who had themselves arrived in Great Britain from the continent only about two centuries before) enthusiastically adopted both Christianity and the monastic system, and began to write down Anglo-Saxon. Caedmon, who died at Whitby about 687, was the literary giant of the seventh century who wrote in Anglo-Saxon. His work is considered to have been adapted by Milton in *Paradise Lost* in the seventeenth century, just as the Irish work by “St. Fursa of the Visions” who died in 648 in Peronne, France, is considered to have been adapted by Dante in his *Divine Comedy* of the thirteenth century.

We tend to forget today that such use of ancient tales was not considered plagiarism in those days. For instance, Shakespeare also used old tales in writing some of his works.

First the Irish monks in the sixth century, and then both the English and Irish monks in the seventh century, commonly working together, flowed over both barbarian Europe in the north and lapsed-Christian Europe in the south. They were rivers of light, spreading both their devout faith and their learning. Illustrative maps showing the great numbers of Irish and English monasteries founded on the European continent in the period from about 600 to 750 A. D. are reproduced in Appendix A, which shows various reproductions pertinent to this history.

Alcuin’s reference about 800 A. D. to the Latin texts in the library of his monastery in England is an indication of the quality of the scholarship of those “insular” monks. So are the classical allusions in the writings of St. Columbanus of Ireland, who founded Bobbio monastery in Italy about 600, though an argument exists among scholars concerning whether such classical learning was general or not.

These old Irish and English monks founded a great number of monasteries as they spread across Europe. They brought literacy with them, and monasteries before Charlesmagne’s time, or before the ninth century, are known to have had two schools for children: one for those intending to be monks, and one for those who were outsiders. (These schools are discussed in many unbiased works dealing with the Middle Ages. Specifically, refer to the article on “Monasticism,” in the paragraph, “Education,” page 463, Volume X, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913.)

The libraries of the monasteries were storehouses of pagan literature, as well as Christian writings. The libraries of St. Gall in Switzerland and Bobbio in Italy, for instance, were mined by Renaissance scholars in the sixteenth century. Of those monasteries which survived the Reformation in the seventeenth century into the Age of Unenlightenment in the eighteenth century, “enlightened” governments closed many and scattered what was left of their ancient libraries. Monasteries were still being “outlawed” in

Mexico in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and in France at the beginning of the twentieth century. These facts hardly support the claim that the last few centuries have been notable for cultural “progress” and a devotion to “freedom.”

However, unlike eighteenth century Austria, nineteenth and twentieth century Mexico, or late eighteenth, early nineteenth and early twentieth century France, Ireland had been a safe refuge for monk-scholars from the arrival of St. Patrick in the mid-fifth century until the Viking raids started about 800 A. D. That darkest period for western Europe, the period of the Viking assaults, lasted from about 800 to after 1000 A.D. It was only in 1014 that Brian’s Irish army decisively defeated the Vikings outside Dublin. But when the lights of civilization were finally relit by the 1100’s, it was the Viking rulers and their aristocratic allies who were holding the torches, now all calling themselves Christian. Before 1000 A.D., such barbarians had largely been outside the Christian world, but after that date they were inside it, and they were inside it as rulers, in Normandy and elsewhere, even though they were only a few generations removed from their marauding Viking ancestors.

As Seamus MacManus wrote of the Vikings in *The Story of the Irish Race* (The Devin-Adair Company, New York: 1969, first copyrighted in 1921, pages 267-268):

“In the tenth century we find these adventurous sea-rovers making permanent settlements on the continent of Europe. Bands of them sailed down the coast and forced the king of France to yield to them the fair province ever afterwards known by their name, the Duchy of Normandy. More of them went up the Rhine, the Loire, and the Gironde, and fought the Moors on the banks of the Gaudalquivir. Others of them pushed on past the Pillars of Hercules into the Mediterranean and built a powerful kingdom in Italy. Still others even found their way to Greece and the Black Sea. They planted colonies on the coast of Prussia, rounded the North Cape and discovered a route by water to the White Sea. By way of the Dnieper, the Dniester, the Volga and the northern stretches of the Dvina, their enterprising hucksters and freebooters penetrated into the interior of Russia, and in the year 861 laid the foundations of Novgorod, of the kingdom out of which has grown the modern Russia. Still more of them sailed down the Volga, to the Caspian, and, by the Dnieper, entered the Bosphorus and nearly succeeded in capturing the capital of the Sultan.

“At the other extreme end of Europe more than half of Britain was already in their power. The kingdom of Alfred the Great was threatened and shaken to its foundation, and the outlying islands were entirely occupied by them. They placed a Danish sovereign on the throne of England. Indeed at one time, that is about the middle of the ninth century, it looked as if the Vikings were on the point of becoming masters of the greater part of northern and western Europe.”

The Danish sovereign to whom Macmanus referred was Canute, but Canute who became king of England in 1016 was unlike earlier Vikings. Christopher Dawson wrote the following in *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, Image Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York: 1957, (Sheed & Ward, Inc.: 1950), page 94:

“But the victory of Canute was not a victory for paganism. As soon as he was in power he dismissed the Viking army and ruled England ‘under the laws of King Edgar’ according to the traditions of Christian kingship. He became a great benefactor of the Church.... He introduced English bishops and monks into Denmark and Norway....”

The Vikings had been defeated in Ireland in 1014 which had ended the invasions there. Shortly after, the Viking nations were converted to Christianity and with their conversion the raids ceased. As Dawson documented, they became instead devout Christian nations.

But those Viking leaders who had established themselves as rulers outside Scandinavia in other countries were a very different matter. McManus believed that the Viking defeat in Ireland in 1014 decisively removed the Vikings from control of Europe. He missed the point. Long before then, the Vikings had established kingdoms like Normandy, and it was their royal descendants who shortly after succeeded in controlling much of Europe as warring sovereign kings. The Norman kings of England were just such sovereigns. William the Conqueror from Normandy won out in England in 1066 and his Norman successor, Henry the Second, invaded Ireland in 1171. It was after the installation of these descendants of the Vikings on the European scene as members of the aristocracy, from England to the Volga in Russia, that feudalism increased and the position of farmers and peasants degenerated into serfdom. The level of general culture and decency inexorably dropped. Exceedingly ugly anecdotes have come down concerning the brutality of these Norman “aristocrats” to members of their own families, as cited I believe in Thomas Wright’s *A History of Domestic Manners and Sentiments in England in the Middle Ages* (1862).

Bad as the semi-barbaric Merovingian kings had been a few hundred years earlier in France, the Norman kings were far worse. Posing as defenders of religion after conquering England (and extending their activities as far as Sicily and Russia!), the Normans committed such anti-religious and political acts as driving Anglo-Saxon monks from their monasteries and replacing them with Normans. The English understandably boast that they will never be slaves, but they were almost slaves under the Normans, during which period of subjection to those foreign kings even King Alfred’s Anglo-Saxon language was partially obliterated. It emerged from its 300-year-long near suppression in greatly changed form. A Norman version of French had been spoken in English schools and government until the mid-1300’s!

The Normans coveted the goods of the church, and their rapine extended even to the little parish churches. The practice developed that a lord could bestow the “living” or church income on any rector he appointed, but the rector did not have actually to serve the church. He could, instead, hire a deputy vicar, and give him only some of the revenues. Frances and Joseph Gies record, in their *Life in a Medieval Village*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1990 (page 157):

“A notorious example was Bogo de Clare, younger son of an earl, who in 1291 held twenty-four parishes or parts of parishes plus other church sinecures, netting him a princely income of \$2,200 a year. Bogo spent more in a year on ginger than he paid a substitute to serve one of his parishes, in which he took little interest....

“The Church did not condone such excesses as that of Bogo, whom Archbishop John Pecham called ‘a robber rather than a rector.’ Efforts were made to limit the number of benefices a man could hold, and bishops visited their parishes to check on conditions. In 1172 Pope Alexander III decreed that vicars must have adequate job security and must receive a third of their church’s revenues. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) further denounced the custom whereby ‘patrons of parish churches, and certain other persons who claim the profits for themselves, leave to the priests deputed to the service of them so small a portion that they cannot be rightly sustained,’ and pronounced that the rector when not himself residing must see that a vicar was installed, with a guaranteed portion of the revenues....

“The ‘poor parson’ of the *Canterbury Tales* was the brother of a plowman who had carted ‘many a load of dung... through the morning dew.’ This parson ‘did not set his benefice to hire/ and leave his sheep encumbered in the mire.../ He was a shepherd and no mercenary.’ Despite his peasant background, Chaucer’s parson was ‘a learned man, a clerk who truly knew Christ’s gospel.’ His colleagues in the country parishes were not all so well versed. Archbishop Pecham charged priests in general with an ‘ignorance which casts the people into a ditch of error.’“



The fault for the ignorance of these 14th century English priests, the contemporaries of Chaucer and descendants of the Anglo-Saxons, was obviously not theirs; the fault was the greed of the Norman foreigners. It should be remembered that it was the Insular missionaries (the Irish and the Anglo-Saxons) who had flooded the Continent from the late sixth century to the ninth century, and who were justifiably renowned for their learning. The enormous numbers of monasteries they founded all over continental Europe which at that time was either barbarian or sinking back into barbarism became centers of learning. St. Gall in Switzerland and Bobbio in Italy are two famous examples of such monasteries. Both were found to be treasure-houses of classical literature when their libraries were raided in the "Renaissance." Alcuin and other insular English and Irish scholars had been imported by the semi-barbarian Charlemagne about 800 A. D. because they were the most learned men in Europe and because Charlemagne could find no men like them in his semi-barbaric kingdom. The fourteenth century English "descendants" of the Anglo-Saxon Alcuin were ignorant only because King Harold had lost out at Hastings in 1066 to William the Conqueror.

In the degenerate late Middle Ages, even the quality of spoken and written Latin itself began to decline, though it took about one hundred years after the Norman conquest for the effects to begin to be felt in education and for the fundamental scholastic practices of previous centuries to begin to be diluted. Clear proof of Latin degeneracy - and proof of an astonishing move from "sound" to "meaning" in deciphering Latin printed texts! - is given in *The Invention of Printing* by Theo. L. De Vinne, New York: Francis Hart & Co., 1876. De Vinne said in a footnote on page 164:

"Abbreviations, which deformed written Latin to such an extent that it is almost indecipherable to modern readers, were... esteemed a positive merit. The habit of making them was continued after printing was invented.... [In] the *Logic of Ockham*, 1488.... [appears] 'sic hic e fal sm qd ad simple' meaning 'sicut hic est fallacia secundum quid ad simpliciter.' (The section even omitted punctuation.) In 1498, John Petit, of Paris, published a dictionary which professed to be 'A guide to the Reading of Abbreviations.' It was not published too soon, for the practice of making contractions had increased to such an extent that books of abbreviations were legible only to experts."

Eventually, even the teaching of beginning reading deteriorated, when the wax tablets used since 600 B. C. were replaced with the ABC books, and beginners were separated from exposure to "grammar" by the invention of that new institution, the petty school which used those ABC books instead of the wax tablets. Furthermore, as shown by the pre-1534 Latin ABC, the first page of which is reproduced in Appendix A, even beginning reading material used some of the degenerate Latin abbreviations.

A superb and largely ignored source for the history of education in this period is *Education in England in the Middle Ages*, by Albert William Parry (1874-1950). Parry was Principal of the Training College at Carmarthen when his book was published by University Tutorial Press, Ltd., W. B. Clive, London, 1920. Although his book is listed in the card catalog of the New York Public Library, it is missing from their shelves. However, a 1975 reprinted edition by AMS Press, Inc., New York, N. Y. 10003, is available at the Library of Congress (call number: LA 631.3.P37 - 1975). Parry drew on original documents for the periods he discussed, as well as on excellent previous histories, many of which do not occur in other bibliographies, such as Brother Azarius' (P. J. Mullany's) *Essays Educational*, (Chicago, D. H. McBride & Co: 1896); and L'Abbe Allain's *L'Instruction Primaire en France Avant la Revolution* (Paris: 1881). Parry wrote:

"Preface - The purpose of this book is to give an account of the provision which was made in this country for Education during the period from the Introduction of Christianity to the Eve of the Reformation.... Whilst this work was in progress, the late A. F. Leach published his *Schools*

of Medieval England. His book, however, differs essentially from mine, his aim is different, the conclusions he arrives at are different; further, as he does not quote the authorities for the statements he makes, I did not find his work of direct assistance....

(Page 244) “Until comparatively recently it was generally believed that the educational provision available in this country could not be traced back further than to the efforts of the Reformers of the Church in the sixteenth century, and to the influence of the Renaissance. We are now able to realize that the two centuries preceding the Reformation, at least, were a period in which facilities for education in England were widespread and practically open freely to all. The educational effect of the Reformation - even though undesigned - was to remove from the great mass of the people the opportunities for attending school which had previously been available for them. It is also extremely probable that the significance of the Renaissance upon the educational development of this country has been considerably exaggerated....”

Parry recorded data on the quality of education shortly after the arrival of the Normans, and of the changes that took place in education as control gradually passed from the church into other hands. He spoke of class distinctions existing in England before the fifteenth century (page 51):

“In practice the manorial system implied that freedom of movement and choice of occupation scarcely existed. Even before serfs could send their children to school, it was necessary that the consent of the lord should be obtained, and in many cases fines were exacted before this permission was granted....

“The point which we wish to emphasize here, is that the only real social distinction on a manor was that between a lord and his tenants. Between these two grades there was a great gulf fixed. Socially, they were as far asunder as the poles. Between the tenants themselves the social separation was slight.... Even the priest in charge of the majority of the village churches belonged to the same social grade as his parishioners, and, in many cases, he was as poor as any of them, and glad enough to get a few acres and to add to his income by joining in the common agriculture....”

Nevertheless, in the initial Norman period in the 1100's, when education was not in any sense under the Norman king's direct control, education maintained its earlier high standards. In pre-Norman times, class had been no barrier to education, as Parry remarks (page 54):

“Indisputable evidence of the social grade of those who attended the schools of the Church in the tenth century is available. Not only were the various classes of persons who were employed on agricultural labour, such as shepherds, cowherds, swineherds, represented, but even members of the “unfree” class are described as being present in the school of which Abbot Aelfric gives us a picture.”

The practice of freely educating the poor to a very high educational level continued for a time after the arrival of the Normans.

The devastation over the many centuries of the Viking raids had been enormous. Under such conditions, educational facilities must have almost totally collapsed in England by about the year 1000. Yet, a hundred years later, English education was reviving again. Both the collapse and the revival are suggested by remarks of Guibert of Nogent about the year 1100. Dawson, who wrote *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture*, Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh 1948-1949, said on page 182,

“Guibert of Nogent, who wrote in the beginning of the twelfth century, described in his autobiography how before his day and even in his youth there was such a lack of schoolmasters that they could hardly be found save in the most important cities, and even their knowledge was scanty and ‘hardly equal to that of the wandering clerks’ - *clerculis vagantius* - of ‘modern times’, when, as he writes elsewhere, letters were so flourishing and the number of schools so great that they were accessible even to the poorest.

“For about this time, in the last decade of the eleventh century and the first two decades of the twelfth, there was already a remarkable revival of culture and literary activity which was not identified with any particular cathedral school but was common to the Western provinces of France... and found its patrons in the Anglo-Norman court of Henry I and that of his sister, Adela of Blois....”

Parry discussed John of Salisbury who lived in the twelfth century (page 217):

“...the friend and adviser of Thomas a Beckett, at whose death he was present.... John tells us that whilst he was a boy he was placed under the charge of a priest, along with some other boys, ‘*ut psalmos addiscerem.*’“

John of Salisbury’s first step as a little boy in his English/Norman twelfth century education was the learning of the Latin Psalms, just as it had been in Ireland in the seventh century. It resulted in fluency in Latin. Yet there is little question that John was a poor boy when he was receiving this excellent early education, as he is clearly recorded as a very poor young adult later (page 220):

“Apparently John was obliged to maintain himself during this period, as he had no parents or relatives who could support him. Consequently, we find that he taught the ‘children of noble persons.’... ”

“In order to apply himself to the study of theology, John returned to Paris. His course was interrupted by his poverty; during the necessary interval he again acted as tutor.”

Parry discussed on page 221 William Fitzstephen (d. 1190) who was employed by Thomas a Beckett and who witnessed the murder of his master. Fitzstephen wrote Beckett’s biography. Quoting Fitzstephen, Parry said Beckett:

“...passed the years of ‘*infantiae, pueritiae et pubertatis*’ in the home of his father and ‘*in scholis urbis.*’ When he became a young man, Thomas proceeded to Paris to study.”

Manifestly, urban schools or town schools existed in twelfth century England for boys living at home.

Parry continued (page 222):

“These accounts we have given of the education of John of Salisbury, Alexander Neckham, and Thomas a Becket are noteworthy. They show that education in the twelfth century was much more general, and much more advanced, than we usually think. The audiences, assembled at the school festivities, were able to understand, and thoroughly to appreciate the dialectical disputations carried on in Latin. So too, we learn elsewhere, that when Giraldus Cambrensis was giving addresses, he was everywhere understood when he spoke in Latin....”

Parry discussed the availability of education (pages 53-54):

“The main demand for education at this time came from those who desired some position or other in connection with the Church. As will be shown in a subsequent chapter, the Church provided facilities for education for three reasons: as a partner of the State she was responsible for providing it; as holding the view that intellectual training was necessary for moral perfection it was, of necessity, her mission to supply it; and, in order that a sufficient number of adequately equipped clerks should be forthcoming, it would be imperative that she should take the necessary action.

“An important question now arises. To whom did the Church offer facilities for education? To the gentry and nobility? To the middle classes? Or to the labouring classes?...

“The nature of the education received by the children of the ‘nobility and gentry’ will be considered in Chapter VI; here it will be sufficient to state that the intellectual part of their education was given by a priest, but it was provided at the expense of the relatives... hence, in the ordinary acceptance of the term, the Church did not ‘provide’ facilities for the education of the children who were of ‘gentle’ lineage.

“Two social classes remain: the middle classes and the ‘gutter poor,’ as Mr. Leach elegantly terms them. Which of these two classes did the Church endeavor to educate?

“The answer is obvious when we consider the social structure of the period. For practical purposes, the middle class in England did not exist until about the close of the fourteenth century. The social distinctions between the various classes of tenants on a manor were so slight as to be negligible.... Consequently when the question is asked as to the social grade for whom the Church provided educational facilities, the answer is that such facilities were offered regardless of social standing, and were available for the poorest, even the ‘gutter poor’ if the term is desired.”

But, as has been shown, the content of the curriculum changed for the beginning levels toward the end of the Middle Ages, although what Parry stated remained essentially true for the schools considered as a whole (pages 216-217):

“Any student who enters upon an investigation of the schools of the Middle Ages, without any preconception of what was taught in the schools, and who diligently reads through the documents of the period now available, would unhesitatingly state that the curriculum consisted of grammar and song....”

The problem is with the definition of grammar, which once had meant beginning with letters, or the ABC. Children had learned the alphabet/syllabarium and gone on to the Latin psalter and then the grammar for centuries, but by the fourteenth century a clear split had appeared between those learning the Latin grammar with the Donat and those who were only using ABC books or learning “song.”

This distinction is clearly shown by Parry’s quotation of the curriculum of an English grammar school, as shown by an entry in the Ipswich Court Book of 1476-7 (page 228):

“The grammar master shall henceforth have the jurisdiction and governaunce of all scholars within the liberty and precinct of this town, except only petties called ‘apeseyes’ and song, taking for his salary from each grammar scholar, psalter scholar, and primer scholar, according to the tariff fixed by the Bishop of Norwich, viz. for each grammarian 10d., psalterian 8d., and primerian 6d. a quarter.”

The curriculum sequence by 1476 is clear: first the ABC book and/or song, and then, but ONLY for those to whom the higher Latin training was to be offered, the primer, the psalter, and the grammar, which were all in Latin.

In those days, however, there was a clear distinction between the ABC book in Latin, which children were to learn to read, and the catechism in English, which children were to learn from oral instruction. That distinction is shown by a quotation Parry gives on a petty school curriculum for 1526 (page 229):

“The first full curriculum of a school which we have been able to trace, is that which was drawn up for the use of the school which was founded in 1526 at Childrey, in Berkshire, by Sir William Fettiplace. The priest to be appointed to the school was required to be well instructed in grammar. The children in the school were to be taught, first, the alphabet, and then in Latin, the Lord’s Prayer, the ‘Hail Mary,’ the Apostles’ Creed, all things necessary for serving at Mass, the De Profundis, collects for the departed, and graces for dinner and supper; and in English, the Fourteen Articles of Faith, the Ten Commandments, the seven deadly sins, the seven sacraments, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven works of mercy, the manner of confession, good manners and good conduct. In addition, if any of those who attended the school were capable of profiting by further instruction, the master was required to instruct them in grammar.”

The Latin portion of the curriculum was a recital of the content of the known ABC books which showed up in print within the next decade of this sixteenth century; the English portion of the curriculum was essentially the content of Peckham’s 13th century, Thoresby’s 14th century, and Gerson’s 15th century catechisms, referred to again later. But it is obvious that children in these English petty schools were not learning Latin through their almost immediate memorization of the Psalter in Latin which in earlier centuries had resulted in the Latin fluency referred to by Parry.

In the later Middle Ages, which were materially prosperous but socially degenerate, St. Thomas Aquinas with his great work, and the few who could be considered like him, were swimming upstream in an intellectual milieu that was floating the other way. A comparison of Barbara W. Tuchman’s *A Distant Mirror, The Calamitous 14th Century*, (Alfred A. Knopf, New York: 1984), to the pre-Norman *A History of the English Church and People* written by Bede in the eighth century (translated by Leo Sherley-Price, revised by R. E. Latham, and reprinted by Dorset Press, New York: 1985), is very illuminating concerning the vastly different cultural viewpoints in these two periods.

Although Bede wrote from a monastery, the content of his history shows he was very well informed. As mentioned, the *Hisperica Famina*, a strange and fascinating Latin piece from the seventh century A. D. translated by Michael Herren, concerns adult lay scholars in Ireland in the seventh century who traveled around the countryside, depending on voluntary donations from local farmers, which they received because scholars were held in such high esteem. Bede also confirmed the open-handedness in Ireland of the seventh century to foreign scholars.

By contrast, in the period of the University of Paris in the fourteenth century, foreign clerical, not lay, students were often cheated and robbed by the local people with whom they dealt. Yet some of these clerical students might be said to have deserved it, because of their own sometimes appalling behavior. These later Middle Ages were the time of the rise of the universities. Many of their “intellectuals” of the thirteenth to fifteenth century were a very good match for the “intellectuals” of today who are busy creating a cultural wasteland with such “disciplines” as “deconstructionism” in place of the real study of literature.

The “seven liberal arts” had been known since the latter days of the Roman empire. The seven consisted of the trivium (grammar, logic and rhetoric), and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry,

astronomy, and music)<sup>14</sup>. But, in the later Middle Ages, even the study of the liberal arts often degenerated into futile discussions.

Grammar, logic and rhetoric, the “artes triviale” or elementary arts, concerned language. It is interesting that amidst all the worthless material being published today concerning the teaching of “critical thinking skills,” a certain amount of very sensible material is to be found. Yet “thinking” cannot be taught or conditioned. As discussed elsewhere, the term, “thinking skills” in the sense in which it is used today is an oxymoron. Today’s small amount of worthwhile material should more properly be labeled, “skills to use when thinking.” Actually, this worthwhile material is concerned with the ancient “skills” of grammar, logic and rhetoric. It is possible to learn or to “condition” these skills, which skills having once been acquired can be used on command as yardsticks to judge and shape the logic or orderliness of one’s thinking or speaking.

That “critical thinking” and specific, teachable, subject matter on logic were once considered to be synonymous was shown as late as 1957, by the title of a textbook on logic, *An Introduction to Critical Thinking, A Beginner’s Text in Logic*, by W. H. Werkmeister, Director, School of Philosophy, University of Southern California, published by Johnsen Publishing Company, Lincoln, Nebraska, in the 1957 revised edition of the original edition of 1948. The book taught the specific, dead, “subject matter” of “logic,” which was meant to be used to judge and shape the orderliness of “live” thinking, so that it could be sufficiently “critical.” Yet that dead subject matter, in essence only a series of rules, was obviously not itself the live activity of “thinking.”

In the universities in the later Middle Ages, “refinements” were introduced in teaching the ancient material of grammar, logic and rhetoric, which “refinements” were actually as degenerate as “deconstructionism” is in today’s study of literature. The teaching of grammar, logic and rhetoric in the late Middle Ages therefore deteriorated.

Roger Bacon (born about 1214, died 1294) testified at great length on the academic degeneracy at all levels in the mid-thirteenth century, particularly at the famed University of Paris, which usually gets such great praise. Bacon made it crystal clear that advanced schooling had degenerated there, not improved. In particular, contrast Bacon’s comments below, on the attitude towards study of the Holy Scriptures in the University of Paris in the 1200’s, with the attitude in the ancient Irish saints “lives” from about 600 A. D. Portions of those ancient “lives” were quoted earlier. Note also Bacon’s astonishing complaint in the thirteenth century that greater concern was shown for precisely rendering the “classical poets” than for producing correct Biblical texts!

According to the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Vol. XIII, page 114, in its article on Roger Bacon:

“...the burden... of all his writings was: ecclesiastical study must be reformed. All his ideas and principles must be considered in the light of this thesis. He openly exposes the ‘sins’ of his time in the study of theology, which are seven.... The first sin is the preponderance of (speculative) philosophy. Theology is a Divine science, hence it must be based on Divine principles and treat questions touching Divinity, and not exhaust itself in philosophical cavils and distinctions. The second sin is ignorance of the sciences most suitable and necessary to theologians; they study only Latin grammar, logic, natural philosophy (very superficially!) and a part of metaphysics: four sciences very unimportant, *scientiae viles*. Other sciences more necessary, foreign (Oriental) languages, mathematics, alchemy, chemistry, physics, experimental sciences, and moral philosophy, they neglect. A third sin is the defective knowledge of even the four sciences which they cultivate: their ideas are full of errors and misconceptions, because they

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<sup>14</sup> The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, Volume I, “Arts. The Seven Liberal,” page 760 f.

have no means to get at the real understanding of the authors from whom they draw all their knowledge, since their writings abound in Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic expressions. Even the greatest and most highly-esteemed theologians show in their works to what an extent the evil has spread.

“Another sin is the preference for the ‘Liber Sententiarum’ and the disregard of other theological matters, especially Holy Scriptures; he complains: ‘The one who explains the “Book of the Sentences” is honoured by all, whereas the lector of Holy Scripture is neglected; for to the expounder of the Sentences there is granted a commodious hour for lecturing at his own will, and if he belongs to an order, a companion and a special room; whilst the lector of Holy Scripture is denied all this and must beg the hour for his lecture to be given at the pleasure of the expounder of the Sentences. Elsewhere the lector of the Sentences holds disputations and is called master, whereas the lector of the [Biblical] text is not allowed to dispute.’ (Opus Minus”, ed. Brewer, 328 sq.) Such a method, he continues, is inexplicable and very injurious to the Sacred Text which contains the word of God, and the exposition of which would offer many occasions to speak about matters now treated in the several ‘Summae Sententiarum’. Still more disastrous is the fifth sin: the text of Holy Writ is horribly corrupted, especially in the ‘exemplar Parisiense’, that is to say in the Biblical text used at the University of Paris and spread by its students over the whole world. Confusion has been increased by many scholars or religious orders, who in their endeavours to correct the Sacred Text, in default of a sound method, have in reality only augmented the divergences; as every one presumes to change anything ‘he does not understand, a thing he would not dare to do with the books of the classical poets’, the world is full of ‘correctors or rather corruptors’.... The reasons of ... false exposition are the corruption of the sacred text and ignorance of the Biblical languages. For how can they get the real meaning of Holy Writ without this knowledge, as the Latin versions are full of Greek and Hebrew idioms?

“The seventh sin is the radically false method of preaching: instead of breaking to the faithful the Bread of Life by expounding the commandments of God and inculcating their duties, the preachers content themselves with divisions of the arbor Porphyriana, with the jingle of words and quibbles. They are even ignorant of the rules of eloquence, and often prelates who during their course of study were not instructed in preaching, when obliged to speak in church, beg the copy-books of the younger men, which are full of bombast and ridiculous divisions, serving only to ‘stimulate the hearers to all curiosity of mind, but do not elevate the affection towards good’ (“Opus Tertium”, Brewer, 309 sq.).... First of all, if one wishes to get wisdom, he must take care not to fall into the four errors which usually prevent even learned men from attaining the summit of wisdom, viz. ‘the example of weak and unreliable authority, continuance of custom, regard to the opinion of the unlearned, and concealing one’s own ignorance, together with the exhibition of apparent wisdom’... Opus Majus, I, Bridges, 1, 2)....

“Besides the languages there are other means, e. g. mathematics, optics, the experimental sciences, and moral philosophy, the study of which is absolutely necessary for every priest, as Bacon shows at length. He takes special pains in applying these sciences to Holy Scripture and the dogmas of faith. These are pages so wonderful and evincing by their train of thought and the drawings inserted here and there such a knowledge of the subject matter, that we can easily understand modern scholars saying that Bacon was born out of due time. .... It is in these treatises (and other works of the same kind) that Bacon speaks of the reflection of light, mirages, and burning-mirrors, of the diameters of the celestial bodies and their distances from one another, of their conjunction and eclipses; that he explains the laws of ebb and flow, proves the Julian Calendar to be wrong; he explains the composition and effects of gunpowder, discusses and affirms the possibility of steam-vessels and aerostats, of microscopes and telescopes, and some other inventions made many centuries later. Subsequent ages have done him more justice in

recognizing his merits in the field of natural science.... He is an enemy only of the extravagances of Scholasticism, the subtleties and fruitless quarrels, to the neglect of matters much more useful or necessary and the exaltation of philosophy over theology. Far from being hostile to true philosophy, he bestows a lavish praise on it.... Bacon is sometimes not very correct in his expressions; there may even be some ideas that are dangerous or open to suspicion (e. g. his conviction that a real influence upon the human mind and liberty and on human fate is exerted by the celestial bodies etc.). But there is no real error in matters of faith, and Bacon repeatedly asks the reader not to confound his physics with divination, his chemistry with alchemy, his astronomy with astrology.... whilst his criticism often becomes violent when he blames the most eminent of his contemporaries, he never speaks or writes any word of disregard of the Fathers or ancient Doctors of the Church, even when not approving their opinion.... Bacon was a faithful scholar of open character who frankly uttered what he thought, who was not afraid to blame whatsoever and whomsoever he believed to deserve censure, a scholar who was in advance of his age by centuries.... he must be reckoned among the most eminent scholars of all times.”

Though Bacon was commissioned to write his main work by Pope Clement IV in a letter of June 22, 1266, he was asked to do so secretly. Bacon had met Pope Clement IV while he was still Cardinal Guy le Gros de Foulques, either on the cardinal’s trip to England or when Bacon was in Paris. At that time, Bacon had interested the cardinal in Bacon’s ideas on current abuses, particularly in ecclesiastical studies. Pope Clement IV’s secrecy requirement, of course, was an implicit admission that Bacon was surrounded by men who were not only incapable of appreciating his call for reform but who opposed it. The Catholic Encyclopedia (1913) stated, “About the rest of Roger’s life we are not well informed. The ‘Chronica XXIV Generalium Ordinis Minorum’ says that ‘the Minister General Jerome of Ascoli [afterwards Pope Nicholas IV] on the advice of many brethren condemned and rejected the doctrine of the English brother Roger Bacon, Doctor of Divinity, which contains many suspect innovations, by reason of which Roger was imprisoned’ (see the ‘Chronica’ printed in ‘Analecta Franciscana’, III, 360). The assertion of modern writers, that Bacon was imprisoned fourteen or fifteen years, although he had proved his orthodoxy by the work ‘De nullitate magia’, has no foundation in ancient sources.”

Presumably those self-satisfied “learned” men of the time who were doing such a bad job steering culture’s ship could not tolerate the competence of Roger Bacon. The proverb, “the more things change, the more they remain the same,” certainly seems to apply concerning universities today, as demonstrated by Profscam: Professors and the Demise of Higher Education (1988), by Charles J. Sykes, and other sources.

Europe’s universities first began to arise about the twelfth century, and soon replaced the monasteries as the centers of learning. Yet, earlier standards were apparently slower to change in the monasteries than in those new institutions, the universities. An example of the survival of earlier academic standards appears in an article on Gertrude of Hackeborn, Cistercian Abbess of Helfta, near Eisleben, Germany, who was born near Halberstadt in 1232 and died towards the end of 1292. That article in the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), page 533, stated:

“She required her nuns to be educated in the liberal arts, but insisted especially on the study of Holy Scripture....”

In insisting on education in the liberal arts, Gertrude of Hackeborn was only requiring of her nuns what had been the standard in Christian schools for over a thousand years before her time, from before the days when St. Jerome had been a schoolboy studying his Donat. Yet Gertrude’s high academic standards from those far earlier times were dying out in Roger Bacon’s and her era, even though the hollow form of the basic studies remained the same: the liberal arts and Holy Scripture.



Education usually acts as a mirror of the culture in which it takes place unless government schools, under the control of change-agents, have altered the natural state of things. The drop in educational excellence in the late Middle Ages was the result of the drop in culture between the earlier Middle Ages and the late Middle Ages/Renaissance.

That decline is illustrated very disturbingly by a short biography which appeared in *30 Days in the Church and the World*, July-August, 1990 (United States Edition: 2515 McAllister Street, San Francisco, California 94118..) The article concerned St. Camillus, (1550-1614).

There was nothing about Camillus when he was young, when he was addicted to gambling and was both illiterate and immoral, that even remotely suggested what was to be his amazing and saintly future. Yet Camillus became converted from his ugly old ways and then almost immediately, and undoubtedly to the astonishment of many, behaved like a very great saint.

It was at the age of 25, in 1575, that Camillus changed completely, and he devoted himself to the sick in the pest-holes that were the Roman hospitals of the Renaissance. Other men gathered around him and formed an order in 1586, Congregation of the Ministers of the Sick. Wearing a large red cross on their chests, they went into battlefields to help the wounded and dying. It was the sight of these religious which inspired the Swiss philanthropist of the 19th century, Henri Dunant, to found the Red Cross. What is of interest for this history is that the short biography of St. Camillus recorded the downward spiral in European culture from the tenth century to the sixteenth century. That downward spiral culminated in those sixteenth-century Roman pest-holes called hospitals in which St. Camillus first did his great work.

The article said that, during the early Middle Ages, when the first hospitals had appeared, they had been attached to the monasteries and had been meant for both monks and laity. Then, during the 1200's, a great increase in charitable work resulted in the founding throughout Europe of hospitals, convalescent homes and leper colonies, which were numbered in the thousands. These establishments also helped, in addition, pilgrims and the poor. Surviving records from the Cluny monastery show that the monastery each year fed an average of 10,000 poor people. Yet the principal purpose of the hospitals was to extend help to the sick, the elderly, and the disabled. To support that work, they received substantial funds from bequests dedicated to God.

The article reported the following concerning the drop in standards from the 900's and the 1200's to the 1400's and the 1500's (although the order of the quotations has been changed):

“At the hospital of Siena, founded in the 900s... chronicles speak of diets based on chicken, bread and wine, and of the use of silk sheets. The rules speak of sick people who have the right to ‘a servant who will make their bed for them and feed and serve them’; of the sick called ‘lords’ and of the duty of the rector himself out of ‘reverence for God and the Blessed Virgin Mary’ to serve ‘the poor and the sick.’”

The article stated that Pope Innocent III, in the 1200's, became personally involved in supporting Guido di Montpellier's work, and built in Rome and through Europe the “Hospitals of the Holy Spirit, which were to be operated by religious orders and confraternities. The article continued:

“Innocent III's order to call the sick who were cared for there ‘patrons’ and the Christians who attended them ‘servants’ reflects the primacy that mercy had in medieval civilization. All were bound to this cult of ‘love owed to Christ, God and Man, who is himself sick in the poor’ (as one reads on the entrance of the hospital in Turin)....

“...At the beginning of the 1400s, another culture began to spread....religious orders, in crisis, were replaced in the hospitals where they had worked by convicts, the dregs of society, forced to work in increasingly dirty, infected, and horrible places.

“Descriptions in chronicles of the time are chilling.... sometimes the sick were piled together with corpses, sometimes patients died of maltreatment or from the violence of the staff. For days invalids were left to lie in filth.... In the authors of the time - Berni, Pier Salviotti, Mauro, Strascino - disrespect and mockery toward old, sick and deformed women were common.... There was a horror of death.... esoteric doctrines spread at this time. Spiritualism and hedonism are the content of Renaissance culture and pagan customs. The sick person, who in the Middle Ages was venerated as Christ crucified, was now hated and rejected. Everyone fled from the hospitals, except for the convicts forced to work there.”

The conditions of the hospitals in the sixteenth century were hideous, and yet, six hundred years earlier, conditions had been wonderful. That downward spiral in hospital care serves to corroborate the downwardly spiraling degeneracy of the so-called Renaissance.

After Camillus's conversion, his work at the Rome hospital for the incurable had certainly presented a stark contrast to the terrible conditions that had preceded his arrival. Instead of leaving the sick to lie abandoned and unattended, the biography reported that Camillus, himself, had washed their filthy, infected, sick bodies when they entered, cleaned their infected wounds, carried them and consoled them.

Camillus was in a time-warp, his behavior reverting back to that of the earlier Middle Ages, and the superiority of that earlier behavior is obvious. Yet Camillus was out of step with the Renaissance (of pagan culture) which continued on its intellectual development. By the period of the Unenlightenment in the 18th century, that intellectual development was producing men like Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau, none of whom anyone would expect to find washing the sores of derelicts in a hospital for the abandoned poor.

The late Middle Ages and the Renaissance (of pagan culture) were an appalling period from the standpoint of basic decency. Yet it was in these dreadful times that basic literacy was becoming more widespread, but it was apparently literacy largely in the vernaculars, not in Latin, for most of Europe (England being a possible exception). That meant that the learning of previous ages, most of which was still in Latin, was largely beyond the reach of the great majority of people.

While the common view of the late Middle Ages from about 1300 to about 1500 is that the vast majority of lay people were illiterate, Barbara A. Tuchman in her book, *A Distant Mirror*, thought otherwise, speaking of the period after 1340 (page 59-56). She said that although the ordinary person absorbed information mainly through sermons, plays, and public recitals of poems and stories, the reading of the upper classes and of the nobility had increased because written manuscripts had become more available. She stated the following:

“Books of universal knowledge, mostly dating from the 13th century and written in (or translated from the Latin into) French and other vernaculars for the use of the layman, were literary staples familiar in every country over several centuries. A 14th century man drew also on the Bible, romances, bestiaries, satires, books on astronomy, geography, universal history, church history, rhetoric, law, medicine, alchemy, falconry, hunting, fighting, music, and any number of special subjects....

“Contemporary writers rapidly found an audience. In Dante's life time his verse was chanted by blacksmiths and mule-drivers....”

Dante Alighiere lived from 1265 to 1321. The blacksmiths and mule-drivers of his day were most probably illiterate, but enough literate people must have been available to read Dante in public or blacksmiths and mule-drivers could not have memorized his verse.

Barbara Tuchman said also (page 53):

“Women of noble estate were frequently more accomplished in Latin and other school learning than the men, for though girls did not leave home at seven like boys, their education was encouraged by the Church so that they might be better instructed in the faith and more fitted for the religious life in a nunnery, should their parents wish to dedicate them, with suitable endowment, to the Church. Besides reading and writing in French and Latin, they were taught music, astronomy, and some medicine and first aid.”

Although she gave no sources for this statement, she undoubtedly had data to support it in the 14th century France of which she was writing. In Italy and England, however, original sources which would be too lengthy to cite here show that the education of women deteriorated in the late Middle Ages, English nuns sometimes becoming unable to handle Latin, in sharp contrast to the brilliance of English nuns about 700 A. D. In Italy, some of the humanists even discounted the desirability of educating women at all except for the extremely high-born, and then only as a matter of expediency.

The contempt in which women were held in Italy in these later days appears to have arisen in large part from an identifiable source of cultural degeneracy: the writing of the *Roman de la Rose*, which was in part obscene allegory. Tuchman described it as (page 212):

“...the monumental bible of love written in two sections fifty years apart during the 13th century. Begun in the courtly tradition of one author, it was expanded in a cynical and worldly version and at an inordinate length by another....”

She then briefly quoted the obscene allegories with which it ends. Completed in the 13th century, it was in circulation before the beginning of the 14th century or the year 1300, and, by the time Christine de Pisan wrote in 1399, literature in the vernacular languages of Europe which were modeled on the *Roman de la Rose* had become widespread. The very fact that it became more comfortable for literate people to read the *Roman* in the vernacular than in Latin is, of course, testimony to the degeneracy in Latin teaching.

Tuchman discussed Christine de Pisan, the prolific feminist author born in 1364, and her war against the *Roman*. In 1399, Christine wrote the *Epistle to the God of Love*, and in it asked why the attitude to women in France had so greatly changed. They had once been honored but were at that time being insulted, not just by the ignorant but by clergy and nobles. Tuchman considered that Christine's *Epistle* had been written in direct opposition to Jean de Meung's vicious satire on woman in his addition to the *Roman de la Rose*, which Tuchman called the most popular book of the time. At that time, de Meung, who had a master's degree in Arts from the University of Paris, was a professional writer. Tuchman said de Meung was:

“...the Jonathan Swift of his time, a satirist of the artificial conventions in religion, philosophy and especially chivalry and its central theme of courtly love....”

“[Christine de Pisan's] protest was to provoke a vociferous debate between antagonists and defenders of Jean de Meung in one of the great intellectual controversies at the turn of the century (pages 218-219).”

One of Christine de Pisan's most vocal supporters was Jean Gerson. A history of the debate on the Roman de la Rose and Gerson's part in it is given in *The Epistles on the Romance of the Rose and Other Documents in the Debate*, by Charles Fredrick Ward. This was Ward's Ph. D. Dissertation at the University of Chicago, and it was reprinted in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Section II*, 1910, VIII. Ward wrote (page 3):

"From its first appearance the Roman de la Rose enjoyed great vogue. We observe in this connection the glowing tributes of contemporary and succeeding writers, the numerous manuscripts, which compensate for the art of printing not then invented, the translations into English, Dutch, Italian, and other languages. Even the numerous paintings and tapestries of scenes from the romance point to its great popularity....

"...As we shall see, Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, saw the danger to morals in the average man's reception of a poem which tended to free him from all restraint. Christine de Pisan, too, with a much narrower range of thought, assails with singular energy and with the courage of her convictions a book which contains so many attacks on her sex.

"...its fundamental purpose or idea (whether altogether so intended by Jean de Meung or not does not matter) was to disseminate in a popular form the philosophy of the Latin writers... Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Horace, Juvenal, etc., and especially... the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius, the *De Nuptiis* of Theophrastus, the *De Planctu Naturae* of Alain de Lille, and... the *Ars Amatoria* and *Metamorphoses* of Ovid. As a popular exposition of the favorite doctrines of Latin philosophy, as an encyclopaedia of knowledge on almost every subject, good and evil, the nature of government, the Church, society, morals, manners, women, etc., etc., the Roman de la Rose was admired by the bourgeois, the average man....

"...the constant appeal to a clear and uncompromising reason, lead(s) us to agree (as far as such comparisons will hold) with Gaston Paris that Jean de Meung is the Voltaire of the Middle Ages....

"We remark that up to this point the great popularity of the Roman de la Rose had carried everything before it. Its influence upon literature was supreme. It was the masterly work which terminated the middle ages. But there was to be a reaction against its doctrines and we come now to the first public challenge of the work of Jean de Meung, at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

"Christine de Pizan was not the first woman to resent the insinuations against the feminine sex contained in many parts of the Roman de la Rose, if we are to believe the rather doubtful legend concerning the ladies of the court who were going to whip the author....

"...Christine found powerful allies in Jean Gerson, Chancellor of the University of Paris, Guillaume de Tignonville, Prevot de Paris, and Marshal Boucicault....

"The controversy seems to have commenced... with oral discussions between Christine de Pizan, Jean de Montreuil, and a third person, probably Gerson."

Ward commented in a footnote, concerning Montreuil, that he was a diplomat and secretary to the king, and one of the leading humanists of his time. Ward said that Montreuil:

“...was charged with paganism because he inscribed the ten laws of Lycurgus on the portico of his house, and confessed that he preferred them to evangelical principles.... His attitude in this matter is inseparably connected with the quarrel concerning the Roman de la Rose which, while it is a most ancient literary quarrel, is really moral and religious in nature.”

Continuing in the body of his text, Ward said:

“Doubtless Christine had already been confirmed in her attitude by the support of Jean Gerson. The latter had written in 1399 a Sermon contre la luxure, in one place in which, with all the authority he possessed, he condemned the Roman de la Rose to the fire: “Au feu, bonnes gens, au feu!... C’est la remede meilleur.” (Ed.: To the fire, good people, to the fire!... It is the best remedy.)” Gerson’s condemnation of the work was based on grounds somewhat different from those of Christine. He saw in it a work subversive of private and public morality. Although a humanist and a friend of humanists, he failed to see the real literary and philosophical merits of Jean de Meung’s work....”

All of this confirms the moral and religious degeneracy of the period, and the gradual weakness in Latin of the literate classes so that they were more comfortable when reading written material in the vernacular. The bilingual monks of the early Middle Ages were no longer even a memory. Yet, curiously, the dispute on Roman de la Rose also confirms widespread literacy in the vernacular in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. Would Gerson have thundered from his pulpit in 1399: “To the fire, good people, to the fire!” if numbers of his parishioners had not possessed copies of the Roman in French to throw into the fire? If they had bought the book from the commercial scribes, it is only reasonable to presume they could read it!

Despite the fact that Christine de Pisan was writing some of her books largely for women about 1400 so she obviously expected many women to be literate, in the same era Joan of Arc is known to have been illiterate. That is proof that, despite what may have been relatively widespread literacy, literacy was not universal. Concerning the clear distinction that should be drawn between the pre-Reformation ABC books and the pre-Reformation catechism, Joan of Arc must have had no contact with the ABC book, but it cannot be seriously questioned that she was familiar with the catechism, which was commonly taught orally to the parents in church, so that they could teach their children later at home. Yet the illiterate Maid of Orleans inspired Gerson and Christine de Pisan to write about her. It is interesting that Gerson, who had according to Tuchman (page 479) a general aversion to mystics, nevertheless was:

“in the last year of his life, one of only two theologians willing to guarantee the authenticity of the voices of Joan of Arc.”

Also, shortly before her death about 1430, Christine de Pisan wrote Hymn to Joan of Arc:

“...the only contemporary tribute to Joan of Arc and the only evidence of her achievements outside the trial records written during her lifetime.” (Christine de Pisan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, Translated by Sarah Lawson, Penguin Classics: 1985, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, page 26).

Joan of Arc continued to inspire gifted authors in later centuries, with Mark Twain judging his own painstakingly researched biography of Joan of Arc to be the very best of all his works.

An unusually silly, fairly recent, thesis has predictably been given great credence by “intellectuals.” The thesis is that the concept of childhood did not exist in the Middle Ages. The author of this silliness is Philip Aries of France. Aries proposed the thesis despite the fact that Aries, himself, quoted a 13th

century document outlining seven ages of man, the first of which was infancy and the name for the second of which was derived from the Latin root “puer” meaning “boy,” or child. The excerpt from Beckett’s twelfth-century biography, referred to earlier, clearly mentions three of these stages: “infantiae, pueritiae, et pubertatis.”

However, the final effect of Aries’ idea that in the past no meaningful distinction was made between adults and children may be seen as vicious, rather than silly. Such an idea implicitly denies that the family is a natural, rather than cultural, unit, and that the family therefore exists by the right of natural law. Such an idea implicitly denies that the duties and obligations existing between adult parents and immature children are also natural. Therefore, as an obvious result, such an idea denies that only parents have the right, by natural law, to shape the education of their children.

The following is from the “Pontifical Letter of Approbation To Our Beloved Son, Mateo Crawley-Boevey, Priest of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary” from Pope Benedict XV, dated April 27, 1915, and is quoted in the booklet, *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Home*, published by the Benedictine Convent of Perpetual Adoration, Clyde, Missouri, 1962, which booklet carries an Imprimatur and Nihil Obstat:

“...The malicious efforts of the wicked are specially directed against the home, the family circle. Since the family contains the root, the elements of civil society, the enemies realize well that the hoped-for transformation or rather the hoped-for destruction of all human society cannot take place before the ruin of the family is accomplished. Every effort is being made to weaken the firmness and indissolubility of the marriage bond and to prevent our youth from coming under religious influence....”

Almost eighty years after the above remarks, the following appeared in Special Report No. 115, July, 1994, of Human Life International, Gaithersburg, Maryland:

“The final meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Cairo International Conference on Population in April produced a much-disputed 87-page document. Only seven pages dealt with development; the rest trumpeted IPPF’s [International Planned Parenthood Federation’s] vision of sexual ‘morality’ and the total autonomy of individuals behaving with impunity and without rules of any kind.

“Many nations’ delegations opposed calling the family ‘the fundamental unit of society,’ as does the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other official documents....”

It is obvious that the war against the family which Pope Benedict XV decried in 1915 was continuing, but far more successfully, in 1994, almost eighty years later.

However, the fourteenth-century Gerson knew nothing of the twentieth-century Aries’ “discovery” that such men as Gerson and his contemporaries were to be presumed to be incapable of making any meaningful distinction between children and adults. Therefore, the inconvenient fact for Aries’ thesis is that Gerson did concern himself greatly with the education of children. Obviously, he recognized a stage called childhood, because he spent so much of his free time teaching children. In *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913) article on Gerson (Volume VI, page 531), are these comments:

“(At Lyons) he spent his last years in exercises of devotion and in performing his priestly functions.... (and) wrote various works.... Combining example with precept, he loved to surround himself with little children in the church of Saint-Paul and delighted to teach them the elements of

Christian doctrine. These ten years were the sweetest of his militant life.... Statues have been raised to his memory at Paris and Lyons....”

The Catholic Encyclopedia, (1913) Volume V, page 79, in its article on doctrine, said:

“...John Gerson (1363-1429). He realized that the much-needed reform of the Church should begin by the instruction of the young and though he was chancellor of the University of Paris he devoted himself to this work. He composed a sort of little catechism entitled ‘The A B C of Simple Folk.’”

It is obvious Gerson used the term, “ABC,” only in the sense of “fundamentals” because his material was only a catechism and had nothing whatsoever to do with teaching reading. It began with these words:

“Thus commences the ABC of simple people.

“Listen all, little and big, boys and girls and other simple people, (Ed.: *petiz et grans, filz et filles et aultres gens simples*) I will write for you in French your a.b.c. which contains the pater noster that God made with his own mouth, and the ave Maria that the angel Gabriel announced to the blessed Virgin Mary, and the Credo that was made by the 12 apostles, and the ten commandments of the law, and the virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and other points of our Christian faith, which points have been revealed from God....”

The content of Father Gerson’s catechism was largely the standard material of the catechisms of the time. This can be seen from the catechism of John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, England, in 1281, and from the catechism of John De Thoresby, Archbishop of York, England, in 1357, as outlined in *The Lay Folk’ Catechism*, published for the Early English Text Society, London, 1901. Besides the material listed above, Gerson also included the seven spiritual works of mercy, the seven corporal works of mercy, the seven sacraments, and more.

However, it is obvious that this catechetical material on the Pater Noster was only meant to be an explanation of the Pater Noster which would have already been memorized in Latin. That the Pater Noster was not meant for recital in the vernacular is shown in Gerson’s, *Le Doctrinal aux Simple Gens*. In this he said, “ou en disant ta pater nostre tu diz: *dimitte nobis*, etc.” (“or in saying your Pater Noster you say: *dimitte nobis*, etc.”). It is clear Gerson expected the “simple gens” not merely to call the prayer by its Latin name, “Pater Noster,” but actually to recite it in Latin: “*dimitte nobis*, etc.” Except for one isolated instance, the prayer was uniformly known by its Latin name in England, also, until after the Reformation, as C. C. Butterworth pointed out in his article, “The ‘Term Lord’s Prayer’ Instead of ‘Pater Noster,’” (*The Library Chronicle*, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 1952, vol. XVIII, p. 24)

About 1414, Gerson also wrote for religious instruction *Opusculum Tripartitum de Praeceptis Decalogi, de Confessione et de Arte Moriendi*. According to M. Reu on page 574 of his article, “Religious Instruction of the Young in the Sixteenth Century,” from the *Lutheran Church Review*, Volume 34, No. 5, of October, 1915:

“Gerson wished to have his book written wholly or at least partially on boards affixed to the walls in churches, schools and hospitals in order to keep its contents always before the eyes of people who were able to read.”

Therefore, some French churches of Gerson’s period, about 1400, displayed tablets containing catechetical material to be learned. This is further confirmation of widespread literacy about 1400, because there would be no point to display such materials unless many people could read them. But it is

also confirmation that the churches about 1400 often contained adults who had become literate, almost certainly in childhood, but who still had not learned the simple material of the oral catechism which they would have learned in earlier times orally as children, directly from their parents. The tablets were just another sharp indication of cultural decline in the late Middle Ages, despite spreading literacy.

As mentioned earlier, Gerson's book of catechetical material, the *Tripartito*, was one of the very first books printed in America, about 1544, on the press imported to Mexico by Archbishop Juan Zumarraga. In John Clyde Oswald's *Printing in the Americas*, he said that a copy of the *Tripartito* is presently in the New York Public Library, and it contains a picture, "Adoration of the Virgin," which makes it the first American illustrated book.

Since it is obvious that literacy was widespread in Western Europe before the sixteenth century, it is meaningful that absolutely NO material has surfaced from before the Reformation dealing with the actual teaching of beginning reading, beyond the frequent but bare mention of ABC classes and reference to the prayers in the ABC books. For instance, Gerson was enormously concerned with the teaching of religion to little children and also with education. Yet Gerson apparently never mentioned anything about the very beginning step: how to teach beginning reading. Furthermore, the teaching of reading was almost never mentioned in writings from classical times, except for a few rare comments. It is obvious that teaching beginning reading in Latin or Greek by the syllable method was such a simple thing that it was not even worth mentioning.

However, as soon as the switch was made from Latin to the vernaculars for teaching little beginners in the Germanic languages after the Reformation, authors began writing about a beginning reading problem, starting with Ickelsamer in Germany, and, shortly afterwards, Hart and others in England. (A powerful contributing factor also was that little three- and four-year old children instead of seven-year-old children were being pestered with the alphabet.)

Children who learned to read in Latin first had little difficulty learning to read English (but not vice versa, because of English spelling irregularities). That learning to read in another language than English need not cause any difficulty in later reading English is shown by a comment by Dr. Chall on page 38 of her book, *Learning to Read, The Great Debate*:

"..children and adults who are literate in one language that uses the Roman alphabet can, if they learn to speak another language, usually learn to read the second language quite readily."

That comment carried the following footnote which confirms that English-speaking children can learn to read fluently when they are taught initially in another language than English:

"Indeed, the *Ecole Francaise*, a bilingual private school in New York City, teaches American children to read French first, then English. That is, the fundamentals of the reading process (decoding) are taught to kindergarten and first-grade children in the French language, which is spelled more regularly than English. In the second grade, the children learn to read English. According to the headmistress, most children need little instruction in English reading. Some 'errors' I observed during oral reading of English in a second-grade class involved pronunciation of an English word with a French accent. This was usually corrected by the child from the general sense of what he read."

However, in the culturally degenerate late Middle Ages before the Reformation, from at least the end of the fourteenth century, the quality of spoken Latin was declining, and so was the teaching of Latin. The record shows that children at that time no longer learned to practice their newly learned syllables by immediately reading and writing the Psalms in Latin on their wax tablets. Therefore, little children no



longer acquired as a by-product the ability to understand Latin. In these later Middle Ages, children first learned to read only a few prayers: the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria and the Credo. It is intriguing to find how many cities in Europe still have streets named “Pater Noster,” reaching back to those pre-Reformation days, which apparently dated from the early days of printing, when printers may have been located on these streets.

As is obvious, not all children who learned to read the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria and the Credo by syllables in their ABC books in the petty schools went on to learn the Psalms and the Latin grammar in the grammar schools and so to learn to understand Latin beyond these simple prayers. Even though they could read in their vernaculars, they were culturally inferior, or “functionally illiterate” in all those literary works which were in Latin. It was to meet their needs, apparently, that literature in the vernaculars grew in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, but Latin remained the standard language of scholarship and the Church.

## Chapter 6

### On the Switch from Latin to the Vernacular in the Teaching of Beginning Reading

With the Reformation, beginning reading shifted from learning Latin to learning the vernacular. In most countries, however, the spelling patterns of words matched the sound patterns of syllables very closely, and the shift to the vernacular caused relatively little trouble. This is despite the fact that Germanic languages have many closed syllables which are also meaning-bearing words, while Latin languages tend to have more open syllables, which are only parts of words and are therefore solely sound-bearing.

Therefore, in the learning of whole syllables, the structure of the Germanic languages causes by their very nature a shift toward “meaning” in beginning reading and away from “sound,” which is not the case in the Latin languages.

Something that did cause great trouble in the teaching of reading in the vernacular was the practice, apparently dating only from about the time of the Reformation, of attempting to teach little three-year-olds to read. Many three-year-olds cannot yet distinguish the geometric shapes of letters, as shown by Dr. Elizabeth Koppitz’s published norms in 1963 for the Bender-Gestalt test of visual-motor integration.

The European Germans and the European Swedes, the Pennsylvania Germans, and others continued to use the ABC books for beginners, with the alphabet and syllabarium, but the Our Father and simple prayers were now in the vernacular. The Protestant ABC books usually also included the catechism. Before the Reformation, the catechism had, of course, been in the vernacular, but it was taught orally, so was not included in the ABC Latin books.

As has been shown, in England, the switch to the vernacular to teach beginners to read caused problems because of the irrational spellings of many syllables and words which had accumulated in that language. English has many roots: Anglo-Saxon, Danish, and French being most evident, and it did not actually emerge as one language until just about the time printing arrived in the mid-fifteenth century. (The Norman version of French was still being used in English schools and government until about the mid-fourteenth century!) Printing managed to produce some uniformity among the several English dialects. Spelling, however, was anything but uniform, as can be seen by reading materials written in the reign of Henry VIII - by St. Thomas More in 1532, for instance.

The reason the syllable method to teach beginning reading has survived into the twentieth century in Latin-language nations is because the old syllable method matches Latin languages so well. For instance, a very good primer in French is *Syllabaire Illustré*, by Francis Martin, Brussels: 1974, a beginning reading book which teaches phonics by syllables, which is a very easy thing to do in French.

It is not so easy to use the syllable method in Germanic languages, and particularly so in English. English spelling produces many open syllables which terminate in short vowels: pa-nel, for instance (which the dictionary shows as pan-el but which is not pronounced that way.) Yet, according to the syllabary, open syllables should terminate in long vowels: ba, be, bi, bo, bu, and closed syllables (ending with a consonant) contain short vowels: ab, eb, ib, ob, ub. The rule for short vowels in closed syllables usually works beautifully in English; the rule that open syllables end in long vowels often does not work, particularly in multi-syllable words when the rules for breaking words into syllables are followed. To

confound the problem, English writing has many double vowels which are pronounced as only a single vowel sound (ee, ea, ai), which is not true in Latin.

The ancient schools taught children to divide running texts into syllables, not words. It was a very easy thing to do. They simply had to look for the vowel-consonant patterns. They knew that every vowel produced a syllable, so they divided the vowel-syllables in this fashion: if the vowel were followed by only one consonant, the syllable division came before the consonant, as in “PA - ter.” If the vowel were followed by more than one consonant, the syllable divided after the first consonant, as in NOS - ter. All they had to do then was to remember from their syllabary practice how to pronounce “pa” from pa-pe-pi-po-pu, and “os” from “as-es-is-os-us.” If they had been taught a complete syllabary, they had already practiced putting “n” in front of “as-es-is-os-us” and so had no trouble with “nos.” They also would have practiced putting “t” in front of “ar, er, ir, or, ur,” so had no trouble with the “ter” in both pa - ter and nos -ter. They worked their way through their texts, dividing and pronouncing, using the memorized syllable sounds to pronounce. Meaning, of course, eventually came - but it was a very late arrival after sound.

The curious thing is that the early English spelling books often divided words in the same classical way, even though this rule for division often does not work in English because so many open syllables in English end in short vowels. A perfect example for this kind of Latin division being incorrectly applied to English words is the New England Primer, where the word divisions match the old Latin system. Of course, the pronunciations they produced were wrong, but a little six-year-old child who had learned the syllabary could nevertheless pronounce EVERY SINGLE ONE of these syllabicated “wrong” pronunciations with ease. If the child already knew the correct sound of the “word,” he could then correct his mispronunciation.

Ge-ne-ral-ly, de-di-ca-ti-on, ce-re-mo-ny, de-cla-ra-ti-on.  
A-bo-mi-na-ble, be-ne-fi-ci-al, for-mi-da-ble.

It should never be forgotten that moving from reading by the syllabary to reading by “words” made reading in English enormously more difficult for beginners, because they no longer had that bunch of keys - the memorized syllable sounds - with which they could unlock at least the approximate sound of anything in print.

Sometimes, of course, the Latin-style divisions did produce the right vowel sounds in English, and even most of the wrong ones will “work” if the open syllables are pronounced with a short vowel sound instead of the “proper” long vowel sound. But, it is curious that Noah Webster, who “corrected” this way of syllabating English in his spelling book, never seemed to realize WHY it had been done that way in the first place: It was to give beginning readers the capability of pronouncing ANYTHING in print, once they knew their syllabary and how to syllabicate texts. It is really curious that a scholar of Webster’s stature did not seem to realize such syllabication in English was only a hang-over from teaching the reading of open and closed syllables in Latin. But, by Webster’s time, the ancient conception of print as representing a river of syllable sounds had died out. Print now represented “meaning.” Print in the English language was now uniformly considered to be composed of meaning-bearing words. Even the general awareness in English-speaking people of the importance of the syllable was on its way out.

This was not true in Latin-language countries, nor is it true even today. Shortly before Webster wrote his speller in 1793, the following appeared in the famous *Encyclopedie ou Dictionnaire Raissonne des Sciences, des Arts, et des Metiers*, by Denis Diderot et al, published in 28 volumes from 1751 to 1772 in Paris, France, in the article “Syllabaire,” on pages 713-715 of the volume covering “S.” It was very likely that the article was written by that arch mover-and-shaker, Denis Diderot, himself, but in it he endorsed

Pascal phonics, which had appeared in the Grammaire of Port Royal in 1664. However, he meant, obviously, that Pascal's synthetic phonics was to be applied to syllables:

“But I shall remark, as an important thing concerning the syllables of which I have indicated the detail and the divisions, it is necessary not to omit a single one in the tables that will be made from them: Syllabis nullem compendium est, perdiscendae omnes. This is the opinion of Quintilian. (Inst. I. j. 3); & he wished that one stop the children there until one had all the certitude possible that they were not puzzled in the distinction of a single syllable.”

The distinction between syllables and words was still clear in Germany in the 16th century, in the time of Luther, who would himself have learned to read in Latin. As shown by the following quotation from *The True Believer* by Eric Hoffer, Perennial Library, 1966, Harper & Row, New York, Luther obviously considered the syllable to be the atom of speaking and reading. Luther would have agreed with the 18th century author just quoted, who was very probably Diderot. However, Hoffer's publisher obviously made a misprint in quoting Luther: showing “world” instead of “word.” I have therefore used “word” below instead of “world.” Luther's remarks obviously concern the Bible:

“So tenaciously should we cling to the word that were I to see all the Angels of Heaven coming down to me to tell me something different, not only would I not be tempted to doubt a single syllable, but I would shut my eyes and stop my ears....”

Luther, most probably Diderot, and Quintilian were all in agreement: first come syllables, and only afterwards come words. Syllables generate words. Yet the illusion gradually arose after the sixteenth century in English-speaking countries that “words” were the atom in speaking and reading, instead of syllables.

The combination of syllabifying problems and inconsistent spellings in English caused great trouble when children first began to be taught to read in English, instead of Latin. Therefore, although the ABC books in the vernacular, containing the catechism, continued to be published in England after the Reformation, with “official” ones approved by the state, there appeared along with them, less than fifty years after the switch to the vernacular, “spelling” books for beginners in which children learned to spell, not just syllables, as before, but syllables in specific words. As is obvious, this was a giant step from “sound” to “meaning.”

In Volume Four, *Spelling Books*, of the twelve-volume series, *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800*, Bradford, England, by R. C. Alston, the first spelling book listed was a circa 1561 London edition by Ihon (sic) King, An A.B.C. for Children. Here is an A.B.C. deuised (sic) with Syllabes (sic).... That was apparently a kind of hybrid ABC/spelling book, and Alston said it has surviving copies. One of the first spelling books that was a true spelling book was Clement's in 1576. However, Alston also listed An alphabet and plaine pathwaye to the facultie of readinge by Andrewe Mansell in 1576. That may also have been a true spelling book like Clement's, as a 1601 copy survives of a work by Mansell with a slightly different title which was clearly a speller: A nevv booke of spelling with syllables: or an alphabet and plaine pathwaye to the facultie of reading the English, Romane, Italice, and secretarie hands....

Alston listed a record of a publication by Thomas Johnson in 1590, The pathwaye to readinge; or, the neweste spelling A,B,C; conteyninge a most shorte, easie, and profitable way of teaching to spell and reade. Alston said, however, that Johnson's 1590 book might only have been a reprint of Mansell's 1576 work. Mansell's had a few editions, but Clement's apparently had only two: the 1576 one referred to in the body of Clement's 1587 edition, and the 1587 one recorded by Alston which is still in existence.

Alston listed as the next speller published that of Edmund Coote in 1596, which is also still in existence. It was Coote's which became massively popular, being published in a huge number of editions from 1596 until 1737. (Coote's speller is not mentioned in Nila Banton Smith's reading instruction "history.")

By 1737, a large number of other spellers were on the market. As can be seen, Alston's data which is highly reliable differs somewhat from Foster Watson's data from early in the twentieth century, but the confusion may lie in the definition of a spelling book.

The switch from Latin to the vernacular to teach beginners to read marked the end of Latin as a common tongue for Western civilization. The sixteenth century humanists made a sincere attempt to repair the damage to spoken Latin which had occurred in the degenerate late Middle Ages, but they did so with "improved" Latin grammars like Lily's, which sometimes used the vernacular to teach largely WRITTEN Latin, instead of the ancient Latin Donat which had been used to teach largely SPOKEN Latin, even though boys were then encouraged to speak in Latin in the grammar schools of the sixteenth century. It is true that Latin grammar schools persisted widely into the middle nineteenth century, and some probably persist in many areas today, but it was not spoken Latin which was ultimately learned in these schools, but a written, dead language. For all ordinary purposes except in the Church liturgy, Latin died out as a living, spoken tongue about the beginning of the seventeenth century. Not surprisingly, it therefore largely died out as a written tongue also not long afterwards.

The National Institute of Education, Washington, D. C., published *Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education, A Catalog of the titles held by the Educational Research Library*, 1976, which library is a division of the U. S. Department of Education. The Catalog shows what happened to Latin after the sixteenth century. This collection of books are those which managed to survive over hundreds of years in an English-language country: the United States of America. They should reflect the language usage, therefore, for the educated classes in America over those early years. This is the breakdown I found:

The Catalog showed for Part I - 15th and 16th centuries - 21 titles. Since this period ran from the arrival of printing, c. 1450, to 1599, some of these books were possibly acquired by the forebears of those who ultimately settled in the English colonies in America early in the next century. I counted 17 Latin titles, two Italian, and two German. Latin therefore represented a huge 81 per cent of the surviving titles of books published up to 65 years after the switch to English in the ABC books. There were NO surviving English-language titles.

The Catalog showed for Part II - 17th century - 53 titles. However, counting only one edition for each title, I counted only 50, which produced 24 Latin titles, 4 Italian titles, 3 German titles, 5 French titles, and 16 English titles (but counting the English version of Comenius's work as well as the Latin version.) Since my list, not counting separate editions except for Comenius, totals only 50 instead of 53, it produces 24/50 Latin titles compared to 16/50 English titles. The Latin for the period 1600-1699 represents only 48 per cent but the English has increased from zero per cent for the two centuries from 1400 to 1599 to 32% for the century 1600-1699.

The Catalog shows a relatively huge number of books surviving for the 18th century: 309 titles. In this group, Latin has declined to only a little over 10%, and English titles are the majority. But also included are a large number of French, German, Italian, and Dutch works (but only one Spanish work! An iron curtain had descended between the English-speaking world and Spain by that date!)

The ease with which educated Europeans could communicate with each other in the fifteenth century, with the living Latin language, was gone forever by the eighteenth century. Now, in order to

communicate, one either had to be a linguist (fluent in English, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Polish, Spanish, Portuguese, Gaelic, Welsh, Icelandic, Finnish, Hungarian, Czech, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Bulgarian, Finnish, Latvian, Romanian, etc., etc.) or to have access to easy translations. That is difficult now but was almost impossible then. Yet we are to be asked to believe that the eighteenth century was the Age of Enlightenment!

Comenius wrote a famous, successful and enormously widely used textbook for teaching Latin to beginners in the seventeenth century, the *Orbis Pictus*. While it undoubtedly did a great deal of good, the book did not succeed in returning Latin to its former pre-eminence, most likely because it was given to children after they had already learned to read in the vernacular.

However, the fable which originated at Columbia Teachers College about 1900 that Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1670), the famous Moravian educator, endorsed sight-words in the seventeenth century in his *Orbis Pictus* has been very widely promoted. Mathews provided the refutation of that fable in his book.

In his bibliography on page 210, Mathews showed:

“Comenius, Johann Amos. *Joh. Amos Comenii Orbis Sensualium Pictus...* Written by the author in Latin and High Dutch... Tr. into English by Charles Hoole M. A. for the use of Young Latin Scholars. New York, 1810. This work by Comenius appeared in 1657 and was at once translated by Hoole who signed his ‘Translator’s Preface, From my School in Lothbury, London, Jan. 25, 1658.’ The New York printing was a reproduction of the 12th London Edition.”

Mathew’s book and Johnson’s *Old Time Schools and Schoolbooks* reproduce a total of three separate pages from Comenius’ material. Those pages clearly demonstrate that Comenius was only teaching Latin, not beginning reading, in the book concerned, *Orbis Pictus*. Yet Charles Hoole, Comenius’ seventeenth century English translator, included a preface which may or may not have been adapted from Comenius’ original work. The preface said that the Latin/vernacular book could also be used for teaching beginning reading by starting with the pictured alphabet table and then ADDING a “Table of the chief Syllables” from an outside source since such a table was not in the Latin/vernacular book. Therefore, Hoole (and possibly Comenius) was only recommending the standard alphabet-plus-syllabary approach of the seventeenth century for the teaching of beginning reading. Furthermore, in Comenius’ alphabet table, he had used whole syllables to demonstrate analytically each letter sound and not Pascal synthetic phonics (the consonant plus a muted vowel, the schwa sound).

The “preface” to *Orbis Pictus* may or may not have been Hoole’s translation of what Comenius had written himself. Mathew’s bibliography entry quoted above, however, citing an 1810 edition of Hoole’s translation, seems to imply that Hoole wrote the whole preface himself. Yet, on page 142, Mathews had clearly implied that at least the ideas in the preface on beginning reading were Comenius’ ideas. Very possibly, Mathews himself was not too sure about who was actually responsible for the ideas in the preface.

However, whether the preface was Hoole-translating-Comenius, or only pure Hoole, the fact remains that there is no evidence whatsoever that Comenius ever intended the book to be used as a sight-word BEGINNING reading book. The only certain facts are that Comenius wrote his book in order to teach Latin, and that the book itself did not suggest otherwise, as the three reproduced pages from Comenius’ book in Johnson’s and Mathews’ books indicate.

There was a recommendation in the preface, however, to make a move from sound to meaning AFTER the beginning syllable “sound” stage. Whether the recommendation originated with Hoole or

Comenius, of course, is unknown. The recommendation was to drop “spelling” after the syllable sounds have been memorized and to rely instead on the pictures to identify the new words. With today’s concept of “spelling,” which is only giving the letters in a whole word in sequential order, the real sixteenth-century meaning of the word, “spelling” when used in reading (not writing) is not even suspected.

“Spelling” in those days when used in reading meant to “sound out” or figure out the pronunciation of an unknown word, syllable by syllable. First, the child divided the unknown word into its syllables the easy “Latin” way. The child resurrected those previously memorized syllable sounds by reciting their letters, and then used those resurrected sounds as so many keys in order to pronounce each syllable in the new word aloud. Even though they undoubtedly divided many syllables incorrectly with the Latin method instead of by today’s usage, little five-year-olds could “spell,” or sound out, syllable by syllable, multisyllable words like those in the word lists in the New England Primer, using as keys the previously memorized syllable sounds. They resurrected these memorized syllable sounds by association, through the act of naming their letters (i.e., the so-called “spelling”). “Meaning” had nothing to do with it.

However, after the beginning “syllable” stage, Hoole (or Comenius) did make the startling recommendation to drop such sounding out of unknown words by syllabifying them and then naming the letters in each syllable to resurrect the syllable sounds. Children past the beginning syllable stage were to rely instead on the pictures to identify the words. That is not, however, the same thing as learning INITIALLY to read by whole sight words and INITIALLY dropping “sound” for “meaning.”

Mathews attributed the error on Comenius to R. R. Reeder of Columbia, who wrote *Historical Development of School Readers*, New York, 1900. Mathews said:

“This erroneous attribution came about in a peculiar way. In 1887, C. W. Bardeen, an editor and publisher in Syracuse, New York, brought out *The Orbis Pictus* of Jon Amos Comenius. This little volume was a reproduction of a translation of the *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (‘The World of Sense Objects Pictured’) of 1657 by Comenius. He wrote his *Orbis* primarily to assist students of Latin, but he hoped it might also help a child learn to read his own language more readily. It contained about one hundred and fifty composite pictures, showing all kinds of objects of everyday life. Each object pictured was named in both German and Latin.

“As soon as the *Orbis* appeared, Charles Hoole, then in charge of a Latin school in London, translated it for the use of students of Latin. In rendering Comenius’ preface to the reader, Hoole wrote:

“‘First it will afford a Device for learning to read more easily than hitherto; especially having a Symbolic Alphabet set before it, to wit, the Characters of the several Letters, with the Image of that creature, whose voice the letter goeth about to imitate, pictured by it. For the young Abc-Scholar, will easily remember the force of every Character by the very looking upon the Creature, till the imagination being strengthened by use, can readily afford all things. And then, having looked over a Table of the chief Syllables also (which yet was not thought necessary to be added to this Book) he may proceed to the viewing of the Pictures, and the Inscriptions set over them. Where again the very looking upon the thing Pictured, suggesting the name of the thing, will tell him how the Title of the Picture is to be read. And thus the whole Book being gone over by the bare Titles of the Pictures, Reading cannot but be learned; and indeed too, which thing is to be noted, without using any ordinary tedious spelling, that most troublesome torture of wits.’

“Dr. Reeder, coming upon this passage in Bardeen’s volume of 1887, selected most of the last part of it, beginning ‘The very looking upon the thing’; and ignoring what Comenius had said

about the alphabet and syllables ‘for the young Abc-Scholar,’ he concluded that Comenius in 1657 had advocated a word method of teaching a child to read his own language. The most notable of those who have recently cited Reeder as authority for crediting Comenius with ‘recommending a “word recognition” or “look-and-say” method’ is Dr. Arthur I. Gates of Columbia.”

Comenius had sincerely praised the work of William Bathe and credited it as the source for the method he used to teach Latin in his book, *Orbis*. Dr. Sean P. O’Mathuna wrote *William Bathe, S. J., 1564-1614, A Pioneer in Linguistics*, 1986: Philadelphia and Amsterdam, John Benjamin’s, from which I learned of the work of Bathe. William Bathe, an Irish Jesuit, wrote *Ianua Linguarum* in Spain in 1611. As Dr. O’Mathuna established, Father Bathe’s method for teaching a language with its heavy dependence on teaching in syntactical wholes instead of disjointed words had been used in Bathe’s Irish family in the sixteenth century. An article from about 1922, which was part of a collated volume I saw in the New York Public Library but unfortunately did not record, referred to a folk method the author had seen in use in rural western Ireland for learning languages by memorizing sentences in Gaelic along with the same sentences in English. There is a striking resemblance to Bathe’s method and to Comenius who copied Bathe.

The probability is that the original source for Comenius’ method for learning a language which he adopted from Bathe, the comparing of such whole sample “meaning-bearing” sentences, is very ancient in Ireland. It is conceivable that it could have originated in the learning of Latin texts by little Gaelic-speaking students as long ago as the sixth century and was the method by which the Irish monks had become so competently bilingual. Gaelic-speaking children could not at that time, learning Latin from written texts, have concentrated very much on isolated “words” because words were not separated in texts, and I have seen no reference to the early existence of a true Gaelic/Latin dictionary. As Michael Herrin discussed in his edition of *Hisperica Famina*, glossaries of the rarer and more difficult words were probably available, but they would have been for the use of advanced students.

It is known that in the ancient world learners were taught to separate written texts into syllables, not words. It appears probable that, in language, syllables generate syntax, which only then generates words. Dr. Mathuna pointed out that Bathe’s method did not rely over much on either the vocabulary/grammar approach, or on the “immersion” approach, but was a blend of both. Very probably, what might be called Bathe’s “syllable-to-syntax” method matches more correctly the natural flow of language.

However, despite Comenius’ praiseworthy *Orbis Pictus* which he had based on Bathe’s 1611 work, the use of Latin in written works continued to decline in the seventeenth century and to be replaced by the many European vernacular languages.

Dr. O’Mathuna commented (page 127) on the use of Quintilian’s texts:

“Quintilian had for long enjoyed a richly deserved reputation. His *Institutio Oratoria*, particularly its opening books, contained more practical common sense capable of ready translation to the classroom than almost any other treatise from antiquity. By the late Middle Ages, however, only fragmentary copies of his famous work were known to have survived: the ideas developed in his opening books were known only through secondary sources, such as John of Salisbury (c. 1115-1180) in *Metalogicon*, or through tradition. In 1415, however, Poggio Bracciolini, who was attending as secretary at the Council of Constance, rediscovered a complete copy of all twelve books of ‘The Training of an Orator’ in the library of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Gall. This happy find had considerable influence on educational theory for many years to come and nowhere more than in the Jesuit order.”



This establishes quite clearly that the early Middle Ages were very superior, culturally, speaking, to the late Middle Ages. Before 1180, John of Salisbury in England had sufficient access to Quintilian's work that he could write a secondary work based on it. Probably long before John of Salisbury in England in the 1100's (possibly from at least 900, to judge from reports dating surviving complete books) the St. Gall Monastery in Switzerland had all twelve of Quintilian's books. Yet the use of Quintilian's works had declined so much in all of Europe after 1200 that copies of most of Quintilian's works had disappeared by 1415. How, then, can the 1200's and 1300's be considered culturally advanced over the 800's, 900's, 1000's and 1100's, as is almost uniformly considered to be true?

Dr. Mathuna uncovered another fascinating point. In the early 1600's, Father Bathe had been concerned with studying word frequency. That is an astonishing thing to learn, since it has been uniformly assumed that word-frequency studies are of far more recent date.

As a postscript to Comenius' work based on Bathe's work (and as a postscript to Comenius' exceedingly sad personal life, disrupted by war and persecution), Comenius apparently eventually developed some kind of interest in "spiritualism" or what might more clearly be called the occult. After the mid-nineteenth century, when William James and Agassiz, and the Superintendent of Schools in New York, Kiddle, and many others, had a great interest in "spiritualism," a large section of books appeared in the 1876 American Catalogue under that title. Most promoted "spiritualism," but some denounced it, like texts from the Southern Baptists and the Methodists. The numerous entries demonstrated that "spiritualism" was, indeed, all the rage among the American "intellectuals." (It was also the rage among "intellectuals" in England.) One of the books in that strange category apparently referred to Comenius: "Eleven Days at Moravia - 2nd Edition, 1874" by T. R. Hazard, published by Colby. The Colby publishers were shown in the 1876 American Catalogue listings to be also grinding out a considerable number of other books on "spiritualism." If that book did concern Comenius and if Comenius had left sufficient "spiritualist" material to fill one of Colby's trashy books, then perhaps the poor old fellow went a little mad at the end of his sad life.

The loss of Latin as a common language for Western society has been a cultural disaster of massive proportions. Yet, strangely, it is seldom alluded to. It had provided a way for the reader to reach back in time - to before Julius Caesar - and across distances - to every literate member of Western Europe. The loss of Latin slammed a curtain down between the present and the pre-Reformation past for the vast majority of people. My inability to speak Latin has hampered me greatly in this historical research. At least now, however, a strong movement is on in many countries to use English as a second language, and it promises to replace Latin as a world language. Yet, English as a language is itself degenerating, because of incompetent meddling by "intellectuals" in education. The teaching of basic reading skills, which are absolutely fundamental, is in a catastrophic state. The teaching of grammar is degraded and sometimes ignored, and the teaching of literature - REAL LITERATURE - is virtually non-existent. However, it is entirely conceivable that our "intellectuals" may do it again and almost destroy another language, damaging English so badly it would no longer be recognizable to Shakespeare, Milton, Dickens, Agatha Christie, Mark Twain or Lincoln, or be of much use as a world language.

The reason Latin survived so long as a SPOKEN language was because it had its roots in an unchangeable, written literature, which was read aloud by "sound," not "meaning," and which was studied through an understanding of its grammar. It is interesting that the seventh century Irish scholars wrote a series of Latin grammars, indicating the great importance they attached to the learning of Latin grammar (discussed in *Donat et La Tradition de l'Enseignement Grammatical... [from the fourth to the ninth centuries]* by Louis Holtz, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, 1981). The level of the Latin scholarship of the ancient Irish from the sixth century onwards might very well be viewed as a function of their deep understanding of Latin grammar, and the same would be true of the Anglo-Saxon scholars from the seventh century onwards.

Modern English stabilized as a language at the precise time it developed its great literature. It has remained stable because it has been firmly rooted in that literature as its standard. Our functional illiterates have no knowledge of these roots. Even our literate students have little exposure to literature and virtually no real exposure to grammar. Their sloppy speech is a good index not only to their ignorance of phonics but to their poor grasp of both grammar and literature and to their resultant, probably sloppy, thinking.

In the New England colonies, however, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Latin was still important as a school subject, though the book lists just cited show it was rapidly deteriorating into a largely useless acquirement. Almost all meaningful reading, as in the Bible, was done in English.

**PART 3**  
**The French Sources**

**The Teaching of Reading in France, and Its Influence on the  
Teaching of Reading in English, Both Considered in the  
Historical Context of the Times**



## Chapter 7

### **Eighteenth Century Attitudes on Education and the Background on Eighteenth Century Literacy Levels**

The American “Revolution” is wrongly named. Unlike the French Revolution, which was a true revolution, it is more properly called the War for Independence. Furthermore, its religious philosophy was very different, at least for most of its dominant actors, from that of the anti-religious French Revolution.

These two differences between the events in America and in France are demonstrated by the words of George Washington in June, 1776:

“If it be the will of God that America should be independent of Great Britain, and that this be the season for it, even I and these unhopeful men around may not be thought unworthy instruments in His hands ... In this persuasion I resolve to go on, contented to save my country, or die in the last ditch.”

Washington was quoted on page 38 of *Lines of Credit: Ropes of Bondage*, by Robert Henry Goldsborough, Washington Dateline Publishers, Baltimore, Maryland, 1989.

A parallel is also lacking between the writing of the American Constitution and the writing of the French constitution, both begun in the year 1789. When the framers of the American Constitution were having no success, they were counseled by Benjamin Franklin to pray for guidance as a group, as his long life had convinced him no success could come without such prayer. When they did pray for guidance as a group, they quickly succeeded in writing our Constitution, and it has lasted for over 200 years. In contrast, the majority of the writers of the French constitution were irreligious and they certainly did no praying as a group for guidance. Their constitution took two years to write. Yet, even after a major revision, it lasted only a few years.

Despite such differences between American and French history, the Western World of which France and America are a part, and the major forces acting on the Western World, can only be understood as unitary things, because Western Civilization is a unitary thing. When that unitary viewpoint replaces splintered viewpoints, it reveals that the nineteenth century, far more than the last half of the eighteenth century, was an age of revolution. That was not just at the overt level of the states of the Western World, but below that at what might be called the covert level by the enacting of revolutionary laws, some of which were very good but some of which were very bad.

Far from the least of those revolutionary laws were those which mandated compulsory government education. Compulsory education by the government was only proposed for the first time since the days of ancient Greece in eighteenth-century France. Yet compulsory education by governments was astonishingly in place almost everywhere in the Western World, not just in France, only a century later.

That was an absolutely stunning development, as compulsory government education had apparently never existed anywhere in history before the eighteenth century except in Sparta in ancient Greece. The very idea of compulsory government education had apparently not even been considered until the eighteenth century except in Sparta centuries before Christ.

Carlo M. Cipolla stated on page 80 of *Literacy and Development in the West* (Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland: 1969) that Austria-Hungary under Maria Theresa in 1774 passed what was perhaps

the first true legislation on compulsory school attendance<sup>15</sup>, although it had been preceded by similar earlier legislation in Prussia. In Prussia in 1717:

“Frederick I ordered all children to attend school where schools existed....”

That fact was cited in the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) in its article, “Education, History of,” Volume 7, page 1006. Such a vague ruling in a time when schools were normally run by the churches does not qualify as legislation mandating compulsory attendance at government schools. However, the encyclopedia added the following:

“In 1763 the Landschulreglement of Frederick the Great laid down the broad lines upon which the Prussian state thereafter proceeded, asserting the principle of compulsory school attendance.”

In 1763 and later, the ideas of the French “philosophers,” commonly called the “philosophes,” were influencing all Europe and America as well. Therefore, that legislation in Austria and Prussia in 1763 and 1774 cannot be considered apart from the ideas of the “philosophes” which produced the French Revolution in 1789 with its later mandatory government-school attendance proposals. Yet it should be noted here that the American Constitution of 1789 completely and undoubtedly intentionally omitted the topic of education. Despite the influence of the “philosophes,” the framers of the American Constitution accepted the fact that American education was totally in the private sphere, since they were certainly aware that no American states were involved in education at that time.

Thomas Jefferson was in France at the time the Constitution (but not the Bill of Rights) was written and so had nothing to do with its composition. Jefferson apparently was more receptive to the ideas of the French “philosophes” than most others of the founding fathers since he was later in contact with du Pont de Nemours concerning possible government schools. However, it should also be noted that Jefferson was very different from the “philosophes” in his attitude to religious congregations and to schools maintained by them. The Ursuline nuns in New Orleans wrote to Jefferson after the Louisiana Purchase while Jefferson was president because they were worried about the future of their establishment under the new American government. In New Orleans, the Ursulines maintained an “academy, day school, orphan asylum, hospital and instructions for coloured people in catechism” (Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, Volume XI, p. 10). Jefferson, who was a “theist” and not a Christian, took the time personally to reassure the Ursuline nuns concerning their safety and their rights, and he did so in a very warm and comforting manner, as reported below:

“On 21 March, 1804, the Ursulines addressed a letter to Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, in which they solicited the passage of an Act of Congress guaranteeing their property and rights. The president replied reassuring the Ursulines. ‘The principles of the constitution of the United States,’ he wrote, ‘are a sure guaranty to you that it will be preserved to you sacred and inviolate, and that your Institution will be permitted to govern itself according to its own voluntary rules without interference from the civil authority. Whatever diversity of shades may appear in the religious opinions of our fellow citizens, the charitable objects of your Institution cannot be of indifference to any; and its furtherance of the wholesome purpose by training up its young members in the way they should go, cannot fail to insure the patronage of

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<sup>15</sup> The Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire does show on page 889, under “Ephemerides,” that January 23, 1759, was the date of the Ordinance of Christian VI making primary instruction obligatory in Denmark. There is, however, nothing to indicate this meant compulsory attendance in government schools or to indicate that church or home education was unacceptable. Similar legislation for church schools apparently existed briefly in Germany after the Reformation in the sixteenth century, but was ineffective because of wars.

the government it is under. Be assured that it will meet with all the protection my office can give it.” (The Catholic Encyclopedia, (1913), Volume XI, page 10.)

A contrast in “Christian” behavior towards such groups as the Ursulines is remarkable between Jefferson, who was actually not a Christian, and Reverend Lyman Beecher. Beecher certainly SHOULD have been a Christian, since Beecher was at least officially a Presbyterian clergyman. That very possibly was in name only, as the period in which Beecher lived was full of “free-thinkers” who abandoned their roots. The pantheist, Reverend Ralph Waldo Emerson, was one of them. (See page 141, S. L. Blumenfeld’s *Is Public Education Necessary?*.) Paul A. Fisher wrote the following concerning Beecher’s offensive behavior (page 64, *Behind the Lodge Door*, Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., Rockford, Illinois, 1991, copyrighted by Paul A. Fisher in 1988). Beecher’s remarks not only confirmed the fact of his bigotry but accidentally confirmed two other facts. One is that American children and adults in 1836 had a very high literacy level, and the other is that Beecher promoted “government” schools because he thought they could shape and control children’s minds:

“In 1836, Bishop John Purcell of Cincinnati deplored the calumnious writings against Catholics which were distributed everywhere. Above all, he was concerned because religious and political tracts were made available to children and imbued them with hatred and prejudice against the Catholic Church.

“Among the most notable opponents of the rise of Catholicism in the West [Ed.: Cincinnati area] was the famous Boston Presbyterian clergyman, Rev. Lyman Beecher.

“On August 11, 1834, following a series of anti-Catholic sermons by Beecher, the Ursuline Convent at Charleston, a Boston suburb, was set afire and sacked by a mob. Even the cemetery was violated: graves were dug up, coffins were opened, and their contents exposed.

“In his best-selling book, *A Plea For The West*, the Boston clerical firebrand wrote: ‘...the conflict which is to decide the destiny of the West will be a conflict of institutions for the education of her sons, for the purposes of superstition, or evangelical light, of despotism or liberty.’

“...He further warned:

“‘If we do not provide the schools which are requisite for the cheap and effectual education of the children of the nation, it is perfectly certain that the Catholic powers of Europe intend to make up the deficiency....’

“Later, the Boston minister wrote in his autobiography: ‘Before I left (Boston), the tide had turned and Catholicism forever in New England must row upstream, carefully watched and increasingly understood and obstructed by public sentiment.’”

It is to be presumed that the wild bigot, Beecher, was speaking of the same kind of “public sentiment” which had resulted after his “sermons” in the burning down of the Ursuline convent and the digging up of the graves there. It is curious that Bronson Alcott and Lyman Beecher, 1830’s contemporaries afflicting the unfortunate city of Boston, both produced daughters who had remarkably more attractive minds than their distasteful fathers. Alcott’s daughter, Louisa May, wrote the classic, *Little Women*, and Beecher’s daughter, Harriet Beecher Stowe, wrote *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.

The 1774 Austrian general law for schools required that “all children of both sexes must without exception attend the public school from the age of 6 years until they are sufficiently instructed to choose a

trade or profession.” This law implicitly outlawed home education, which was completely under the control of the children’s parents and was at the time called “private” education, as opposed to “public” education in schools outside the home. By this deadly law of 1774, the legal authority for shaping a child’s character passed officially from the children’s parents to outsiders (who at least in Austria were probably the personnel of the church schools, and not the personnel of true government schools). Cipolla had said on page 81 that:

“The Austrian law of 1774 was much in advance of contemporary legislation in any other country, except the two Regulations of 1763 and 1765 of Frederick II of Prussia.”

Note Cipolla’s use of the judgmental, positive term, “in advance,” which reflects the present-day largely unchallenged “establishment” opinion on mandatory government schools.

The prevalent deep-seated belief is that mandatory government schools are an “advance” in culture. Yet, contrast our vast armies of appallingly ignorant functional illiterates being turned out every year by our enormously expensive compulsory American government schools to the historically demonstrated intellectual level of Americans in 1774. That year of the Austrian compulsory legislation, 1774, was more than fifty years before the campaign in America to have the government take over education, which only started in earnest in 1826.

It was also only two years before our War for Independence, in which written pamphlets distributed throughout the general population played such a large part. The “readability” and information levels of those pamphlets were astonishingly high. However, it is probable that only a small percentage of our high school graduates today, the products of our compulsory so-called education, could either read correctly or understand such pamphlets..

The young soldiers in George Washington’s army were serving without pay when, before dawn on Christmas day, they rowed Washington across the Delaware River through the broken ice to attack Trenton. It was not money that motivated those young soldiers in our War for Independence. It was the material contained in those widely circulated pamphlets which the young men undoubtedly had read with high “reading comprehension.” Yet these young men in the 1770’s were probably only about the age of the present-day armies of functional illiterates in our “compulsory” high school senior classes, or only a few years older.

Compulsory government school attendance laws dating from the late eighteenth century, which had such a high priority with the French Revolutionists, have been justified by the ridiculous fable that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the vast majority of people were illiterate. Yet that was manifestly not true in most places, and certainly not in the United States.

The founder of the du Pont family in the United States and supporter of the French Revolutionary government is a surprising source for testimony on almost universal literacy in America in 1800. He also grudgingly gave testimony to a certain level of literacy in pre-Revolutionary France, though he almost certainly grossly underestimated it.

A brief biography on Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours is given in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire* (1880-1888, Vol. 1 - 1, page 748 and following). It states du Pont was born in Paris in 1739 and died in the United States in 1817. It is not completely accurate, however, as it said du Pont’s first book was composed while he was in America and was published in France in 1812 in *Annales de l’Education*, M. F. Guizot, Editor. Actually, what may have been du Pont’s first written work was listed in a separate article in the *Dictionnaire*, the “Bibliographie,” under 1794 as *Views on National Education*, prepared when du Pont was a member of the French Revolution’s assembly. That 1794 work included a



description of du Pont's reading method, according to a third article, "Lecture," in the Dictionnaire. The "Bibliographie" also records that in 1812 du Pont de Nemours published a book in France, *National Education in the United States*, Paris, of 160 pages. This is presumably the same material as that listed in his brief biography in the Dictionnaire as *Annales de l'Education*, 1812.

The Dictionnaire biography on du Pont said he commented at the beginning of the 1812 work:

"This was made in 1800 at the request of Mr. Jefferson, President of the United States of America; it has the approval of this great judge and of his respectable successor."

The article then described the 1812 material, quoting du Pont directly at times.

"Addressing next his subject, du Pont recorded that in the United States education is very general. 'Almost all the young Americans learn to read, to write, and to compute. (Les jeunes Americaines apprennent presque tous a lire, a ecrire et a compter.) There are not more than four in a thousand who cannot write legibly and also properly; as for [those] in Germany, in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, there are scarcely a sixth of the nation who know how to read; in France, even, not more than a quarter. (Il n'y en a pas plus de quatre sur mille qui n'ecrivent pas lisiblement et meme proprement; tantes qu'en Allemagne, en Espagne, en Portugal, en Italie, il n'y a guere qu'un sixieme de la nation qui sache lire; en France meme, pas plus d'un quart.)'"

Yet du Pont had run no literacy survey in any of those countries. Nor did he apparently have any authoritative sources on literacy in Germany, Spain, Portugal, or Italy. His comments on those countries are only opinions. In any case, as Cipolla made clear in his book, very few meaningful statistics exist for Europe at that period. But, concerning France and the United States, du Pont was speaking from personal contact, so his comments for those two countries do have objective value. He had sat in the French assembly in 1794 that was so busy "improving" France, particularly its education system, and that assembly was doing so with a deep contempt for France's past. Therefore, it is hardly likely that du Pont would have over-estimated French literacy, even though his estimate was based on his own personal knowledge, but would have under-estimated it.

It is probable the same negative tendency had affected Saint Thomas More when he made his early sixteenth-century estimate of English literacy of about sixty percent. More probably underestimated rather than overestimated literacy as he was finding fault with what he considered very poor conditions. (In More's time, however, beginning reading was taught in Latin. It was far, far easier both to teach reading and to learn to read in regularly-spelled Latin than in the wildly complicated spellings of English and French. Therefore, there probably would have been a higher degree of literacy among the poorer classes, who would have found it very easy to teach their children or their apprentices.)

Since du Pont estimated that a quarter of France was literate, the probability is that a considerably greater proportion than a quarter were literate. In America, du Pont prepared material on education especially for Jefferson in 1800 while du Pont was presumably staying in the vicinity of Wilmington, Delaware, and Washington, D. C., and not even in New England which had a tradition of common schools to account for high literacy. (It should be noted here that originally such "common schools" were locally-controlled schools, not state-controlled schools, and so were not originally "government" schools.) With this first-hand and high-level contact with the America of 1800, du Pont had concluded that not more than four out of a thousand young Americans were illiterate. Du Pont's testimony in 1800, therefore, was that America was a place where young adults were virtually all literate! (Unfortunately, however, du Pont was obviously not considering those Blacks in the South who were still in slavery and who were denied education, so his figures only concerned free young adults.)

However, since du Pont was in a highly authoritative position to comment on the level of U. S. literacy in 1800, it is extraordinary that his testimony has been almost totally overlooked.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) reported that du Pont prepared a plan for national education and gave it to Thomas Jefferson. It also said that du Pont tried to promote trade between France and the United States by forming companies to engage in it, but that none succeeded in doing so. Du Pont's two sons, Eleuthere and Victor, had come to the America with him, and Eleuthere began to produce gunpowder in America in what eventually became the famous du Pont factories. However, the elder du Pont went back to France in 1802, reportedly to foster the Louisiana Purchase.

Du Pont de Nemours had apparently been a rich man all his life, with influence for a time in the court of Louis XVI before the Revolution, for a time in the French legislature in the Revolutionary period, and for a time at a high level after the take-over by Napoleon. Du Pont had returned to France in 1802, and much later was part of the post-Napoleon provisional government in 1814, but when Napoleon briefly returned for the "Hundred Days," du Pont left France for Delaware in the United States where his son was living, and where he died in 1817. Apparently, du Pont had refused to work again under Napoleon's government. Du Pont had therefore demonstrated all through his life a surprising knack for always endorsing what became the next winning team.

Du Pont, however, had added meaningful testimony in 1800 on the extent of eighteenth-century literacy, at least for America and France. Yet even where there was considerable illiteracy, as well as where there were relatively smaller amounts, financial aid to existing church schools in all countries of the West could easily have extended education to those still lacking it, and at far less cost than was involved in establishing the government schools that were demanded by the French Revolutionists.

Carlo M. Cipolla's *Literacy and Development in the West* gave some firm figures for literacy before 1800, but most of his figures are after that date. At all times, he relied heavily on the percentage of signatures on marriage records, as opposed to making a mark, as an indication of literacy. Yet using signatures as a test for literacy is not an adequate test for the years before 1800 since for many centuries before that time writing had not usually been taught at the same time as reading. The teaching of writing at the same time as reading had disappeared with the dropping of wax tablets for beginners and the arrival of the ABC books about 1350. Such ABC books were ubiquitous on the European Continent until the mid-eighteenth century, and in England till after the beginning of the seventeenth century. Even when ABC books in England largely disappeared in the seventeenth century and only spelling books and horn books were used as a first step, "spelling" was still only done orally. Writing itself was still taught apart from reading, if it were taught at all. Even in New England through the eighteenth century, "writing" schools were separate from reading schools.

Far more than Andrew Bell with his monitorial school sand tablets (which he eventually dropped, anyway) it was the educational theorists of the French Revolution who were largely responsible for the significant educational improvement of reuniting the teaching of writing to that of reading. (That is, of course, a mute testimony to their widespread influence).

Shakespeare's daughter in the seventeenth century had been unable to sign her own name, but it is unlikely that she was illiterate. The Paston women in England in the fifteenth century, referred to elsewhere, were also unable to write but are known to have been literate. Yet Cipolla's method of citing signatures as an index of literacy would have listed the Paston women and Shakespeare's daughter among the illiterate.

I have read that some aphasics who had lost the ability to read have nevertheless retained the ability to write, but were then unable to read their own writing. This certainly seems to suggest that the learned

conditioned reflexes for writing are at least in part totally separate from the learned conditioned reflexes for reading, and that therefore the conditioned reflexes for writing must be specifically acquired. Many pre-nineteenth century literates who were never specifically taught to write may very well have been able to read while remaining unable to write. Signatures on such documents as marriage records are therefore an unreliable source for literacy statistics before about 1800.

Furthermore, Cipolla had a curious bias for the years before 1800, implying that literacy was more closely associated with urban, and not rural populations, and, of course, populations were far more rural before the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. He said:

“...one must realize that the educational progress outlined in the previous pages had essentially an urban character,” (page 55).

Cipolla apparently did not know that Ireland had no towns or cities whatsoever before the Viking invasions which had started about 800, and so was totally rural. Yet, for centuries before those invasions, Ireland had highly developed schools, both secular and religious, and had exported scholar monks to found schools all over Europe.

It cannot be emphasized too often that to teach reading in Latin by the syllable method was a very easy thing to do, and, to paraphrase a slogan, each literate could, indeed, teach another illiterate without even trying very hard. “Schools” were therefore not even necessary to teach simple literacy in Latin.

Furthermore, Cipolla’s reference to provisions for lay students as well as clerical students in church and monastic schools before 1000 A.D. is inadequate, since such provisions were the norm and must have produced a considerable degree of lay literacy.

Instead of acknowledging such facts supporting the existence of literacy in those so-called “Dark Ages,” Cipolla emphasized the fact that the later Norman kings were illiterate, which is only what one would expect since their Viking ancestors were illiterate in the Latin alphabet (but almost certainly not in the runic alphabet). Cipolla also emphasized the fact that, before the semi-barbaric Charlemagne about 800 A.D., some semi-barbaric French kings who preceded him (whose general behavior was appalling) were also illiterate. This is hardly surprising, considering their degeneracy, but Cipolla seemed unaware of the fact that educational facilities for common people had existed at that time, and for hundreds of years before and after, in much of western Europe and in the British Isles.

Some information on pre-French-Revolutionary education is given in the article, “France,” in the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), pages 182, Volume VI:

“From the eleventh century onwards, history shows unmistakable traces, in most provinces of France, of small schools founded by the church, such as were recommended in Charlemagne’s capitulary in the year 789. The ever-increasing number of schools, writes Guibert de Nogent in the twelfth century, makes access to them easy for the humblest.”

That last is an astonishing statement from an apparent contemporary, suggesting that access to education (real education, and not just simple literacy) was easier in the twelfth century in France than in the eighteenth century all over Europe!

Before the sixteenth century when literacy in Latin was replaced by literacy in the vernaculars which made the achieving of simple literacy far more difficult, education had been conceived of as something to be acquired only AFTER the simple learning of reading in Latin was already finished. That fact is demonstrated by the famous fifteenth century print, so often reproduced, of a boy’s arriving at the door of

education's tower already carrying his ABCs (from *Margarita Philosophica*, by Gregory Reisch, Heidelberg, 1486, reproduced in Appendix A of this history.)

Most historical reference works, like Cipolla's, make a time-jump from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Renaissance (of pagan culture). They imply that not much of cultural importance happened in the more than a thousand years that lies in between those two markers. The making of that time-jump is particularly true of many reference works on the history of education. Although Cubberley's historical work on education is better, it is biased and incomplete, and, in any event, largely forgotten today. Yet, in order to understand what happened to education in the Western World because of the influence of the eighteenth-century philosophers of the so-called "Enlightenment" and the influence of the French Revolution, it is necessary to have concrete information on education during those largely ignored thousand years before the Renaissance. The following specific historical information which includes that period is taken from pages 555 to 557 of the article, "Schools," in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913), Volume XIII:

"...II. Catechetical Schools. These flourished about the middle of the second century of the Christian era. They were brought into existence by the conflict of Christianity with pagan philosophy. They were, consequently, academies of higher learning.... We have reason to believe that in some instances, as in the catechetical school of Protogenes at Edessa (about 180), not only the higher branches but also the elementary branches were taught in the catechetical schools. Schools of this type became more numerous as time went on. In the Council of Vaison (529), the priests of Gaul are commanded to take boys into their household and teach them to read 'the Psalms, and the Holy Scriptures and to instruct them in the Law of God'. From these sprang the parochial schools of medieval and modern times.

"...In the first centuries great stress was laid on the importance of home education, and this task was committed in a special manner to Christian mothers. It is sufficient to mention the Christian matrons Macrina, Emmelia, Nonna, Anthusa, Monica, and Paula, mothers of saints and scholars, to show how successfully the home under the direction of the Christian mother was made to counteract the influence of pagan schools. There were also private schools for Christian youth, taught by Christians, for instance the school at Imola, taught by Cassian.

"III. Monastic Schools. - Monasticism as an institution was a protest against the corrupt pagan standards of living which had begun to influence not only the public life of Christians but also their private and domestic life. Even in the fourth century, St. John Chrysostom testifies to the decline of fervour in the Christian family, and contends that it is no longer possible for children to obtain proper religious and moral training in their own homes. It was part of the purpose of monasticism to meet this need and to supply not only to the members of the religious orders but also to children committed to the care of the cloister the moral, religious, and intellectual culture which could not be obtained elsewhere without lowering the Christian standard of life. At the same time episcopal schools, though instituted primarily for the education of clerical candidates, did not decline to admit secular scholars, especially after the State schools of the empire had fallen into decay. There were parochial schools also, which, while they aimed at fostering vocations to the priesthood, were expressly commanded not to deny their pupils the right to enter the married state as soon as they reached the age of maturity (*cum ad aetatum perfectam pervenerint*). The explicit enactment of the Council of Vaison (529) in this matter is important because it refers to a similar custom already prevailing in Italy.

It remains true, however, that although the episcopal and presbyteral (parochial) schools thus contributed to the education of the laity, the chief portion of the burden of lay education in the Middle Ages was borne by the monasteries. The earliest monastic legislation does not clearly

define the organization of the 'internal' and 'external' schools. Nevertheless, it recognizes the existence in the monastery of children who were to be educated, not for the cloister, but for the world. In Ireland, as Archbishop Healy says, the monks 'taught the children of the rich and poor alike' ('Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars', 102) and to Ireland went not only clerics but laymen from England and the Continent, to receive an education. On the Continent also the education of the laity, 'gentle and simple', fell to the lot of the monks. It is difficult to say when the distinction between the 'internal' school (*schola claustris*) and the 'external' (*schola canonica, s. externa*) was first introduced. We find it in St. Gall, Fulda, and Reichenau in the ninth and tenth centuries. In the internal school the pupils were novices, future members of the order, some of which were offered up (*oblatis*) by their parents at a tender age. In the external school were the children of the neighbouring villagers and the sons of the nobility; many of the references to this class of pupils in the monastic code lay stress on the obligation to treat all with equal justice, not taking account of their rank in life. There was a similar custom in regard to the reception of young girls in the convents, as appears from several enactments of Bishop St. Caesarius of Arles and his successors. At Arles, moreover, according to Muteau (see bibliography) open schools (*ecoles ouvertes*) were held by the nuns for the benefit of the entire neighbourhood. The curriculum of studies in the monastic schools comprised the trivium and quadrivium, that is to say, grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and the theory of music. Besides, the monks cultivated the science and art of healing; they devoted attention to agriculture, building, and the decorative arts. They took pains to transcribe the Classics as well as the distinctly ecclesiastical works that had come down to them; and in doing this they developed the art of penmanship and that of illumination to a high degree of perfection. They were annalists also, noting down year by year the important events not only in the life of their own community but also in the Church at large and in the political world. Finally, by example and precept they dignified manual labour, which in pagan Rome was despised as fit only for slaves.

"The head of the monastic school was called *magister scholae, capiscola, proschola*, etc. By the end of the ninth century, however, the usual name for the head of the school was *scholasticus*. His assistants were called *seniores*. The method of teaching was influenced largely by the scarcity of books and the need of handing down without diminution the heritage of the past. The master dictated (*legere* was the word used to signify the act of teaching), and the pupils wrote not only the text but also the master's explanation or commentary. Of the many textbooks in use the most popular was the work by Marcianus Capella (about 420) entitled '*Satyricon, seu de Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*'.

"That the instruction given to the laity in the monastic schools was entirely gratuitous is evident from the decree of Bishop Theodulf of Orleans in the eighth century, and from other documents. When, at Tours, the external school was frequented by a number of wealthy pupils, whose voluntary gifts to the monastery put the poorer students in a position of apparent inferiority, the bishop of that see, Amalric, gave a generous donation to the monks to be used in the maintenance of poor students. The Carolingian revival of education affected not only the internal schools of the monasteries but also the external schools, and, during the reign of Charles's successors, bishops and popes by a number of decrees showed their interest in the maintenance not only of schools of sacred science, but also in schools 'for the study of letters'. The external school had by this time become a recognized institution, which the sons of the farmers in the neighbourhood of the monasteries frequented not by privilege but by a right freely acknowledged. We know that before the end of the ninth century both boys and girls attended the schools attached to the parish churches in the Diocese of Soissons. As time went on the establishment and maintenance of schools by the Church was made a matter of express canonical enactment. No document could be more explicit than the Decree of the Third Council of Lateran

(1179): ‘That every cathedral church have a teacher (magistrum) who is to teach poor scholars and others, and that no one receive a fee for permission to teach’ (Mansi,XXII,234).’

“IV. Cathedral Schools. - [Ed.: refers to ‘Cathedral’ and ‘canonicate’ schools, the latter under local churches.] ...In both institutions there came to be distinguished (1) the elementary school (schola minor) where reading, writing, psalmody, etc. were taught; and (2) the higher school (schola major) in which the curriculum consisted either of the trivium alone (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic), or of the full programme, namely the seven liberal arts, Scripture, and what we now call pastoral theology. The method employed in the cathedral schools was identical with that of the monastic schools.

“V. Chantry Schools... The chantry was a foundation with endowment, the proceeds of which went to one or more priests carrying the obligation of...saying Mass...for the soul of the endower, or for the souls of persons named by him. It was part of the duty of the incumbents of a chantry foundation to ‘teach gratis the poor who asked it humbly for the love of God’. (See ‘Catholic University Bulletin’, IX, 3 sq.).

“VI. Guild Schools, Hospital Schools, and City Schools, the last beginning with the thirteenth century, shared the work of education with the cloister, cathedral and chantry schools. The guilds and hospitals were ecclesiastical foundations, were guided by clerics, and engaged in the work of education under the direction of the Church, The city schools at first met with opposition from the teachers in the monastic and cathedral foundations, although they also were under the control of ecclesiastics. Kehrein in his ‘History of Education’ (see bibliography) mentions a Decree of Alexander III which prohibits any abbot from preventing any magister or scholasticus from taking charge of a school in the city or suburb ‘since knowledge is a gift of God and talent is free’. Towards the end of the Middle Ages the task of the ecclesiastical teacher became so important that communities of clerics were founded for the express purpose of devoting their lives to the duties of elementary education. The best known of these communities is that of ‘The Brothers of the Common Life’ founded by Gerard Groot (1340-84) at Deventer. It soon extended to Windedheim, Agnetenberg, and other towns in Holland and North Germany. To this community belonged Thomas a Kempis, the author of ‘The Imitation of Christ... Allain (see bibliography) has told the story of primary education in France; Ravelet (see bibliography) has gone over the whole question of primary education in medieval times; Leach has told part of the story (see bibliography) as far as pre-Reformation England is concerned....’

Leach produced an enormous amount of useful historical data from surviving documents on the widespread existence of schools in England before the sixteenth century. In a later section, “In England,” of this article, “Schools,” on page 571, the following appears:

“A. F. Leach begins his masterly work, ‘English Schools at the Reformation’ (London, 1896) with the sentence: ‘Never was a great reputation more easily gained and less deserved than that of King Edward VI as a Founder of Schools.’ The truth is that the few educational foundations made by the Government either of Henry VIII or Edward VI were but re-foundations forming a small salvage from the wreck of educational endowments confiscated with the monasteries and chantries. In fact England was singularly well provided with schools previous to Henry VIII. Among them were the cathedral schools, collegiate grammar schools, monastery schools, guild schools, and perhaps most numerous of all, chantry schools... They usually taught reading, writing and Latin. Many reached a good standard and included rhetoric and dialectic in their curriculum. There were also song schools of more elementary character. As most of the grammar schools taught gratuitously, a very liberal provision of education was open even to the poorer

classes.... ‘The proportion of the population which had access to Grammar Schools, and used them was much larger than now’ (Leach, p. 97).”

It should be mentioned that Leach did not consider the monasteries to have been important for lay education in England in the late Middle Ages, but did consider the local grammar and ABC schools to have been of great importance.

The following continues the excerpts from pages 555 to 557 of the article, “Schools:”

“Both the particular and the general councils of the Church, imperial capitularies, and episcopal and papal decrees show that bishops and popes, while concerned primarily for the education of future members of the clerical body in sacred sciences, were also at pains to encourage and promote the education of the laity. For instance, the Council of Cloveshoe, held by Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury in 749, prescribes that abbesses as well as abbots provide for the education of all their households (*familiae*). A Carolingian capitulary of 802 enjoins ‘that everyone should send his son to study letters, and that the child should remain at school with all diligence until he became well instructed in learning’. Theodulf of Orleans in 797 decrees that gratuitous instruction be given by the priests in every town and village of his diocese, and there cannot be the least doubt that education of the laity is meant. The Council of Chalon-sur-Saone in 813 legislates in a similar spirit that not only ‘schools of Sacred Scripture’ but also ‘schools of letters’ be established. The Council of Rome, held in 853, directs the bishops of the Universal Church to establish ‘in every episcopal residence (in *universis episcopiis*) among the populations subject to them, and in all places where there is such need’ masters and teachers to teach ‘literary studies and the seven liberal arts’. These and similar documents lay stress on the obligation which rests on the parents and godparents to see to the education of children committed to their care.

“By the middle of the ninth century the distinction between external and internal monastic schools being clearly recognized, and parish schools having become a regular diocesan institution, the testimonies in favour of popular education under the auspices of the Church becomes clearer. In the tenth century, in spite of the disturbed conditions in the political world, learning flourished in the great monasteries such as that of St. Gall (Switzerland), St. Maximin (Trier), and in the cathedral schools, such as those of Reims and Lyons. The greatest teachers of that time, Bruno of Cologne and Gerbert of Aurillac (Pope Sylvester II), taught not only the sacred but also the profane sciences. In the eleventh century the school of Chartres, that of Ste-Genevieve at Paris, and the numerous schools of rhetoric and dialectic show that even in the higher branches of learning, in spite of the fact that the teachers were invariably clerics, the laymen were welcomed and were not denied education of the secondary kind.....

“... Specht (see bibliography) has produced documentary evidence to show the extent to which laywomen were educated in the convent schools of the ninth and the following centuries; he has also shown that daughters of noble families were, as a rule, educated by private teachers who, for the most part, were clergymen. The assertion so frequently made that, during the Middle Ages, learning was considered out of place in a layman, that even elementary knowledge of letters was a prerogative of the clergy, is not sustained by a careful examination of historical records.... ‘Knowledge’, says a twelfth century writer, ‘is not an exclusive privilege of the clergy, for many laymen are instructed in literature. A prince, whenever he can succeed in escaping from the tumult of public affairs and from [the confusion of] constant warfare, ought to devote himself to the study of books.’ (P. L. CCIII, col. 149). The number of distinguished laymen and laywomen, emperors, kings, nobles, queens and princesses who, during the medieval era, attained prominence as scholars shows that the advice was not disregarded....

“The destruction of this vast and varied system of ecclesiastical legislation is a fact of general history. The schools, as a rule, disappeared with the institutions to which they were attached. The confiscation of the monasteries, the suppressions of the benefices on which the chantries were founded, the removal of the guilds from the control of ecclesiastical authority, the suppression of cathedral and canonical chapters and the sequestration of their possessions by the State, were the immediate cause of the cessation of this kind of educational activity on the part of the church at the time of the Reformation and afterwards. In Protestant countries these events took place in the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In Germany, a compromise was reached in some States by the recognition of both Protestant and Catholic ‘confessional’ schools and the division of school funds, an arrangement which lasted until the beginning of the nineteenth century; in France the work of confiscation began with the French Revolution; in Italy, Spain, and Portugal the suppression and spoliation have taken place within the last half-century and are still going on....”

(References:)

“I. For history of schools (catechetical, monastic, etc.):

Drane [Augusta Theodosia, Mother Francis Raphael, O. S. J.], *Christian Schools and Scholars*, (2 vols., London, 1867); Brother Azarius [of the Brothers of the Christian Schools - P. J. Mullaney], *Essays Educational* (Chicago, 1896); Willmann, *Didaktik*, I (Brunswick, 1894), 211 sq.; Krieg, *Lehrbuch der Padagogik* (Paderborn, 1900), 73 sq.; Denk, *Gesch. de Gallo-frankischen Unterrichts- und Bildungswesen* (Mainz, 1892); Kehrein, *Ueberblick der Erziehung und des Unterrichts* (Paderborn, 1899); Maitre [Leon], *Les ecoles episcopales et monast. de l’Occident* (Paris, 1866).

“II. For primary education under ecclesiastical auspices in medieval times: Leach [Arthur F.], *English Schools at the Reformation* (Westminster, 1896); Specht, *Gesch. des Unterrichtswesens in Deutschland* (Stuttgart, 1885); Ravelet [Armand], *Blessed J. B. de La Salle* (Paris, 1888), chap. ii, *Primary Schools of the Middle Ages*; Allain [L’Abbe ?E?], *L’instruction primaire en France avant la Revolution* (Paris, 1881); Magevney [Rev. Eugene], *Christian Education in the Dark Ages* (New York, 1892) [Also as Vol. C, *Pedagogical Truth Library*, Rev. Eugene Magevney, 1903]; McCormick, series of articles in *Catholic Educational Review*, beginning Nov., 1911; Muteau, *Les ecoles et colleges en Province* (Dijon, 1882)....”

As has been mentioned previously, additional references concerning education before the French Revolution were cited by Brother Azarius (P. J. Mullaney) in his book, *Essays Educational*, Chicago: D. H. McBride & Co., 1896, which is also listed in the above bibliography. His references included L’Abbaye Allain who wrote *L’Instruction Primaire en France Avant la Revolution*, Paris: 1881, also shown above; Armand Ravelet, who wrote *L’Instruction Primaire dans les Campagnes Avant 1789*, Troyes: 1875; and Babeau who wrote *L’Instruction Primaire*, 1875. Others Azarius cited were listed on page 172 in his chapter, “Primary School.” Another excellent reference on primary education in the Middle Ages, which has also been mentioned previously, is the 1920 work of Albert William Parry, Principal of the Training College at Carmarthen, entitled *Education in England in the Middle Ages*, published by University Tutorial Press, Ltd., W. B. Clive, London.

The article, “France,” in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913), pages 182, Volume VI, testified to increased church efforts in France from the seventeenth century to the time of the French Revolution to spread primary education:

“The seventeenth century saw the foundation of a certain number of teaching institutes: the Ursulines who between the year 1602 and the Revolution, founded 289 houses, and who numbered 9000 members in 1792; the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, founded in



1630, recognized [by the Church] in 1657; the Congregation of Notre-Dame, founded by St. Peter Fourier, recognized in 1622; the Brothers of the Christian Schools, called, in the eighteenth century, Brothers of Saint Yon, founded by St. John Baptist de la Salle, and who had 123 classes in 1719, when their founder died, and 550 classes in 1789. In the last twenty years a large number of monographs which have been given restricted publication in the provinces, have presented historical evidence of the care which the Church was devoting to primary education during the period immediately preceding the Revolution.”

Casual entries in biographies of the pre-Revolutionary period can be illuminating concerning facts on primary education in France at that time. For instance, in the *Biographie Universelle* (Michaud's) published in Paris in 1854 and republished in Austria in 1969 by Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, the following appears in an entry for Jacques Deschamps (1677-1759), a priest in Normandy (not the Abbe Deschamps discussed later). Old Pastor Deschamps' will gave as a legacy to his own church his entire estate, amounting to 10,000 francs, for the cost of maintaining a school-mistress for his own church. Such a school-mistress obviously would have been teaching both boys and girls, almost certainly at the primary level. It is reasonable to assume that there was nothing unusual about Pastor Deschamps' will, either. There must have been many wills like his, just as there had been many legacies very like his in pre-Reformation England. When Pastor Deschamps wrote his will some time before 1759, in which year he died at the age of 82, he was certainly not the only one in France who considered primary education of such high importance, as the existence of the large religious teaching orders proves.

However, concerning Cipolla's low figures for literacy even after 1800 when handwriting again began to be taught more routinely, in many places pre-existing educational facilities had been badly disrupted by the extensive wars of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, so early nineteenth century figures are no real indication of what might have been the norm one hundred or two hundred years earlier.

To show the high regard for literacy before 1800 and to suggest literacy was far more widespread than Cipolla presumed, when the Protestant and Catholic Spanish, French, English, German and Swedish settlers arrived in America in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, one of their first concerns was with the teaching of beginning reading to children. The Spanish in Mexico in the 1500's, and the English Pilgrims in Massachusetts and the French in Canada in the 1600's also tried to teach the Indians to read. According to *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. XV, page 229, "Ursulines of Quebec":

“The Ursuline monastery of Quebec is the oldest institution of learning for women in North America. Its history begins on 1 August 1639.... Their first pupils were Indians.... Marie de l'Incarnation mastered the difficult Indian languages thoroughly, and composed dictionaries in Algonquin and Iroquois, also a sacred history in the former, and a catechism in the latter idiom....”

Actual records exist, cited elsewhere, concerning German ABC books (Klinefelter) Spanish-Indian ABC books (Berry and Poole,) and Swedish ABC books (Wickersham) in America during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Concerning further evidence on French attitudes, Marguerite Bourgeoys of the Congregation of Notre Dame, an order whose work was the teaching of poor girls gratuitously, founded a branch in Montreal, Canada, in 1657, confirming a concern in France and Canada not just for literacy but for the literacy of poor women, a powerless class, in 1657 (*The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913), Vol. III, page 296, "Canons"). When the Ursuline nuns founded a convent school for girls in New Orleans in 1727 and were welcomed with pleasure by the influential townspeople, they were only extending into the relative wilderness the facilities available for well-born girls in the French homeland (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. IX, page 379, "Louisiana").

Klinefelter documented the enormous concern of the Protestant Pennsylvania Germans in the late seventeenth and all the eighteenth century for the teaching of reading in their pioneer settlements. Du Pont's unfounded estimate that only a sixth of Germany was literate by 1800 certainly is in total disagreement with the historical fact that there was an enormous concern for literacy in the eighteenth century among the Pennsylvania Dutch (Germans) of all religious denominations.

Such citations on the widespread concern for literacy shown by settlers from all these countries, both Protestant and Catholic, could be multiplied almost endlessly. Yet the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century American settlers were obviously only carrying on Old-World practices, though, indisputably, greater or lesser degrees of illiteracy also nevertheless existed in their countries. However, the best indication of widespread literacy in Western Europe in the eighteenth century, at least for those who were not poor, is the vast market for books, newspapers and journals. The indications are that there was a brisk market for all these materials in the eighteenth century. After all, how else could the Encyclopedists and Voltaire have spread their ideas all over Europe at that time except through such printed materials? Furthermore, Gedike's comment, quoted elsewhere, on the vast numbers of children's books at the Leipzig book fairs in the 1770's certainly suggests there must have been even more books available for their parents!

## **Chapter 8**

### **The Suppression of Religious Schools and Promotion of Government Schools Originated with the Change-Agents of the Eighteenth Century. The Relationships to the Teaching of the Deaf**

Subsidizing the increase of already-existing church schools could have avoided any government control of curriculum (though it did not in Great Britain), but such string-free subsidies would, of course, also have aided traditional religion. The historical record for the nineteenth century tells of the suppression of religious orders in various places, most of which orders were involved in running schools, and in the suppression of all sorts of religious rights. Of course, it was religion itself that was the primary target of such nineteenth-century laws, despite the lies of change-agents about the necessity for laws of suppression to increase both “liberty” and “enlightenment.” Therefore, change-agents were certainly not going to promote the granting of string-free subsidies to church-sponsored schools since church schools would promote the “unenlightenment” of traditional religion. Instead, the change-agents worked for the establishment of government schools which would teach the safe “religion” of secularism.

The following comment on the power of change-agents in nineteenth-century secret societies, which appear to have been major influences in the suppression of religious freedom and religious-sponsored education, appears in a biographical entry on Pope Gregory XVI (page 9, Volume VII) *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913):

“On 20 May, 1846, [Gregory XVI] felt himself failing, and ordered Cretineau-Joly to write the history of the secret societies against which he had struggled vainly....”

Cretineau-Joly apparently did write such a history, because the bibliography at the end of the entry included his *L’Eglise Romaine en face de la Revolution* (Paris, 1859). It is perhaps in that work that he made the remark about Voltaire which was quoted by Robert Henry Goldsborough on page 2 of *Lines of Credit, Ropes of Bondage*. J. Cretineau-Joly is reported to have referred to Voltaire as:

“The most perfect incarnation of Satan that the world has ever seen.”

Yet Voltaire most commonly receives the most respectful treatment from the general media. In contrast, the weekly bulletin for May 16, 1993, of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Lyndhurst, New Jersey, had this to say, although it did not cite the source for Voltaire’s comments:

“Voltaire predicted that within a hundred years of his day (i.e., the 18th century) Christianity would be nothing but a relic of the past. He had to admit that in order for that to happen, the world would first have to get rid of Sunday. He said: ‘There is no hope of destroying Christianity so long as the Christian Sabbath is acknowledged and kept.’”

Not surprisingly, the “decadi” persecution broke out in the French Revolution. Sunday was abolished, and every tenth day (“decadi”) was to be the day of rest. Those who opposed the new legislation were persecuted.

It is not difficult to find the primary eighteenth-century source for the anti-religious attitudes of the nineteenth-century change-agents and the secret societies “against which [Gregory XVI] had struggled vainly....” It was not the French Revolution which was the primary source, because the French Revolution was itself only one of the products. The primary source was a group of “philosophers” of the eighteenth

century, and one of the most virulent was Voltaire. An account of the rabid hatred of these “philosophers” for Christianity, and of their successful suppression of the Jesuit order which ran so many schools as a “first step” toward suppressing Christianity itself, appears in the biography, “Clement XIII, Pope,” Volume IV, page 32, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913). Clement XIII was born in 1693, was elected to the papacy in 1758, and died in 1769.

However, the pertinent excerpted portion cited later begins by using the terms “regalism” and “Jansenism.” Knowing the meaning of these terms is necessary in order to understand the excerpt. While the meaning of “regalism” becomes self-evident from the excerpt itself, the reference to Jansenism does not. Jansenists were an anti-papal faction among Roman Catholics which followed the heretical teachings of Roman Catholic Bishop Jansen, first published in 1640, which denied the effectiveness of free will. Jansenists were a grim and joyless sect who in practice regarded pleasures as evil. Their most famous adherents in the seventeenth century were Antoine Arnauld and the Port Royal school at which Jacqueline Pascal taught. That was the first school to use the brilliant synthetic phonics reading method of Jacqueline’s brother, the genius, Blaise Pascal. Blaise Pascal, the renowned mathematician/scientist and inventor of the synthetic phonics “sound” beginning reading method, was possibly a Jansenist sympathizer without actually being a Jansenist.

The famous teacher of the deaf who used the “meaning” beginning reading method, the Abbe de l’Epee, was a Jansenist. When he was first to be ordained to the priesthood, he refused to take an oath in opposition to Jansenism and so did not then receive holy orders. He was later ordained in 1736 by the bishop of Troyes, who employed him in his diocese. According to the brief biography on de l’Epee in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire* (page 884):

“At the end of some years, the death of this prelate made the abbe decide to settle in Paris. One knows his attachment to the doctrine of Port-Royal and his well-followed relations with the venerable Soanen. This is why he was censured and struck with an interdiction by Monseigneur de Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris.”

It would appear from the fact that de l’Epee’s work with the deaf was sponsored by Louis XV that de l’Epee was not only an active Jansenist but was probably also a “regalist,” in the sense that he would tend to reject any opposition to positions taken by the king. This is particularly so since de l’Epee’s father had been the king’s architect, and his brother who later supported his work had also become the king’s architect. Kings tend to employ sycophants, not opponents. De l’Epee’s well-placed “connections” very probably accounted for the wide publicity and many visitors he received, while pre-existing and other teachers of the deaf in France such as the Abbe Deschamps and the Portuguese, Peirere, faded into obscurity.

After having considered the meaning of the terms, regalism and Jansenism, in the life of the famous de l’Epee, those terms may have more meaning in the following excerpt, “Clement XIII, Pope,” Volume IV, page 32, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913).

“Regalism and Jansenism were the traditional enemies of the Holy See in its government of the Church, but a still more formidable foe was rising into power and using the other two as its instruments. This was the party of Voltaire and the Encyclopedists, the “philosophers” as they liked to call themselves. They were men of talent and highly educated, and by means of these gifts had drawn over to themselves many admirers and adherents from among the ruling classes, with the result that by the time of Clement XIII, they had their representatives in power in the Portuguese and in all the five Bourbon Courts. Their enmity was radically against the Christian religion itself, as putting a restraint on their license of thought and action. In their private correspondence they called it the Infame (the infamous one), and looked forward to its speedy

extinction through the success of their policy; but they felt that in their relations with the public, and especially with the sovereigns, it was necessary to feign some kind of Catholic belief. In planning this war against the Church, they were agreed that the first step must be the destruction of the Jesuits. "When we have destroyed the Jesuits", wrote Voltaire to Helvetius, in 1761, "we shall have easy work with the Infame." And their method was to persuade the sovereigns that the Jesuits were the chief obstacle to their Regalist pretensions, and thereby a danger to the peace of their realms; and to support this view by the diffusion of defamatory literature, likewise by inviting the co-operation of those who, whilst blind to the character of their ulterior ends, stood with them for doctrinal or other reasons in their antipathy to the Society of Jesus. [Ed.: One such group was the Jansenists, since the Jesuits had opposed them.] Such was the political situation with which Clement XIII saw himself confronted when he began his pontificate [Ed.: in 1758].

"PORTUGAL. - His attention was called in the first instance to Portugal, where the attack on the Society had already commenced. Joseph I, a weak and voluptuous prince, was a mere puppet in the hands of his minister, Sebastiao Carvalho, afterwards Marquis de Pombal, a secret adherent of the Voltairian opinions, and bent on the destruction of the society.... [By 1760] Pombal... shipped off all the Jesuits from Portugal and its colonies, save the superiors who were still detained in their prisons, and sent them to Civitavecchia, "as a present to the pope", without a penny from their confiscated funds left to them for their maintenance....

"FRANCE. - It was to be expected that the Society's many enemies in France would be stimulated to follow in the footsteps of Pombal. The attack was opened by the Parlement, which was predominantly Jansenist in its composition, in the spring of 1761.... Louis XV, like Joseph I, had a will enervated by lust, but unlike him, was by no means a fool, and had besides an underlying respect for religion. Thus he sought, in the first instance, to save a body of men whom he judged to be innocent... but the king was being drawn the other way by his Voltairian statesmen and Madame de Pompadour... the arret of 2 August, 1762, by... the Parlement suppressed the Society in France.... Finally ... the king, weakly yielding to the pressure of his entourage, suppressed the French [Jesuits] by his edict of November, 1764....

"SPAIN. - The statesmen who had the ear of Charles III were in regular correspondence with the French Encyclopedists, and had for some years previously been projecting a proscription of the Society on the same lines as in Portugal and France. But this was not known to the public, or to the Jesuits, who believed themselves to have a warm friend in their sovereign. It came then as a surprise to all when, on the night of 2 - 3 April, 1767, all the Jesuit houses were suddenly surrounded, the inmates arrested and transferred to vehicles ordered to take them to the coast, thence to be shipped off for some unknown destination - forbidden to take anything with them beyond the clothes which they wore....

"Finally, on 18, 20, 22 January, 1769, the ambassadors of France, Spain, and Naples presented to [Pope Clement III] identical notes demanding the total and entire suppression of the Society of Jesus throughout the world. It was this that killed him. He expired under the shock on the night of 2 - 3 February...."

It is impossible to read this account of "identical notes" in 1769 from three governments without acknowledging organized group action involving several countries with the suppression of the Jesuits as the aim. It was probably also largely clandestine group action. Yet, as Voltaire's remark made clear, the real target was not the Jesuits, but the "Infame," or Christianity itself.

The "philosophers" after the mid-eighteenth century were very influential on general culture. A review of the chronological "Bibliographie" from the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire

shows a remarkable change in emphasis on the entries on education after about 1760 when the “philosophers” became so famous. Prior to that time, the entries had largely been concerned with education by the church and by the home, and many had a pronounced emphasis on training in piety. After the mid-eighteenth century appeared many entries calling for a “national” education but the emphasis on “piety” almost disappeared.

A subdivision of the “Bibliographie” entries on education are those on the teaching of the deaf, which, of course, concern methods for teaching reading. De l’Epee with his emphasis on sign language and sight-words learned for “meaning” was NOT the only teacher of the deaf in Paris. He was preceded by a Portuguese, Peirere, who successfully taught the deaf to speak. Soon after, the Abbe Deschamps, who had been amazed by Peirere’s results, began his life work of teaching the deaf, and consciously modeled his work on Peirere’s. Therefore, the Abbe Deschamps successfully taught spoken language to the deaf as the initial step and refused to work with de l’Epee because of de l’Epee’s dependence on sign language and his failure to teach speech as a beginning step. Abbe Deschamps wrote of his own great success by teaching such “sound” methods instead of “meaning” methods, and several entries for his books appear in the “Bibliographie.” The following concerning Deschamps appears in the article, “Education,” Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Vol. 5:

“The Abbe Claude Francois Deschamps (1745-91), in his treatise on the education of the deaf and dumb, is said to have also sketched the outlines of the art of teaching the blind to read and write.” (page 308)

“When the Abbe de l’Epee originated the method of signs, many of his contemporaries, such as the Abbe Deschamps, refused to be associated with this new school, and between him and Samuel Heinecke of Leipzig, the great upholder of the speech method, there was carried on a spirited controversy, which has continued ever since, among the educators of the deaf.” (page 318)

The entry on Abbe Deschamps in Michaud’s Biographie Universelle (1854, 1969) adds further information.

“An unforeseen circumstance resulted in his meeting a pupil, mute from birth, in whom Peirere had created the faculty of speech. This miracle of art struck him so perfectly that at that instant his vocation was decided. Fortune, talent, existence, he consecrated all to the education of deaf-mutes. This was particularly so to the class of people to whom he offered the lessons free: to pupils of this kind he gave bread and lessons at the same time. The attempt was made to associate him with the Abbe de l’Epee; but he refused to sacrifice to his advancement his preference for the system of the Israelite over that of his illustrious emulator. Thus the Abbe Deschamps lived unknown, and died almost ignored, but very regretted by his friends and above all by his pupils, in January, 1791. (On tenta de l’attacher a l’abbe de ‘Epee; mais il refusa de sacrifier a son avancement le sentiment de preference qu’il accordait au systeme de l’Israelite sur celui de son illustre emule. Ainsi l’abbe Deschamps vecut obscur, et mourut presque ignore, mais tres-regrette de ses amis et surtout de ses eleves, en janvier 1791.)”

Deschamps received no Royal and apparently almost no other support, while the Jansenist de l’Epee, whose father had worked for the royal court, received great support and even had crowds of visitors come to see his “success.” A half century later, similar crowds came to see Robert Owen’s “success” in his “infant school” at New Lanark, Scotland, and crowds of sight-seers have appeared in turn at every change-agent promotion throughout the nineteenth century, as with Colonel Parker’s in Quincy, Massachusetts. That certainly indicates that organized group support must have existed for these historical “wonders.” Yet Deschamps, despite his entries in the “Bibliographie” and his objective success, had no

such crowds and no such support and has fallen into total oblivion. Heinecke in Germany, de l'Epee's far more famous "sound" opponent, had more good fortune.

De l'Epee is presented as an innovator with his use of sign language, of which he is wrongly called the inventor, since sign language has existed in many forms since the dawn of time. However, printed sight words are a form of signs, and de l'Epee is the apparent inventor of the pure sight-word reading method for alphabetic print. On a scale from Code 1 to Code 10, in which Code 1 represents a pure "meaning" approach to decoding, and Code 10 represents a pure "sound" approach, and Codes 2 to 9 represent relative mixtures of the approaches, de l'Epee's initial method rates a pure Code 1. In later stages, de l'Epee undoubtedly taught his pupils to compare sight-words, in order to identify like parts so as to tell them apart (phony phonics), so at later stages his method would probably rate a Code 3.

Yet de l'Epee's invention some time after 1760 of a pure Code 1 "meaning" method for reading alphabetic print may very well have been inspired by the developing Code 3 "echo" reading method in France, very popular after 1744. (It was based on the whole-word comparison of memorized sample words to new words.) As discussed later, what became the Code 3 "echo" method had originated in France in an incomplete form with de Vallange's *New Systems or New Plans of Methods...* in 1719. In 1744, Abbot Bertaud elaborated on the basic concept and published the *Quadrille des Enfants*, which became very popular. In essence, it taught two-step, whole word phony phonics. After several more versions written by others, the Code 3 approach appeared in a further revised form as Daubanton's *Lecture Par Echo* in 1810. Of course, the use of the word, "echo," confirms that the material was indeed two-step phonics. Since what was being "echoed" was the sample whole word which had been used to teach a particular phoneme, *Lecture Par Echo* represented two-step, whole-word, phony phonics, in principal very like like W. S. Gray's 1930 "phonics."

De l'Epee used his Code 1 reading method as the initial "meaning" method for teaching his deaf and mute students to read. It is true that de l'Epee did first teach his deaf-mute students the manual alphabet, but apparently he never taught them to write the individual letters as isolated letters. Instead, to judge from de l'Epee's own description of his work, referred to elsewhere, he introduced his deaf-mute students to written letters only as part of meaningful, written whole words. Furthermore, de l'Epee introduced such great numbers of written words at this initial step that normal minds could not have memorized their spellings. Instead, his students would have had to remember the sight-words (if they could remember them at all) only as whole words.

Earlier teachers of the deaf had first taught the deaf to use a manual alphabet and a written alphabet, and only after that taught them to use the written alphabet to build written words. Also, most taught them while they were still at the initial alphabet step to make the sounds of the letters they were learning with their mouths, and then to speak, before they introduced any degree of "meaningful" language. For such deaf students who had learned the written alphabet first, and often learned to speak first, the printed word and the spoken word became the second, derivative step. In a sense, that parallels the hearing child who learns the sounds of the letters first, and then to speak, and then learns the sounds of the printed letters as a first step in learning to read. For such a hearing child, both spoken and printed words are derivative, second steps.

Manual sign language, which may have partly inspired de l'Epee to use whole printed words also as "signs," is as old as man. American Indian sign language achieved astonishing perfection, as observed by Columbus and other explorers. (See *Indian Sign Language*, by William Tomkins, 1931 Fifth Edition, Reissued and Corrected in 1969 by Dover Publications, Inc., New York and London.) Surely the great number of French explorers in America, from Quebec to New Orleans and on the Great Plains, so many of whom were priests and missionaries to the Indians, would have known of Indian sign language used by Plains Indians. They surely must have reported on it in some published fashion in France. Therefore, de

l'Epee and others in Paris must have had some knowledge of the existence of workable Indian manual sign language before de l'Epee began his work about 1760. De l'Epee must have worked out his own manual sign system, which apparently preceded his use of whole sight-words as signs, after having such knowledge. Yet no reference is made to prior sign languages in any reports on de l'Epee that I have seen. De l'Epee apparently was willing to accept international acclaim for having "invented" manual sign language.

Spoken languages can also be "signed" by a manual alphabet, though undoubtedly it must be far slower in transferring "meaning" than Indian or de l'Epee's signs. Manual alphabets to teach spoken languages had actually been used successfully with the deaf for centuries, and since the sixteenth century had been the foundation on which oral speech and lip-reading were later taught to the deaf so that they could communicate with hearing people. What de l'Epee actually originated was the practice of teaching a pure sign language to the deaf which was unrelated to any spoken language, as manual alphabets are. De l'Epee's sign language was meant to be used instead of a standard spoken language. Therefore, de l'Epee cut the deaf off from the rest of society, which was an extraordinarily cruel thing to have done.

It is worth while here to contrast manual signing to speech, using quotations from William Tomkins' *Indian Sign Language* (1931 and earlier; Dover Publications, Inc. 1969, page 100). Indian sign language is the equivalent of de l'Epee's sign language approach. In the following selections, let the reader decide for himself whether signing or sound-based language is the more precise and efficient method for transferring thought.

"Spoken: The man is poor and blind.

"Signed: Man have money not, see not, eye wiped out.

"Spoken: The old woman went to the farmer to get some corn.

"Signed: Woman old go farm-man, bring corn.

"Spoken: In the middle of the night it began to rain. Before daylight we were soaking wet. One of my friends got sick, and there was no doctor anywhere near. Much to our disgust, we had to break camp and come back home.

"Signed: Middle night begin rain. Morning come. We all much water. One friend arrive at sick. White-Chief-Medicine near no. Heart much tired, we must stop sit camp, come home."

The superiority of spoken language over signed language appears obvious. Furthermore, how could such constricted signed language possibly deal with the nuances of meaning in great poetry, or with its beauty?

William Tomkins' book also gave two interesting but undated quotations on page 91 concerning the differences between "sound"-based alphabetic writing and "meaning"-based ideographic writing:

"Ideographic writing directs the mind of the reader by means of a picture or a symbol directly to the idea existing in the mind of the one who uses it, while alphabetic or literal writing is simply the written expression of the sound, and only indirectly expresses the idea." Prof. C. J. Ryan, Theosophical University, San Diego.

Ryan's remarks are a verbal explanation of the "triangle" appearing in the article on reading by Henry Suzzallo of Columbia in the 1913 *Cyclopedia of Education*, which article is discussed further in Part 7.



Ryan was with the Theosophical University, and “theosophy” was well known by about 1880. It is intriguing that the “meaning” approach in beginning reading, justified by the reasoning in Ryan’s quotation, began to be vastly promoted in America again starting about 1875 in Quincy, Massachusetts, as discussed in Part 5 of this history.

The second quotation was from Professor William Gates of the Peabody Institute:

“There is one great broad line that divides the nations and civilizations of the earth, past and present, in all their arts of expression. We may call it that of the ideographic or general, as against the literal or definite. It controls the inner form of language and of languages; it manifests in the passage of thought from man to man; it determines whether the writing of the people shall be hieroglyphic or alphabetic.”

In his undated statement, Gates had the cart before the horse: hieroglyphic writing produces imprecise language, not the other way around.

Therefore, de l’Epee’s sign language, and the sight-word method for hearing people, represent the “general” as against the “definite.” No reasonable person can conclude that such language methods, which are incapable of precision, are equal or superior to language methods which have precision. The history demonstrates that de l’Epee’s work, from its inception, was a degenerate approach. That it should have received the support of the “great” such as the Austrian Emperor and the Russian Empress and have been praised all over the Western World were developments which defied all reason. However, the promotion of de l’Epee’s work paralleled the widespread promotion of sight-words and “whole language” in reading instruction today all over the English-speaking world, which also defies all reason.

De l’Epee had been aware of the “sound” and “meaning” aspects of spoken and written language for many years, since the following appears in his biography in *Biographie Universelle* (1854, 1969):

“...he had not lost sight of the irrefragable principle that his tutor of philosophy had tried to inculcate in him when he was on the dusty benches of the school: ‘Ideas and pronounced sounds do not have a rapport any more natural or more immediate than ideas and written characters.’”

De l’Epee’s teacher’s ideas were probably based on centuries-old work with the deaf. The article, “Education of the Deaf and Dumb” in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913), Volume V, page 316, referred to “the principle announced by Girolamo Cardano (1501-1576), a friend of St. Charles Borromeo that ‘writing is associated with speech, and speech with thought, but written characters may be connected together without the intervention of sounds. The deaf can hear by reading and speak by writing.’”

Both de l’Epee and Sicard later did try to add “sound” speech to their curriculum, but only after the deaf-mute students had been taught to communicate by “meaning-bearing” signs and to read whole sight-words by “meaning” and not by “sound.” Yet, as stated in the excerpt in Appendix A from the July 28, 1900, issue of *The School Journal* by Dr. A. L. E. Crouter, based on his school’s twenty years of experience in teaching deaf children in Pennsylvania with different methods, teaching deaf children initially by the “meaning” signing approach achieves sharply inferior results later in the teaching of spoken language in comparison to teaching deaf children from the beginning with the “sound” approach. This is obviously because of diametrically opposed conditioned reflexes established at the beginning stage, one type established by teaching “sound” and the other by teaching “meaning.” Such reflexes are apparently highly resistant to change. The “triangle” in Suzzallo’s article, “Reading,” in the *Cyclopedia of Education* (1913) shows the “sound” vs. “meaning” paths pictorially and very effectively, though no reference is made to the fact that the two different paths are actually two different and opposite conditioned reflexes in reading.

De l'Epee's short biography in *Biographie Universelle* told of his great but puzzling "success."

"Soon fame announced the unprecedented results of his method, and his humble school, the cradle of moral emancipation of these pariahs of nature, saw itself besieged each day by the curious belonging to the highest classes of society. Among these last, one cites the ambassador of Catherine I, Empress of Russia, and the Emperor Joseph II. This monarch, amazed at the prodigies to which he was witness, and more by the disinterestedness of the humble priest, after having observed the contrary at the place of his antagonist, Pereira (sic)...[wished] to create in his States a school of deaf-mutes in imitation of that of Paris...."

Yet Deschamps had been so impressed by Peirere that he spent the rest of his life imitating Peirere's "sound" speech work in teaching the deaf, while Deschamps had been appalled by de l'Epee's "meaning" sign language in teaching the deaf. Why, then, was it de l'Epee's "meaning"-approach school that received such enormous fame, and why did the Russian ambassador and Emperor Joseph II of Austria evaluate the situation in that school so very differently from Deschamps who was himself a teacher of the deaf? It seems only reasonable to assume that such visitors should have been more impressed by seeing born-deaf people speaking in Peirere's school, than by seeing born-deaf people only able to use hand signs in de l'Epee's school! All these facts certainly seem to suggest that for some reason de l'Epee and his strange but inferior "new" Code 1 "meaning" method was being promoted over the pre-existing and highly successful "sound" method by people who were expert at using "influence."

De l'Epee is credited as having founded the first "school" for the deaf, but this also is to be questioned, since the real meaning apparently is that he founded the first boarding school, with pupils actually living in his establishment. His high reputation remained at the moment of his death in Paris on December 23, 1789 (apparently not sometime in September, 1789, as reported by the *Biographie Universelle*. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913), Vol. V, page 484, gave that precise date of death and the fact de l'Epee been born at Versailles on November 25, 1712.) His funeral oration, delivered the following February 23, 1790, by the Abbe Fauchet, was attended by a deputation from the National Assembly and other dignitaries, seven months after the storming of the Bastille.

Abbe Deschamps died about a year later in January, 1791, and he had also taught impoverished deaf children but by the "sound" method instead of the "meaning" method that de l'Epee used. Deschamps had even fed the poor children, using his own money to do so. Yet Deschamps died "almost ignored" (*Biographie Universelle*). Therefore, Deschamps had no such funeral oration attended by a Revolutionary delegation and other dignitaries. His life's work teaching the deaf to read by "sound" instead of "meaning" fell into almost total obscurity, while de l'Epee and his school became more and more famous, receiving heavy governmental support.

Note that de l'Epee's enormously famous school apparently had no religious connections, despite the fact that de l'Epee himself was a priest (although apparently an "heretical" one, since he was a Jansenist). Note also that his school began and prospered in the very period in which religious schools, such as those of the Jesuits, were being closed. His school later received the enormous support of the French Revolutionists at the very time they were outlawing all religious schools and promoting government schools.

About 1800, De l'Epee even had a famous play written concerning his work with a foundling deaf-mute. De l'Epee had unsuccessfully claimed the deaf-mute foundling was the heir of a rich family. The play, called *The Abbe de l'Epee* by Bouilly was apparently performed on stages all over Europe from about 1801 until the 1820's and later, since it had editions not only in French but in English, German and Italian, and perhaps other languages. This certainly suggests continued promotion of de l'Epee's work by

his enthusiasts. An English adaptation was *Deaf and Dumb, or the Orphan Protected*, by Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), and another English adaptation was by Benjamin Thompson from a German edition, both of which have 1801 dates listed in the New York Public Library catalog.

The Thompson version of the play, *The Abbe de l'Epee* by Jean Nicolas Bouilly (1763-1842) also reportedly had an 1818 edition published by S. G. Goodrich of Hartford, with a preface by Laurent Clerc. This suggests that the play had a continued connection with the movers-and-shakers, since Samuel G. Goodrich was later a famous and rich Boston publisher and was also for a time publisher of the change-agent *Journal of Education in America*. Although it is possible that the date (1818) and the place (Hartford) are in error, it seems unlikely that the initials (S. G.) refer to some other Goodrich as the publisher of the play. Woodbridge, the second editor of the *Journal of Education*, was working in Gallaudet's school for the deaf by 1818 when "Goodrich" published the play. Gallaudet had founded the school in 1817 after returning from France with the deaf-mute Clerc who had been trained by Sicard, de l'Epee's successor. These are some of the many ties among these people. However, since the play's preface was written by the deaf-mute and teacher of the deaf, Clerc, whom Gallaudet had brought from France only two years before, that fact suggests a possible and surprising connection between Gallaudet and Goodrich as early as 1818 (if the 1818 date is not in error. Both Gallaudet and Goodrich were then near the beginning of their highly successful careers. Publication of the play also identified Goodrich, like Gallaudet, as one of the widespread promoters of de l'Epee's "meaning" work.

The play contains the following lines, certainly showing the author's philosophical point of view:

"Science would (vote) for D'Alembert, and Nature say Buffon, Wit and Taste present Voltaire, and Sentiment plead for Rousseau, but Genius and Humanity cry out for de l'Epee, and him I call the best and greatest of all."

It is interesting to see that the author of the play about de l'Epee saw fit to put him on the same rating scale as Rousseau and Voltaire, two historical villains. This also tells something about the play's promoters.

The information about the play is from "The Preface of the Translator" (who did not name himself) on a translation of de l'Epee's work. It was entitled, *The Method of Educating the Deaf and Dumb, Confirmed By Long Experience.... Translated from the French....*, London, 1801. It had appeared in 1776 in France under the title, *Institution of the Deaf and Dumb by the Way of Methodical Signs*. The 1801 edition in English also included the exchange of letters between de l'Epee, the promoter of the "meaning" method for the deaf, and Heinecke, the German promoter of the "sound" method for the deaf. Much was made of the fact that both Heinecke and Peirere received pay, while de l'Epee did not. Yet the high-born de l'Epee had his own private funds, and the support of the rich and powerful and the state. Were Heinecke and Peirere, neither of whom were "high-born" and who therefore lacked such resources, supposed to starve? (Heinecke stated that he did take some poor students, and so, very probably, did Peirere.) That kind of unfair and emotionally-loaded argument which was used to attack both men is characteristic of attacks by change-agents.

In the 1801 English translation of the second edition of de l'Epee's book, the translator wrote,

"When the world was deprived of the great and good man, the instruction of the deaf and dumb was continued by the Abbe Sicard, and prosecuted likewise by the language of methodical signs. The editor being in Paris in 1790 and 1791, frequently visited this school....

"He found, however, that the Abbe Sicard had wholly set aside teaching them Utterance, alledging that the benefit of it to the Deaf was by no means adequate to the trouble of acquiring it,

assigning reasons to which the Editor, who had himself had occasion to observe its utility, could not subscribe.

“Conferring with the scholars by means of writing, he (the Editor) happened to signify to one of them... that Deaf persons in England were taught to speak. The youth was instantly struck, as if electrified; then upon recovering himself, ran with eagerness round the school to impart the information to his companions, and afterwards expressed an anxious wish to be carried to England to learn the art of speaking.”

It is extraordinary that the Abbe de l’Epee’s method, which ultimately resulted in so many deaf pupils remaining permanently mute, should have been promoted and glorified over previously successful methods which taught the deaf to speak and enabled them to take their places in ordinary society. The Abbe in his second edition admitted that originally he had made no effort to teach speech, though he was now attempting to do so. In this book, de l’Epee also implicitly admitted the success of Peirere’s oral method in Paris before he began his own work, saying on page xxviii:

“They... deemed the idea which I had conceived... as more calculated to obstruct than to facilitate the progress of my pupils. This censure acquiring a certain degree of credit from the reputation of Mr. Perreire (sic), I was under the necessity of combatting the prejudice of the public mind against my method of tuition, when I was induced to print it for the benefit of the Deaf and Dumb, both of the present and future generation, regarding myself to be in a manner charged by Providence to render this unfortunate class all the service in my power.

“I therefore attacked the false principles of these gentlemen’s argument, and even took upon myself to show that although the system made use of by Mr. Perreire for the tuition of his pupils, denominated Dactylogy, ... the science of the movement and position of the fingers, could by degrees conduct the deaf to learn to speak, it was nevertheless absolutely incapable of teaching them to make a legitimate use of their faculty of thinking.”

Therefore, de l’Epee, himself, opposed “sound” as the entrance to reading and language, and endorsed “meaning” as the first step, just like our “reading experts” today!

“But I had to combat other and more formidable adversaries, I mean a number of theologians, of (rational) philosophers, and academicians of different (countries?) who maintained the impossibility of subjecting metaphysical ideas to representative signs, and, consequently, the necessity of their ever remaining above the intelligence of the deaf and dumb.”

In conducting public lessons “attended by the learned from all parts of Europe,” de l’Epee defended his approach, and, of course, he was right that “metaphysical ideas” can be transferred by signs, the reason being that both the sender and the receiver have minds that deal naturally with such “metaphysical ideas.” William James in his 1890 psychology text referred to a deaf man who remembered that, before he had learned any language, he had as a child speculated silently on the origin of the world. That youngster who had no language at all nevertheless had no difficulty conceiving and dealing with such “metaphysical ideas” as the origin of the world. The problem concerns the precision of such ideas, and whether they can be clearly focused by the thinker or remain more vague. It is not just a waste of ink that English dictionaries contain up to a half million or so words, while sign languages and pictographic writing contain only a few thousand. Clearly, therefore, ideas conceived and transferred in such sound-bearing English words can be far more precise than ideas conceived and transferred in “meaning-bearing” sign language or pictographs.

In summary, royal financial support and enormous international publicity were given to the Jansenist de l'Epee, who promoted the "meaning" method in primary teaching of the deaf, a method which left most born-deaf students forever mute. Yet virtually no support was given to Deschamps, who promoted the "sound" method in primary teaching of the deaf, a method which taught the born-deaf to speak and which enabled them to take their places in general society. Deschamps was ignored, and his work fell into oblivion, along with Peirere's. In contrast, de l'Epee's method lived on, not only in the teaching of the deaf. It became the source for the Code 1 "meaning" sight-word approach in the teaching of reading to children with normal hearing. The Code 1 approach, along with the Code 3 two-step, phony-phonics whole word approach discussed later, which also originated in eighteenth-century France, produced massive functional illiteracy throughout the English-speaking world starting about 1826.

It is disturbing to read in the *Biographie Universelle* article on Roch-Ambroise Cucurron Sicard, (1742-1822) that de l'Epee's school had been supported in large part under decrees of 1778 and 1785 by money obtained when the Royalist French government suppressed a Celestin convent. That means, of course, de l'Epee benefited directly from the religious persecution of others! When the Revolutionary assembly nationalized all the monasteries in 1790, government payments to the deaf-mute school which had been based on Celestin monastery properties temporarily ceased until funds were voted again by the Revolutionary assembly in July, 1791. Sicard's biographer in the *Biographie Universelle* censured Sicard for the distasteful tone of his remarks before the assembly in which Sicard fawned on them for having reinstated his payments.

When de l'Epee died shortly after the beginning of the Revolution, Sicard was chosen in his place. Therefore, the Revolution supported Sicard and the "meaning" method by eventually supporting his schools, while it totally ignored the "sound" work of Deschamps, who had died in 1791 but who had left an extensive body of writings, and, presumably, a functioning school which he had always supported with his own money.

As has been shown, by 1764 in France, the Jesuits with their renowned schools had been outlawed. As reported in a later quotation, Louis XV had also "nationalized" Jesuit property. Yet, when the French Revolution began in 1789, except for home education, most schooling in France still remained in the hands of the surviving "religious orders and congregations" or in the hands of the parish priests with their "petite ecoles" and their hired primary school-mistresses or school-masters/bell ringers.

Then, on February 13, 1790, all the other "religious orders and congregations" joined the Jesuits in banishment from France when their very existence was outlawed by the Revolution's Assembly. That was the same Assembly that only ten days later, February 23, 1790, produced a respectful delegation to attend de l'Epee's eulogy, which suggests their respect for the Jansenist de l'Epee had nothing whatsoever to do with religion. The outlawing of the "religious orders and congregations" was also only a little more than half a year after the Bastille was stormed! Once the "philosophers" and their allies had gained control in France, their burning hatred for Christianity did not take long to burst into roaring flames.

Soon after the outlawing of "religious orders and congregations," the "non-juring" parish priests who had refused to take the oath to support the anti-religious legislation were exiled or killed, and these "non-juring" priests had composed about 55 per cent of the total number of priests. The removal of the "non-juring" priests must have had a catastrophic effect on their "petite ecoles" or parish primary schools. Not long after, all Christianity was suppressed, and presumably, with it, all the rest of the "petite ecoles" or primary schools run by parish churches under the direction of the parish priests.

The outlawing of "religious orders and congregations" and eventually of Christianity itself meant that the old French school system was effectively destroyed not long after February 13, 1790. It is therefore hardly surprising that in that same year of 1790, and in the few years following, vast plans appeared in

France for government schools, as evidenced by the chronological bibliography on education in Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire. The plans of the French Revolution for government schools were built on the dead body of church schools.

## Chapter 9

### Necessary Background Information on the French Revolution

The intent of the legislation of the French Revolution was to place all education under centralized state control. However, to understand properly the chronological account of the Revolution's publications and decrees on education which mandated centralized state control, it is necessary to have a chronology of the French Revolution itself, to provide the framework in which to place such publications and decrees to be discussed later. Yet most otherwise well-informed people have only a generalized picture of the events of the French Revolution, and such a generalized picture is insufficient to follow the progression of the Revolution's legislation on education. Therefore, to provide that necessary chronological framework, following are excerpts from the article, "Revolution, French," by George Goyau, pages 9 - 16, Volume VIII, Catholic Encyclopedia [1913].

The surprisingly approving words for Napoleon with which Goyau ended his pre-1913 article suggest that Goyau was probably French himself. He was certainly familiar with French documentary sources, even though his apparent opinion of Napoleon is jarring. The fact that Goyau said he emphasized "more especially the relations between the Revolution and the Church" means that his article also comes very close to emphasizing the relations between the Revolution and pre-existing education, since almost all pre-Revolution education was given by the Church.

The excerpts from his article, "Revolution, French," follow:

"The last thirty years have given us a new version of the history of the French Revolution, the most diverse and hostile schools having contributed to it. The philosopher, Taine,... admirably demonstrated the mechanism of the local revolutionary committees and showed how a daring Jacobin minority was able to enforce its will as that of "the people". Following up this line of research, M. August Cochin has quite recently studied the mechanism of the societies de pensee in which the revolutionary doctrine was developed and in which were formed men quite prepared to put this doctrine into execution. The influence of freemasonry in the French Revolution proclaimed by Louis Blanc and by freemasonry itself is proved by the researches of M. Cochin. Sorel has brought out the connexion between the diplomacy of the Revolution and that of the old regime. His works prove that the Revolution did not mark a break in the continuity of the foreign policy of France.... This article, however, will emphasize more especially the relations between the Revolution and the Church.

"MEETING OF THE ESTATES. - The starting point of the French Revolution was the convocation of the States General by Louis XVI [Ed.: for the first time since 1614]. They comprised three orders, nobility, clergy, and the third estate, the last named being permitted to have as many members as the two other orders together.... The clergy advocated almost as forcibly as did the Third Estate the establishment of a constitutional government based on the separation of the powers, the periodical convocation of the States General, their supremacy in financial matters, the responsibility of ministers, and the regular guarantee of individual liberty. Thus the true and great reforms tending to the establishment of liberty were advocated by the clergy on the eve of the Revolution. When the Estates assembled 5 May, 1789, the Third Estate demanded that the verification of powers should be made in common by the three orders, the object being that the Estates should form but one assembly in which the distinction between the "orders" should disappear.... when on 17 June the members of the third estate proclaimed themselves the "National Assembly," the majority of the clergy decided (19 June) to join them. As the higher clergy and the nobility still held out the king caused the hall where the meetings of

the Third Estate were held to be closed (20 June), whereupon the deputies, with their president, Bailly, repaired to the Jeu de Paume and an oath was taken not to disband till they had provided France with a constitution. After Mirabeau's thundering speech (23 June) addressed to the Marquis de Dreux-Breze, master-of-ceremonies to Louis XVI, the king himself (27 June) invited the nobility to join the Third Estate. Louis XVI's dismissal of the reforming minister, Necker, and the concentration of the royal army around Paris, brought about the insurrection of 14 July, and the capture of the Bastille.... There was no rising en masse of the people of Paris, and the number of the besiegers was but a thousand at most; only seven prisoners were found at the Bastille, four of whom were forgers, one a young man guilty of monstrous crimes...and two insane prisoners. But in the public opinion the Bastille symbolized royal absolutism.... Louis XVI yielded before the agitation, Necker was recalled, Bailly became Mayor of Paris, Lafayette, commander of the national militia; the tri-colour was adopted, and Louis XVI consented to recognize the title of "National Constituent Assembly". Te Deums and Processions celebrated the taking of the Bastille; in the pulpits the Abbe Fauchet preached the harmony of religion and liberty...."

Note that almost from the beginning the French had called, in effect, a constitutional congress. Although initially moderate and reasonable, it ultimately produced unspeakable horrors. We should remember that fact when considering the recurrent drive in America for just such a constitutional congress which would suspend our current Constitution with its safeguards. At present, only resolutions from two more states are needed to bring that about. Yet our "free press" remains strangely silent!

"DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN. CATHOLICISM CEASES TO BE THE RELIGION OF THE STATE. - Before giving France a constitution the Assembly judged it necessary to draw up a "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen" which should form a preamble to the Constitution.... the only article relating to religion was worded as follows: "No one shall be disturbed for his opinions, even religious, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law." In fact it was the wish of the Assembly that Catholicism should cease to be the religion of the State and that liberty of worship should be established.... But it soon became evident in the discussions relating to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy that the Assembly desired that the Catholic Church, to which the majority of the French people belonged, should be subject to the State and really organized by the State.

"The rumours that Louis XVI sought... a counter revolutionary movement... brought about an uprising in Paris. The mob set out to Versailles, and amid insults brought back the king and queen to Paris (6 Oct., 1789). Thenceforth the Assembly sat at Paris.... At this moment the idea of taking possession of the goods of the clergy in order to meet financial exigencies began to appear in a number of journals and pamphlets. The plan of confiscating this property, which had been suggested as early as 8 August by the Marquis de Lacoste, was resumed (24 Sept.) by the economist, Dupont de Nemours, [Ed.: the same Dupont previously discussed, the author of a beginning reading method who later came to America and presented a plan for government education to Jefferson, and whose son shortly after settled in America and founded the famous Dupont company] and on 10 October was supported in the name of the Committee of Finances in a report which caused scandal by Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, who under the old regime had been one of the two "general agents" charged with defending the financial interests of the French clergy. On 12 October Mirabeau requested the Assembly to decree (1) that the ownership of the church property belonged to the nation that it might provide for the support of the priests.... The advocates of confiscation maintained that the clergy no longer existed as an order... and that the State had the right to claim (the property),... that in 1749 Louis XV had forbidden the clergy to receive anything without the authority of the State, and that he had confiscated the property of the Society of Jesus [the Jesuits].... Finally, on 2 November, 1789, the Assembly decided that the possessions of the clergy be "placed at the disposal" of the nation. The results of this vote were



not long in following. The first was Treilhard's motion (17 December), demanding in the name of the ecclesiastical committee of the Assembly, the closing of useless convents, and decreeing that the State should permit the religious to release themselves from their monastic vows.

“The discussion of this project began in February, 1790, after the Assembly by the creation of assemblies of departments, districts, and commons, had proceeded to the administrative reorganization of France. The discussion was again very violent. On 13 February, 1790, the Assembly... decreed as a “constitutional article” that not only should the law no longer recognize monastic vows, but that religious orders and congregations were and should remain suppressed in France, and that no others should be established in the future. After having planned a partial suppression of monastic orders the Assembly voted for their total suppression....

“CIVIL CONSTITUTION OF THE CLERGY. - On 6 February, 1790, the Assembly charged its ecclesiastical committee, appointed 20 Aug, 1789, and composed of fifteen members to prepare the reorganization of the clergy. Fifteen new members were added to the committee on 7 February. The “constituents” were disciples of the eighteenth-century philosophes who subordinated religion to the State.... ...Taine has proved that in many respects their religious policy merely followed in the footsteps of the old regime, but while the old regime protected the Catholic church and made it the church exclusively recognized, the constituents planned to enslave it after having stripped it of its privileges.... the Assembly... discussed the Civil Constitution of the Clergy from 1 June to 12 July, 1790, on which date it was passed....

“At the festival of the Federation (14 July, 1790) Talleyrand and three hundred priests officiating at the altar of the nation erected on the Champs-de-Mars wore the tri-coloured girdle above their priestly vestments and besought the blessing of God on the Revolution... On 10 July, 1790, in a confidential Brief to Louis XVI, Pius VI expressed the alarm with which the project under discussion filled him. He commissioned two ecclesiastics who were ministers of Louis XVI... to urge the king not to sign the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. On 28 July, in a letter to the pope, Louis XVI replied that he would be compelled, “with death in his soul”, to promulgate the [Civil] Constitution [of the Clergy], that he would reserve the right to broach as soon as possible the matter of some concession, but that if he refused, his life and the lives of his family would be endangered.... At the end of October, 1790, [the bishops] published an “Exposition...”... in which they rejected the [Civil] Constitution [of the Clergy] and called upon the faithful to do the same. This publication marks the beginning of a violent conflict between the episcopate and the [Civil] Constitution [of the Clergy]. On 27 November, 1790, after a speech by Mirabeau, a decree stipulated that all bishops and priests should within a week, under penalty of losing their offices, take the oath to the [Civil] Constitution [of the Clergy], that all who refused and who nevertheless continued to discharge their priestly functions should be prosecuted as disturbers of the public peace....

“It may be said that from the end of 1790 the higher clergy and the truly orthodox elements of the lower clergy were united against the revolutionary measures. Thenceforth there were two classes, the non-juring or refractory priests, who were faithful to Rome and refused the oath, and the jurors, sworn, or [Civil] Constitutional priests, who had consented to take the oath.... Out of 125 bishops there were only four, Talleyrand of Autin, Brienne of Sens, Jarente of Orleans, and Lafond de Savine, of Viviers; three coadjutors or bishops in partibus, Gobel, Coadjutor Bishop of Bale; Martial de Brienne, Coadjutor of Sens; and Dubourg-Miraudet, Bishop of Babylon. In the important towns most of the priests refused to take the oath. Statistics for the small boroughs and the country are more difficult to obtain. M. de la Gorce...asserts...that in 1791 the number of priests faithful to Rome was 52 to 55 out of 100....

“On 5 February, 1791, the Constituent Assembly forbade every non-juring priest to preach in public. In March the elections to provide for the vacant episcopal sees and parishes took place. Disorder grew in the Church of France; young and ambitious priests, better known for their political than for their religious zeal, were candidates.... on 13 April, 1791, [Pope Pius VI] issued a solemn condemnation of the Civil Constitution in a solemn Brief to the clergy and the people. On 2 May, 1791, the annexation of the Comtat Venaissin and the city of Avignon by the French troops marked the rupture of diplomatic relations between France and the Holy See.... The Masses celebrated by non-juring priests attracted crowds of the faithful. Then mobs gathered and beat and outraged nuns and other pious women. On 7 May, 1791, the Assembly decided that the non-juring priests as pretres habitues might continue to say Mass in parochial churches or conduct their services in other churches on condition that they would respect the laws and not stir up revolt against the Civil Constitution. The [Civil] Constitutional priests became more and more unpopular with good Catholics...

“The king’s tormenting conscience was the chief reason for his attempted flight (20-21 June, 1791). Before fleeing he had addressed to the Assembly a declaration of his dissatisfaction with the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, and once more protested against the moral violence which had compelled him to accept such a document. Halted at Varennes, Louis XVI was brought back on 25 June and was suspended from his functions till the completion of the [major] Constitution, to which he took the oath 13 Sept., 1791. On 30 Sept., 1791, the Constituent Assembly dissolved, to make way for the Legislative Assembly, in which none of the members of the Constituent Assembly could sit....

“THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. - When the Constituent Assembly disbanded (30 Sept., 1791), France was aflame concerning the religious question. More than half the French people did not want the new Church, the factitious creation of the law; the old Church was ruined, demolished, hunted down, and the general amnesty decreed by the Constituent Assembly before disbanding could do nothing towards restoring peace in the country, where that Assembly’s bungling work had unsettled the consciences of individuals.... But the majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly had sat in the departmental or district assemblies; they had fought against the non-juring priests and brought violent passions and a hostile spirit to the Legislative Assembly. A report from Gensonne and Gallois to the Legislative Assembly (9 October, 1791) on the condition of the provinces of the West denounced the non-juring priests as exciting the populace to rebellion and called for measures against them. It accused them of complicity with the emigres bishops. At Avignon the Revolutionary Lecuyer, having been slain in a church, some citizens reputed to be partizans of the pope were thrown into the ancient papal castle and strangled (16-17 Oct., 1791). Calvados was also the scene of serious disturbances.

“The Legislative Assembly, instead of repairing the tremendous errors of the Constituent Assembly, took up the question of the non-juring priests. On 29 November, on the proposal of Francois de Neufchateau, [Ed.: See later his extensive work on beginning reading instruction] it decided that if within eight days they did not take the civil oath they should be deprived of all salary, that they should be placed under the surveillance of the authorities, that if troubles arose where they resided they should be sent away, that they should be imprisoned for a year if they persisted in remaining and for two years if they were convicted of having provoked disobedience to the king. [Ed.: Note the hypocrisy, since the king himself was effectively a prisoner at this point!] Finally it forbade non-juring priests the legal exercise of worship.... But this decree was the object of a sharp conflict between Louis XVI and the Assembly. On 9 Dec., 1791, the king made his veto known officially. Parties began to form. On one side were the king and the Catholics faithful to Rome, on the other the Assembly and the priests who had taken the oath. The legislative power was on one side, the executive on the other. In March, 1792, the Assembly

accused the ministers of Louis XVI; the king replaced them by a Girondin ministry.... They had a double policy: abroad, war with Austria, and at home, measures against the non-juring priests....

“A papal Brief of 29 March 1792, renewed the condemnation of the Civil Constitution [of the Clergy] and visited with major excommunication all juring priests who after sixty days should not have retracted, and all Catholics who remained faithful to these priests. The Assembly replied by the Decree of 27 May, 1792, declaring that all non-juring priests might be deported by the directory of their department at the request of twenty citizens, and if they should return after expulsion they would be liable to ten years’ imprisonment. Louis vetoed this decree.... At the ministerial council Roland read an insulting letter to Louis, in which he called upon him to sanction the decrees of November and May against the non-juring priests. He was dismissed, whereupon the populace of Paris arose and invaded the Tuileries (20 June, 1792), and for several hours the king and his family were the objects of all manner of outrages.... there came petitions for the deposition of the king, who was accused of being in communication with foreign rulers. On 10 August, Santerre, Westermann and Fournier l’Americain at the head of the national guard attacked the Tuileries defended by 800 Swiss. Louis refused to defend himself, and with his family sought refuge in the Legislative Assembly. The Assembly passed a decree which suspended the king’s powers, drew up a plan for education for the dauphin [Ed.: Note the Assembly’s curious and constant preoccupation with education], and convoked a national convention. Louis XVI was imprisoned in the Temple by order of the insurrectionary Commune of Paris.

“Madness spread through France caused by the threatened danger from without; arrests of non-juring priests multiplied. In an effort to make them give way, the Assembly decided (15 August) that the oath should consist only in the promise “to uphold with all one’s might liberty, equality, and the execution of the law, or to die at one’s post.” But the non-juring priests remained firm and refused even this second oath. On 26 August the Assembly decreed that within fifteen days they should be expelled from the kingdom, that those who remained or returned to France should be deported to Guiana, or should be liable to ten years’ imprisonment. It then extended this threat to the priests, who, having no publicly recognized priestly duties, had hitherto been dispensed from the oath, declaring that they also might be expelled if they were convicted of having provoked disturbances. [Ed.: Sicard, de l’Epee’s successor in the Paris school for the deaf, who had apparently been exempt from taking the first oath, took this second oath in August, 1792, and even made a financial donation to the government at the same time, though most non-juring priests apparently did not take the second oath, either. Sicard’s article in *Memoires Sur Les Journees de Septembre 1792*, published in 1823 by Baudouin Freres, Paris, referred to elsewhere, and Sicard’s biography in *Biographie Universelle* of J. Fr. Michaud (1854, 1969), show Sicard to have been a very vain, foolish and even silly man. Yet, despite his enormous vanity and his taking of the second oath, Sicard was apparently very well-intentioned and was really devoted to his deaf students.] This was the signal for a real civil war. The peasants armed in La Vendee, Deux Sevres, Loire Inferieure, Maine and Loire, Ile and Vilaine. This news and that of the invasion of Champagne by the Prussian army caused hidden influences to arouse the Parisian populace; hence the September massacres. In the prisons of La Force, the Conciergerie, and the Abbaye Saint Germain, at least 1500 women, priests and soldiers fell under the axe or the club. The celebrated tribune, Danton, cannot be entirely acquitted of complicity in these massacres. The Legislative Assembly terminated its career by two new measures against the Church: it deprived priests of the right to register births, etc., and authorized divorce....

“THE CONVENTION; THE REPUBLIC; THE REIGN OF TERROR. - The opening of the National Convention (21 Sept., 1792) took place the day following Dumouriez’s victory at Valmy over the Prussian troops. The [Civil] constitutional bishop, Gregoire, proclaimed the republic at

the first session; he was surrounded in the assembly by fifteen [Civil] constitutional bishops and twenty-eight [Civil] constitutional priests. But the time was at hand when the [Civil] constitutional clergy in turn was to be under suspicion, the majority of the convention being hostile to Christianity itself. As early as 16 November, 1792, Cambon demanded that the salaries of the priests be suppressed and that henceforth no religion should be subsidized by the State, but the motion was rejected for the time being. Henceforth the convention enacted all manner of arbitrary political measures: it undertook the trial of Louis XVI, and on 2 January, 1793, "hurled a king's head at Europe." But from a religious standpoint it was more timid; it feared to disturb the people of Savoy and Belgium, which its armies were annexing to France. From 10 to 15 March, 1793, formidable insurrections broke out in La Vendee, Anjou, and a part of Brittany. At the same time, Dumouriez, having been defeated at Neerwinden, sought to turn his army against the Convention, and he himself went over to the Austrians. The Convention took fright; it instituted a Revolutionary Tribunal on 9 March, and on 6 April the Committee of Public Safety, with formidable powers, was established.

"Increasingly severe measures were taken chiefly against the non-juring clergy.... On 18 March it was decreed that any emigre or deported priest arrested on French soil should be executed within twenty-four hours.... The proconsuls of the Convention, Freron and Barras at Marseilles and Toulon, Tallien at Bordeaux, Carrier at Nantes, perpetrated abominable massacres. In Paris the Revolutionary Tribunal, carrying out the proposals of the public accuser, Fouquier-Tinville, inaugurated the Reign of Terror. The proscription of the Girondins by the Montagnards (2 June, 1793) marked a progress in demagogy."

Mass execution of clergy had predated March 18, 1793, in the September, 1792, massacres referred to previously. Abbe Sicard's arrest, despite his having taken the 1792 oath, took place over a half year before this March 18, 1793, ruling, and Sicard narrowly and accidentally escaped execution by the Paris Commune on September 3, 1792, even though he had the support of the Assembly. He was a witness at that time to terrible atrocities and murders. All the others with him in a wagon, which wagon was transferring the group to a second prison, were either wounded or murdered en route by the crowds. Since Abbe Sicard's fellow prisoners, as a mark of their respect, presumably since he was a clergyman, had told him to get on the wagon first, Sicard had been in a recessed position in the wagon where he had been out of the reach of the crowds. Sicard later watched untold brutal executions and hideous crowd behavior from his cell window while he awaited his own execution. A member of the Paris Commune finally brought about Sicard's release just before Sicard's scheduled execution, which had been delayed only because of a cloudburst. ("Relation Adressee par M.l'Abbe Sicard... sur les Dangers..2 et 3 Septembre, 1792," *Memoires sur les Journees de Septembre, 1792*, Paris: Baudouin Freres, 1823.)

The article continued:

"The assassination of the bloodthirsty demagogue, Marat, by Charlotte Corday (13 July, 1793) gave rise to extravagant manifestations in honour of Marat. But the provinces did not follow this policy. News came of insurrections in Caen, Marseilles, Lyons and Toulon; at the same time the Spaniards were in Roussillon, the Piedmontese in Savoy, the Austrians in Valenciennes, and the Vendean defeated Kleber at Torfou (Sept., 1793). The crazed Convention decreed a rising en masse; the heroic resistance of Valenciennes and Mainz gave Carnot time to organize new armies. At the same time the Convention passed the Law of Suspects (17 Sept., 1793), which authorized the imprisonment of almost anyone and as a consequence of which 30,000 were imprisoned. Informing became a trade in France. Queen Marie Antoinette was beheaded 16 October, 1793....

“From a religious point of view a new feature arose at this period - the [Civil] constitutional clergy, accused of sympathy with the Girondins, came to be suspected almost as much as the non-juring priests....In October the Convention declared that the [Civil] constitutional priests themselves should be deported if they were found wanting in citizenship. The measures taken by the Convention to substitute the Revolutionary calendar for the old Christian calendar, and the decrees ordering the municipalities to seize and melt down the bells and treasures of the churches, proved that certain currents prevailed tending to the de-christianization of France. On the one hand the rest of decadi, every tenth day, replaced the Sunday rest; on the other the Convention commissioned Leonard Bourdon (19 Sept., 1793) to compile a collection of the heroic actions of Republicans to replace the lives of the saints in the schools.”

Note again the intense interest in elementary education, at the very same time that the Reign of Terror was in full force! Note also the deliberate suppression of religious influence on the public's children by suppressing study of the saints' lives, and that the “decadi” legislation outraged not just all Christians but Jews as well!

“The ‘missionary representatives’, sent to the provinces, closed churches, hunted down citizens suspected of religious practices, endeavoured to constrain priests to marry, and threatened with deportation for lack of citizenship priests who refused to abandon their posts. Persecution of all religious ideas began. At the request of the Paris Commune, Gobel, Bishop of Paris, and thirteen of his vicars resigned at the bar of the Convention (7 November) and their example was followed by several [Civil] constitutional bishops.

“The Montagnards who considered worship necessary replaced the Catholic Sunday Mass by the civil mass of decadi. Having failed to reform and nationalize Catholicism they endeavoured to form a sort of civil cult, a development of the worship of the fatherland which had been inaugurated at the feast of the Federation. The Church of Notre-Dame-de-Paris became a temple of Reason, and the feast of Reason was celebrated on 10 November. The Goddesses of Reason and Liberty were not always the daughters of low people; they frequently came of the middle classes.... On 23 November, 1793, Chaumette passed a law alienating all churches in the capital. This example was followed in the provinces, where all city churches and a number of those in the country were closed to Catholic worship. The Convention offered a prize for the abjuration of priests by passing a decree which assured a pension to priests who abjured, and the most painful day of that sad period was 20 November, 1793, when men, women and children dressed in priestly garments taken from the Church of St. Germain des Pres marched through the hall of the Convention. Laloï, who presided, congratulated them, saying they had “wiped out eighteen centuries of error”....

“Indeed a reactionary movement was soon evident. As early as 21 November, 1793, Robespierre complained of the “madmen who could only revive fanaticism”. On 5 December, he caused the Convention to adopt the text of a manifesto to the nations of Europe in which the members declared that they sought to protect the liberty of all creeds; on 7 December, he supported the motion of the Committee of Public Safety which reported the bad effect in the provinces of the intolerant violence of the missionary representatives, and which forbade in future all threats or violence contrary to liberty of worship. These decrees were the cause of warfare between Robespierre and enthusiasts such as Hebert and Cloutz. At first Robespierre sent his enemies to the scaffold; Hebert and Cloutz were beheaded in March, 1794, Chaumette and Bishop Gobel in April. But in this same month of April Robespierre sent to the scaffold the Moderates, Desmoulins and Danton, who wanted to stop the Terror, and became the master of France with his lieutenants Couthon and Saint-Just.... Robespierre's true intentions are still an historical problem. On 6 April, 1794, he commissioned Couthon to propose in the name of the

Committee of Public Safety that a feast be instituted in honour of the Supreme Being, and on 7 May Robespierre himself outlined in a long speech the plan of the new religion. He explained that from the religious and Republican standpoint the idea of a Supreme Being was advantageous to the State, that religion should dispense with a priesthood, and that priests were to religion what charlatans were to medicine, and that the true priest of the Supreme Being was Nature. The Convention desired to have this speech translated into all languages and adopted a decree of which the first article was: 'The French people recognize the existence of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.' The same decree states that freedom of worship is maintained but adds that in the case of disturbances caused by the exercise of a religion those who 'excite them by fanatical preaching or by counter-Revolutionary innovations' shall be punished according to the rigour of the law. Thus the condition of the Catholic Church remained equally precarious and the first festival of the Supreme Being was celebrated throughout France on 8 June, 1794, with aggressive splendour. Whereas the Exageres wished simply to destroy Catholicism, and in the temples of Reason political rather than moral doctrines were taught, Robespierre desired that the civic religion should have a moral code which he based on the two dogmas of God and the immortality of the soul. He was of the opinion that the idea of God had a social value, that public morality depended on it, and that Catholics would more readily support the republic under the auspices of a Supreme Being....

“While danger from abroad was decreasing, Robespierre made the mistake of putting to vote in June the terrible law of 22 Prairial, which still further shortened the summary procedure of the Revolutionary tribunal and allowed sentence to be passed almost without trial even on the members of the Convention. The Convention took fright and the next day struck out this last clause. Montagnards.. threatened by Robespierre joined with .. Moderates... to bring about the coup d'etat of 9 Thermidor (27 July, 1794). Robespierre and his partisans were executed, and the Thermidorian reaction began. The Commune of Paris was suppressed, the Jacobin Club closed, the Revolutionary tribunal disappeared after having sent to the scaffold the public accuser Fouquier-Tinville and the Terrorist, Carrier, the author of the noyades (drownings) of Nantes. The death of Robespierre was the signal for a change of policy which proved of advantage to the Church: many imprisoned priests were released and many emigre priests returned. Not a single law hostile to Catholicism was repealed, but the application of them was greatly relaxed. The religious policy of the Convention became indecisive and changeable. On 21 December, 1794, a speech of the constitutional bishop, Gregoire, claiming effective liberty of worship, aroused violent murmurings in the Convention, but was applauded by the people; and when in Feb., 1795, the generals and commissaries of the Convention in their negotiations with the Vendéans promised them the restoration of their religious liberties, the Convention returned to the idea supported by Gregoire, and at the suggestion of the Protestant, Boissy d'Anglas, it passed the Law of 3 Ventose (21 Feb., 1795) which marked the enfranchisement of the Catholic Church. This law enacted that the republic should pay salaries to the ministers of no religion, and that no churches should be reopened, but it declared that the exercise of religion should not be disturbed, and prescribed penalties for disturbers. Immediately the constitutional bishops issued an Encyclical for the re-establishment of Catholic worship, but their credit was shaken. The confidence of the faithful was given instead to the non-juring priests who were returning by degrees. These priests were soon so numerous that in April, 1795, the Convention ordered them to depart within a month under pain of death. This was a fresh outbreak of anti-Catholicism. ....on 30 May, at the suggestion of the Catholic, Lanjuinais, the Convention decreed that (Law of 11 Prairial) the churches not confiscated should be placed at the disposal of citizens for the exercise of their religion, but that every priest who wished to officiate in these churches should previously take an oath of submission to the laws; those who refused might legally hold services in private houses. This oath of submission to the laws was much less serious than the oaths formerly prescribed by the Revolutionary authorities, and the Abbe Sicard has shown how Emery, Superior

General of St. Sulpice, Bausset, Bishop of Alais and other ecclesiastics were inclined to a policy of pacification and to think that such an oath might be taken....

“But the policy of religious pacification was not lasting.... On 6 Sept., 1795 (Law of 20 Fructidor), the Convention exacted the oath of submission to the laws even of priests who officiated in private houses. The Royalist insurrection of 13 Vendemiaire, put down by Bonaparte, provoked a very severe decree against deported priests who should be found on French territory; they were to be sentenced to perpetual banishment. Thus at the time when the Convention was disbanding, churches were separated from the State. In theory worship was free; the Law of 29 Sept., 1795 (7 Vendemiaire), on the religious policy, though still far from satisfactory to the clergy, was nevertheless an improvement on the laws of the Terror, but anarchy and the spirit of persecution still disturbed the whole country. Nevertheless France owes to the Convention a number of lasting creations: the Ledger of the Public Debt, the Ecole Polytechnique, the Conservatory of Arts and Crafts, the Bureau of Longitudes, the Institute of France, and the adoption of the decimal system of weights and measures. The vast projects drawn up with regard to primary, secondary, and higher education had almost no results. [Ed.: Note the admission of “vast projects” on education, including primary education, simultaneous with the years of the Reign of Terror. Their actual results will be considered later, but the proposed educational “projects” continued under the Directory, which was the next governmental form.]

“THE DIRECTORY - In virtue of the so-called ‘Constitution of the Year III’, promulgated by the Convention 23 Sept., 1795, a directory of five members (27 Oct., 1795) became the executive, and the Councils of Five Hundred and of the Ancients, the legislative power. At this time the public treasuries were empty.... The Directors... were averse to Christianity, and in the separation of Church and State saw only a means of annihilating the Church. They wished that even the [Civil] constitutional episcopate, though they could not deny its attachment to the new regime, should become extinct by degrees, and when the [Civil] constitutional bishops died they sought to prevent the election of successors, and multiplied measures against the non-juring priests. The decree of 16 April, 1796, which made death the penalty for provoking any attempt to overthrow the Republican government was a threat held perpetually over the heads of the non-juring priests. That the directors really wished to throw difficulties in the way of all kinds of religion, despite theoretical declarations affirming liberty of worship is proved by the law of 11 April, 1796, which forbade the use of bells and all sorts of public convocation for the exercise of religion, under a penalty of a year in prison, and, in case of a second offence, of deportation. The Directory having ascertained that despite police interference some non-juring bishops were officiating publicly in Paris, and that before the end of 1796 more than thirty churches or oratories had been opened to non-juring priests in Paris, laid before the Five Hundred a plan which, after twenty days, allowed the expulsion from French soil, without admission to the oath prescribed by the Law of Vendemiaire, all priests who had not taken the [Civil] Constitutional Oath prescribed in 1790, or the Oath of Liberty and Equality prescribed in 1792; those who after such time should be found in France would be put to death. But amid the discussions to which this project gave rise, the revolutionary Socialist conspiracy of Babeuf was discovered, which showed that danger lay on the Left; and on 25 Aug., 1796, the dreadful project which had only been passed with much difficulty by the Five Hundred was rejected by the Ancients.

“The Directory began to feel that its policy of religious persecution was no longer followed by the Councils. It learned also that Bonaparte, who in Italy led the armies of the Directory from victory to victory, displayed consideration for the pope.... The elections of 20 May, 1797, caused the majority of Councils to pass from the Left to the Right.... The Directors, alarmed by what they considered a reactionary movement, commissioned General Augereau to effect the coup d’etat of 18 Fructidor (4 Sept., 1797),... and laws against the emigres and non-juring priests [were] restored

to their vigour. Organized hunting for these priests took place throughout France; the Directory cast hundreds of them on the unhealthy shore of Sinnamary, Guiana, where they died. At the same time the Directory commissioned Berthier to make the attack on the Papal States and the pope, from which Bonaparte had refrained. The Roman Republic was proclaimed in 1798 and Pius VI was taken prisoner to Valence. An especially odious persecution was renewed in France against the ancient Christian customs; it was known as the *decadaire* persecution. Officials and municipalities were called upon to overwhelm with vexations the partisans of Sunday and to restore the observance of *decadi*. The rest of that day became compulsory not only for administrations and schools, but also for business and industry. Marriages could only be celebrated on *decadi* at the chief town of each canton....

“Through its clumsy and odious religious policy the Directory exposed itself to serious difficulties. Disturbed by the anti-religious innovations, the Belgian provinces revolted; 6,000 Belgian priests were proscribed. Brittany, Anjou and Maine again revolted, winning over Normandy.... Bonaparte’s return and the coup d’etat of 18 Brumaire (10 November, 1799) were necessary to strengthen the glory of the French armies and to restore peace to the country and to consciences.”

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On this apparently pro-Bonaparte note, the author ended his remarkably detailed summary, which certainly does clarify for a casual reader many of the turbulent events of the Revolutionary period. He had also provided a background against which the French Revolution’s legislation on primary education - and on textbooks and reading methods - can better be understood. It also provided the background for a better understanding of subsequent history in much of the Western World, since the French Revolution was such a pivotal event.



## Chapter 10

### The Publishing Record Demonstrates the Influence of the Activists

By the end of the eighteenth century, little sympathy for the French Revolution and its attack on religion existed in America. Although the Club of Jacobins in Paris had been closed with the execution of Robespierre in mid-1794, and the Illuminati in Bavaria, Germany, had been presumably disbanded not long before when their existence was accidentally discovered, the use of these two notorious names still persisted as labels for other hidden activist groups after the mid-1790's.

That such hidden groups had at least some influence in America is strongly suggested by material quoted by Robert Henry Goldsborough in his book, *Lines of Credit: Ropes of Bondage*. Goldsborough reported on page 4 that the Rev. Timothy Dwight, President of Yale University, spoke to New Haven churchgoers, in July, 1798, about the French Revolution's outrages against religion and about the influence of both Voltaire and the Illuminati (which name was probably only a generalized label for such secret groups):

“Is it that we may see the Bible cast into a bonfire, the vessels of the sacramental supper borne by an ass in public procession, and our children either wheedled or terrified, uniting in the mob, chanting mockeries against God....? Shall our sons become the disciples of Voltaire and... our daughters the concubines of the Illuminati?”

On page 3, Goldsborough wrote:

“At Charleston, S. C., on May 9, 1798, the Rev. Jedediah Morse preached this remarkable sermon on the Illuminati: ‘Practically all of the civil and ecclesiastical establishments of Europe have already been shaken to their foundations by this terrible organization.... The order has its branches established and its emissaries at work in America....’”

If these two respected ministers were right, the long arm of the “philosophers” and the change-agent secret societies which certainly appear to have had some kind of connection with them had reached across the Atlantic.

But the probable effect of the activities of the “philosophers” such as Voltaire and Diderot, and their fellow-travelers such as the change-agent secret societies, is first evident in the mid-eighteenth century change in the nature of the entries in the “Bibliographie” (pages 194 and following) of the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire*, 1887, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris, edited by Ferdinand Edouard Buisson, (1841 - 1932). The sharpest distinction in the bibliography between the pre-1760 material and the post-1760 material is in the educational topics themselves. Before 1760, the emphasis had been on training children - boys AND girls - to a Christian way of life. After 1760, the emphasis was on “plans” for founding “national” schools under state control.

Those two words, “plan,” and “national” constantly appeared in essays on education after Chalotais’s 1763 work proposing state control of education, mentioned below, which used those two words.

It is interesting that many pre-1760 entries specially concerned only the education of girls, which suggests that a far higher value was given in France at that time to female education than is generally acknowledged. For instance, St. Peter Fourier (1565-1640) founded in 1598 the Congregation of Notre-Dame, a group of nuns whose work was the teaching of poor girls gratuitously. He wrote at length on teaching methods (*Sommaire des constitutions des Religieuses de la congregation de Notre Dame*,

1649) and the Ven. Marguerite Bourgeoys founded a branch of the order in Montreal, Canada, in 1657. The Ursuline order, which also taught women, had already arrived in Montreal by 1639. (Saint John Baptist de la Salle, founder of the Christian Brothers, had begun his work for educating poor boys in 1679.)

Some pre-1760 “Bibliographie” entries concerned home schooling and training by parents. Some entries concerned matter-of-fact references to the ages-old parish schools known as the *petite* schools, but these references did continue after 1760 until the Revolution in 1789. (The Elizabethan English term, “petty schools,” may be a direct parallel, since “petty” is conceivably a derivative of *petite*.)

The Christian Brothers’ schools for poor boys begun in the late 1600’s and the Jesuits’ schools begun in the mid-1500’s had been highly successful in France before 1762. Yet, as quoted earlier, in 1762 (by the Parlement) and in 1764 (by the king, presumably ratifying the Parlement act), the Jesuits were outlawed and their schools presumably closed. After the revolution, other religious schools run by other religious orders were outlawed in 1791 with the suppression of religious orders. Such religious orders, plus the parish, cathedral, and monastic personnel, had been the dominant educators in France for over a thousand years. A very large literature appeared in the nineteenth century documenting the church’s involvement in education in France back to before the time of Charlemagne in the ninth century. Brother Azarius’s works and others from the late nineteenth century give ample bibliographies on that topic.

Therefore, to judge from the Bibliographie, a sharp preference for religion in education, by religious groups or privately at home, was apparent before about 1760, but an implicit opposition to religion in education, given by religious groups or by parents, became apparent after about 1760.

What is also highly meaningful is that not long after 1760, simultaneously with the de-emphasis on religion, came the first call for “national” schools. Why should that sudden change of direction after 1760 have occurred unless some hand or hands, somewhere, were trying to hold culture’s rudder? Certainly one of the hands on the rudder was not Rousseau’s. That distasteful faker had made no plea for “national” schools, because he did not believe in ANY schools! It is more reasonable to assume that the people who promoted Rousseau’s book in the 1760’s were the same people who promoted “national” schools. That group presumably included personalities like Diderot and Voltaire, as well as some of the highly influential eighteenth-century women intellectuals. The existence of such highly influential women intellectuals, of course, belies the fable that French women of the period were uneducated.

The first entry in the Bibliographie that may have dealt with the topic of the government’s taking over of education, instead of education’s being handled by churches or by parents, was written by “Anonymous.” It was published in Amsterdam in 1762, under the title, “Of Public Education.” (“Public education” in the eighteenth century only meant education outside the “private” education of the home, so the text may not have proposed government involvement.) The Bibliographie commented, “Wrongly attributed to Diderot. This work is probably by Crevier.” However, the fact that it had been attributed to Diderot certainly seems to confirm that the material was in agreement with the general ideas of the “philosophers” and so that it may have recommended education by the government instead of by religious groups or by the home.

The next entry in the Bibliographie clearly dealt with the topic of the government’s take-over of education. The material was published in 1763 and was enormously important. It was by Louis Rene de Caradeuc de la Chalotais and was entitled, “Essay on National Education, or Plan of Studies for Youth.” The Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), in its article, “Education, History of, page 989, Volume 7, stated that Chalotais’s “Essay” was very influential, and that Chalotais had revived the Greek idea of state control of education. Chalotais criticized education by the Jesuits, saying:

“I venture to claim for the nation an education which depends only on the state, because it is essentially a matter for the state.”

In Chalotais’s view, only the state should dispense “education,” but it is horrifying to learn how little “education” he thought most people should receive. Yet, unlike so many others in the eighteenth century, Chalotais did not endorse mandatory school attendance. Instead, Chalotais promoted something far, far worse: the government monopoly and control of ALL education. However, Chalotais in 1763 was not the first in France to think that education should be limited or non-existent for most people. That view had been simmering since at least 1746. It had existed side by side with the massive Christian Brothers schools for the poor, and other charity-run schools, spread all over France, and the “petite ecoles” (little schools) attached to so many parish churches, which had taught simple reading to children for far more than a thousand years, since long before the days of Charlemagne.

The fact that giving an education to the majority of the population in eighteenth-century France met some powerful opposition is demonstrated by a quotation from Chapter 3 of *Literacy and Development in the West*, Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland, 1969, by Professor Carlo M. Cipolla. In reading the quotation, it should be remembered that in the eighteenth century the great majority of people were peasants. Cipolla quoted the startling title of a topic debated by the Academy of Rouen (France) in that year of 1746:

“Is it advantageous or is it harmful for the state to have peasants who know how to read and write?”

Cipolla cited as his source for that information *Histoire de l’enseignement primaire avant 1789*, by De Fontaine de Rasbecq, Lille-Paris, 1878, p. 98.

In Chapters 3 and 4 Cipolla also quoted some absolutely astonishing remarks (astonishing to our modern-day eyes). They are particularly so since they were made by Chalotais, the person who was, apparently, the very first since the days of Ancient Greece to propose that education should be controlled by the state. Cipolla quoted from pages 54 and 55 of ( L. R. de Caradeuc de la) Chalotais’s 1763 work, *Essay on National Education*, as translated and edited by H. R. Clark in London, England, in 1934. Chalotais was the Attorney-General of the King of France:

“Never before have there been so many students... even the working people want to study... the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, called the Ignorantins, are pursuing a fatal policy; they are teaching people to read and write who should have learnt only to draw and to handle planes and files but who no longer wish to do so. The good of society demands that the knowledge of the people should not exceed what is necessary in their occupation. Every man who sees further than his dull daily round will never follow it out bravely and patiently. Among the common people it is really only necessary for those to learn reading and writing who live by means of these accomplishments, or who need them in their daily tasks.”

“...after a poor education that teaches them only to despise their fathers’ profession, they turn to the cloisters and join the clerics; they take posts as officers of the law, they often become persons harmful to society....”

“It is recognized that under a good administration the classes of men that live on the labour of others must not be too numerous, they must be limited to the essential minimum.”

Cipolla showed that the same general opinion, about a society of rigid “classes,” in which only the upper classes were supposed to be literate, was held by some very influential people in England as late as

1807, at the time that a Bill had been proposed by a man named Whitbread to set up elementary schools all over England. The bill was defeated in the House of Lords. Cipolla quoted the remarks at that time by the President of the Royal Society who had been strongly opposed to the bill.

“However specious in theory the project might be of giving education to the labouring classes of the poor, it would in effect be found to be prejudicial to their morals and happiness; it would teach them to despise their lot in life, instead of making them good servants in agriculture, and other laborious employments to which their rank in society had destined them; instead of teaching them subordination, it would render them factious and refractory, as was evident in the manufacturing counties; it would enable them to read seditious pamphlets, vicious books, and publications against Christianity; it would render them insolent to their superiors; and in a few years the result would be that the legislature would find it necessary to direct the strong arm of power toward them.”

Cipolla’s source for the previous extraordinarily ugly comments by the President of the famous Royal Society was page 57 of *Town Labourer* by J. L. and B. Hammond, published in London in 1918.

Education reformers in England had to struggle against that kind of powerful opposition to education for the poorer people because education supposedly gave the poor too much power.

In Chalotais’s 1763 rejection of education by the Jesuits, he was clearly siding with the “philosophers” because they had succeeded in having the Jesuit order legally suppressed in France in 1762 by the Parlement and in 1764 by the king. (The legal distinction between those two actions most probably was that the 1762 parliament act could not take effect until it was signed by the king, in 1764.) As was quoted previously in the article on the French Revolution, it should be noted again here that Voltaire, the most famous of the “philosophers” (or “philosophes” in French) had written to Helvetius in 1761, saying, “When we have destroyed the Jesuits, we shall have easy work with the Infame,” the “Infame” being the Christian religion. Therefore, the real target of the “philosophers” was Christianity, and not just the Jesuit order.

Of course, in stating that education “is essentially a matter for the state,” Chalotais also dismissed the rights of parents to educate their children in any manner that they see fit, and by doing so he was therefore attacking the family unit. Yet the Christianity which the “philosophers” aimed to destroy exalts the family as the fundamental unit in society and considers that only parents are the legitimate teachers of their children. In the Christian view, schools can receive the authority to teach children only through the consent of their parents, and schools only act “in loco parentis,” or in place of the parents. Therefore, any attack on Christianity may also be an attack on the family unit since Christianity considers the family unit to be of paramount importance.

The “National” schools that Chalotais recommended in 1763 (and that “Anonymous” may possibly have recommended in 1762) had apparently been unheard of since the time of ancient Greece. Of course, Voltaire, Diderot and their intellectual “mafia” must have been well acquainted with the Greek classic, Plato’s *Republic*, which endorsed such state-controlled schools as well as massive state control in general. In case some people should think all of ancient Greece’s ideas were sparkling wonders, it is suggested that such people carefully read Plato’s proposal for rule by an oligarchy. Plato proposed a dictatorship of a few presumably superior beings over the masses of their inferiors - which means the rest of us.

A very perceptive article by John Taylor Gatto, New York State Teacher of the Year for 1991, was entitled “The Curriculum of Reform.” It included these comments on the pervasive influence of the bloodless Plato:

## “The Pagan Bible

“The indispensable utopia is Plato’s Republic.” \* All Plato is a footnote to the Republic - it is the perfected utopia showing perfect justice to be harmony among all parts of society. Those who are subordinate accept their subordination willingly. The leadership can be said to create the moral world of simpler folk, lying to them when necessary as a kind of beneficent oil to assist operations of the State.

“The family is openly regarded as an enemy. Everything is where it ought to be. The best and brightest are at the top. It is a world going nowhere; it has already arrived.

“Ask the question who reads Plato’s Republic then and now and you get the surprising answer that everybody who counts did and does.” \*\* The majority of elite young college men in the past three centuries all read it. Other classics come and go, the Republic stays. It is on sale in every American bookstore. On the shelves of every single library; even the collections in tiny towns. The continuity of this pagan bible in Western tradition has no peer.

“Delving into this phenomenon discloses further strangeness. The Christian Bible is filled with fantastic tales, oriental color, vivid language and images. Even in its decline the narratives are kept alive by tens of thousands of ritual assemblies each week. Great cinematic and televised adventures from the Testaments have been popular entertainment for over half a century. The great national celebration is Christ’s birthday.

“The pagan bible seemingly has no advantages. Plato gives us a group of men dressed in sheets who sit around talking about ideas. No action, the drama is eventless, and the republic being discussed is imaginary: How can we account for the fact that this dull book’s ideas have been continuously taught over a vast area for two thousand years and more?

“Something had kept the Republic and its antifamily message vigorously alive.... there is no consensus.... except about one thing and that is the universal fascination with the book’s nature as a comprehensive secular agenda to organize all human society.... The history of utopian writing after Plato shows plainly how impossible it has been to even think of a social design not involving more state control.... The philosophical climate is always one of sanitary distance between rulers and ruled, augmented by an atmosphere of illusion in these exercises.... Platonic goals are indifferent to human aspirations or indigenous cultures, platonic reforms are imposed in the absence of popular acceptance as public education was imposed.... The estrangement of the political system from human values is expected in a Platonic republic. Sophisticated men hardly bother to deplore it....”

\*Bertrand Russell raised a few eyebrows in 1920 when he announced that a close inspection of the new Russian Bolshevik state would reveal its theoretical substructure to be identical with that of Plato’s Republic - and almost certainly stolen from there!

\*\*According to biographers of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, his vision of an Islamic state led by a philosopher-king stemmed from his time in Qum as a young man when he became enchanted by Plato’s Republic; a recent display as in The New York Times for Adelphi University announced that ‘everyone’ should read Plato’s Republic before entering college.

While only someone like Hitler could admire the mandatory government schools which existed in Sparta in ancient Greece, we are all supposed to be entranced with the government schools which existed in Athens in ancient Greece. Yet, such schools in Athens were only for the “free” part of the population,

and then only for the “male” part of the “free” population, which was actually only about five per cent of the total population.

That male, “free” part of the population was the only part which could vote. Therefore, all of the famed love of democracy in Athens concerned only about five percent of its population. It should also be noted that the ancient Greeks apparently lacked any kind of constitution (either written or oral and traditional), which could have served to protect the rights of minorities from the “democratic” majority.

I have become very irritated with hearing about the Greek love for and presumed invention of democracy (as well as the Greeks being credited with so much of Western culture - when they were, themselves, so often drawing on others like the Egyptians). However, concerning their “democratic” (majority rule) form of government, the Greeks were part of the Indo-European peoples, and Indo-European peoples almost uniformly had such a legislative (“democratic”) type of government. ( That government was admittedly composed only of the higher classes.) Therefore, the Greeks did not invent the concept of self-rule, but only inherited it, as did other Indo-European peoples.

For instance, the famed Icelandic Parliament of a thousand years ago, the earliest Parliament in Europe, was only an extension of Indo-European traditions perhaps at least three thousand years old. So, too, was the civil arrangement in Celtic ancient Ireland an Indo-European type, where a king was “elected” at a similar “parliamentary” gathering. (The Irish, however, did have a “constitution” to protect rights, the ages-old pagan Brehon Laws.)

One of the ancient Irish “saints’ lives” from about the fifth century even tells as background material of a saint’s mother traveling alone in a chariot to such a legislative gathering - though presumably she was not supposed to vote. (Such accidental background information in legends is highly reliable. The tale about the saint himself might have been largely fictional, but its casual mention of the fact that at that time a well-born woman could ride alone in a chariot to attend a public legislative meeting is almost certainly true.) Yet no ancient Greek woman would have been welcome in any ancient Greek “democratic” gathering! The other ninety-five per cent of the population in Greece, including all of the women, had nothing whatsoever to say about anything! Women in Athens were relegated to women’s quarters and did no traipsing about alone in chariots.

Indo-European “democracy” was far more real and widespread in Celtic pagan Ireland before the fifth century A. D. and in pagan Iceland in the tenth century A. D. than it was in pagan Indo-European Athens in the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ, where only about five per cent of the population had the right to vote!

Yet, if Plato had his way with his tiny oligarchy ruling everyone else, there would be considerably LESS democracy in Plato’s ideal civil society than there was even in Athens!

Admirers of ancient Greek schools should research what actually was the reason for the schools in ancient Athens. Students were trained to be good citizens because they were effectively perceived to be wards of the state, not of their parents. This was NOT true of ancient Rome, where education was strictly a private affair and was arranged for by children’s parents, the family being the important unit. Yet no one can doubt the patriotism of those ancient Romans, nor the remarkably stable government they had for so very many years, nor Rome’s cultural level!

The first “national” schools since the days of ancient Greece were established in Prussia under Frederick some years before the French Revolution, and, as discussed, possibly the first requirement for compulsory public school attendance came under Empress Maria Theresa in Austria in 1774. However, Frederick and Maria Theresa were only putting into practice the “Platonic” idea of state control that was

being promoted by French “philosophers” before the French Revolution. As might have been surmised, Frederick was a member in good standing of that so-called “Enlightenment” along with Diderot and Voltaire.

“National” schools on the Greek model (NOT the Roman!) finally appeared as one of the most enduring fruits of the French Revolution, itself the fruit of the so-called “Enlightenment.” In true “national” schools, students are treated as wards of the state. Since then, “national” schools have spread all over the globe, and mandatory school attendance laws are generally in place all over the Western world. Why is it that such mandatory attendance laws are NEVER identified for what they really are: involuntary servitude to the state?

The fact of such state control of children which is firmly in place all over the Western world in the twentieth century should be contrasted to the situation in the Western World before the sixteenth century. Before the sixteenth century, Western children were considered to be so totally the wards of their own parents that even religious catechism lessons were expected to be given by their parents. The parents were instructed in the catechism in church and were then expected to go home to teach their children!

In the *Lutheran Church Review*, Volume 34, No. 5, October, 1915, in the article, “Religious Instruction of the Young in the Sixteenth Century,” by M. Reu of Dubuque, Iowa, the following appears on pages 567 and 569. The author was making the point that it was widespread parental laxness in the sixteenth century which caused Luther to make his church directly responsible for education of the young, instead of indirectly responsible. However, in doing so, the author established that before the sixteenth century it had been only the parents, and not even the church, who were in actual control of the education of their children. Reu wrote:

“It is firmly established, firstly, that the opinion according to which the sponsors and parents are responsible for the religious instruction of the youth (an opinion which can be found as far back as the time of Charlemagne) was alive also in the 15th Century; that, secondly, the ordinance requiring the parts of the catechism to be read from the pulpit every Sunday was often renewed in this time and carried into effect by not a few priests; that, thirdly, the church, by means of the so-called sacrament of confession, exercised control over the sponsors and parents as to whether they were fulfilling this duty in the way of instructing the young, and also made provision for a rich literature which was intended to enable both the priest and Christian home to discharge their duties along educational lines (some of the books here in question, as can be proved, were published in 25, 60, and 75 editions....

“...Where conditions were most favorable, the medieval church endeavored to influence the adults religiously by no insignificant literature as well as by not too infrequent preaching. Where, however, it gave religious instruction to the young at all, it was done directly in exceptional cases only. Indirect teaching through parents and sponsors was the rule, and in some instances the school also served as a medium....”

The medieval tradition that the parents were responsible for the religious instruction of the young was an affirmation of the importance and dignity of the family. What has happened with the arrival of “national” or state education is a weakening of the family. It is certainly no accident that it was in ancient Greece, where the family was of minimal importance, and where anti-family homosexual behavior was acceptable and widespread, that “national” or state schools were promoted. Yet in ancient Rome, where the traditional family was of paramount importance, “national” or state education was unknown!

Some annotated excerpts from the educational “Bibliographie” from the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire* (Paris, 1887) and from some other sources in the *Dictionnaire* are given below, to

show the religious and family emphasis in French education before about 1760, and the propagation of the “national” schools idea and the de-emphasis of religion after about 1760. However, in addition, some of the entries indicate the status and development of methods for teaching beginning reading in France. Of course, the bibliography itself in the Dictionnaire is far, far longer, and those excerpts which were selected are only a few of the total entries.

1649

Fourier (R. P.) Constitutions. Lettres choisies. Paris.

[Ed. As mentioned elsewhere, he founded an order for the teaching of poor girls, and this was a “teacher’s guide” which included instructions for using the syllable method to teach beginning reading.]

1654

Anonymous [Ed.: Pere I. D. B.] - The Parish School, or the Manner of Properly Instructing Children in the Little Schools, by a Priest of a Parish in Paris. (L’ecole Paroissiale ou la maniere de bien instruire les enfants dans les petites ecoles, par un pretre d’une paroisse de Paris.) Paris. (Prescribed or recommended by a great number of bishops) [Ed.: Contained precise instructions for the teaching of beginning reading by the syllable method and it was reprinted for many years.]

1664

Grammaire Generale of Port Royal. [Briefly described Pascal’s 1655 synthetic phonics method without naming Pascal. That Pascal was the true author of the synthetic phonics method is shown by an extant letter of 1655 from Pascal’s sister, Jacqueline, to Pascal asking for his further explanation. That Arnauld knew of the source of the synthetic phonics method is shown by his surviving letter of January, 1656. The Grammaire Generale of Port Royal is not listed in the “Bibliographie,” but is discussed in other Dictionnaire articles, “Lecture,” “Pascal, Blaise” and “Pascal, Jacqueline.”]

1668

Demia - Expostulations for the Establishment of Christian Schools for the Instruction of Poor People (Remonstrances pour l’establissement des ecoles chretiennes pour l’instruction du pauvre peuple.) Lyon. [Described on pages 1534 of article, “Lecture.” Pere Demia founded a school to train teachers. He also wrote on the teaching of beginning reading, and outlined the use of the syllable method. For teaching a class how to tie letters together in cursive writing, he recommended the use of a “table noire,” a blackboard, possibly the first such reference to blackboards in educational literature.]

1673

Pommereuse (La mere Marie de) The Chronicles of the Order of Ursulines (Les Chroniques de l’Ordre des Ursulines). Paris. 2 vol. (The Second is from 1676.)

1695

Lefebvre, (P.-C.) Senior Professor of the College of Grassins. - Instruction for the petites ecoles of the diocese of Mirepoix. Toulouse. 176 p. [Ed.: It is evident that “a great number of bishops” would not have prescribed and recommended the anonymous Pere I. D. B.’s work after 1654 if they did not already have parish schools, or petite ecoles, in their dioceses, nor would they have had such parish schools, obviously largely for poorer people, if literacy were not highly valued. Nor would Professor Lefebvre bothered to have written his 176-page book of instructions in 1695 for the petites ecoles (note the plural) in the



diocese of Mirepoix, unless such primary schools were actually in existence in that diocese. The reason J. B. de La Salle founded the Christian Brothers was because not enough teachers could be found for already existing poor schools, good teachers too often choosing to leave to go to work for richer people. Pere Demia was also concerned with training teachers. Therefore, facilities for teaching beginning reading to the poor did exist in France in the seventeenth century, though teachers were too scarce, and education for the well-to-do was obviously more available.]

1695

Vassetz, The Abbot of - Of the Obligation of Fathers and Mothers to Instruct Their Children Themselves. Paris.

1698

Liancourt, the Duchess of, died in 1674: Rule given by a woman of high quality to Madame, her daughter, for her conduct and that of her house, with another rule that this woman has made for herself. Paris. "Reprinted many times, among others in 1811 under the title: Of the Christian Education of Young Men and Young Women."

1719

De Vallange [Not on the "Bibliographie" but from page 1540 of article, "Lecture," which indicated by an asterisk that another entry on de Vallange appeared in the Dictionnaire] - "New Systems or New Plans of Methods to Succeed Quickly and Easily to the Knowledge of Languages, Sciences, Arts, and Exercises of the Body, exposing a procedure of his own invention, which consisted of teaching reading by means of symbolic figures corresponding to the different sounds of the language. This idea was revised by the Abbot Bertaud, who executed it in 1744 under the name, Quadrille des Enfants..." "See 1744 entry for Bertaud, and 1801 entry under Madame de Genlis concerning a discussion of the method, and other revisions, which included Anonymous in 1751, Alexandre in 1777, Michel in 1779, possibly Madame de Genlis in 1801, and Daubanton in 1810, who wrote Lecture Par Echo.]"

1719

Py-Poulain Delaunay, [Ed.:from the article, Lecture, but not listed in the Bibliographie] Methode de Sieur Py-Poulain de Launay, ou l'art d'apprendre a lire le françois et le latin, Nicolas Le Clerc and Jean-Francois Herissant, Paris. [Ed.: His son published a revision of his father's original 1719 book, with notes in 1741. In it, his father had referred to Abbe de Saint Cyran using phonics, presumably the Abbe de Saint Cyr who was Bishop Jansen's associate and follower, and who was himself followed by Antoine Arnauld as the leader of the Jansenists. However, it seems very unlikely that St. Cyr did this, since Arnauld wrote a letter on January 31, 1656 (quoted in the Blaise Pascal article on page 2215 of the Dictionnaire) asking Arnauld's niece at Port Royal about how to use Pascal phonics as Arnauld wished to teach an illiterate. If Saint Cyr had originated the phonic method before Pascal, Arnauld would not have written that letter. The elder Delaunay also referred to seeing a book by a Benedictine religious referring to a phonic method, which, of course, could have been Pascal phonics. Then the elder Delaunay said by 1719 that he had finally found the 1664 Port Royal grammar which described the Pascal phonic method. Curiously, the account said, presumably from Delaunay's own observation in 1719, that some people wanted to renounce spelling. This anticipated Cherrier's dropping spelling in 1755 by almost forty years. (Cherrier is discussed later.) The elder Py-Poulain used italic print or red to mark silent letters in initial lessons and when beginning with connected reading, and was assumed to have been the first to have done so].

1720

La Salle (J.-B. de) - *Conduct of Christian Schools, Divided in Two Parts (Conduite des ecoles chretiennes, divise en deux parties)*. Avignon. [This was de La Salle's "teacher's guide" in schools for the poor. He recommended teaching beginning reading in French, and not Latin, because many poor children spent little time in school, but it must have caused problems because of irregular French spelling. He also used wall charts to teach letters and syllables to a whole class, apparently one of the first to use such charts, although Demia had used a blackboard to show cursive writing to a whole class.]

1720

Anonyme - *Mechanical Alphabet (Alphabet mecanique)*. Typographical Bureau of Dumas for Reading (Bureau typographique de Dumas pour la lecture). Paris. [Louis Dumas used Pascal's 1655 synthetic phonics, knowledge of which was spreading from Port Royal, on collections of separate letter cards, which the children selected to build words based on their sounds. See the 1733 entry.]

1724

Anonymous - *Essay on a Christian School, or Instructing and Raising Children in a Christian Manner in the Schools*. Paris.

1726

Rollin, Charles (1661-1741) - *On the Manner of Teaching. (De la maniere d'enseigner et d'etudier les belles-lettres) or Treatise on Studies (Traite des etudes.)* Paris.

[Ed.: Rollin elaborated on Dumas' 1720 method, and in doing so also implied Pascal's approach which Dumas had used, although Rollin did not name Pascal or Port Royal where the approach was first used in 1655. Surprisingly, the 1664 *Grammaire* of Port Royal by Arnauld which first published information on the Pascal phonic method is not listed in this bibliography. A translation of Part I of Rollin's work was published with John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* in a Dublin edition of 1738. That Dublin edition very possibly inspired the *Irish Spelling Book* of 1740, referred to elsewhere in this history. Thomas Sheridan's use of Pascal phonics most probably resulted from his having seen the *Irish Spelling Book*. The 1738 Dublin edition of Rollin's material is listed in *Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books in Education*, published in 1976 based on the library collection in what is now the Department of Education.]

1728

Lambert, the Marquise of - *Advice of a Mother to Her Son and Her Daughter*. Paris.

1728

Saint-Pierre, the Abbot of - *Project for Perfecting Education*. Paris, Briasson.

1733

Dumas, Louis, 1676-1744, natural son of Louis de Montcalm, disciple of Malebranche. *La Bibliotheque des Enfants*. Three volumes, the first explaining the Bureau Typographique, the second l'Alphabet Latin, and the third l'Alphabet Francais. [Ed.: From article "Lecture" and Dictionnaire

biographical entry. Dumas had traveled to the principal cities in France before 1726 to exhibit his methods. His Pascal phonics used the notation, “c = ce, ka, qu.” That bore a strong resemblance to the printed tables in the Irish Spelling Book, and, with Rollins’ book, was the probable source of the Irish Spelling Book. However, Dumas’ total method was intolerably over-complicated, to judge from its description in the article, “Lecture.” See also the 1720 entry, above.

1740

Saint-Pierre, the Abbot of - Advantages of Education in Colleges over Domestic Education. Amsterdam, Paris.

[The use of the word “college” did not have any necessary connection to universities. In this particular title, it meant collections of students, or student groups outside the home.]

1744

[This information is from the article, “Lecture,” page 1540, Volume I, Part II of the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire, and the article on the Abbe Bertaud (Berthauld possible alternate spelling) in the Dictionnaire, Volume I, Part I. Bertaud is not listed in the article, “Bibliographie,” of the Dictionnaire.

[Abbe Bertaud wrote the program, Quadrille Des Enfants, teaching basic sounds by hieroglyphs. It was an elaboration of the idea first developed by Vallange in 1719, New System or New Plans, etc. (Nouveau Systeme ou Nouveau Plans etc.) Both Vallange and Bertaud inspired the later methods of Anonymous in 1751, Alexandre in 1777, Michel in 1779, possibly Madame de Genlis in 1801, and Daubanton in 1810. All those materials are the apparent source of Code 3, two-step, whole-word phony phonics as it has been used in English since the early nineteenth century. In his book, Emile, Rousseau had testified that a vast interest existed in the teaching of reading in France by 1762, and these programs are only some of the confirmations of that interest.

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The article, “Bertaud, Abbe” in Volume I-I of the Dictionnaire... explains his reading program:

“Reading without spelling. 88 square cards from which comes the name of quadrille. [Ed.: quadrillage is a French noun for squaring, and quadrille is a French noun meaning a troop.] These cards each carry a picture representing an object known to the child and are meant to make him remember mnemonically one of the 86 syllables in which the Abbe Bertaud summarizes all the teaching of French reading; for example, to remember the sound, “u,” the picture shows a bossu [Ed.: a hunchback. Note that the example, for a little child, is of something that is sad. Unhappy examples have strangely been characteristic ever since in materials meant to teach beginning reading to little children by “meaning.”] One shows the engraving to the pupil and at the same time the word bossu, then only the letter u. The pupil remembers that letter, at first by the aid of the picture, and insensibly by the same form of the letter that is written thus in his memory. (One recognizes there in principal the system of “normal” words of Vogel.) When the pupil knows a series of 12 cards, he applies his acquired knowledge, in a series of syllables, of words and of sentences that one finds in the teacher’s book. By this means, the child quickly learns the 88 cards; he knows how to read at the end of some weeks of exercises.

“This method had a great vogue in the last century. The king of Prussia, who had been struck by the results, had the prince royal, Frederick William, taught to read by this procedure. Like all

reading methods without spelling, it succeeds only with those pupils who have, as has been said, the memory of the eyes.”

This Dictionnaire article was signed, A. Demkes. The French “Quadrille” system of 1744 as described by Demkes is clearly the origin of Code 3 two-step, whole-word “phonics.” It is apparently the first program which taught children to read whole words like “bossu” long before they knew the whole alphabet, and therefore before they knew the rest of the letters in those whole words which they were learning by their “meaning.” Demkes specifically described the Quadrille method as a reading method “without spelling” That seems to confirm further that the child was expected to work with whole words and whole word parts, instead of sequentially naming all letters in new syllables and words. Demkes specifically said “reading” began when only 20 of the 86 whole-word cards had been learned! Possibly the remaining two, to bring the total to the recorded 88, were the alphabet, one in upper and one in lower case letters.

The once-famous Quadrille method is also obviously partly like the approach of Gedike of Germany, which whole word approach Gedike is wrongly presumed to have invented. Its obvious use of sight-words suggests that it very probably provided the inspiration for Abbe de l’Epee’s sight-word method for the deaf, after 1760, and for the sight-word proposals of de Randonvillers in 1768 and of Adam in 1787, discussed later.

Just as is true today, two-step, whole-word phonics brought failure in its wake, as Demkes clearly noted: “Like all reading methods without spelling, it succeeds only with those pupils who have, as has been said, the memory of the eyes.”

The “memory of the eyes” was of the whole, meaning-bearing sight words, each containing only one phoneme to be studied for its sound, which phoneme was remembered as part of that whole, meaning-bearing sight word. The method was a very famous one in the mid-eighteenth century, endorsed even by the king of Prussia. It was the probable source for the “meaning” method introduced in America in 1826, and in Great Britain about the same time. See the 1801 entry under Madame de Genlis for a further discussion of the method.

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1751

Anonymous - *Methode Facile Pour Apprendre a Lire, Dediee a M. le Prince de Bouillons* [from article, “Lecture,” page 1540. Variation on Bertaud’s Quadrille of 1744, which was based on De Vallange’s 1719 work, later similar programs being Anonymous in 1751, Alexandre in 1777, Michelle in 1779, and Daubanton in 1810, who wrote *Lecture Par Echo*. See Madame de Genlis, under 1801, who reportedly used the approach, for a further discussion of the method.]

1755

Canon Cherrier [Ed.: not in “Bibliographie” but discussed on page 1541 of the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie...*] - *New Methods to Teach Reading (Methodes Nouvelles Pour Apprendre a Lire)*, Paris. [Cherrier’s text gave a history of reading instruction to 1755. Cherrier wanted learners to drop the spelling of syllables and to learn them as wholes - a very significant deterioration. The approach was later adopted in part by the monitorial school founder, Andrew Bell of Great Britain. Yet Bell made no mention of Cherrier or his French successors, Viard and Boisjermain. Cherrier recommended naming the letters in a modified Port Royal fashion, with an e mute before and after each consonant, but this “improvement” only made Port Royal phonics useless for blending, which was the only purpose for which it had been

invented. However, since Cherrier wanted the syllables learned as wholes anyway, without spelling (which also meant without Port Royal Pascal blending), he said traditional letter names could be used if desired. Cherrier's degenerate method of 1755, which had dropped the spelling of syllables, was a very significant milestone. Viard's 1759 method, revised in 1778 by Luneau de Boisjermain and reprinted in the year VI of the French Revolution, continued with the dropping of the spelling of syllables. Quotations from the article, "Lecture," concerning Cherrier are given later.]

1759

Viard, Master of a boarding school - True Principles of Reading, of Spelling (Orthographie) and of French Pronunciation (Vrais Principes de la Lecture...). [Ed.: Listed in article, "Lecture," but not in "Bibliographie." Viard's work rejected the spelling of syllables, as Cherrier had done in 1755, and had numerous editions. See the entry under 1778 for Luneau de Boisjermain's revision, reprinted in the year VI of the French Revolution. Quotations from the article, "Lecture," concerning these works are given later.]

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On the following selection of entries after 1760, note the appearance for the first time of books on "national" education, the omission of entries on home education, and the relative lack of concern for training in "piety," although books on parish schools continue.

Abbe de l'Epee's work appears later, but it is of interest that it was about 1760, in that kind of watershed period, that de l'Epee is reported to have started his education of the deaf, initially with two impoverished twin girls. De l'Epee reportedly took over the twins' education from a priest who had died about 1760.

Annotated comments have been given at some length on the following entries if they are needed as necessary background.

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1762

Rousseau, J. J. - Emile, or Of Education

1762

Anonymous - Essay on the Manner of Filling the Places in the Colleges that the Jesuits Occupied Before, Containing Some New and Important Observations on the Choice of Teachers and the Method of Teaching. Cologne.

1762

Rivard, F. D. - Memorandum on the Necessity of Establishing in Paris a House of Instruction to Form Teachers and Some Colleges for the Lower Classes.

[With the exit of the very highly educated Jesuits as schoolmasters, a call had come for normal schools to train teachers. Yet, previously, the Christian Brothers and Jesuits had trained their own teachers. Works cited earlier by Pere I. D. B. and Pere Demia from the 1600's also concerned the training of teachers. Note also the edition of the matter-of-fact manual for pastors concerning schoolmasters, listed

below under 1768. It implicitly confirms the widespread existence of church schools before 1768 and the resultant need for instructions by pastors to such schoolmasters. Note the entry under Anonymous for 1770 which also confirms the widespread existence of such petite schools before that date.]

1762

Anonymous - "Of Public Education. Amsterdam. (Wrongly attributed to Diderot. This work is probably by Crevier.)"

1763

Caradeuc, de la Chalotais (Louis Rene de), - Essay on National Education, or Plan of Studies for Youth. Dijon, Causse. (Reprinted, Paris, 1825).

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According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), in its article, "Education, History of, page 989, Volume 7, Chalotais revived the Greek idea of state control of education, criticizing education by the Jesuits:

"I venture to claim for the nation an education which depends only on the state, because it is essentially a matter for the state...."

The Encyclopedia article claimed that Chalotais' essay was very influential. Napoleon began state-centralized education by founding in 1808 the so-called Universite de France which was more a state department of education than a university. In doing so, however, Napoleon concerned himself very little with primary schools.

See the history given later on the progression in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century of state control of French education. The intense movement for state control of education in modern times originated with Chalotais in 1763. The Prussian state regulation, mentioned earlier, endorsing the principle of mandatory school attendance, which came out in that same year of 1763, was not the same thing, because the Prussian regulation apparently did not rule out the legitimacy of private schools. Chalotais' proposal was refined by Condorcet in 1792, although Napoleon was apparently the first to make any meaningful, long-lasting change. The shocking success of Chalotais' proposal in France in the early twentieth century, at which time church schools were legally suppressed once again and government schools were exalted, is discussed later.

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1763

Anonymous - Difficulties Proposed to M. de Caradeuc de La Chalotais on His Memorandum Entitled, Essay on National Education or Plan of Studies for Youth. Paris.

1763

Navarre (the R. P.) Of Christian Doctrine, Etc. Discourse which Carried Off the Prize, by the Judgment of the Academy of the Jeux Floraux, in the year 1763, on these words: "What Would Be, in France, the Most Advantageous Plan of Studies?"

1763

Vanier - Second Discourse on Education, in Which One Exposes All the Defects of the Scholastic Institution and the Means to Remedy It.

1764

LePrince de Beaumont (Madame) Magazine for Young Women, or Instructions for Young Women Who Enter in the World, Etc. Lyons (Reprinted many times: Paris, 1772, Lyon, 1765, 1776, 1782, 1811.)

1764

Fleury, Senior Royal Professor of Mathematics - Essay on the Means to Reform Particular and General Education.

1768

Abbe de Radonvilliers, Academie Francaise - On the Manner of Teaching Languages [De la maniere d'apprendre les langues], Paris.

[Ed.: Not listed in "Bibliographie," but in "Lecture," page 1541. That article's author said he believed that de Radonvilliers was the first who had suggested beginning the teaching of reading with whole words, followed by Nicolas Adam. Radonvilliers had outlined his ideas in a few paragraphs, portions of which - or possibly all - were quoted in the article. It seems highly likely that de Radonvilliers conceived the idea of teaching sight words to hearing children from knowing of de l'Epee's use of whole sight-words in teaching the deaf some time after 1760, and also of the 1744 Quadrille Code 3 method previously described.]

1768

Dinouart (Abbot) - The Manual of Pastors, with a Rule in 22 Articles for the Schoolteachers. Paris.

[Ed.: This is further confirmation of the widespread existence of parish schools in France before 1768.]

1768

LeRoux, Master of Arts in the University of Paris - Journal of Education, Presented to the King. Amiens. (This journal, which was published in 1768, from July to December, suspended its publication and reappeared from 1776 to 1778.)

[Ed.: Note the journal has the same title as Boisjerman's material described in the following 1787 entry for Nicolas Adam, as the 1816 French journal also listed later, and as the 1826 American journal first edited by William Russell.]

1769

Rivard, F. D. - Memorandum on the Means of Perfecting Public and Particular Studies, Showing in What the Perfection of Teaching Methods Appears to Consist. Paris.

1770

Diderot - Plan of a University for the Government of Russia, Addressed to Catherine II.

1770

Frederic II, King of Prussia. Letter on Education. Berlin.

1770

Anonymous - Instructive and Curious Letters on Education.

1770

Anonymous - Familiar Method for the Little Schools [Petites Ecoles], Containing the Duties of the Masters and Mistresses, With the Manner of Proper Instruction. Toulouse. Third Edition Much Expanded and Corrected.

[Ed. The publication of the third edition of this work by 1770 also confirms the widespread and long-standing existence of parish schools in France.]

1770

Anonymous - "Treatise on Education, to Serve as a Supplement to Emile by J. J. Rousseau. Neuchatel, Societe Typographique. (This is a collection of many pieces on education taken from the Encyclopedie [of Diderot].)"

1774.

Filassier - Historical Dictionary of Education. Paris. (Many editions, the last in 1837.)

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A 1784 copy of Filassier's book is in the Department of Education library in Washington and is reviewed on page 25 of Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education, A Catalog of the Titles Held by the Educational Research Library, National Institute of Education, Washington, D. C.: 1976. It is described as "Stories and anecdotes from history, illustrating qualities for a good life." It is not, therefore, a history of education. However, as shown, the book by Cherrier on his new reading method in 1755 was preceded with a history of reading methods, and such a history of reading methods is almost unheard of today. Because of Cherrier's history, and very possibly other such histories in French, when Neufchateau modeled his reading method in 1798, he was able to do it by contrasting it with reading methods that had been considered before 1798.

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1774

L'Epee, l'Abbe de - Institution for Deaf Mutes. Training.



1774

Serane, Philippe - Theory of J. J. Rousseau on Education, Corrected and Reduced to Practice. Toulouse. (Reprinted under the title of Theory of Education, Paris, 1787)

1774

Anonymous - Plan of Studies and of Education, with a Discourse on Education. Paris. [The phrase, "Plan of Studies" or "Plan d'études," appeared fairly frequently in the post-1760 period in this French bibliography. Note later the use of the word, "plan," which is used in both English and French, in the post-1826 period in America by both sight-word promoters, Angell and Russell, concerning their sight-word reading methods.]

1774

Deschamps, l'Abbe - Letter to M. de S\*\*\* on Institution for Deaf Mutes. London.

1777

Alexandre, Professor Emeritus from the Ecole Militaire [Ed.: not in Bibliographie, but listed on page 1540 in article, "Lecture"] - Revision of Bertaud's 1744 Quadrille des Enfants. [See also de Vallange in 1719, Anonymous in 1751, Michelle in 1779, and Daubanton in 1810, who wrote Lecture Par Echo. See Madame de Genlis, under 1801, who reportedly used the approach, for a further discussion of the method.]

1778

Luneau de Boisjermain

[Ed.: Not listed in "Bibliographie" but in article, "Lecture" which said that in 1778 and 1795 Boisjermain had revised the 1759 work of Viard, listed above. Viard's work had also dropped the spelling of syllables, as was done by Cherrier in 1755. The article said that Viard's work:]

"...which had numerous editions, was revised in 1778 by Luneau de Boisjermain, and reprinted again in l'An VI. Francois de Neufchateau said 'that it had served usefully for more than 20,000 private instructions.' It did not offer anything original: it is an abecedaire with a number of tables of syllables and of words. The name given to the letters is that of the grammar of Port Royal; the syllables must be joined without the child spelling: it is not necessary for him to say be-a ba, but all at once ba.' ('Il ne faut pas lui faire dire be-a ba, mais tout d'un coup ba.')

[Ed.: Boisjermain was at least the third in dropping the spelling of syllables: Cherrier in 1755, Viard in 1759, and Boisjermain in 1778, although Delaunay had said as early as 1719 that some recommended the dropping of spelling. The monitorial school founder, Andrew Bell of Great Britain, later dropped the spelling of syllables, although only for words of two syllables or more, but his doing so was clearly not an innovation. Quotations from the article, "Lecture," concerning Cherrier, Viard, and Boisjermain are given later. For Boisjermain's Journal of Education concerning the teaching of other languages, refer to the 1787 entry which follows for Nicolas Adam.]

1779

Deschamps, l'Abbe - Elementary Course of Education for Deaf-Mutes (Preceded by a letter to M. Jally, serving as introduction.) Paris, Debure.

1779

Desloges, P., Bookbinder - Observations of a Deaf-Mute on "Elementary Course of Education for Deaf-Mutes" by the Abbe Deschamps. Amsterdam and Paris. [Ed.: This suggests organized opposition to Deschamps' "sound" approach for teaching the deaf, since the material was published in both Amsterdam and Paris. The Abbe de l'Epee with his "meaning" method was located in Paris, and it is highly likely that the deaf-mute credited with writing this apparent 1779 rebuttal of Deschamps 1779 work was one of de l'Epee's pupils. That fact is further suggested because the apparently literate author is referred to as a deaf-mute, while Deschamps' graduated pupils were no longer mute, but only deaf. While de l'Epee later attempted to teach speech after having first taught sign language and sight-word reading, he did not initially do so. Nor did his successor, Sicard, attempt to teach oral speech until long after he took over from de l'Epee in 1790.]

1779

Miremont, Madame the Countess of - Treatise on the Education of Women, and Complete Course of Instruction, Paris.

1779

Thelis, the Count of - Plan of National Education in Favor of Poor Country Children. [Ed.: Note the activist buzz-words by 1779: "plan" and "national," which recurred with increasing frequency after this date. Both words had been used in 1763 by Louis Rene de Caradeuc de la Chalotais in his enormously influential Essay on National Education, or Plan of Studies for Youth. Yet "poor country children" in France at that time were very frequently being taught to read by the local parish priests' bell-ringers/schoolmasters, as is indicated by the previous entries on teachers' guides for such parish priests dating from 1649, 1654 and later.]

1779

Michel, Paris - Methodical Plan of the First Principles of French Reading [From article, "Lecture," page 1540-1541 - An elaborate version of Bertaud's Quadrille, 1744, using wall charts and individual cards for the child's use. The method had originated with Vallange in 1719, was further revised by Anonymous in 1751, by Alexandre in 1777, and Daubanton in 1810, who wrote Lecture Par Echo. See Madame de Genlis, under 1801, who reportedly used the approach, for a further discussion of the method.]

1780

Deschamps, l'Abbe - Letter to M. de Bellisle, to Serve as a Response to the Observations of a Deaf-mute on the Elementary Course of Education for Deaf-Mutes Published in 1779. Followed by Many Letters to the Author. [Ed.: It is obvious that the 1779 work in opposition to Deschamps which was listed above must have been very influential, or Deschamps would hardly have written another work specifically to contradict his critic.]

1781

Chatelain, Henri-Abraham - Education Put at the Door of the Whole World. Lausanne.

1781

Goyon D'Arsac, de - Memorandum on the Best Plan of Education for the People (Crowned by the Academy of Chalons-sur-Marne) (Reprinted in 1783 at Chalons under the title of Essay of Laopedie.)

[Ed.: Note not only the buzz-words, "Plan of Education," but the all-inclusive word, "the People," suggesting not only "national" education but the leveling of all class distinctions. Desirable as it is to remove odious class distinctions, the record of the French Revolution on that topic was unspeakably hideous. Only ten years after this work was published, that kind of "leveling" had become the hallmark of the French Revolution. Note also the wide support by 1781 for the ideas in the phrase, "Plan of Education for the People," since the work was "Crowned by the Academy of Chalons-sur-Marne," and then reprinted in 1783.]

1781

P. M. de B., Light-horse (?) of the King's Guard - New Views on Education. Paris.

1781

Anonymous - Memorandum Concerning the National Schools ("les ecoles nationales"). Paris.

1783

Deschamps, l'Abbe - Of the Manner of Substituting the Eyes for the Ears, to Be of Service Following the Elementary Course of Education for Deaf-Mutes. Paris.

1783

Philipon de la Madelaine. Patriotic Views on the Education of the People Whether of the Cities or of the Country, with Many Interesting Notes. Lyons.

1783

Vaureal, the Count of, Senior Officer of the Royal Corps of Engineers - Plan or Essay of General or National Education, or the Best Education to Give to Men of All Nations. Bouillon. (Asked for a reform in teaching, especially in that which concerned grammar, Latin, "la scholastique;" wished that one followed natural theology ["veut qu'on suive la theologie naturelle"]). [Ed.: By dropping the study of Latin for most literate people, culture was being largely cut loose from primary sources on the history of Europe before about 1500.]

1784

Lesbroussard, Jean-Baptiste - Memorandum on This Question: What Are the Means of Perfecting Education in France?

1785

Proyard, l'Abbe - Of Public Education and of the Means to Realize the Projected Reform in the Last Assembly of the Clergy. Paris.

1785

Gosselin, P.-Ch.-Rob. - Plan of Education, in Response to the Academies of Marseille and of Chalons of Which One Proposed for the Subject of the Prize, "What Is the Plan of Public Education the Most Conformed to the Situation of the Mercantile and Maritime City?", the Other: "What Are the Actual Vices of Education and the Means of Correcting Them?" Amsterdam....

1787

Adam, Nicolas [1716-1792] - The True Manner of Teaching Any Language Whatever, Living or Dead, by the Means of the French Language.

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According to the article, "Lecture," page 1541 of the Dictionnaire, Adam's book contained some pages entitled, "New Manner of Teaching Reading to Children Without Speaking to Them of Letters and of Syllables," from which pages the article quoted extensively. The quotations demonstrated that Adam had outlined at length the pure sight-word, Code 1, method for teaching beginning reading, and did so far more completely than was suggested by the Abbe de Radonvillier in 1768. It is astonishing that Adam's basic 1787 work is no where to be found in our reading experts' literature, nor is any reference ever made to the Abbe de Radonvillier's brief 1768 comments.

The author of the article, "Lecture," had an acid comment to make concerning the famous Jacotot and his "new" method in the early 1820's for teaching beginning reading, by using the text of Fenelon's *Telemaque* and reading it sentence by sentence. Although Jacotot began the teaching of reading with whole words, he immediately analyzed them phonically, which Radonvillier and Adam had not. Nevertheless, like them, Jacotot did begin with the whole word. The "Lecture" author therefore said, "The process that Jacotot announced with so much pomp as a marvelous invention was simply that which had been proposed in the preceding century by the Abbe de Radonvillier and Nicolas Adam: it was the analytic step substituted for the synthetic step."

What appears to have been Jacotot's direct source for his idea of using the "whole" in teaching both beginning reading and other languages was the *Journal of Education*, published by Pierre Joseph Francois Luneau de Boisjermain. On page 483 of the biography on Boisjermain in J. F. Michaud's *Biographie Universelle*, republished in 1969 by Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, Graz, Austria, the journal is described as a series of "cahiers" or notebooks. They ultimately formed three textbooks for learning Italian, English or Latin and they were composed of interlinear translations of well known works. The textbook containing the English material was composed of interlinear translations of Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Fenelon's *Telemaque*. The article credited as the sources for the interlinear translation method "Dumarsais" and the "judicious principles posed by Radonvilliers in his *Maniere d'apprendre les langues* (Manner of Learning Languages)." Boisjermain's biography then stated that Boisjermain's language materials "had much success in their novelty." Jacotot's recommending the use of a French copy of Fenelon's *Telemaque* to his Dutch students, and asking them to make what amounted to their own interlinear translations, appears to have been an approach taken directly from Boisjermain, who had also used *Telemaque*. (It also saved Jacotot from the drudgery of making a Dutch translation himself for his

students!) As Boisjermain's biography noted, Boisjermain's materials had "much success" so Jacotot, who was a young college teacher in France in the 1790's, almost certainly would have known of them.

However, crediting "Dumarsais" and Radonvilliers as the source for the idea of interlinear translations in learning languages is clearly in error. Comenius used the idea in his famous *Orbis Pictus* in the seventeenth century, and is on record crediting William Bathe, S. J., (1564-1614) in the sixteenth century as his source. Yet Bathe used as his source a method used in Ireland in the sixteenth century. Bathe's work is discussed fully in Sean P. O'Mathuna's *William Bathe, S. J., 1564-1614, A Pioneer in Linguistics*, 1986, John Benjamin's, Philadelphia and Amsterdam. The probability is that the method of learning languages by studying syntax (whole sentences) instead of isolated words had been used in Ireland for many centuries. It is a more successful method than the learning of word lists and possibly matches brain structure better. In speech, syntax appears to generate words, instead of the other way around. The reason for the use of syntax to learn written Latin in Ireland before about 800 may have been the fact that texts at that time were not divided into words but were run together. The student was taught to divide such texts initially into syllables. As a result, his flow in reading (or in learning a written language) would mimic the natural flow in speech: syllables would generate syntax, which would finally generate words.

Like Radonvilliers and Boisjermain, Nicolas Adam was also concerned with other languages, and most probably his "True Manner of Teaching Any Language Whatever, Living or Dead, by the Means of the French Language" was the interlinear approach that had been used by Radonvilliers in 1768. Nicolas Adam also used the Code 1 approach for teaching beginning reading recommended by Radonvilliers in 1768. Adams' 1787 work, therefore, appears to have been only an elaboration of Radonvillier's 1768 work. It is of interest that all three authors of methods for learning other languages, Radonvilliers, Adam and Boisjermain, also concerned themselves with methods for teaching beginning reading, though Boisjermain did not use a Code 1 method. Concerning Boisjermain's reading method in his 1778 and 1795 revisions of Viard's 1759 material, see the 1778 entry.

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1788

Bourdon de la Crosniere, Leonard - Plan of an establishment of national education. Orleans.

1789

Sicard, l'Abbe - Memorandum on the Art of Instructing Deaf-mutes from Birth (*Memoire sur l'art d'instruire les sourds et muets de naissance*). Bordeaux. [Ed.: Sicard had headed the school in Bordeaux in 1789, just before he was chosen to head the Paris school, over the head of de l'Epee's former Paris assistant. The hostility of the Paris Commune to Sicard in 1792, despite his approval by the Assembly, which hostility nearly resulted in Sicard's execution in 1792, conceivably may have had its source in that fact.]

1789

Verlac, Lawyer and Professor of the English Language at the Royal Marine School at Vannes - New Plan of Education for All Classes of Citizens, with a Treatise on Liberty in General, on Civil Liberty, and on the Principles of Government; The Work Extracted from an English Author and Which, in France, Can Serve as a National Catechism. Vannes. (Caustic criticism on Education Before 1789. Asked for instruction of all, teaching of living languages, the study of French, of history, of geography, of religion; a normal school, a school of commerce. [Ed.: It would be of interest to find who the English author was.]

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There were ten entries in the Dictionnaire's "Bibliographie" of education for 1789, the year the French Revolution began, slightly more than previous years, including the above and two by Sicard on teaching deaf-mutes. Of the remaining seven, three used the phrase, "plan d'education nationale," and one used "plan of education and of public instruction, dedicated to the National Assembly." Of the remaining three, one read "project of education for all the realm, preceded by some reflections on the National Assembly," which joined, in meaning, the words "plan d'education nationale." Of the remaining two, The Art of Forming a Man was written by the Abbe de Vaniere and another, by Anonymous, was Letters on Education, Paris, of 24 pages, which sounded like an argumentative pamphlet. Therefore, the push for "national education" was overwhelming in France by 1789. In 1790 the entries increased to 12, sharply more than pre-Revolution years, and the nature of some of these entries is revealing:

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1790

Danou (Claude-Pierre-Francois). - Plan of Education Presented to the National Assembly, in the Name of the Public Teachers of the Oratoire. Paris.

1790

Extract of Deliberations of the General Assembly of the Section of Luxembourg, of December 15, 1790. Paris. Asks that the municipal body of Paris design in each section a building where all citizens would be admitted to receive free instruction, and where would be explained to them the principles of morality and of the constitution.

1790

Paris, de l'Oratoire, Member of many academies and literary societies. Project of National Education. Paris. (32 p.) (Compulsory Education, Free for All Paupers at All Degrees of Instruction. 40 pupils to a school; three degrees of instruction; Salary of 1600 livres for the teachers; tax on the celibate.)

[Ed. Note the implicit persecution of members of the "celibate" teaching orders like the Christian Brothers, which persecution would be operative even after the teaching orders had been outlawed.]

1791

Extract from the Minutes of the General Assembly of the Section of Palais-Royal, of May 30, 1791, Concerning the Instruction of the People. Paris. (Against Congregationist Teaching) [Ed.: That meant against teaching by religious orders such as the Christian Brothers.]

1791

Gossin, Deputy from Bar-le-Duc - Motion made to the Constituent Assembly on the Necessity of Establishing National Schools. Paris, Imprimerie Nationale. 8 pages. (The principal object of education will be the principles of the new Constitution, the rights and the duties of men, exercises of the body, living languages preferred to dead languages.) [Ed. Note the reference to "exercises of the body," an early endorsement of physical education or gym classes. It represented, of course, the Greek tradition and would have met with Plato's approval.]

M. D., chevalier de Saint-Louis - Call to Public Opinion on National Education. Paris. 16 pages. Free education, election of the teacher by the people, prayer replaced by a hymn to the fatherland. In the morning, teaching of children; in the afternoon, teaching of adults.

[Ed.: in French “National Education,” the author wanted prayer to be “replaced by a hymn to the fatherland.” Hitler (and probably Hegel) would have loved that.]

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The “Bibliographie” on education is obviously only a partial selection. Even in the Dictionnaire itself, it is possible to see that many surviving books on reading were omitted from this “Bibliographie” since many appear elsewhere in the article, “Lecture” which are not to be found in the “Bibliographie.” However, taking the “Bibliographie” entries as a chance selection, which they obviously are, and even allowing for the fact that great numbers of books published in those years on education are almost certainly totally omitted, the relative size of each year’s entries in the “Bibliographie” does tell something about relative activity on education in France in that year. Therefore, no doubt can exist after seeing the relative size of these “Bibliographie” entries that the very worst years of the French Revolution were also overwhelmingly the most active years concerning educational theorizing and research.

We should remember that fact, when considering the great “push” going on today by the federal government promoting “America 2000” and national achievement tests. Never in the history of the Western World, except during the French Revolution, has there been as much propaganda as there is today for educational control from the top by the national government. As in the French Revolution, the flood of material is published by government-owned printing presses, at taxpayer expense. Those in opposition (such as this writer) must use their own limited funds and their own limited resources to refute the tax-supported flood of material promoting a centralized “control” of culture.

Ideas fostered in the French Revolution assemblies later spread throughout the Western World, possibly in large part because the assembly also had its own printing press. So many of these Revolutionary entries were followed by a little dagger, indicating that they were officially printed papers. Therefore, the enormous emphasis given to educational theorizing during the French Revolution can be judged solely from the size of the yearly entries, although not all of them, of course were printed by the official press.

In the 20 years before 1789, yearly entries in the “Bibliographie” had varied from about two to about eight, and in 1789 had reached ten. The only previous year in the bibliography with more than ten entries was 1762, when Rousseau’s *Emile* caused such a stir that the entries swelled to fifteen. The stir continued in the following year, 1763, when the entries reached ten, which figure was not equaled again until 1789, the first year of the Revolution. In 1790, the second year of the French Revolution, the entries totaled 12. However, in 1791, the entries exploded to a total of 33. These 33 1791 entries, with notes, occupied a little more than a page in the “Bibliographie” of books on education. The numerous entries for the next year, 1792, covered about 3/4 of a page, and the 1793 entries, by which time France was in a massive civil ferment, covered an incredible two full pages! Entries for the following year, 1794, occupied more than a page, and 1795 entries occupied almost a page. The entries dropped off starting in 1796, when they covered only 3/8 of a page, and in the years after that until about 1816 the yearly entries varied from between less than 1/8 to more than 1/4 of a page. There was a slight increase in 1816 and 1818, but a note appeared on 1818 indicating that the relative size of the entries for books could no longer be an adequate barometer of educational activism:

“N. B. At this year and in the following [appear] numerous brochures for and against education.”

Change-agent activism had increased again starting about 1815 when the Lancaster monitorial school approach was imported into France from Great Britain, with the support of influential men. The “Bibliographie” of books on education later also dutifully showed other British entries: one by the socialist/atheist Robert Owen who was promoting infant schools, and one by Lord Brougham who was promoting government schools. Therefore, the lines of communication on educational ideas were obviously wide open between France and the English-speaking world in those years. However, in the years of the French Revolution, the intellectual currents were apparently largely running the other way. Instead of ideas from the English-speaking world being imported, ideas from the French-speaking world were being exported. Those ideas concerned “national” education (the shaping of children’s minds by the state), compulsory education, government normal schools (the shaping of the minds of the children’s teachers by the state) - and, obviously, beginning reading instruction. The Revolutionists’ big ideas were largely mere talk in France during the disordered Revolutionary period, except for the government normal school. However, the educational ideas from Revolutionary France were published and so lived on as a perverse influence on education throughout the whole Western World right up to the present day.

The legislators of the French Revolution gathered together and studied all the reading methods promoted in the earlier part of the century, so that accumulated knowledge was ready and waiting for action in later years. It might be said that new and different reading methods which concentrated on “meaning” as well as on “sound” were conceived in eighteenth-century France, were gestated in the French Revolution, and were ready to be sent out into the world by the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the very same “Revolutionary” package that promoted government schools.

After all, the beginning of the nineteenth century is exactly when the shift from “sound” to “meaning” in the teaching of reading first becomes apparent in English- language sources, as with Richard Edgeworth’s 1798 recommendation in the book he wrote jointly with his daughter, Maria, *Practical Education*, that the ancient syllable method be dropped and be replaced by the study of letter sounds in whole words. This was not necessarily a bad thing, of course, but was a pronounced shift to “meaning.” However, this was also shortly before the time that Edgeworth is known to have been working hard to promote government or national schools in Ireland, as shown by 1806 correspondence quoted by Andrew Bell, referred to in Part 5. Therefore, Edgeworth’s activities demonstrate the twin packaging of government schools and “meaning” instruction for beginning reading (with some kind of analytic phonics, but how much is unknown). When Edgeworth promoted the teaching of beginning reading by “whole words” (with an addition of an unknown amount of analytic phonics), he was jettisoning the almost three-thousand-year-old “ABC syllable” method.

By 1792, the French Revolution had degenerated into a bloodbath. Against that hideous background, therefore, it is startling to read the educational proposals which follow in that year:

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1792

Order of 22 Frimaire An I (12 Dec. 1792) on the organization of primary schools.

1792

Leclerc, Deputy from Maine-et-Loire, Discourse on Obligatory Public Instruction. [Ed.: “Obligatory Public Instruction” was being discussed in the bloody year of 1792!]



1792

Maudru - Letter to the Committee of Public Instruction, or Reasoned Exposition of the New System of Reading Applicable to All Languages. Paris. 56 pages. [Ed. Nothing further has surfaced on this. It is very possibly an extension of Nicolas Adams' 1787 work, *The True Manner of Learning Any Language Whatever* (La Vraie Maniere d'Apprendre Une Langue Quelconque), in which Adams had a section concerning learning to read initially by pure sight words, or Code I.]

1792

Condorcet - Report and proposed law on the general organization of public instruction presented to the National Legislative Assembly, April 20 and 21, 1792.

1792

Codet (Silvain) Deputy of Ille-et-Villaine. - Considered Opinion on the general plan of organization and of public instruction presented by M. Condorcet, and proposed law for promptly organizing all the primary schools of the French Empire. Imprimerie nationale. 36 p. (Against the plan of Condorcet.)

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Condorcet's work described in the above last two entries is of the highest importance in considering the history of government schools. It is worthwhile at this point to discuss its long-term impact on education in France, though it apparently did not directly concern the teaching of beginning reading. However, Condorcet's disciple, du Pont de Nemours, did affect the teaching of beginning reading.

The ideas of Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas de Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794), economist, mathematician, philosopher and revolutionary, were a source of inspiration for nineteenth and twentieth century French and Prussian government schools. F. Buisson, an admirer of Condorcet, wrote the following in *L'Annee Pedagogique*, 1913, on the occasion of the Prussian anniversary of school reform in 1813. Buisson commented, "But Fichte himself was inspired by Condorcet. And in another language... he appropriated the (ideals) of the French Revolution..." Yet Condorcet's influence was not limited to early nineteenth century Prussia and France. Condorcet's ideas on government schools have influenced education from the time of the French Revolution to the present day.

Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemours (1739-1817) was an economist who was a follower of Condorcet's economic theories, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Volume 7, pages 769-770. Like Condorcet, (and Buisson), du Pont also rejected Christianity. An article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913) Volume XIII, page 16, stated:

"Another religious venture of this period was that of the Theophilanthropists, who wished to create a spiritualist church without dogmas, miracles, priesthood or sacraments, a sort of vague religiosity, similar to the 'ethical societies of the United States.' ...It was the private initiative of a former Girondin, the librarian Chemin Dupontes, which gave rise to this cult; Valentine Hauy, instructor of the blind and former Terrorist, and the physiocrat, du Pont de Nemours, collaborated with him."

Both du Pont and Condorcet were very active in the French Revolution's Assembly. Du Pont was also probably a disciple of Condorcet's theories on public education which Condorcet presented to the

Revolutionary Assembly. Du Pont most probably incorporated many of Condorcet's ideas into the government education plan he later presented to Jefferson after Napoleon had come into power.

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) article on Condorcet said that he was one of the workers on the famous Encyclopedie and that his wife conducted one of the most famous "salons" of the time (intellectual social gatherings). However, although Condorcet wrote the declaration on suspending Louis XIV, he voted against actually executing the king. As a result of that unpopular vote, he was eventually imprisoned in 1794 and was found dead two days later, but whether he was poisoned or not is not known. His book, *Esquisse*, published in 1795, opposed all religions, in particular Christianity. The Encyclopedia Britannica said that it was:

"Pervaded by a spirit of excessive hopefulness ...Condorcet's ethical position gives emphasis to the sympathetic impulses and social feelings and had considerable influence upon Auguste Comte."

A note in the "Bibliographie," mentioned earlier, under 1793, said that the assembly had analyzed in detail the plans of Talleyrand and Condorcet and then proposed its own hierarchical organization, with inspection of schools, and a director general of studies at the head of all public instruction. The theory of governmental control of all education from the top down was therefore being clearly worked out in 1793, actually during the Reign of Terror! It is the same top-down control we are threatened with in America today, over two hundred years later, but to be exercised here through government-ordered, and change-agent-written "tests" and "America 2000."

After Napoleon's take-over in 1799, concern for primary education sharply diminished. However, it was under Napoleon that educational control finally passed totally to the state, since a system was set up so that only the state "university" (a bureaucratic body, and not a real university) could grant credentials "certifying" that a student had satisfactorily completed whatever studies he had undertaken. Such certification was based on government-constructed "tests," just as we are faced with today.

However, private primary education was finally authorized again in France by a law of 1833, but it was not until the Loi Falloux of 1850, which was passed over the opposition of Victor Hugo, that private education was again fully authorized at the secondary level. ("Establishment" darlings like Victor Hugo often pop up in history unexpectedly, doing unpleasant things like opposing educational freedom.)

The article, "Falloux," page 772, Volume V, Catholic Encyclopedia of 1913, states:

"Minister of Education from December, 1848, until 31 October, 1849, de Falloux immediately determined to push vigorously against the educational monopoly of the university.... in June, 1849... he strongly advocated the passage of a law establishing liberty of education.... In two years' time 257 free schools sprang up, and it is from this law, the last remnants of which the French Parliament is now (1908) preparing to abrogate, that dates the development of the Catholic teaching orders in France...."

The university monopoly on higher education was abolished by the law of July 12, 1875 ("France," page 183, Volume VI, Catholic Encyclopedia - 1913). Yet by 1882, education at the primary level was adversely affected once again by the Ferry laws. Finally, after the beginning of the twentieth century, religious orders were once more outlawed by the government and church property was seized, just as had been done during the French Revolution. All private education by religious at all levels which the orders had been carrying out was effectively destroyed.

Condorcet's ideas on government control of education were still being lauded in the twentieth century by Ferdinand Edouard Buisson (1841-1932). F. Buisson was Inspector General of Primary Instruction in France in 1887, according to the title page of the volume *1er Partie, Tome Premier*, of the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire* published in that year, on which Buisson was editor. Presumably Buisson also was Inspector General of Primary Instruction when the other *Dictionnaire* volumes of which he was editor were published between 1880 and 1888.

Gabriel Compayre was in great good favor with American education "experts" at the turn of the century, as shown by the fact that he was one of the contributors to the *Cyclopedia of Education* (1913) which was edited by Paul Monroe of Columbia University. Yet Compayre was given to wild historical distortions in his general writings. He was attacked because of them by Brother Azarius (P. J. Mullany) in *Essays Educational*, D. H. McBride & Co., Chicago: 1896, in the chapter, "M. Gabriel Compayre as an Historian of Pedagogy." Compayre therefore was a very fallible French authority on higher education, accepted by American "experts," about the same time that Buisson was accepted by them as a French authority on primary education. Commenting on the influence of these two men, Brother Azarius said on page 280:

"Will the Buissons and the Compayres continue to write our histories, and formulate our theories of pedagogy? Children of the Revolution, they find all excellence, all modern progress, all educational reform growing out of that terrible upheaval. Inimical to the Church, they can see nothing good come out of Nazareth."

Buisson had been influential on French education for years, having also attended the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition and the Vienna world's fair in 1873 as a French representative. Buisson was also later a Member of the Chamber of Deputies, apparently in the same early years of the twentieth century when teaching by religious groups was outlawed in France. He made a report to the 8th Legislative Session of the Chamber of Deputies in France, No. 1509, 16 pages, Annex to the Supplementary Report, "Report Made... Relative to the Suppression of Congregationist Teaching," Paris, 1904. Although the nature of his comments are unknown, at least Buisson was certainly in the middle of things when religious teaching was again being suppressed for the first time since the French Revolution.

Besides writing approvingly of Condorcet's education plans, Buisson also lauded Jules Ferry, who worked so hard in France to secularize education in the nineteenth century, resulting in the infamous 1882 Ferry laws. From Buisson's comments in his later writings, it is apparent that Buisson had ideas on the nature of things which place him firmly in the camp of the anti-ecclesiastical members of the French Revolution like Condorcet, as Brother Azarius clearly recognized in 1896. F. Buisson was active for many years in the Union of Free Thinkers and Free Believers for Moral Culture. At Buisson's death, the periodical, *Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale*, Annee 39, 1932, commented on him:

"...he remained always the 'militant, the propagandist par excellence. ... after the war [World War I]... the secular idea, the socialist idea, the pacifist idea... found in Ferdinand Buisson the most convinced of patrons...."

In 1919, World Book Company, Yonkers, New York, who also published some of Edward L. Thorndike's work and Nila Banton Smith's, published *French Educational Ideals of Today*, An Anthology of the Molders of French Educational Thought of the Present, "Edited by Ferdinand Buisson, Formerly Director of Primary Education in France and Member of the Chamber of Deputies" and Frederic Ernest Farrington of Columbia University and Chevy Chase School, Washington. At the beginning of this book which is composed of earlier articles, on page 4, this remarkably hysterical material appeared. (The comments may or may not have been Buisson's.)

“Do you wish to free lay teaching? Dare affirm what three centuries have affirmed before you, that it is sufficient unto itself, that it exists of itself, that it itself is belief and science.

“How has modern science been constituted? By breaking away from the science of the Church. The civil law? By breaking away from canon law. The political constitution? By breaking away from the religion of the State. All the elements of modern society have developed by emancipating themselves from the Church. The most important of all - education - remains to be emancipated. By a conclusion deduced from all that precedes, is it not clear that we can regulate it only on condition that it be completely separated from ecclesiastical education?”

It is easy to see the French Revolution’s and Condorcet’s hatred of religion peeping out from behind that flood of immoderate speech in that World Book Company text of which Buisson had been one of the two editors. That book also contained material starting on page 5 written by Jules Ferry (1832-1893). The preface to the Ferry material described Ferry as Mayor of Paris during the siege of 1870-71, a member of the National Assembly, then of the Chamber of Deputies, and from 1879 to 1885 Minister of Public Instruction several times. The preface read:

“Deriving his inspiration from Condorcet’s ‘Plan of Education’ and from the ideas of Edgar Quinet, he brought about the enactment of the school laws which have been justly named the ‘Ferry laws.’ These laws provide for compulsory, free, elementary education to be given by laymen, for the secondary instruction of girls, for professional schools and normal schools. They instituted the ‘Higher Council of Public Instruction’ and laid the foundation of the system of national education which has been gradually realized by the Third Republic.”

The date of the promulgation of the Ferry laws was March 28, 1882. As the foregoing indicates, Condorcet had been, indeed, enormously influential.

On page 42 of Buisson’s 1919 text was an article on Felix Pecaut (1828-1898), extracted from Buisson’s lecture delivered at the University of Geneva in April, 1900. The article’s preface said that Pecaut was “in his youth a Protestant minister,” and became one of the founders of the movement known as “liberal Protestantism.” Buisson was also called a “liberal Protestant.” If Buisson’s writings on religion are typical of that group’s views, then the group certainly would not be considered Christian by any Protestants that I know! Pecaut, probably more accurately described as a FORMER Protestant Christian, was chosen by Jules Ferry to organize the higher primary normal school for women at Fontenay-aux-Roses, which he directed until just before his death.

“For fifteen years he furnished the inspiration for a type of moral education whose originality consisted in uniting deep religious feeling with the complete independence of mind characteristic of the lay spirit. It is at Fontenay, the ‘Port-Royal of the Third Republic,’ that the teachers and principals of normal schools for women are trained. Without question Pecaut has had the most far-reaching influence over the primary education of women in contemporary France.”

Buisson began his 1900 lecture remarks on Pecaut:

“You all know what an effort we have been making in France for the past quarter of a century to organize a system of national education after the type outlined by the men of the French Revolution. The name of Jules Ferry suffices to personify for you this great political movement. [Ed.: Note the interesting 1900 identification of “education” with a “political movement!”] The public school that has become a lay school - lay in program, lay in personnel, lay in the spirit that animates it - such is the end that the laws of the Third Republic have permitted us to attain after long years of violent struggle.”

On page 321 of Buisson's 1919 book was an address by Professor Paul Painleve (1863 - ) before the International Educational Conference at the Sorbonne, May 21, 1916:

“Forty-five years ago, just after our defeat, Jean Mace... gave his entire attention to the Educational League (Ligue de l'Enseignement). Our assembly here today is due to the initiative of this organization.... The program of the League, at that time daring, now commonplace, may be summed up in the phrases: compulsory education, free education, secular education; compulsory, because the child's interests demand that he should not be kept in ignorance on account of the ignorance of his parents; free, for it is adding penury to poverty to deprive a child of all education because those who are bringing him up cannot pay for it; secular, because the State in carrying out its duties as teacher has no right to force any particular religious belief upon its children.”

“You are aware, gentlemen, what a storm of criticism this program has raised. You have not forgotten the anxiety and the distrust shown only too readily with regard to the educational work of the Republic, even during the months directly preceding the war....”

So Painleve even admitted there had been “a storm of criticism” to the government's education program. He actually admitted that the change-agents in France had nevertheless ridden rough-shod over the rights of all those who opposed them and by 1916 had forcibly taken over the education of their opponents' children.

Note that the last point Painleve made, “the State... carrying out its duties as teacher” is based on the enormously false assumption that it is the state that actually has the duty of “teacher,” instead of a child's parents! So the pernicious theories in 1792 of the violently anti-Christian Condorcet had lived on to become the very foundation for French education before 1916!

The following appeared concerning the 1882 Ferry laws in the article, “France,” under the sub-heading, “The Laicization of Primary Instruction,” in the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), Volume VI, page 181:

“...in the public schools dependent on the municipality of Paris, the antispiritualist tendency became so violent that, after 1882, the new editions of certain school books expunged, even where they occurred in selected specimens of literature, the words God, Providence, Creator.... In 1894, M. Devinat, afterwards director of the normal school of the department of the Seine, wrote: ‘It may be affirmed without any exaggeration that, since 1882, the lay public school has been very nearly the Godless school.’”

Such government invasions of parental liberty concerning textbooks extended over many years. The following appeared on page 182 of the same article about actions in 1909, the year the article was written:

“Bills introduced... impose heavy penalties on fathers whose children refuse to make use of the irreligious books given them by their teachers, and render it impossible for parents to prosecute teachers whose immoral and irreligious instruction may give them reason for complaint....”

It is apparent from the article, “France,” in the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), pages 182-183, Volume VI, that some religious brothers and nuns had still taught in the government schools after the 1882 Ferry laws which forbid any mention of religion and which forbid priests to enter government schools.

However, the presence of such religious teachers in the public schools was finally outlawed, at least theoretically but not in fact, in 1886. The encyclopedia article stated:

“Laicization of the Teaching Staff - The Law of 30 October, 1886... called for the laicization of the teaching staff in the public schools. In the schools for boys this laicization has been an accomplished fact since 1891, since which date no Brother of the Christian Schools has acted either as principal or as teacher in public primary instruction. The difficulty of forming a body of female lay teachers impeded the process of laicizing the public schools for girls; but this, too, has been complete since 1906, except in some few communes, where it is to be effected before the year 1913.”

Removing the teaching brothers and sisters, who apparently could be employed at low cost, from the state-supported public primary schools and then eventually forcing the closing of the private Catholic primary schools had an apparently catastrophic effect on education in France. Figures quoted later suggest that a third of poor children may have been denied primary education as a result of that anti-clerical legislation.

Concerning a much earlier period, the encyclopedia article discussed the 1833 revival of “Denominational Primary Instruction,” which meant non-public school facilities.

“At the beginning of the Consulate [Napoleon’s], Fourcroy, anti-religious as he was, alarmed, to use his own words, at the ‘almost total ineffectiveness of the primary schools’ (nullite presque totale), recommended it as a useful expedient, to confide a portion of the primary teaching to the clergy and to revive ‘the Institute of the Brothers, which had formerly been of the greatest service’. In 1805 the Brothers, having re-established a mother-house at Lyon, were solicited to furnish teachers in thirty-six towns. The Government of the First Empire authorized in ten years 880 communities or establishments of teaching sisters; the Restoration, less generous, authorized only 599, the Monarchy of July, only 389. Until 1833 these congregations could exercise their functions only in schools controlled by the State, for the University would allow no infringement of its monopoly. The magnificent tribute to the educational activity of the clergy which Guizot uttered during the debates on the Law of 1833 was endorsed by the law itself, which, partially suppressing the monopoly of the University, established the principle of free primary teaching....”

So private religious primary schools spread after 1833, although, obviously, brothers and nuns were often still employed by the government schools. Yet the free condition of the private primary schools only lasted about fifty years:

“The [Ferry] law of 28 March, 1882...[provided] that every teacher must hold a diploma (brevet) from one of the government jurys, or examining boards. The congreganistes... submitted to this formality. With this exception, the Law upheld the liberty of private teaching.... The masters and mistresses of private schools might give religious instruction in their schools... but the state authority... might prohibit the introduction and use of books judged contrary to morality, the Constitution, or the law... the establishment and support of these schools has fallen on Catholic charity exclusively. The communes can only give assistance to poor pupils in private schools as individuals.

“A first, very serious, attack on the principle of freedom of teaching was made by the Law of 7 July, 1904, which formally declared that ‘teaching of every grade and every kind is forbidden in France to the congregations’.... Every Brother, every religious woman, who wished to continue the work of teaching was forthwith compelled to be secularized... M. Combes immediately closed

14,404 out of 16,904 such schools, and it is decreed that in 1910 the last of the congreganiste schools shall have disappeared.

“From time to time the Ministry publishes lists of congreganiste schools which must be closed definitely by the end of the school year... The bishops are seeking to maintain primary Catholic education or to reorganize it with secularized or lay teachers... Already in twenty-four dioceses there are diocesan organizations for free teaching.... These measures have been imperatively demanded in order to repair the losses suffered by free primary education, the number of pupils having fallen, according to statistics compiled in 1907 by M. Keller, from 1,600,000

The Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), Volume 9, page 634, reported those infamous events as follows:

“...in 1901...religious congregations could be formed only with proper authorization and could be dissolved by decree. This measure was aimed specially at the Assumptionists and the Jesuits. Then Emile Combes, dignitary of Freemasonry, who succeeded Waldick-Roussau in 1902, suppressed nearly all the congregations and took away their right to run schools (1904).”

It is utterly incredible that a militantly anti-Catholic Freemason like Combes, clearly acknowledged as such by the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) in the above excerpt, was elected in France in the twentieth century and was permitted to annihilate almost the entire Catholic school system of France!

Therefore, the religious persecution and attempted indoctrination of children which were hallmarks of the French Revolution and which were undoubtedly implicit in Condorcet’s government education plans were both alive and well in France in the early twentieth century. Those facts made early twentieth-century talk of French “liberty” not only hollow but ridiculous.

Excerpts from the “Bibliographie” of the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire continue:

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1793

Examination and Refutation of the Systems Proposed Successively by Citizens Condorcet and G. Romme, in the Name of the Committee of Public Instruction of the Legislative Assembly and of the National Convention. Paris.

1793

Opoix, Deputy of Seine-et-Marne, Opoix to his Colleagues, Paris. Insists on the introduction of religious education which did not figure in the project presented to the Convention by the Committee of Public Instruction. [Ed.: This is clear confirmation that the official planners of government education during the French Revolution, such as Condorcet, deliberately meant to exclude education in religion as early as 1793. This was in vivid contrast to the practice before 1760 when religion had been the dominant theme of education in the “petites ecoles.”

1793

Ducos, de la Gironde, On Public Instruction and Especially on the Primary Schools. Paris.

1793

Arbogust, L. F. A., Deputy of Bas-Rhin. Report and Proposed Decree on the Composition of Primary Elementary Books. Paris. [Ed.: Note the French Revolutionary Government attempt as early as 1793 to censor schoolbooks, which means to censor what children are taught, by legally mandating “official” content. Such control of textbooks is now in place in America in Texas, California, and some other states. Besides the appalling invasion of intellectual freedom which such “adoptions” represent, and the fact that they are probable violations of the Bill of Rights which guarantees freedom of speech and of the press, official “adoptions” also provide a hot-house climate for potential graft. The textbook scandal in Texas under Governor “Ma” Ferguson, reported in a front-page article in the New York Times on December 4, 1925, certainly proves that.]

1793

Committee of Public Instruction - Commission Proposed by the Committee of Public Instruction for the Examination of Elementary Books. August 30, 1793. Paris.

1793

Masuyer. C. (L.), Deputy of Saone and Loire, Discourse on the Organization of Public Instruction and of National Education in France.

1793

Lanthenas, F. Fundamental Basis of Public Instruction and of All Free Formation, or the Way to Tie Public Opinion, Morality, Education, Teaching, Instruction, the Feasts, the Propagation of Enlightenment and the Progress of All Knowledge to the National Republican Government. (Reissued year III, second augmented edition.) [Ed.: Note the wildly ambitious ideas concerning control from the top in 1793: “Big Brother” in earnest. Note the acceptance of those ideas, since the book was reissued in year III, or 1795, in an augmented edition. Note also that the hideous years of the Reign of Terror were under way by 1793, while the “National Republican Government” carrying out that Reign of Terror was simultaneously talking about its “Propagation of Enlightenment.”]

1793

Massieu, deputy de l’Oise. Report and Proposed Decree on the Establishment of a School for Deaf-Mutes in the City of Bordeaux, Presented in the Name of the Committees of Help and of Public Instruction. [Ed. Note that the Committee of Public Instruction had reason to be very familiar by 1793 with methods of teaching the deaf to read, while it was at the same time reviewing all prior methods of teaching reading.]

1793

LePeletier (Michel) [1760 - Jan. 20, 1793] “Plan of National Education, Presented to the Jacobins by His Brother, Felix le Peletier, Read at the Convention by Robespierre on July 13, 1793. Paris. Printed by order of the Society of Jacobins.”

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In case anyone should have admiration for the promotion of government education by that “Convention,” the above entry shows that the Convention listened in 1793 to plans for “National Education” which came straight from the Jacobins and were read by Robespierre, of all people! The



materials had even been printed by the Society of Jacobins. This was a year of intense educational activity by the convention as a whole, as well as one of the worst years of the French Revolution's blood-bath. That unspeakable blood-bath was, of course, associated closely with Robespierre and the Jacobins who were finally overthrown with the coup d'état of 9 Thermidor (27 July, 1794).

Robespierre and his partisans were executed, and the Thermidorian reaction began. The Commune of Paris was suppressed, the Jacobin Club closed, and the Revolutionary tribunal disappeared. Le Peletier's plan read by Robespierre in 1793 was to force parents to have their children all educated in exactly the same way, at state expense and totally under state control. The purpose was to promote "equality" and presumably "fraternity" although, of course, the plan simultaneously destroyed parental "liberty."

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1793

Inauguration of the Normal School of Paris (from "Ephemerides," page 889)

1793

Thiebault (Dieudonne) et Borelly, *Journal de l'instruction publique*, Paris, 28 issues, 8 vol., published from 1793-1795

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This periodical magazine on education, originally published in 1793 during the height of the Terror, continued until 1795. The periodical press, of which this magazine is an early member, is customarily given credit for being the promoter of liberty. Yet it can easily lend itself to propaganda, for good or evil, because its necessarily short entries permit no elaboration. More importantly, the periodical press controls the selection of topics, and only what news it sees fit to print ever gets printed, while no such control normally exists in the world of books. The periodical press as we know it has only been in existence since the change-agent eighteenth century, so perhaps it is not surprising that it is the eighteenth century which "invented" this vehicle that lends itself so readily to the influence of change-agents.

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1793

First Report of Lakanal to the Convention on the Organization of National Education, June 26, 1793 (from "Ephemerides," page 889.)

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By the fall of 1792, Joseph Lakanal (1762-1845) had joined the Convention. Lakanal's work on education, like that of Condorcet, du Pont de Nemours, and Neufchateau, is of critical importance.

Concerning his background, Michaud's *Biographie Universelle* (1854, Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, Graz, Austria, 1969) contains an eight and a half-page biography on Lakanal, far longer than most other entries. It was written by a man who knew Lakanal very well in Paris in the years just before Lakanal's death in 1845. (Only the initials of the author were given: I. G. S. H.)

The article also quoted approvingly and at length from “l’Eloge de Lakanal” by Mignet, May, 1857, which indicates the entry was prepared after the *Biographie Universelle* began publication in 1854. A footnote on page 592 from Mignet’s speech lamented the fact that Lakanal was among those who voted the death penalty for Louis XVI, “a vote cruel and incompetent, which, by the royal murder, was bound to lead to other murders, and deliver the blood-stained revolution to anarchy and to despotism.”

With that ugly but early vote as an apparently established fact, it is therefore startling to see the praiseworthy picture of Lakanal which emerged, particularly from the author of the long excerpt, who was Lakanal’s personal friend when Lakanal was an old man. Lakanal had arrived at the Convention in the last half of 1792 as a 30-year old college teacher, and almost immediately was given great responsibility. For years, he worked enormously hard and capably in government positions to promote education and general culture.

In 1815 after the fall of Napoleon, Lakanal came to the United States as a refugee and Congress presented him with a large tract of land in Alabama as a token of its high regard. Lakanal remained in America until after the 1830 shift in power in France. When Lakanal returned to France in 1837, he was momentarily lionized, but then fell into semi-obscurity and poverty. His holdings in America, on which he had been depending for income, were “mishandled” there so he died a poor man, with his funeral attended only by twenty people, including the author of the article, who obviously was very fond of Lakanal, and Lakanal’s wife.

Lakanal’s history, despite the ugly entry on his vote for Louis XVI’s death, simply does not fit the profile of most movers-and-shakers, who usually profit handsomely from the net of influence of which they are a part. First of all, in the French Convention, Lakanal received great authority but it apparently was because he was the one willing to do great amounts of work: movers-and-shakers are more likely to “delegate” responsibility than to do the hard work themselves. Secondly, Lakanal ended a poor, and almost certainly cheated, man, and died in semi-obscurity. Movers-and-shakers are more likely to have their deaths respectfully publicized, and to leave fat inheritances for their heirs.

Lakanal’s biography contains two entries, based apparently on the author’s personal conversations with Lakanal in his old age, that indicate Lakanal was an unusual Revolutionary. During the persecution of priests who had refused to take the government oaths, Lakanal aided the escape of such a priest, who was his friend from Lakanal’s short period in a seminary before the Revolution. The priest would otherwise have faced execution, but, by aiding his priest friend, so would Lakanal have been executed if discovered. On another occasion, Lakanal took from the desk of an official an incriminating, foolish, letter written by Abbe Sicard because Sicard would have been in great danger if the letter were not destroyed.

The picture of Lakanal that emerged from the biography is of a highly principled, compassionate man, despite the extraordinary vote (if correctly reported) for the death of Louis XVI. That Lakanal’s vote might have been misrepresented is suggested by Lakanal’s words shortly before his death:

“I go to appear before God, the heart pure, the hands clean.”

Lakanal was obviously a primary source for the history of the French Revolution, and he was also a scholar and teacher before and after his period in public life during the revolution. Not surprisingly, therefore, Lakanal had begun to write his memoirs in America and resumed writing his memoirs shortly after his return to France. The friend of his old age who wrote the short biography said:

“...two works occupied him day and night: the one is the *Expose Sommaire de ses Travaux* (Short Account of His Works) during the revolution, a collection of pieces and of letters often of

great interest; the other, a considerable work commenced long before in America, and which, finished about 1840, was, until the last days of Lakanal, his joy and his hope, hope very cruelly disappointed! This work, of which we have often seen the manuscript volume and the title already printed, has mysteriously disappeared at the moment of the death of Lakanal! Has it been annihilated for ever? Is it held in reserve to reappear one day?"

That was a very strange development. Lakanal's impoverished wife, with the child of his old age, seems an unlikely candidate to have suppressed Lakanal's enormously important historical work, since its publication could have provided her with much-needed funds. It had been completed for five years before Lakanal's death, with only the title page in print, which fact is itself very strange. Others obviously knew of the existence of the manuscript, as well as the author of the short biography, who had "often seen the manuscript volume."

One such person who knew of Lakanal's book might have been, surprisingly, Lord Brougham, whose work on education as a member of Parliament is described in Part 4. The author of Lakanal's short biography recorded:

"We assisted one day at a visit that Lord Brougham made to the ex-conventionnel. 'Your Lord,' said Lakanal to Lord Brougham, who answered him, 'Dear Citizen.'"

As indicated elsewhere, Brougham curiously omitted from his own multi-volume memoirs most of his enormous work on education, which suggests that Brougham may have preferred sanitized history. Was Brougham in any way associated with the mysterious and total disappearance of Lakanal's great work, which very probably was discussed and perhaps even shown to him when Brougham visited Lakanal?

Was there some material in Lakanal's history that was so embarrassing to some persons in France, England, or America that they had his book stolen on the very day of his death? After all, it is an attested fact from a close friend of Lakanal that Lakanal's written history:

"...mysteriously disappeared at the moment of the death of Lakanal!"

From the year 1792, Lakanal's name recurs again and again on entries in the bibliography concerning education, as a member of the Committee of Public Instruction. The information given in his biography makes such recurring appearances understandable. Unfortunately, Lakanal was apparently in total agreement with the "need" for government schools, for normal schools, and for government-issued textbooks, as subsequent entries will make clear.

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1794

Committee of Public Instruction. Report... on the Organization of a Jury to Judge Elementary Books....

1794

National Convention, Gregoire - Report on the Opening of a Concourse for Elementary Books of the First Education. Meeting of 3 Pluiose, An II, Paris. [Ed.: Printed by the government press.]

1794

Lakanal - Report on the Establishment of Normal Schools, Meeting of 2 Brumaire, An III

1794

National Convention - Decree of 9 Brumaire, An III 30 October, 1794, Relative to the Establishment of Normal Schools. [Ed.: This was made on the report of Lakanal, according to "Ephemerides," page 890 of the Dictionnaire.]

1794

Lakanal- Report and Proposed Law on [the organization] of Primary Schools Presented to the Convention in the Name of the Committee of Public Instruction, 7 Brumaire, An III.

[Ed. Many other entries about this time concerned primary schools]

1794

Dupont (de Nemours) - Views on National Education, by an Agriculturist, or Means to Simplify Instruction and to Make it at the Same Time Moral, Philosophical, Republican, Civil and Military, Without Disordering the Work of Agriculture and the Arts on which the Young Must Cooperate. Paris.

[Ed.: Included a description of his method which taught beginners only how to write, not how to read, from which knowledge of writing the children learned to read incidentally. It was presumably a "sound" and not a "meaning" method, and, if so, should have been quite successful.]

1794

Maigret, Deputy of Pays de ?Dora, Report and Proposed Decree on the Organization of Establishments for Indigent Deaf-Mutes, Decreed June 28, 1793, Meeting of 9 Pluviose, An II.

[Ed.: This particular legislative entry was followed by one after another on the education of the deaf. The interest of the assembly in the education of the deaf was extraordinary. However, by supporting Sicard and ignoring Deschamps' work, the assembly was promoting the "meaning" approach instead of the "sound" approach.]

1794

Raffron - Observations on the Establishment Proposed by the Committee of Help and Public Instruction in Favor of Deaf-mutes. ....13 Pluviose, An II [Printed by the government press.]

1794

Thibandeau - Report on Deaf-Mutes Presented in the Name of the Committee of Public Instruction. Paris.

[Ed.: Since the Committee of Public Instruction was also concerned with elementary textbooks, this again shows that those who were studying reading methods were also studying methods for teaching the deaf.]

1795

Citizen H. G. [listed only in article, "Lecture," page 1542] - Method for Learning at the Same Time to Read, to Write, and to Write Under Dictation. An III.

1795

National Convention - Decree of 11 Prairial, An 1 (May 30, 1793) on the Establishment of Primary Schools.

[Ed.: Printed by the government press. Note that it was not printed for two years, but what is printed is permanent. The convention's ideas on primary schools stayed alive in print for many years after Napoleon had unseated the Revolutionaries in 1799. The ideas were finally largely realized in France in the nineteenth century. So did the Revolution's written research on reading history and methods stay alive in the next century. This is despite the fact that the educational plans of the Revolutionists were very poorly and incompletely executed during the Revolutionary period, and were apparently largely ignored during Napoleon's tenure.]

1795

National Convention- ?Jouenne, Calvados, Deputy - [Reporting on two establishments for deaf-mutes in Paris and Bordeaux]

1795

General Program of the Course of Normal Schools - to the Convention

1795

Merlino - Report on an Establishment for Blind Workers

1796 (and 1818)

Brun - [From the article, "Lecture," page 1545, but not in Bibliographie] "Another grammarian, Brun (author of New Method of Teaching which had been distinguished in the year IV by the jury of elementary books), wished to start the pupils with numeration, verbal at first, then written; after having written some figures, the child commenced to trace some letters, the vowels at first, then the consonants, which he associated with the vowels in pronouncing the syllables without spelling; in putting together some syllables, he next formed some words, which he read at the same time that he wrote them (Journal d'education, January, 1818)."

1796

Barbe-Marbois - Report Made to the Council of Five Hundred [Conseil des Cinq Cents, the lower house of the Revolutionary legislature after the constitution of September 23, 1795] Relative to the Works Which Should Serve as Elementary Books in the Primary Schools.

1796

Fourcroy - Opinion on the Action of II Germinal, Year IV, on the Resolution Relative to Elementary Books.

1796

La Chabeauiniere, French Catechism or Principles of Philosophy, Morals and Republican Policy for Use by Primary Schools. (“Work considered classic by the government and printed free by the state.”)

1796

Lakanal - Report made to the Council of 500 on Elementary Books, Presented at the Concourse Opened by the Law of 9 Pluiose, Year II, Imprimerie Nationale.

1797

[Ed.: Only five entries, for 1797, including the following:]

Couret-Villeneuve - Letter to the Citizen Sicard, Teacher of Deaf-mutes, Member of the Institut Nationale “(etc.)”. Paris.

[Ed.: Sicard was in trouble again with the Revolutionary authorities at this time, as discussed in his biography in the Biographie Universelle (page 286).]

1797

DeBry (Jean) Statement on the Inviolability of the Right of Kinship With Reference to the Education of Children (22 Vendemiaire, Year VI)

[Ed.: Note the implicit acknowledgment that government education was invading the rights of parents.]

1798

Francois de Neufchateau, The Institute of Children, or Advice of a Father to his Son. (Imitates the verses that Muretale wrote... for... his nephew and which could serve all the little schools [petite ecoles]). Paris.

1799?

Francois de Neufchateau - Practical Reading Method [Methode Pratique de Lecture], Year VII

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The above was listed in the article, “Lecture,” page 1543, and quoted in the article in the “Supplement,” pages 3030-3031, on Herbault. In de Neufchateau’s book on reading, he reviewed earlier reading methods and then invented his own, using reading and writing simultaneously and teaching whole syllables by sound, without spelling them.

The Dictionnaire article on Herbault included quotations from a lengthy report by Neufchateau of an eye-witness account of 1747 of Herbault’s charity school (Classe de l’Enfant Jesus, Hospice de la Pitie) run in Paris for 300 children, using Dumas’ phonic typographic bureau. Herbault’s 1747 school was run on what became known as the monitorial plan, with older children teaching younger children. The author of the article on Herbault, which was quoting de Neufchateau at length, pointed out that Herbault did not invent the approach of older children teaching younger children as it had been used by Pere I. D. B. in

Paris in 1654 and by Demia at Lyons about 1675. Therefore, the 1816 claim of the Societe Pour l'Instruction Primaire that Herbault, rather than Bell and Lancaster, was the inventor of the monotorial schools was not correct, as even Herbault was only carrying on I. D. B. and Demia's approaches.

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1799

Jury of Instruction of the Arrondissement of Treves - Plan of Interior Organization of the Primary Schools, Year VII [Listed only in the article, "Lecture," page 1542]

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Entries after 1800 were very sparse, but were obviously published in a very different intellectual climate after Napoleon's take-over. The following entry seems to suggest that opposition to the Revolutionists was surfacing under Napoleon:

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1800

Anonymous - Sessions at the Normal Schools Collected by Shorthand, Etc. 600 p.

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Appearing in 1800 after the Revolutionists were safely overthrown, this sounds as if "Anonymous" had produced 600 pages of debunking transcripts concerning what actually went on in the government normal schools for the training of teachers. The government normal schools were one of the few concrete educational "achievements" of the Revolution. Note that the term, "normal school," apparently originated in the Revolution, although religious training schools for teachers date back at least to the seventeenth century, when Pere Demia is known to have established one in Lyons.

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1801

Genlis, Madame de - New Method of Teaching for Early Childhood, Paris

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If the book by Madame de Genlis included instruction on beginning reading, it was almost certainly two-step whole word phony phonics, the precursor of the basal reader Code 3 whole-word phony phonics of today. Information is given on page 1548 of the Dictionnaire on Madame Genlis's use of that method as revised by Professor Emeritus Alexandre of the Ecole Militaire for the "enfants d'Orleans," presumably the children of the royal family.

In 1719, M. de Vallange had originated what appears to have been that approach. It was revised by the Abbot Bertaud in 1744 under the title, *Quadrille des Enfants*, as discussed in the 1744 entry for Bertaud. "Anonymous" had also made a revision in 1751. The article, "Lecture," stated, "The system due to Vallange and to Bertaud enjoyed a vogue that lasted rather a long time. It is related that Crebillon and Marivaux had it put to the test in their presence on two chimney-sweeps who, at the end of a month, by

means of two lessons a day, were in the state of fluent reading. The Abbe Desfontaines called the process the philosopher's stone for the teaching of reading."

Yet, as A. Demke stated, who is quoted in the 1744 entry on Bertaud, "Like all reading methods without spelling, it succeeds only with those pupils who have, as has been said, the memory of the eyes." That the two-step whole-word phony phonics method, the precursor of the Code 3 phony phonics of today's basal readers, was called the philosopher's stone for the teaching of reading, showed that poor approaches in teaching reading have often received warm approval!

In 1777, the material was revised again by Alexandre, a professor emeritus from the Ecole Militaire and was used by Madame de Genlis. It was revised again in 1779 by Michel. Finally, it was revised by a professor of grammar, Daubanton, in his 1810 book, *Reading by Echo*. Daubanton also applied the method to the teaching of writing in his book, *Application of Reading by Echo to Writing*, 1811.

Yet all these authors had used the idea of teaching reading by the so-called "echo," which meant comparing the sounds in new words to the memorized sounds from memorized whole sample words. This is, of course, two-step whole word phonics since it requires resurrecting the memories of whole, meaning-bearing words before it is possible to sound out the sequential parts of an unknown whole, meaning-bearing word.

Becoming a Nation of Readers, The National Institute of Education, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985, page 12, lines 3 through 20, confirms that the time-consuming and distracting two-step "echo" approach is what is used by most American readers today. This is hardly surprising, since most adult Americans were taught to read with Dick and Jane or its clones. (The article, "Lecture" from Volume I-I of the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire*, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris: 1887, summarized the history of the "echo" method on page 1540.)

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1805

Choron, Alexandre-Etienne (1772-1834) [Ed.: from the article, "Lecture" and biographical entry] - *Method for Teaching Reading and Writing (Methode pour apprendre a lire et a ecrire)* "He used the simultaneous method and the omniphonique procedure. His superior method to most of those which existed before was adopted in the mutual teaching schools."

[Ed.: The entry mentions Francois Edme Jomard (1779-1862) who was, according to his own biography in the *Dictionnaire*, one of the founders of the Society for Elementary Instruction that promoted the French monitorial schools. "Minister Carnot... (in) April, 1815, charged a commission of five members to give him an opinion on the best method of primary teaching....." and Jomard was one of the five. The "simultaneous method" usually meant whole-class teaching, which had been used by the Christian Brothers, but it certainly could not have been used in the monitorial schools, in which older children taught younger children ("mutual teaching"). In this context, it obviously referred to the second meaning used for "simultaneous" in teaching at that time, which was the "simultaneous" teaching of reading and writing, instead of holding off the teaching of writing until later. However, what the "omniphonique procedure" was is unknown.]

1810-1811

Daubanton, *Reading by Echo (Lecture par Echo)*, *Application of Reading by Echo to Writing* (1811), Paris.



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See the entries under Bertaud in 1744 and under Madame de Genlis in 1801 for a discussion of this two-step whole-word phony phonics approach, the probable precursor to the Code 3 whole-word phony phonics approach in use today. The method had originated with Vallange in 1719, was revised by Bertaud in 1744, by Anonymous in 1751, by Alexandre in 1777, by Michel in 1779, possibly by Madame de Genlis in 1801, and finally by Daubanton in 1810. All but the last two would have been reviewed and studied by the Revolutionists working on reading methods. The Code 3 whole-word phony phonics method was effectively in general use in England by the 1830's, as in *Reading Disentangled* and the *Irish Readers*, and was equivalent to much of the Code 3 whole word phony phonics used in American texts since at least the 1870's. However, from shortly after 1826 and until about the 1870's, most American readers had used only Gallaudet Code 1 sight words, until the partial but aborted return of phonics in the 1860's. This had resulted in the use in America of Code 3 "echo" phony phonics in the 1870's and later. The "echo" Code 3 method was still in almost universal use in England in the 1870's as shown by beginning readers of that period.

Although proposed years earlier, the Institute of France of which Daubanton was a member came into actual being during the period of the Directory, through Lakanal's organizing it (page 596 of the article on Lakanal, previously cited). The Institute initially had forty-eight chosen members, and the article listed twenty-six of them. It is interesting that the list included two who wrote reading methods, Daubanton, whose method has just been described, and Lebrun, whose method was described previously. Another Institute member was Sicard, who taught reading to the deaf, and another was Haüy, who taught reading to the blind. Whether du Pont de Nemours and Neufchateau were members of the Institute is unknown, but these famous men also wrote beginning reading materials during the French Revolution. Truly, the French Revolution had been a hot-house for reading instruction methods written by the "great," most of whom were apparently acquainted with each other and so most probably with each others' teaching approaches.

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1812

Dupont de Nemours - *On National Education in the United States*. Paris, 160 pages. [Discussed previously.]

1812

Laborde... *Plan of Education for the Child... After the Two Methods... Dr. Bell and M. Lancaster. English System of Instruction.*

1814

Du Pont, M., *Teacher* [Ed.: not du Pont de Nemours. From article, "Lecture," only.] *Citologie* - published tables of spelling. Numerous editions to 1825. A careful gradation of reading and writing with Port Royal spelling.

1816 (or Earlier)

Journal of Education (Journal d'Education)

[Ed.: This is referred to several times in the article, "Lecture," and the first such entry is for May, 1816, in the section on the monitorial schools on page 1544, which method is reviewed later. Note that the 1816 magazine carried the same title, Journal of Education, as the magazine founded in 1826 by an unknown person or persons in America on which William Russell was employed as the first editor, which was only the second American magazine on education and the first such successful American magazine.]

1817 [and for an unknown time before]

Lemare, Dr. E. D., Linguist and Physician [Ed.: Mentioned in article, "Lecture," page 1545 but not in "Bibliographie"] - "The linguist and physician Lemare<sup>16</sup> proposed an analytic method, in the curious book which he entitled, 'Course of Reading [Cours de lecture] Where, Proceeding from the Compound to the Simple, One Teaches the Reading of Some Sentences, Then Some Words, Without Knowing Either Syllables or Letters, Composed of 41 Cards,' 4th edition, 1817."

Biographie Universelle of Michaud's, published in Paris in 1854 and republished by Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, Graz, Austria, in 1969, had an entry on Pierre-Alexandre Lemare (1766-1835) who, despite the different initials, was obviously the same man, since it credited him with writing the above book and also referred to him as a physician and grammarian. Lemare was born in the canton of St. Laurent, the son of a poor laborer, and achieved his education "almost alone." That fact confirms that some kind of educational opportunities were available for the poor in France in the 1770's. When Lemare was nineteen years old, he was named the professor of rhetoric and principal of the "college de St.-Claude," a school probably similar to our junior and senior high schools. The lengthy entry shows Lemare to have been not only brilliant but an adventurer, "ardent friend of the revolution, but a man of good will, he wished to stop the excesses, and he made the administration of which he was a member suspend the committees of surveillance. Proscribed then by a decree of the convention, he was re-established in his function after the fall of Robespierre...."

Lemare's life continued for many years until after the fall of Napoleon to be material fit for an adventure movie. He eventually returned to academic life and, in the course of his lifetime, wrote an incredible number of books, one of which was a dictionary, Dictionnaire Francais, Par Ordre d'Analogie, Paris, 1820. Lemare also wrote Stories Adapted to Simultaneous and Mutual Teaching, As Well as to Private Teaching (Contes Appropriés a l'Enseignement Simultane et Mutuel, Aussi Bien qu'a l'Enseignement Particulier), meant to follow his Course de Lecture, above. The biography cited a sixth edition of his "Stories..." in 1829. Therefore, like the dictionary author Noah Webster in the English language, the dictionary author LeMare in the French language can be truly said to have written a series of readers, his "Course of Reading" (which the article said had been a revision of his original work, Systeme Naturel de Lecture or Natural System of Reading with 50 Figures in Copper-plate Engravings) and his "Stories Adapted..."

1817

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<sup>16</sup> A separate article appeared in the Dictionnaire on Lemare. That separate article showed that Lemare had actually started children with the alphabet and its sounds, despite the title of his book. His title obviously only meant that the "spelling" or naming of letters and syllables was dropped in the teaching of reading. Since the children knew the sounds of the letters first, that made his method an analytic phonics method, as opposed to a synthetic phonics method in which children would have sounded the letters. Lemare's original work must have come out some time before 1817, since it had a fourth edition in that year.

Butet\* de la Sarthe [Ed.: From article, “Lecture,” page 1545, but not in “Bibliographie.” The asterisk indicated Butet had a separate article in the Dictionnaire. The 1815 monitorial school method, described elsewhere:]

“...was nevertheless susceptible to some perfecting, and, as the public attention was vividly drawn at this moment towards the problems of education, a great number of attempts more or less successful were produced. We will cite among others the syllabary of Butet\* de la Sarthe, who reduced the elements of pronunciation to 30 sounds and to 19 articulations. While allowing the simultaneous teaching of reading and writing, Butet wanted [that teaching] preceded by exercises of oral syllabating. His syllabary was the object of a favorable report by the Society for Elementary Instruction (Journal of Education [Journal d’education], September, 1817.”

1818

“N. B. At this year and in the following [appear] numerous brochures for and against education.”

“Description Composed by Laurent Clerc and Read by Mr. Gallaudet to Examine Some Pupils in the Asylum Established in Connecticut, etc.”, Geneva.

[Ed.: Note from the Butet 1817 entry that a “great number of attempts” to compose beginning reading materials had been made in French since about 1815, with the foundation of the French monitorial schools, and they had as a resource the material on reading methods from the French Revolution. With the end of the Napoleonic wars, the great interest in secular education in France that had been exhibited by the “intellectuals” of the French Revolution had resurfaced. Napoleon had certainly been no “intellectual.” Note that in 1818, a year of great interest in education in general in France, as shown by the writing of “numerous brochures” on education, a report in French was published on the work of Gallaudet who was teaching deaf-mutes in the United States. Gallaudet had returned from Sicard’s Paris school with the deaf-mute Clerc of France and had opened his Connecticut school by 1817, only one year before the publication of the 1818 report in French. Possibly that report was printed in Geneva, Switzerland, rather than in France, through some connection with Pere Girard’s monitorial school there. Girard’s work was a great favorite with “experts” of the period. Concerning the very poor educational results in such monitorial schools as well as the vast publicity from change-agents to promote their spread, see later the comments of the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster from 1828 and 1829.]

1818

Freville, A. F. J., Reading by Pictures [Lecture par images] or Fitting, Amusing Method to Pique the Curiosity of Children and to Teach Them to Read, etc....Paris.

[Ed.: It would have been more than a little astonishing to see what is possibly a Code 1 sight-word work openly promoted in France in 1818, except for the fact that Lemare’s curious work, although it had not actually dropped the alphabet as a first step, was published some time before 1817 and it already had a fourth edition by that year. Since Lemare’s work, despite its title, was preceded by teaching children the alphabet and letter sounds, conceivably so may Freville’s work have included teaching the alphabet and letter sounds before teaching whole words by pictures. Nevertheless, both Lemare and Freville are possible precursors of the total “meaning” Code 1 approach that appeared in America by 1826.]

1825

[Ed.: The “Bibliographie” showed a translated work on Robert Owens’ New Lanark infant school. Lines of communication continued to be open between England and France on secular education approaches.]

1826

Translation of Brougham’s Practical Observations on the Needs of the People. [Ed.: Lord Brougham’s work in England pushing for government schools was obviously being read in France in 1826.]

1827

De Laffore, M. [Ed.: from article Lecture only, pages 1545 1546. Statilegie which dropped syllabifying but used letter sounds on whole words:]

“...enjoyed a momentary vogue endorsed by men like Messrs. Mignet, Francoeur and Magendie.”

[Ed.: This 1827 reference is one of the few in French to the dropping of syllables in the teaching of beginning reading. Yet Worcester in America had already dropped teaching syllables in 1826, as discussed elsewhere, but Worcester also omitted any use of letter “sounds,” which this method did not.]

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Rousseau’s Emile was published in 1763, but Rousseau’s general ideas do not really account for the changes in the teaching of reading after 1760, even though Rousseau specifically rejected any need to teach Emile to read. Rousseau did refer to what amounted to a flood of material in France at that time concerning the teaching of beginning reading. Rousseau’s comment certainly confirmed that ideas concerning the teaching of beginning reading were growing (festering?) in eighteenth-century France. No such development had ever happened before, despite the few works in English which had appeared in the previous hundred years or so concerning the teaching of beginning reading. The purpose of those English works was only to circumvent the difficulties in English spelling, and not to invent new methods to teach beginning reading.

The “Bibliographie” of the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie... is curiously lacking in texts on the teaching of reading, except before 1730. The article, “Lecture,” however, more than makes up for those omissions and many of its entries have been cited above. The many entries demonstrate that, as Rousseau had said, there was a great interest in France in the topic of teaching beginning reading in the mid-eighteenth century.

However, some of the entries only mentioned in passing in the previous chronological summary are worth describing in more detail. One is that of Cherrier’s.

The canon Cherrier (discussed on page 1541 of the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie...) had written in 1755 the book, New Methods to Teach Reading (Methodes Nouvelles Pour Apprendre a Lire), Paris. In it, he reviewed earlier methods, so his text very interestingly provided a history of reading to 1755. In it, he also recommended the Port-Royal naming of the consonants with an e muet, but in a fashion which would have made the Pascal approach useless for synthetic phonics. That is because Cherrier recommended preceding and following each consonant with the e muet, which would make blending impossible. However, Cherrier wanted learners to drop the spelling of syllables, anyway, and to learn them as wholes

- a very significant deterioration. Since he recommended dropping the spelling of syllables, which would make the use of Port Royal phonics unnecessary, he said he could find no fault with naming letters by their traditional names as they would not be used in “spelling,” anyway. Therefore, Cherrier’s strange adaptation of Port Royal phonics was virtually useless.

Cherrier had said, “It is proposed not to spell the letters to syllabicate, but to make the children pronounce the syllables as soon as they know the letters.” He wanted children to learn to read in Latin. His work ended with alphabets and “methodical Latin and French syllabaries... with useful and agreeable readings in the one and the other language.” What was critical, of course, was the dropping of spelling.

The Dictionnaire wrote the following on Viard and on Luneau de Boisjermain (page 1541):

“In 1759, Viard, master of a boarding school, published True Principles of Reading, of Spelling (Orthographie) and of French Pronunciation (Vrais Principes de la Lecture....). This work, which had numerous editions, was revised in 1778 by Luneau de Boisjermain, and reprinted again in l’An IV [1795]. Francois de Neufchateau said ‘that it had served usefully for more than 20,000 private instructions.’ It did not offer anything original: it is an abecedaire with a number of tables of syllables and of words. The name given to the letters is that of the grammar of Port Royal; the syllables must be joined without the child spelling: ‘il ne faut pas lui faire dire be-a ba, mais tout d’un coup ba. (It is not necessary for him to say be-a ba, but all at once ba).’”

If reading at the fundamental level should only be the correct and sequential pronouncing of individual syllables in words, and if these syllables are learned best by memorizing their sequential parts (i. e., “spelling” their letters), then any change which suppresses either the breaking of words into these syllables or the naming of the letters in the syllables adversely affects efficiency in reading. Reading is defined as the correct pronunciation of a text, so that the message can be understood just as if it were spoken and not written. After all, the whole purpose for which alphabetic writing was invented was to encode speech so that it could be precisely reproduced later. Until well into the Christian era, reading quite literally meant pronouncing a text out loud. By contrast, highly inefficient picture writing, which can be read only by guessing from the meanings of groups of pictures, and which does not require speech at all, is acknowledged to be a primitive and barbaric method.

It seems hardly surprising that the “Age of Unenlightenment” in France also produced the first deliberate suppression of teachings on syllables. The reading disabilities that can result from such suppression, of course, make it more difficult for a reader to obtain any information or truths transmitted by print. Yet the suppression of syllable teaching was supposed to be an improvement. Almost all of the French reading “improvements” suppressed one or more of the facets of correct “sound” beginning instruction in reading. Only a few of the French methods for hearing children, however, went all the way to recommend teaching beginning reading by Code 1 “meaning” (Radonvilliers, Adam, and possibly Freville). Of course, de l’Epee’s method for deaf children was a pure Code 1 approach.

The article, “Lecture,” also had a section reviewing the work of the French Revolution period and the years immediately following. It said that the years of the Revolution had not been objectively productive concerning reading methods, despite much activity on them. However, just before Napoleon’s take-over, the Revolutionary government finally endorsed an official phonic method written by de Neufchateau, a high government official who was not, himself, a schoolmaster. De Neufchateau had a huge volume of written material to draw on in preparing his own reading method, since for more than a century so much had been written in France concerning new and different ways to teach beginning reading. Neufchateau reviewed some of that history in his work. The section of the Dictionnaire... article, “Lecture,” concerning the Revolutionary period stated:

“In the year IV, Lakanal, rendering an account to the Five Hundred of the results of the concourse opened by the Convention for the composition of elementary books, said: ‘The concourse has not produced, on the art of teaching reading and writing, any work that the jury has judged worthy to be adopted in the primary schools of the Republic. It is even persuaded that none exist in French, and that until now the patience of the teachers and of their pupils has been exhausted.’

“Meanwhile, the necessity of organizing in the primary schools a methodical and regular teaching of reading was evident. It was to answer this need that Francois de Neufchateau, Minister of the Interior, composed and published in the Year VII his Practical Method of Reading (*Methode Pratique de Lecture*). In a preface addressed to the citizen Janny, his compatriot, professor at the central school of the Vosges, he explained in these terms the end that he was proposing to himself: ‘The methods described in Cherrier’s books are scarcely applicable except to private education. Their authors had in view only the children of the great, and had not dreamed of the people.... The methods which were easy for teaching the nobles and the rich to read could not fill the end that I proposed to myself, to put a simple teacher within reach of showing the elements of reading to many children of two sexes, in a manner not costly and which could suit the countryside as well as the cities.... We constantly returned to this interesting problem. You have for your part attempted to resolve it by trying yourself to teach some children to read in a village of our mountains. Finally, from the combination of all our ideas, there has resulted a system justified already by successful experience. This is the basis of the work that I address to you today, divided in four parts. The first gives an account of the principal difficulties of the art of teaching reading. The second gives an idea of the different methods proposed until now for removing such difficulties. The third discloses the plan that a teacher should follow, charged with 100 pupils, to show them how to read and write, at the same time. Finally, the fourth contains the necessary tables for the execution of the plan, and which free the pupils from the cost and the torment of books. All are preceded by a general table of voices and articulations of the French language. You will learn with pleasure that this practical method will be demonstrated to the teachers of Paris by a skillful grammarian, one of my illustrious colleagues of the National Institute, and one of the dignified professors of the central schools of the Department of the Seine. [Ed.: Sicard, teacher of the deaf, was also a member of the National Institute.] The zealous and brilliant Urban Domergue [Ed.: 1745-1810] readily seized this occasion to enoble the first degree of education, by descending from the heights of grammatical science to abecedaire ideas. It is to raise oneself without doubt to descend in this way. Could the professors of the central schools follow that example. Alas! until now childhood has been stupified by lessons of routinism. It is time that liberty and philosophy are introduced in the bosom of the primary schools. The constitution wishes it; the policy asks for it. The revolution of enlightenments can only consolidate that of the government.’

“Francois de Neufchateau counts thirty-four fundamental voices and articulations: fourteen vowels and twenty consonants. He begins by making known to the pupils the different manners of representing these thirty-four sounds. At the end of the class is a large blackboard (*tableau noir*) divided by some horizontal slats of which the interior angle is a little turned down in such a manner that one can introduce there and fasten there some cardboard tablets on which are painted some alphabetical characters; the pupils are each provided with a plain black tablet, and a piece of chalk. The master puts on the blackboard, by means of the grooved slats, the first voice of the alphabet, by presenting it under its four formes, e, eu, eu [Ed.: with a dot over the u] and oeu. He pronounces it, has it pronounced by three or four pupils, then by all simultaneously. Each pupil must immediately reproduce on his tablet the characters that he said. The master traces himself these characters by chalk on the big board, in order to show how they must be made. One passes immediately to the second voice, then to the third, etc.; in five or six days, in ten or fifteen at the most, the pupils know all the vowels and all the ways to represent them. By the same

procedure, they learn next the consonants, that one pronounces for them by means of the e muet. Then one makes them spell in applying successively the different vowels to the different consonants; and they write on their slates all the syllables that they spell. They do not pass to compounded syllables until they are absolutely trained in the simple syllables, and one only speaks to them of words when they do not experience the least hesitation on compounded syllables. To arrive there one should exhaust all the combinations possible of vowels and of consonants. Remaining are the difficulties coming from the irregularities of pronunciation, the mute letters, the letters which have many different sounds; one comes to this end by the following exercise: one asks the children to guess the letters of a word that one pronounces aloud; one places these letters on the tableau and one makes them write in proportion as they are guessed; this is what Francois de Neufchateau calls spelling under dictation. These preliminaries achieved, the children become stronger in reading by the means of exercises where they find regular applications of what they have learned. These exercises are methodically distributed in sixteen tables, covering some words and some short sentences. After having gone over these sixteen tables, the pupils, who have still not had books in their hands, reach fluent reading at last and the teacher has them read a book of morals and a treatise on orthography.

“The method of Francois de Neufchateau, of which the general adoption had constituted a considerable progress for primary teaching, had received the approbation of the Counsel of Public Instruction. But the political change that was the consequence of the coup d’etat of 18 Brumaire suddenly stopped the reforms that the republican government projected; the primary schools ceased to be the object of the authorities, and all progress, in the domaine of methods of education was put off for a long time.”

Ever since the wax writing tablets for beginners had been dropped during the fourteenth century, and until the French Revolution, the teaching of reading had generally been separated from the teaching of writing. There were, of course, always a few children who still learned writing at the same time as reading. The teaching of writing with beginning reading appeared again in force during the French Revolution. It is probable Revolutionary France was also the source for the numerous German methods which followed shortly after in the early nineteenth century, combining the teaching of reading and writing. A separate sub-section appeared in the Dictionnaire article, “Lecture,” entitled “Reading-Writing.” It read in part:

“The idea of teaching reading and writing simultaneously to children is very old. Montaigne said that he was taught to read at the same time as he learned to write, by [his teacher’s] putting the letters, the vowels and the words that served as examples under some sheets of horn or of transparent paper, so that he had only to trace the shape of the letters, stroke by stroke. Delaunay’s son, in 1741, advised parents who taught their children to read to put a pen in their hands as soon as they begin to read and to make them write, however, young they may be.’ The Canon Cherrier pointed out, as ‘an expedient simpler than all the others for teaching reading’ the following procedure: to write on a slate with chalk one or two letters at a time, and to make the children name them and to imitate them as well with the chalk. If they form the characters badly, they erase them to begin to make them again; one gives them next some syllables and some words which one teaches them at the same time to write and to pronounce. ‘One can by this means,’ he adds, ‘train children in a short while to read and to write syllables and words at the same time. Children of five years of age who have been instructed in this manner have been known to read fluently and to form their letters and all sorts of figures passably well.’

“Many attempts to compose practical systems of reading-writing are to be found in the Revolutionary period. A citizen, H. B., published in the year III a Method to Teach Writing and Reading, and to Write Under Dictation at the Same Time, which is cited by Francois de

Neufchateau. The author of this method showed that much time was gained by uniting the two studies which aided each other; he added that a single teacher could instruct at the same time a great number of pupils; it was sufficient to place in the class a blackboard [tableau] on which one could trace the letters, the syllables, etc. A little later, in the year VII, the jury of instruction of the arrondissement of Treves published Plan d'organisation interieure des ecoles primaires in which it is recommended to begin by writing, at which the child must be exercised 'before learning to read.'

"Du Pont de Nemours went further. According to him, reading is nothing, writing is all. Historically and logically, writing precedes reading; he who knows how to write knows how to read. 'It is necessary,' he said, 'to begin the literary instruction of children by teaching them to write, and one should not trouble them at all with reading, of which one will not have the need to make a separate study, if writing is well taught.... I have had the good fortune to have had several children to educate who are today men of merit, and who have never especially learned to read.' (Vues sur l'education nationale, An II)"

After an inactive period during Napoleon's tenure, interest in beginning reading instruction was revived about 1815 with the promotion of the French monitorial schools, modeled on the English schools of Lancaster and Bell.

The Journal d'Education was in existence in May, 1816, since it was mentioned on page 1544 in the section of the "Lecture" article concerning monitorial schools. On page 1545 appeared the information that the journal had also referred in an article in September, 1817, to the Society for Elementary Instruction (Societe Pour l'Instruction Elementaire), which was concerned with the founding of monitorial or "mutual" schools. On page 1544, information appeared on "The Method of the Schools of Mutual Education" ("La Methode des ecoles d'enseignement mutuel"). This was the reading method used in the French version of the Lancastrian monitorial schools and not surprisingly was modeled after the English method. The English method had been based on studying one-syllable words first, made up in tables first of two-letter words, then three-letter words, and so on to very long one-syllable words. This was a poor method for English, but it was considerably worse for French, because French has so many more multi-syllable words of high frequency. The article described the French monitorial schools and method:

"With the creation of the Society for Elementary Teaching in 1815, primary teaching received in France a new and fertile stimulus. A group of distinguished men gave themselves the mission to create some schools on the monitorial system, and put themselves to the search for the most reliable and the most rational methods for teaching elementary subjects. The reading method of the mutual schools, imitating that of Lancaster but adapted to the nature of the French language, was the work of Choron (who had published since 1805 a remarkable Methode pour apprendre a lire et a ecrire), of Jomard and of the Abbe Gaultier. It offered, like the method of Francois de Neufchateau, which it very much resembled, the advantage of teaching writing at the same time as reading. We shall outline the principal steps, from the Journal of Education [Journal d'education], the number for May, 1816.)

"The teaching of reading in the French mutual schools must be done by the means of a Syllabaire, forming 38 tables divided among the eight classes of the school, and of Lessons of reading.

"The first class (10 tables) is only kept busy with the alphabet; It is presented in three different ways: following the accustomed order, to teach the pupil the names of the letters; second, according to the form of the letters, straight, angular or curved, and to learn to trace them



on sand; third, following the nature of the sounds, distinguishing voices and articulations and arranged in the order adopted by Choron (14 voices, single-lettered or double-lettered, and 21 articulations, equally expressed by one sign or by two. The alphabets are in roman type and in cursive type. The children, with the index figures of their right hands, trace on the sand all the letters, large and small, roman and cursive.

“The second class (3 tables) spell some syllables of two letters (a single articulation and a single letter, and the opposite). The pupils also spell by heart: the table reversed, the monitor asks: he says de; the first pupil replies d, and the second de. They write on the slate some syllables of two letters, given by the monitor.

“The third class (6 tables) spell some syllables made of a single articulation and a two-letter voice (bou, beu) and the opposite; of a double articulation and of a single-letter voice (bla), and the opposite; of a single-letter voice or two-letters voice between two simple articulations (bal).

“The fourth class (4 tables) spell some syllables formed of a double articulation and of a two-letter voice (brou), and the opposite; of a triple articulation and of a single-letter voice or two-letter voice (stri); of a single-letter voice or two-letter voice between two single, double or triple articulations (tris, trist, strid, strict). In the spelling by heart, the children begin by saying the syllable, then they break it apart by pronouncing all the letters.

“The fifth class (5 tables of the syllabary and 7 tables of reading) begin to consider the syllables as forming some words. The tables of the syllabary contain a vocabulary of monosyllables, arranged under the voice or the articulation relating to their principal sound; by this means, the pupil perceives by a glance what must be the pronunciation and how to know all the equivalent notations of the same sound. The tables of reading offer some monosyllabic and disyllabic sentences with divisions between syllables (sentences and proverbs). The children who in the third and the fourth class could only write syllables, begin to write entire words but of single syllables.

“The sixth class (5 tables of the syllabary and 18 tables of reading) study a vocabulary of disyllabic words, and read some polysyllabic sentences with divisions between syllables (sentences, proverbs, maxims from the Old Testament). The children write some words of two and of three syllables.

“The seventh and the eighth classes (5 tables of the syllabary, 25 tables of reading common to the two classes) study a vocabulary of polysyllabic words, and read some polysyllabic sentences without separations between the syllables (stories from the Bible). It is here that one begins to put books into the hands of the children (catechism, moral stories). The pupils write some words of three, four and five syllables, those of the eighth class using ink and paper.

“The method that we review, officially adopted by the Society for Elementary Instruction, offered a systematic ensemble, of which all the parts were logically combined, and which rested on a rational analysis of the elements of the language. That was the most remarkable attempt that had been done, with that of Francois de Neufchateau, for organizing the collective assignment of reading for the school.”

The French monitorial schools met with some intense opposition. An article in the *Dictionnaire* (page 1482) on the Abbe Jean-Marie-Robert de Lammenais (1775-1861) said he wrote in opposition to it the book, *De l'Enseignement Mutuel*, 1819, saying, “This system is the work of demagogues and of the impious to whom France is indebted for so much misfortune.” He said that since 1815 the schools had

been a pernicious influence with terrible results, “in increasing the number of crimes among the young people and also among children.” The article said, “Lammenais wished to organize a crusade ‘against this defective method, defective in its procedures, dangerous for religion and for morals....’”

In contrast to the Abbe de Lammenais, according to the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913) article on the Abbe Gaultier, he had been a founding member of the group promoting monitorial schools and the “Lecture” summary had said he contributed to that reading method, but it did not describe his own approach. Gaultier’s method was summarized elsewhere in the article, “Lecture.” The Dictionnaire “Bibliographie” showed Gaultier’s initial work on reading as having appeared about (“vers”) 1788.

“During the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century, they were content in general to re-edit, to the usage of private education, the methods of the preceding century, Le Quadrille des Enfants (see Daubanton) or the typographical bureau. We must nevertheless make a special mention of the procedure of the Abbe Gaultier, which simplified in a favorable fashion the typographical system to use it in the outline of his instructive games. His “typographical box” is a box a foot long by six inches wide; the interior is divided in twenty-four compartments, each composed of two little leaves of cardboard which are joined at the back of the box to form together a right angle, and two other sides which are only vertical separations. The box, placed in one direction or the other, in front of the child, presents him thus with four lines, each offering six little desks, all of which carry one of the twenty-four letters of the alphabet.... When he knows his alphabet well, one makes him compose some syllables, then some words and some sentences.

“The Abbe Gaultier published five volumes of graduated reading, to follow the exercises of the typographical box.”

Presumably it was Gaultier’s five books on reading which were of use in the monitorial schools, as his elaborate typographical materials would have been of little use in such crowded, almost unsupervised surroundings. This description of Gaultier’s method made no reference to Port Royal spelling of letters by their sounds, instead of their names, so presumably such phonics was omitted. The typographical approach has many versions today, one of which is the English Breakthrough to Literacy program, although that takes an analytic approach, moving from whole words to letters. However, what is never mentioned in such accounts of “typographical” methods is the enormous “housekeeping” problems when little children are presented with multiple little cards, all of which must be returned to their proper locations or the materials become utterly useless. Most little children have great difficulty even putting away their own toys, and to teach children properly to use great numbers of separated letter cards requires constant follow-up by adults, or such materials degenerate into meaningless jumbles. One of the strong points of some Montessori programs is that they spend considerable effort training little children to put such “manipulative” materials back where they belong after each use, but the necessity to give such training to little children only confirms the fact that such neat behavior is not the norm.

Abbe Gaultier had endorsed the founding of mutual schools under government auspices, and Pere Girard in Switzerland had promoted monitorial schools which were presumably also government schools. Despite the opposition from clergy such as Abbe Lammenais, Gaultier and Girard were giving an unfortunate legitimacy as respectable clergy to the move from church to government schools. However, a curious reference was made in Girard’s biography in the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie to his possible pro-Kantian views, so Girard’s religious orthodoxy might be questionable.

An 1830 book in English contains these two interesting entries, demonstrating further the bridge between ideas of the French Revolution and ideas in the English-speaking world, including America. In his work, *Is Public Education Necessary?*, Blumenfeld told of Frances Wright, the public lecturer and advocate of free love, who was active in America about 1829, and who was a close associate of the

socialist/atheist Robert Owen's son. Writings from both the younger Owen and the woman, Frances Wright, appeared in the following volume, as well as the use of Frances Wright's married name, which certainly confirms at least one French contact among the change-agents. Note her concern with "national education," just like the activists preceding and during the French Revolution:

"Wright, Francis (Mme. d'Arusmont)

Address to the Industrious Classes: A Sketch of a System of National Education by Frances Wright, and Address to the New York Periodical Press by Robert Dale Owen, New York, 1830"

An 1829 book was put out on Frances Wright's lectures, in which she defended the "French Reformers:"

"Frances Wright - Course of Popular Lectures ...(including) A Reply to the Charges Against the French Reformers of 1789. New York, 1829."

French influences in the early nineteenth century continued to affect the teaching of beginning reading in English. One such program, apparently the source for comments by the American Dwight which will be referred to later, is reviewed in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire*, F. Buisson, Editor, Paris: 1887. This excerpt is from page 1546.

"Reading without Spelling, by Messrs. Lamotte, Perrier, Meissas and Michelot. We will finish this chapter by mentioning the attempt made in 1832 by Messrs. Lamotte, Perrier, Meissas and Michelot to create a method of reading which, inspired by experience and good sense more than by more or less hazardous and paradoxical theories, always took into consideration those innovations whose utility seemed confirmed by practice, and which could adapt itself indifferently to mutual instruction, simultaneous instruction or individual instruction. 'Having been devoted for a long time to the instruction of the young,' said the authors of the Method of Reading Without Spelling, 'we had to examine with the greatest care the different methods of reading, to do or to see the experience of the greatest number. It is because none of these of which we know has entirely satisfied us that we decided to compose the work that we offer today to persons who are charged with instructing or the instructors of children or adults who have been deprived of the benefit of education.'

"One commences by the study of the fourteen simple sounds (or vowels) and of the sixteen simple articulations (or consonants); these last are pronounced by means of the e mute; then come numerous tables: simple vowels followed with a simple articulation, simple articulations followed by a simple vowel, equivalent sounds of the simple sounds, equivalent consonants of the simple consonants, etc., etc. The syllables being regarded as the true elements of words, all kinds of spelling are rejected. The classification of the syllables and their methodical distribution in gradual tables, such was the task to perform. 'The real base of this classification is the more or less great difficulty that the pupils experience in recognizing and in pronouncing the syllables, a difficulty which is dependent on the number of the letters which compose them, on the number of the letters that are not pronounced, or on the alterations that usage has made between the pronunciation of certain letters and also of certain syllables.' One can regard the arrangement of the syllabaire of MM. Lamotte, Perrier, Meissas et Michelot as achieving certain progress on that of the mutual schools of 1815."

This last 1832 "syllabaire" may well be the French material which the American Theodore Dwight, Jr., in 1835 said had dropped "spelling," mentioned later. Yet the 1832 French method was nevertheless still strongly "sound"-oriented, as were the French monitorial school materials and most other French materials after 1800. Despite the fact that the Code l "meaning" method originated in eighteenth-century

France, and that the Code 3 two-step “phony phonics” method also had its origin in eighteenth-century France, France did not itself make wide use of either of those “meaning” methods until after World War I in the twentieth century, beginning to do so in the early 1920’s. However, by about 1950, such a public uproar had arisen in French-speaking areas against the “meaning” approach, called the “global method” in Europe, that it was largely dropped.

## Chapter 11

### Summarizing the French Influence

The eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century facts concerning reading history, and the people in eighteenth-century France who were so intimately concerned with reading history, are almost totally omitted from the modern literature. In English-speaking countries, when changes in reading methods came in the nineteenth century, almost no histories of previous methods were given in the works promoting those changes, as Neufchateau had done with his own work in France in 1799. As time went on, the “born yesterday” syndrome became the norm in the discussion of reading methods. The past has therefore largely been buried.

The latest “whole language” craze in the English language, world-wide, is an example of the bald ignorance of reading instruction history demonstrated by our “reading experts.” As will be discussed, “whole language” is largely a recycling of the much-publicized approach used in Quincy in 1875 and in Boston after 1878, where Leigh phonics was forced out. It is also largely a recycling of the “natural” method of the Riverside and Heart of Oak materials of the 1890’s. All of these approaches failed. Yet no suggestion is given in today’s literature that “whole language” is indeed, simply a retread of these old, failing programs.

In the few twentieth-century attempts in English to review reading instruction history, Germany has been listed as the primary source of new reading methods. Ickelsamer of Germany in the sixteenth century has been listed as the presumed source for the synthetic phonics method instead of the true source, Blaise Pascal in France in the seventeenth century. It is absolutely incredible that Gedike of Germany in the late eighteenth century has been listed as the presumed source for the whole-word method, to replace the syllable method, instead of the Quadrille “echo” method and de l’Epee, Radonvillier, and Adam in France, and Basedow in Germany, in the eighteenth century.

Gedike’s whole-word method was primarily a spin-off from the German Basedow’s Pascal-phonics whole-word method of 1770, in which Basedow broke up whole words in order to teach all their letter sounds. Basedow had obviously partly based his work on Pascal phonics as reported in the *Encyclopedie* article, “Syllabaire.” However, Gedike, although a great admirer of Basedow, used single whole words first in order to demonstrate single letter sounds while Basedow taught every letter sound in sample whole words.

Basedow is never mentioned as an important source of reading methods, even though he was, with the originators of the Quadrille “echo” method, and with de l’Epee and Radonvillier, one of the first to move the teaching of beginning reading from the syllable “sound” level to the whole-word “meaning” level. Of course, unlike them, Basedow used Pascal sounding-and-blending phonics at that level.

However, Basedow’s move from the syllable level to the word level had other spin-offs from one-time instructors in his Philanthropinum school, like Wolke’s phonic method, Trapp’s and Wackernagel’s sight-word methods, and Campe’s.

Jacotot in the 1820’s is usually listed as important in the history of reading instruction because of his use of whole words instead of syllables in reading instruction in Belgium. Yet Jacotot’s background as a college teacher during the French Revolution which spent such great effort on studying reading methods, which efforts may well have inspired Jacotot’s method, remains unnoticed. The possibility is never mentioned that Jacotot may have only been adapting the Quadrille “echo” whole-word method, and Radonvillier’s, Nicolas Adam’s, and Basedow’s whole-word work, as well as the work of their early

followers. Yet the “Lecture” article in the 1880’s Dictionnaire commented tartly that Radonvillier and Adam were the obvious source for Jacotot’s “new” whole-word method, testifying that the whole-word method was clearly not Jacotot’s invention.

Gedike’s and Basedow’s late eighteenth-century whole-word approaches in Germany were almost certainly influenced by Abbe Bertaud’s Quadrille early eighteenth-century whole-word materials from France. As A. Demkes stated in the 1880’s concerning the Quadrille approach, quoted earlier:

“This method had a great vogue in the last century. The king of Prussia, who had been struck by the results, had the prince royal, Frederick William, taught to read by this procedure. Like all reading methods without spelling, it succeeds only with those pupils who have, as has been said, the memory of the eyes.”

Therefore, not only was the use of whole words to teach beginning reading known earlier in eighteenth-century Germany before Basedow’s and Gedike’s day, but the method was also known (at least in France) as a defective method, since, “Like all reading methods without spelling, it succeeds only with those pupils who have, as has been said, the memory of the eyes.”

Since A. Demkes testified in the 1880’s that the Quadrille whole-word method “had a great vogue in the last century,” and was even used by the highly visible King of Prussia in Germany for his own son, it is really amazing that it is instead Gedike of Germany who is credited with having initiated the move from the syllable to the word far later, toward the end of the eighteenth century. Truly, reading instruction history is a black hole.

Before the French innovations of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, teaching beginning reading had always meant the teaching of the syllabary - fe, fi, fo, fum, and all the other whole and unbroken syllable sounds. No one ever dreamed of the act of reading as being anything except the sequential reproduction of memorized whole and unbroken syllable sounds, which then produced words, just as the sequential reproduction of memorized whole and unbroken syllable sounds produces words in speech.

However, the history of the teaching of beginning reading demonstrates that the moves from the whole syllable to its parts (phonics) or from the whole syllable to its products (words) originated in France. These moves did not originate in Ickelsamer’s Germany in the early sixteenth century or Gedike’s Germany in the late eighteenth century, or with the French Jacotot teaching in Belgium in the early nineteenth century, as the “expert” literature would have us believe. Instead, the switch from the age-old syllable method (“sound”) to phonics on the one hand (still “sound”) or to whole words on the other (“meaning”) originated in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The two versions of the whole-word “meaning” method also originated in eighteenth century France: either Code 1, the pure “meaning” approach of de l’Epee, or Code 3, the Quadrille “echo” approach, which is two-step phonics using parts of memorized meaning-bearing whole words to work out new words.

The benighted two-step, phony-phonics, whole-word method for children with normal hearing compares memorized whole printed words to an unknown word in order to see like parts. That “echo” method was never fully perfected in France, as it was later in the English-speaking world, but it clearly originated in eighteenth-century France.

The effect of one-step phonics in comparison to two-step phonics can be seen on the standardized “California” tests used about 1980 in the primary grades. The phonics in the “vocabulary” test was

divided into two parts: one required simple phonic answers, but the other necessitated comparing whole words to other whole words to see phonic likenesses. It fascinated me to see my first graders' exceedingly high scores on the first phonic section drop somewhat on the second phonic section. Did such a score profile also demonstrate to the test-makers whether a teacher was, or was not, teaching real, not "whole-word," phonics?

Various reading methods were a source of intense study during the French Revolution, at the same time that intense study was given to such plans as Condorcet's for government schools, and the record of this study persisted in printed reports which undoubtedly had wide distribution outside France. Not surprisingly, therefore, activism for new reading methods became the siamese twin of activism for government schools in English-speaking countries shortly after the beginning of the nineteenth century. Yet both the movement for government schools and the movement to alter reading methods in English-speaking countries had their origin in eighteenth-century France. It is therefore impossible to understand the history of the teaching of beginning reading or the spread of government schools in English-speaking countries without first studying the work on both in eighteenth-century France.





**PART 4**  
**The First Large-Scale Intentional Move from Sound to  
Meaning in America Began in 1826**



## **Chapter 12**

### **On Reading Texts of the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries, And on the Dame Schools**

It is just a fable that the New England Primer Enlarged was the dominant book to teach beginning reading to children in America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The erratic and unpopular author of the New England Primer Enlarged, Benjamin Harris, did not even arrive in this country until about 1686. The New England Primer Enlarged, which is presumed to have been Harris's compilation and the New England Primer in the sense it has since been known, was first advertised in Boston in 1690. As discussed elsewhere, it was apparently unsuccessful, presumably because of Harris's bad reputation. The probability is that the New England Primer was still not really available until 1727, after Harris's death. Harris had returned to England many years before 1727, where he had continued to publish for years until he died there, and where he never re-published the New England Primer Enlarged. The first surviving copy of the New England Primer Enlarged was printed in Boston in 1727 by another publisher who had no connection with Harris, but that edition appears to have been available only in tiny quantities, since the next surviving copy came out years later. The New England Primer Enlarged was not really widely published until almost forty years later - and even then the record demonstrates that it was not used for the teaching of beginning reading, but only as a religious catechism.

It is obvious that other materials than Harris's elusive primer must have been in use for the teaching of beginning reading all throughout the seventeenth century, from the arrival of the Pilgrims in Massachusetts in 1620 and from the arrival of the settlers in Virginia, and long before Harris's 1690 announcement that he was going to print the New England Primer Enlarged. As shown elsewhere, those other materials used in the seventeenth century in Colonial America continued in use for the teaching of beginning reading all throughout the eighteenth century.

According to Clifton Johnson's *Old-Time Schools and School-books*, in 1665 or 1666, Northampton, Massachusetts, paid for scholars "such as are in the primer & other English books...." That was about twenty-five years before the announcement that Harris's New England Primer Enlarged was to be published. Those 1665 New England children could not have been using Harris's primer, but had to be using some other primers. Yet the children would have used those primers as a second step, since they would have been using horn books or spelling books, and possibly even the 1643 Day speller published in Boston, as the first step in learning to read, just as their parents and grandparents had done in England.

The fact that hornbooks were used as the beginning step in America in 1691, even AFTER the New England Primer Enlarged was presumably finally available, is recorded in Ellen Schaffer's article, "The Hornbook - an Invitation to Learning," in *The Horn Book Magazine*, February, 1971. Schaffer said:

"An entry in the diary of Samuel Sewall in 1691 mentioned a little lad going to school accompanied by his cousin who carried his hornbook for him.... He was not quite three years old."

The hornbooks had been in use New England long before 1691. Susan Steinfirst, in her interesting unpublished dissertation, *The Origin and Development of the ABC Book in English from the Middle Ages through the Nineteenth Century*, University of Pittsburgh, 1976, in which I found the above reference, also quoted the following from page 8 of of Beulah Folmsbee's work, *A Little History of the Horn Book*. Boston, Horn Book, 1942:

“...Beulah Folmsbee refers to a 1632 statement by one Morton who wrote in his book, *New England Canaan, of the Puritan Sectarie* who came over to New England and brought ‘a great Bundell of Horne books with him, and careful hee was (good man) to blott out all the cross of them for feare least the people of all the land should become Idolators.’”

That certainly seems to establish that children in New England had been taught to read by the use of hornbooks, not primers, since at least 1632, and that was only 12 years after the Puritans had arrived there.

On page 146 of her book, Dr. Steinfirist wrote:

“In 1647, the General Court of Massachusetts provided for the establishing of reading schools because it was ‘one chief project of that old deluder, Satan, to keep men from knowledge of the Scriptures.’”

The expression, “reading schools,” instead of just the simple word, “schools,” undoubtedly was used in 1647 because “reading” had been taught apart from “writing” in England ever since about the late fourteenth century. “Writing schools” existed apart from “reading schools” as late as the 1790’s in New England.

Obviously, some kinds of texts were needed for such “reading schools” which were officially established in 1647 specifically to teach beginning reading so that children could read the Bible. The texts these schools used must have included imported horn books and imported spelling books, and perhaps even the American-printed Day speller published only four years before, in 1643. Furthermore, it is only reasonable to assume that some such schools must have existed unofficially before the 1647 law made their establishment mandatory. The probability is that they were widespread wherever the size of the local population warranted their establishment, and the large numbers of hornbooks imported in 1632, mentioned above, must have been used not only in private homes but in such schools.

As discussed, the popularity of the *New England Primer Enlarged* dates only from after 1750. Even after that, it was almost certainly used as a catechism for children and as a religious manual for adults, and not as a beginning reading book. It is interesting that it is not even mentioned in Noah Webster’s anecdotes about schoolbooks used when he was a boy in Connecticut. On March 10, 1840, Noah Webster wrote a letter to Henry B. Barnard, publisher of the *American Journal of Education*, which letter Barnard published. In it, Webster said:

“When I was young, the books used were chiefly or wholly Dilworth’s *Spelling Books*, the *Psalter*, *Testament* and *Bible*.”

Webster also confirmed, therefore, that a primer, ANY primer, was not the first book used to teach reading in school when he was a boy. The spelling book was the first book when he was a boy. Noah Webster (1758-1843) would have learned to read about 1764 so his comments concerned the period from 1764.

The eighteenth century was the period when literature for children was increasing mightily in Europe, and surely the increase must have had some impact in America. From that consideration alone, it is astonishingly naive to assume that the *New England Primer* was the uniformly used reading book for American children until about the nineteenth century. For instance, Mary F. Thwaite wrote the following (in *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, Boston, The Horn Book, Inc.: 1972 - copyright 1963, page 246):

“But children’s book publishing was growing fast in the second half of the eighteenth century in Europe, as recorded by a regular visitor to the Leipzig Book Fairs in 1787. Friedrich Gedicke, a Berlin schoolmaster, wrote in the programme of his Gymnasium that year some observations about schoolbooks and other works for children, stating that no form of literary manufactory had become as common as the making of books for youth, often of inferior quality. ‘At every Winter and Summer Fair at Leipzig,’ he wrote, ‘there flows in, like the flood of the sea upon the shore, a countless number of books....’”

Thwaite reported that Gedike had said that not much in the way of “pearls or amber” was available, but “mostly mud, or at best painted snail-shells.” Yet there was an astonishing variety of materials for children, such as newspapers, storybooks, poetry, history, travel books, and more, as well as reading books in many languages. Thwaite said that Gedike found fault with the advertising of frequently worthless children’s books as “Christmas Gifts for Good Children. Yet he would hardly have done so unless there was a vast quantity of such material for children being offered commercially.

Not only the European continent but eighteenth-century England was full of popular, cheap reading materials for children as well as adults. Thwaite wrote (pages 39-40):

“...Less reputable publishers... knew what ordinary folk, both young and old, wanted, and they intended to purvey cheap books sure to sell. The unsophisticated masses, encouraged by authority to read, so that they might know their Bible, were as ready to imbibe all kinds of lurid improbabilities in print as they were to enjoy old wives’ tales.... It was these conditions which gave rise to the rapid growth of chapbook literature in the eighteenth century. The lapse of licensing for the printing trade in 1695, and the growing interest in secular literature, were other potent contributory causes.

“Chapbooks were the flimsy little productions sold by the ‘Running Stationers’... and were usually hawked around the countryside at cottage doors, village fairs, and other places where likely customers might be found. The salesmen were itinerant peddlars or chapmen, who usually sold other wares besides penny and halfpenny books. Among the better chapbooks were versions of the old romances already described....

“In style and appearance chapbooks were of inferior quality, though designed always to attract the customer. Another important feature was their illustration....”

Thwaite said further (pages 60-61):

“The spread of cheap literature of an irreligious or subversive nature was looked upon as a real danger to the welfare of society at the end of the eighteenth century....

“‘Vulgar and indecent penny books were always common,’ wrote Hannah More to Zachary Macaulay in 1796, ‘but speculative infidelity, brought down to the pockets and capacities of the poor, forms a new era in our history.’”

So large numbers of “the poor” in eighteenth century England were not only able to read the penny books which “were always common,” but had a high enough “reading comprehension” of what was in them that Hannah More thought they could absorb written arguments for “speculative infidelity.” Yet almost the only way “the poor” in England could have learned to read in the eighteenth century was in dame schools, or at home!

Harvard has an extensive collection of chapbooks in its Boswell collection. As has been mentioned, a delightful account of chapbooks is given in *The Penny Histories, A study of chapbooks for young readers over two centuries*, by Victor E. Neuburg, published by Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York: 1969. Some comments on the history of chapbooks are also given in *Notes on Children's Books in England - Five Centuries of Social Life*, by F. J. Harvey Darton, Third Edition, Revised by Brian Alderson, Cambridge University Press: 1982, First Edition 1932. On pages 69, 70 and 81, Darton wrote:

“The true chapbook as a common vendible piece of reading matter distinct from broadside ballads, almanacs and the like, really came into embryonic existence in the seventeenth century, and grew up rapidly after the Star Chamber was abolished in 1641. A horde of political and religious pamphleteers fell upon the excited public as soon as they could do so, with reasonable safety. In fact, as Milton, the greatest of all apologists for a free press, complained, they ‘well-nigh made all other books unsaleable.’ But the other - non-controversial - books did appear. Thus there were editions of *Guy of Warwick* (in prose) in 1640 (licensed, if not published) in 1681, 1685, 1695, 1703, to say nothing of one or two which bear no dates.... The Licensing Act of 1662 did not hinder this stream... but when that Act expired in 1694, the strenuousness of controversy had abated, and fiction - the main [part] of chapbook literature - had a more ample share. The Copyright Acts - the first, ‘An Act for the Encouragement of Learning,’ was passed in 1710 - made no difference to the increasing number of literary pirates, who “encouraged learning” in a manner quite different from that intended by legislators influenced by authors and reputable booksellers. The day of the penny, twopenny, and sixpenny chapbook had dawned, and by the middle of the eighteenth century the grimy little productions were everywhere....

“In short, the chapbook, from 1700 to 1840 or thereabouts, contained all the popular literature of four centuries in a reduced and degenerate form: most of it in a form rudely adapted for use by children and poorly educated country folk.”

While Darton regarded the chapbooks with an obvious contempt, he made it clear that chapbooks were produced in vast numbers from about 1700 to after 1840 for the “mind of humbler England,” such as “children and poorly educated country folk.” The poor during those years were paying out some of their meagre coins to purchase enjoyment - by reading. Darton quoted with contempt from about the mid-eighteenth century what he called a “hotch-potch” version of the old tale of *Valentin and Orson*. Yet its readability level was very high! No functional illiterate could possibly have handled it. Darton seemed oblivious to the interesting fact - ignored in our era of government schools - that vast numbers of the “humbler” people in eighteenth century England were literate. Darton also produced the interesting fact that the chapbooks, which had been the reading amusement of the poor, were not wiped out by any frontal attack. Darton said the chapbooks were still on the market when Victoria married Albert, which was on February 10, 1840, so they simply died out very silently some time after that date. The chapbooks died out after 1840, not because the poor and the children of the poor had run out of the pennies to buy them, but because so many of the newer generation of the poor, who had learned after 1830 to read by “meaning” instead of by “sound” in government-subsidized schools, could not really read, or at least could not read with enjoyment. (“Psycholinguistic guessing,” the result of the “meaning” beginning-reading method, is a very disagreeable way to have to read.) The chapbooks were killed off after 1840 by the same things that killed so many of our newspapers after 1940: “psycholinguistic guessing” and the educational disease known as functional illiteracy, which are the gifts we can always depend on receiving from our highly-paid “reading experts.”

It is customary to discount the degree of literacy of the poorer classes in England in the eighteenth century, and to attribute increases in literacy to the laudable Sunday schools formed toward the end of the century. Yet, from the vast market for the cheap chapbooks, it seems probable that literacy was far more widespread than is generally acknowledged.

The chapbooks obviously were read in America - and published in America. In the New York Public Library are two copies of Mrs. Barbauld's Lessons for Children from 4 to 5 years old (New York Public Library Call Number \*KVD Barbauld). Both copies are paper covered and are about 2 by 4 inches. On each cover, on what was probably once white paper but is now tan, is a different design in blue, apparently stenciled. Despite the Barbauld content, the little "books" are obviously chapbooks. They were published in Wilmington, Delaware in 1801, "Printed and sold by P. Brynberg," very likely a descendant of the early Swedish colonists. On the last page is an advertisement for his other publications, and they were obviously largely the chapbooks of the eighteenth century:

"Books Printed and Sold by Peter Brynberg, Market Street, Wilmington, for the Entertainment and Instruction of the Little Masters and Misses in the United States."

Valentine and Orson  
Seven Wise Masters.  
Seven Wise Mistresses.  
Academy of Compliments.  
Arabian Nights Entertainments.  
Book of Knowledge.  
Universal Dream Book.  
Robinson Crusoe.  
Deeds of Old  
Fairy Tales.  
Prompta.(?)  
History of Jane (?)Shaw and Fair Rosamond.  
Funny Companion.  
Oeconomy of Human Life.  
Catechism of Nature.  
History of the Bible.  
History of Little Jack.  
History of Margery Two Shoes.  
History of Dick by (?)John.  
Entertaining Tales for Children.  
The Father's Legacy to his Daughters.  
Little Masters' and Misses' Delights.  
Gulliver's Travels.

In 1797, Peter Brynberg had published the Universal Spelling-book, reported by R. C. Alston in Volume IV of his A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, 1969.

Teaching children to read by the syllable method is not very demanding, in any event, and that is how children were taught in the dame schools of the eighteenth century. That is how the "Little Masters and Misses in the United States" had learned to read by 1801. They obviously provided a profitable market for Peter Brynberg's Wilmington output, since it was of a considerable size.

An excellent source on the "curriculum sequence" of the dame schools appears in a child's story first published in 1765, which story is considered today to be fine literature and is often attributed to Oliver Goldsmith. To show its widespread fame as late as 1801, it was included in Brynberg's chapbook list as History of Margery Two Shoes. As Thwaite remarked concerning the story about Goody Two-Shoes, (page 51):

“By 1766 it was in a third edition, and although like other Newbery books, *Goody Two-shoes* bears the marks of its period, its charm of style, humour and feeling ensured it a longer life than its companions on Newbery’s shelves. Its appeal to the discriminating is witnessed by Charles Lamb, who praised it in a letter to Coleridge in 1802, when he lamented that it was almost out of print, banished with other classics of the nursery by ‘Mrs. Barbauld’s stuff’.

“*Goody Two-Shoes*, still immensely engaging, is commonly considered to have been written by Oliver Goldsmith. Published by John Newbery in London in 1765, he advertised it amusingly with the comments, ‘See the Original Manuscript in the Vatican at Rome,’ and ‘the Cuts by Michael Angelo’“ (Thwaite, page 52).

Thwaite described it (page 51):

“The story tells how poor orphan Margery, whose father had died of a violent fever ‘in a place where Dr. James’ Fever Powder was not to be had,’ gets her two shoes instead of half-a-pair, learns to read, becomes ‘a trotting tutoress’ and teaches children, not merely their letters but lessons for the conduct of life....She (becomes) the head of an Academy where the animals she has rescued from cruel boys help her to run the school. At last she wins the reward of all her industry and virtue marrying the Lord of the Manor.”

The story unintentionally reflects mid-eighteenth century life, and not only that the poor were taught to read, but precisely how they were taught to read: by the syllabary and spelling, not by “primers.”

The Heart of Oak Books, Second Book, Edited by Charles Eliot Norton, D. C. Heath & Co., Boston: 1895 (1902) contains a shortened version of *Goody Two-Shoes*. That some of the students of the trotting tutoress were poor, indeed, is shown by this excerpt (page 145):

“The next place we came to was Gaffer Cook’s cottage. Here a number of poor children were met to learn, who all came round Little Margery at once; and having pulled out her letters, she asked the boy next her, what he had for dinner.

“Who answered, ‘Bread’ (the poor children in many places live very hard).

‘Well, then,’ says she, ‘set the first letter.’“

She had him spell out “bread,” and then asked the other children the same question. They had happier answers: “apple-pie,” or “potatoes,” or “beef and turnips.” All answers were duly spelled out with the letters.

*Goody Two-Shoes* traveled around the neighborhood carrying her collection of ten complete sets of the small letters of the alphabet and six complete sets of the large letters, which she had cut herself by her knife out of wood. “And having got an old spelling-book, she made her companions set up all the words they wanted to spell” (pages 141-142). Since Goldsmith came from Dublin, one wonders if he had been exposed as a child to the similar “typographical scrutore” alphabets of Dumas described in Rollins’ book published in Dublin in 1739, referred to elsewhere.

To one little boy, Goody was teaching the basic alphabet. She put down a mixed-up alphabet and he had to name the letters as he picked them up and placed them in alphabetical order. This obviously showed that he had learned his letters.



The next higher achiever had a different task (page 144):

“Come in, Madge (Ed.: for Margery Two-Shoes); here, Sally wants you sadly; she has learned all her lesson.’

“Then out came the little one.

“So Madge!’ says she.

“So Sally!’ answered the other, ‘have you learned your lesson?’

“Yes, that’s what I have,’ replied the little one, in the country manner; and immediately taking the letters she set up these syllables:

“ba be bi bo bu, ca ce ci co cu,  
da de di do du, fa fe fi fo fu,

“and gave them their exact sounds as she composed them; after which she set up the following: -

“ac ec ic oc uc, ad ed id od ud,  
af ef if of uf, ag eg ig og ug,

“and pronounced them likewise....

“After this, Little Twoshoes taught her to spell words of one syllable, and she soon set up pear, plum, top, ball, pin, puss, dog, hog....”

By the four periods following “likewise,” The Heart of Oak version indicates something was left out at that point. Presumably the omitted section in the original story concerned the rest of the syllabary. The story mentioned that Goody had found an old spelling book to use, and spelling books of the eighteenth century gave the whole syllabary and consonant blends (bla, ble, bli, blo, blu, etc.) and then usually began the one-syllable step by sound analogy, such as in “band, hand, land.” Yet, even the portion reproduced in The Heart of Oak version accurately showed that the one-syllable step followed the syllabary. Equally, it showed the two-syllable step at the trotting tutoress’s next stop, at Gaffer Cook’s cottage, where she was working with children on words of two or more syllables (turnips, apple-pie, potatoes). Finally, she went to Farmer Thompson’s, “where there were a great many little ones waiting for her” (pages 145-146):

“They all huddled round her, and though at the other place they were employed about words and syllables, here we had people of much greater understanding, who dealt only in sentences.

“The letters being brought upon the table, one of the little ones set up the following sentence:

-

“The Lord have mercy upon me, and grant that I may be always good, and say my prayers, and love the Lord my God with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my strength; and honor government and all good men in authority.

“Then the next took the letters, and composed this sentence: -

“Lord have mercy upon me, and grant that I may love my neighbor as myself, and do unto all men as I would have them do unto me, and tell no lies; but be honest and just in all my dealings.”

The third and the fourth child composed like sentences, deeply religious and of startlingly high “readability” levels. To show how far we have sunk culturally, it is probable that the story of Goody Two-Shoes would be banned from any government school because of its “religious content” - the same government schools that oppose “censorship” of “literature” with obscene content. Of course, most primary grade school children who learned by sight words would be unable to read the religious content of Goody Two-Shoes, anyway, so the “banning” would be rather pointless.

In due course, Goody ceased being a trotting tutoress and became a stationary one (pages 148-149):

“Mrs. Williams, who kept a college for instructing little gentlemen and ladies in the science of A, B, C, was at this time very old and infirm, and wanted to decline that important trust. This being told to Sir William Dove, who lived in the parish, he sent for Mrs. Williams, and desired she would examine Little Twoshoes, and see whether she was qualified for the office.

“This was done, and Mrs. Williams made the following report in her favor, namely, that Little Margery was the best scholar, and had the best head, and the best heart of any one she had examined.

“All the country had a great opinion of Mrs. Williams, and this character gave them also a great opinion of Mrs. Margery, for so we must now call her...”

Note that “All the country had a great opinion of Mrs. Williams...” That certainly implies that dame schools also could be greatly respected in eighteenth century England, in sharp contrast to nineteenth century England when government school activists vilified dame schools.

Goody Two-shoes is not the sole narrative testimony to school practices for beginners in Great Britain in the eighteenth century. Mary F. Thwaite recorded another eighteenth century story concerning the teaching of rural children (page 152):

“An interesting example describing a rural dame school of the period is *The Village School* (ca. 1783) by Dorothy Kilner. Here Mrs. Bell, ‘a very good woman’, teaches little boys and girls to read, and the girls ‘to spin, knit stockings, and to hem, fell, stitch and mark’. The clergyman, Mr. Right, is much in evidence. He helps to pay for the poor children’s schooling, plays with the scholars at cricket, and helps them to fly their kites.”

Ellwood P. Cubberley included a section, “The English Dame School,” in his book, *Readings in the History of Education* (pages 374-377), Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston - New York - Chicago - Dallas - San Francisco: 1920. In his book, Cubberley quoted poetry written during the period of the dame schools. That poetry, unsolicited, certainly must stand as reliable testimony concerning the agreeable nature of the dame schools.

In discussing the poetry of the Reverend George Crabbe (1754-1832), Cubberley said:

“The English poet Crabbe was essentially a poet of the homely life of the people. In his description of the Borough, in speaking of the “Poor and their Dwellings,” he pays a passing tribute of respect and gratitude to his first teacher, in the following lines describing the Dame School he attended:

“At her old house, her dress, her air the same,  
 I see mine ancient letter-loving dame:  
 ‘Learning, my child,’ said she, ‘shall fame command;  
 Learning is better than house or land -  
 For houses perish, lands are gone and spent;  
 In learning then excel, for that’s most excellent.’  
 ‘And what her learning?’ - ‘T is with awe to look  
 In every verse throughout one sacred book.  
 From this her joy, her hope, her peace is sought;  
 This she has learned, and she is nobly taught.  
 If aught of mine have gained the public ear;  
 If RUTLAND deigns these humble Tales to hear,  
 If critics pardon, what my friends approved;  
 Can I mine ancient Widow pass unmoved?  
 Shall I not think what pains the matron took,  
 When first I trembled o’er the gilded book?  
 How she, all patient, both at eve and morn,  
 Her needle pointed at the guarding horn;  
 And how she soothed me, when with study sad,  
 I labored on to reach the final zad?  
 Shall I not grateful still the dame survey,  
 And ask the Muse the poet’s debt to pay?  
 Nor I alone, who hold a trifler’s pen,  
 But half our bench of wealthy, weighty men,  
 Who rule our Borough, who enforce our laws,  
 They own the matron as the leading cause,  
 And feel the pleasing debt, and pay the just applause:  
 To her own house is borne the week’s supply;  
 There she in credit lives, there hopes in peace to die.”

Crabbe’s poem is more eighteenth-century testimony on the high public regard given, not only to the English dame school heads, but to the dame schools themselves.

Cubberley said, “Another English poet, Henry Kirke White (1758-1806) also describes his school in a somewhat similar vein:

““In Yonder cot, along whose mouldering walls,  
 In many a fold the mantling woodbine falls,  
 The village matron kept her little school -  
 Gentle of heart, yet knowing well to rule.  
 Staid was the dame, and modest was the mien,  
 Her garb was coarse, yet whole and nicely clean;  
 Her neatly border’d cap, as lily fair,  
 Beneath her chin was pinn’d with decent care;  
 And pendent ruffles of the whitest lawn,  
 Of ancient make her elbows did adorn.  
 Faint with old age, and dim were grown her eyes;  
 A pair of spectacles their want supplies.  
 These does she guard secure in leather case,  
 From thoughtless wights in some unweeted place.  
 Here first I entered, though with toil and pain,

The low vestibule of learning's fane -  
 Entered with pain, yet soon I found the way,  
 Though sometimes toilsome, many a sweet display.  
 Much did I grieve on that ill-fated morn  
 When I was first to school reluctant born;  
 Severe I thought the dame, though oft she tried  
 To soothe my swelling spirits when I sighed,  
 And oft, when harshly she reproved, I wept -  
 To my lone corner broken-hearted crept -  
 And thought of tender home, where anger never kept;  
 But, soon inured to alphabetic toils,  
 Alert I met the dame with jocund smiles -  
 First at the form, my task for ever true,  
 A little favorite rapidly I grew;  
 And oft she strok'd my head, with fond delight  
 Held me a pattern to the dunce's sight;  
 And, as she gave my diligence its praise,  
 Talked of the honors of my future days."

Cubberley referred to still another eighteenth-century English poet, William Shenstone [1714-1763], who wrote about the dame schools, saying Shenstone:

"has immortalized, in a poem of three hundred and fifteen lines entitled *The Schoolmistress*, his early dame-school teacher, and has also given a detailed description of the school. This has been said to rank in poetry with the paintings of Teniers and Wilkie for its truthfulness of portrayal...."

Cubberley quoted two verses but said the whole poem had appeared in Barnard's *American Journal of Education*, Vol. III, pp. 449-55. The second verse of the two verses Cubberly gave is quoted below. That verse is interesting because it confirms the presence of a dame school in every English village in the eighteenth century, and confirms that the little ones in the dame schools had actual lessons to "con," which means they were being taught simple reading.

"In every village mark'd with little spire,  
 Embowered in trees, and hardly known to fame,  
 There dwells, in lowly shed and mean attire,  
 A matron old, whom we schoolmistress name,  
 Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame;  
 They grieven sore, in piteous durance pent,  
 Awed by the power of this relentless dame,  
 And oft-times, on vagaries idly bent, '  
 For unkempt hair, or task unconn'd, are sorely shent."

Such authors had no vested interest in these simple dame schools. They were only telling stories whose settings were in their own time. They therefore unconsciously painted as background their own familiar world. Historically speaking, one of the best sources for facts about a culture are those facts which are mindlessly embedded in the backgrounds of its stories. Using this concept as an historical yardstick, it is reasonable to assume, despite some negative lines in the last poem, that the eighteenth-century dame schools were, generally speaking, pleasant for the students, successful in their teaching, and regarded with respect by the eighteenth-century public. There is hardly a trace of antipathy to dame schools in these contemporary writings.

These English dame schools, so charmingly described in *Goody Two-Shoes* and *The Village School*, were also turning out the great number of middle and lower class literates who were buying the eighteenth-century massive production of chapbooks in England. Yet, in less than a century, such dame schools would be described by government-school activists in Great Britain as most commonly being hell-holes in which it was almost impossible to learn. It seems highly improbable that the vast majority of dame schools in the mid-nineteenth century were as those government-school activists described them, since the historical descriptions of dame schools from the eighteenth-century are almost totally contradictory.

### Background on Noah Webster's Synthetic Phonics

In eighteenth century America, Noah Webster was directly concerned with a change in the teaching methods for beginning reading which had come down from antiquity: the memorization of the syllabary as a key to unlock print. Instead, Webster incorporated in the spelling book which he wrote in 1783 the 1655 invention of that French scientific genius, Blaise Pascal. That invention was true synthetic phonics.

True synthetic phonics should be defined. Most consonant sounds cannot exist apart from a vowel; syllables are units composed of a vowel alone or a vowel and one or more consonant sounds. Therefore, the idea of considering consonant sounds separated from vowels (as is the case in synthetic phonics) is only an abstraction, and so is the idea of blending these abstract sounds. The three sounds, "cuh-ah-tuh," cannot in reality be blended to form the spoken word, "cat." But it was the conception of abstract consonant sounds (which do not exist) and the concept of blending of such abstract sounds into syllables (which is clearly impossible) that produced that extraordinarily successful teaching technique, synthetic phonics.

It is hardly surprising to discover that synthetic phonics was the brainchild of the scientific and mathematical genius, Blaise Pascal in 1655. Science deals with analysis and synthesis. Reading already had sound "analysis" with the syllable method, in which syllables were arranged in regularly formed sound patterns so that the sounds of consonants and vowels could be analyzed by comparison: ba, be, bi, bo, bu, - ab, eb, ib, ob, ub; ca, ce (s), ci (s), co, cu - ac, ec, ic, oc, uc (and so on). In a truly complete syllabary, all consonants and usable consonant blends were placed before and after all the vowels: bla, ble, bli, blo, blu, etc., and act, ect, ict, oct, uct, etc.). English spelling books containing complicated English spellings extended the method by applying it to spelling analogies: cake, make, bake; find, bind, kind; and eight, freight, sleigh. What Pascal added to the syllable method was phonic "synthesis." With his method, children had only to learn the relatively few isolated sounds of the letters of the alphabet, (and their variations as with the "s" sound for the syllables ce, ci and other French irregularities) after which they could easily blend the letters to form the long syllable tables which previously had to be learned slowly, by analysis. Synthetic phonics used on the syllable tables placed a far lower load on the memory than the syllable tables alone had done, and it was correspondingly far more successful.

When Pascal's synthetic phonics method was finally adapted to the reading of English, necessary additions had to be made to make it thoroughly workable: silent letters had to be marked, variant vowel sounds had to be learned (ou, aw, oi, etc.) and so on.

Pascal's phonics, mentioned in his sister Jacqueline's letter to him from the Port Royal school of October 26, 1655, and in Antoine Arnauld's letter of January 31, 1656 (mentioned in the article on Blaise Pascal in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire*, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris, 1887) appeared in 1664 in the *Grammaire* of the Port Royal Jansenist school in France, which was written by Antoine Arnauld. As mentioned, the article, "Syllabaire," in Denis Diderot's *Encyclopedie* in France in the mid-eighteenth century praised the method, because it made the learning of syllables so much more

rapid, but the article emphasized that it was still essential to memorize the sounds of all the syllables. Pascal's idea had lain largely dormant for about a century, with some slight use being made of it in France. This use was described in the article mentioned previously, "Lecture," in F. Buisson's 1887 *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire*. It was not until after the mid-18th century that the use of Pascal's synthetic phonics really spread, influencing possibly the teaching of deaf-mutes. Braidwood's school with a phonic method began in Edinburgh in 1760 and Heinecke's in Germany not long after.

An earlier connection in the seventeenth century between phonics for hearing children and phonics for the deaf is suggested by the historical record. It is conceivable that Pascal's 1655 idea was inspired by a 1620 text for teaching the deaf<sup>17</sup> which appeared in Madrid.

Teaching spoken language to the deaf was first done apparently in the sixteenth century. The pagan "classical world" of the Greeks and Romans had exhibited predictable callousness towards the problems of the deaf and there is no record of deaf education in that ancient world. Yet, as early as the eighth century in Christian England, the historian monk, Bede, told of a manual alphabet used to teach language to the deaf.

The development of the language areas in the brains of American students may have been stunted at the precise ages when those areas of the brain are reported to be maturing (from the ages of about seven to ten years). The stunting may have resulted from the appalling defects in the methods by which the students were taught to read and by the dumbed-down vocabulary and syntax in the textbooks and storybooks given to them to read afterwards. (This is in addition to the vacuous subject-content of the textbooks). The idea of such a critical age for language exposure in brain development is hard to deny. Everyone is aware of how easy it is for a seven- or eight-year old child to pick up a language in a new country with the greatest of ease, while his university-educated, but mature, parents, will have difficulty in acquiring enough language to find and get around in the local buses.

Concerning possible proof of critical ages in brain development, the following appears in *Human Neuropsychology*, by Henri Hecaen and Martin L. Albert, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1978, page 418:

"...we wish to make allusion to the unusual case of a child deprived of all verbal communication from 20 months to 13 years of age (Fromkin et al, 1974). Despite the return to a normal life, this child has acquired only a limited amount of language. Dichotic listening studies showed that only the right hemisphere was treating material, verbal or non-verbal. The problem of a critical period of maturation affecting transfer of language representation from one hemisphere to the other may now be posed, in a different manner: perhaps without adequate stimulation during maturation, a preformed cerebral zone may not be able to acquire its functional capacities."

In the fifteenth century, Rudolf Agricola (1443-1485), the classical scholar, told of a deaf man who had learned to communicate by writing. The beginning of teaching spoken, and not just written, language to the deaf was the work of a Spanish monk, Ponce de Leon (1520-1584). About fifty years after Ponce de Leon's efforts, a Spanish priest, Juan Pablo Bonet, published a book for the education of the deaf in

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<sup>17</sup> Source: "Education of the Deaf and Dumb," page 315 and following, in the article "Education," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, The Encyclopedia Press, Inc. New York, New York, 1913. The high quality and content of this encyclopedia, written and published in America in 1913, compared to the far lower quality and content of most reference works published in America today, is one of a vast number of indications of a sharp deterioration in American literacy and learning since 1918.

spoken language which showed the position of the vocal organs when pronouncing each letter. Bonet's book, published in Madrid in 1620, contained, according to the 1913 Catholic Encyclopedia, "many valuable suggestions useful to modern teachers of articulation and lip reading."

It is conceivable that Ponce de Leon was influenced by the 1527 book of the German, Valentin Ickelsamer, whose work has been discussed previously, and who had hearing children concentrate on the position of their mouths in forming consonants. Also, it is conceivable that Pascal by 1655 may have seen and been influenced by this 1620 Spanish work for the deaf, when he made his 1655 suggestion to use sounding-and-blending phonics for hearing children. However, just as Ickelsamer's work appeared to be concerned with analytic phonics - the analysing of sounds in whole words, so may the Spanish work for the deaf been conceived of by its inventors as an analysis of spoken whole syllables. The "synthesis" of individual consonant letter sounds is actually an impossibility because there are no such things as isolated consonant sounds - only isolated vowels or semi-vowels. The imaginary abstraction of isolated consonant sounds, so that "synthesis" of consonants and vowels could aid beginning reading, appears originally to have been solely work of the scientific genius, Blaise Pascal.

After the 1620 Spanish text, the idea of teaching speech to the deaf spread, with other promoters, such as John Conrad Amman (1669-1724) of Switzerland and Samuel Heinecke (1729-1790) of Germany. Thomas Braidwood opened his school in Edinburgh in 1760. That the spread of effective methods for teaching oral language to the deaf followed immediately after Bonet's and Pascal's work suggests direct influence from one or both. However, Pascal may have had his phonic influence limited to hearing children with synthetic phonics, and Bonet to deaf children with analytic phonics.

The phonic idea, probably from Pascal, influenced the teaching of elocution. Thomas Sheridan, Jr., (1718-1788), the Anglo-Irish father of the playwright, Richard Sheridan, was himself the son of Thomas Sheridan, Sr., (1687-1738) "a schoolmaster of highest repute," according to the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963). Thomas Sheridan, Sr., was a close friend of the author of Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift, and Thomas Sheridan, Jr., in 1784 wrote a Life of Swift. Thomas Sheridan, Jr., therefore, obviously grew up in a very education-conscious and literate household, and would have been exposed to many books, one of which may have been a work by Charles Rollin of France (1661-1741). In 1726, Rollin of France published his *Supplement au Traite des Etudes*. Rollin spoke with great approval of Dumas' Bureau Typographique which used little letter cards and holders to teach Pascal's synthetic phonics. Rollin's "De la maniere d'enseigner et d'etudier les belles-lettres" was translated into English and published in Dublin, Ireland, in 1738, according to Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education of the National Institute of Education in Washington, 1976. Rollin's *Supplement* very likely was also available in Dublin in the Sheridan household. Thomas Sheridan, Jr., must have absorbed Pascal phonics through some such source since it is unlikely that he reinvented the idea of synthetic "pronouncing print." (Sheridan's dictionary did not, however, follow Pascal's method for naming the letters, following each with a schwa sound, but instead preceded each with a short "e." Sheridan obviously did not get Pascal's material directly but indirectly.)

Rollin said, concerning Du Mas' materials which used Pascal's phonics (from pages 6 and 8 of the 1738 Dublin reprint of *De La Maniere....*, as shown above, Volume 309 in the NIE catalog):

"There has lately been offered to the publick a new method of teaching children to read, entitled, The TYPOGRAPHICAL SCRUTORE, or BUREAU, the invention of which we owe to Mr. Du Mas.... The typographical scrutore is a table or board, much longer than broad, on which is fixed a kind of shelf, consisting of three or four stories or ranges of little boxes or cells, in which are laid the different sounds contain'd in a language, express'd by characters, single or compounded, on so many cards. Each of these cells has its title, denoting the letters which lie in it. The child ranges on the table or board, the sounds of such words as are ask'd him, by taking

them out of their respective drawers, in the same manner as a printer selects out of his box, the various letters of which his words are compos'd; and 'tis for this reason, that the scrutore in question had the epithet typographical given it.

“This way of learning to read, besides many other advantages, has one which appears to me very considerable, and that is, its being entertaining and agreeable, without having the least air of study.”

So the idea of Pascal's synthetic phonics was sown in Dublin in 1738 with the translation of Rollin's work describing Du Mas' use of it. This Dublin reprint was obviously meant to be sold to schoolmasters like Sheridan's father.

That 1738 translation apparently influenced the writing of two other books in Dublin. Neither showed an author, which is intriguing, and both are reported by Alston in his *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800*, Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, 1969. In Volume I, *English Grammars Written In English*, on page 97, Alston showed his entry No. 475, which was published in Dublin in 1743 by M. Cooper:

Anonymous. *A New English Grammar: Containing Such Useful Observations in Spelling and Amendments in the Sounds of Letters as Will Enable Even a Mean Capacity Soon to Become a Master of the English Tongue....*

Alston described it as follows:

“(pronunciation, accentuation; homophones; prosody.)”

This 1743 book certainly may have been influenced from Rollins' book published in Dublin in 1738.

In Alston's Volume IV: *Spelling Books*, the following was illustrated on Plate LIII, and described under item No. 422:

“The Irish Spelling Book; or, Instruction for the Reading of English, Fitted for the Youth of Ireland. ‘In which are set forth many useful Observations in Spelling, Alterations, and Amendments in the Sounds of Letters, both Single and Double; Exact Formations of both Sorts by the several Organs of Voice; --- A Discourse on Prosody:--- A large Chapter about various Quantities of Vowels, Change, and Loss of Letters and Syllables in Pronunciation; ---Rules for the right Reading of Prose and Verse....’ [etc., but the rest of the title page not dealing with phonetics] Dublin: printed by and for James Hoy, Printer and Bookseller.... 1740.”

Alston noted under his entry 422 for *The Irish Spelling Book of 1740* that its author was unknown, but that it was discussed by W. Bohnhardt in *Phonetische Studien*, II, 1889, pages 64-82. It is obvious that the German author in 1889 recognized *The Irish Spelling Book of 1740* as exceedingly important in the history of phonetics. Alston who also obviously recognized its great importance reproduced the book elsewhere in its entirety. An examination of one of the copies Alston took the trouble to have reproduced, which is presently in the British Library, showed it is, among other things, a dissertation on simple, synthetic phonics for the teaching of reading in English. It is a brilliant and original book.

The first page of the reproduction reads:

“English Linguistics 1500-1800 (Collection of Facsimile Reprints) Selected and edited by R. C. Alston. No. 199 The Scolar Press, Limited, Menston, England, 1969 - X.989/4721.”



Its title page reads:

“The Irish Spelling Book 1740 A Scolar Press Facsimile, The Scolar Press, Limited, Menston, England, 1969.”

The following page has this “Note:”

“Reproduced... by permission of the Director of Jena University Library. The author of The Irish Spelling Book has never been identified, but the work remains today an indispensable source of information on the pronunciation of England during the last half of the eighteenth century. As acknowledged in the Preface, the work borrows substantially from Isaac Watts’ The Art of Reading and Writing English (1721), and frequently reprinted throughout the eighteenth century. As with so many early schoolbooks, the text is arranged in a catechetical form.

“Only two copies of the original have been traced - the British Museum copy (in very fragile condition - 12984. aaa. 18) and the Jena copy. For a brief phonological study, see W. Bohnhardt, *Phonetische Studien*, II, 1889, 64-82. Reference: Alston IV, 422.”

The book itself is 346 pages long. “The Preface” referred scornfully to “idle Romances” then in use in Ireland, (obviously, the chapbooks) and implicitly confirmed that children could, indeed, read them. The author’s major objection to such “idle Romances” was that reading them could do nothing to teach children to pronounce English properly, which was obviously necessary if the children were to prosper in a society dominated by England. The author wrote:

“The children in Ireland are generally train’d up in reading idle Romances, which fill their Heads with wild, and unnatural Fancies, and corrupt their Morals, also... whereas Books, furnish’d with Observations and Rules, setting forth the Nature of the English Language, would, with certainty and expedition, carry them on towards the reading and understanding of it; in the Romances they have no such Instruction: They have nothing to help them, but only the Voice of the Teachers, who themselves are mostly very ignorant and unskilful; and hence their Progress in Learning is very slow, and tedious, and they scarcely ever arrive at any tolerable Knowledge in the Language. Having seriously considered this matter, I made my Address to some Persons of good Figure, and Understanding, with Complaints of such a wrong education, and told them, that if some book were composed, which might be compleat Instruction for Reading, and so order’d, as not to be disagreeable to any Perswasion whatsoever, I believ’d it might be more useful to the Public, than Romances, and also than most of the Spelling-Books we already have.

“By their Approbation of the Thought, and Wishes express’d for such a Book, I was animated to the following work.

“Before the Reader dips into it, I think it proper (according to the custom in Prefaces) to give some short Account of it.

“I have perused many Thoughts both new and old, upon the Subject, and, out of them (as everyone has done from those before him) have cull’d some Things useful for my purpose; and particularly from the ingenious Dr. Watt’s Spelling-Book, which is reason’d to be the best Performance in its Kind, which hitherto we have ever had.

“And yet, whoever compares what is here done, with other Pieces before it, will not find it (some few Things excepted) the same with any of them, but in many things different from all.”

In outlining the book's contents, the anonymous author said of Chapter IV:

"The Alterations Proposed in the Sound of Letters, may seem a bold Adventure, and yet I presume it is a rational one."

This establishes that his introduction of Pascal phonics was an innovation in English in 1740, or he would hardly have referred to it as "a bold Adventure." He said:

"It is odd, that such Names shou'd be given to Letters in most Languages, as do so little exercise the Powers, and Sounds they have to have when joined in Syllables; and it is wonderful, how young children ever learn to spell them at all, even by their Names in English, though generally more... plain than in other Tongues; as for instance, our named Uzzard (z) is so very strange, that I was much puzzled to account for it; till Mr. Samuel Davey, a very ingenious gentleman, convinced me, it was a corruption of (s) hard, as in zone, by way of distinction from (s) soft as in Sam.

"The amendments therefore in that, and other letters, single and double, seem to be proper and convenient."

The author's "amendments" in the sounds of consonants were generally to name them in the way Pascal had suggested, which meant to put the consonant sound before or after a muted vowel sound.

In Chapter X, he covered:

"Vowels and Consonants Single and Double With the Sounds, Changes and Loss of Letters and Syllables in Pronunciation...methodically."

His 'catechism' told a lot about prevalent ideas on the nature of reading:

"Q. What is reading?

A. Reading is the expression of written or printed Sentences with a due Pronunciation.

"Q. What is a sentence?

A. A sentence is a set or number of words comprehending some perfect sense or sentiment of the mind.

"Q. What is a word?

A. A word is a sign of a thought expressed by one, or more Syllables in Writing or Speech.

"Q. What is a Syllable?

A. A Syllable is the sound of one letter or of several letters together; that is of one single vowel or of those vowels called a diphthong with or without other letters called Consonants and utter'd with one Breath; as O-be-di-ent, Book.

"Q. What is a letter?

A. A letter is a character, or mark, denoting the motion or position of the instrument of speech, to which it belongs, in the Production, or Determination of it's Sound. What a Vowel, Diphthong, and Consonants are, will be explained in their proper places.

"Q. What is a consonant?

A. A consonant is a letter which cannot give a clear and perfect sound of itself without the help of a vowel; and therefore can never make a perfect syllable.

“Q. How does it happen that a consonant alone cannot make a perfect sound?

A. The very name of the consonants cannot be expressed without a Vowel before or after them to help out its Pronunciation.

“Q. What is the second division of consonants?

A. Into Mute and Semi-Vowels...

“Q. What is a mute consonant?

A. A letter which singly taken, makes no sound at all, unless a vowel be added to it, and therefore is quite mute or silent.

“Q. What is a (Semi-Vowel)?

A. (It makes an) imperfect sound as if it has a short sound of a vowel....”

On page 13, he emphasized the fundamental importance of the syllable in speaking and reading, and equated “spelling” with “pronouncing”:

“A true division of words into their syllables is very necessary to its pronunciation: For, Reading being nothing, but a rapid... Spelling ... whoever spells or divides syllables wrongly must of course read and speak wrongly... so that without true spelling our very speaking itself wou’d be improper and hardly intelligent.”

We think of “spelling” as naming letters. He thought of spelling as the oral pronunciation of the syllables in a word, which could only be done by properly dividing words into syllables. He discussed on page 15 how to syllabicate correctly.

“The first rule for spelling

Q. What is the first rule for true spelling?

A. When one single consonant goes between two vowels, it is to be joined to the latter as

“abide a-bide parent pa-rent....

“The IId rule

Q. What is the second rule for true spelling?

A. When two or more consonants go between two vowels, as many of them as may well begin a word, a syllable, are to be joined to the latter vowel as

“A-pril bre-thren e-strange - fa-brick e-state au -stere....

“The IIIId Rule

Q. What is the third rule for true pronunciation?

A. When two consonants which cannot properly begin a Word go between two vowels... the former consonant is to be (joined) to the former vowel and the latter consonant to the latter vowel as

“dan-ger... mul-ti-tude sel-dom

“NB Consonant X... is always to be joined to the vowel before it as

“ox-en....

“The IVth Rule

Q. What is the IVth rule?

A. When two vowels go together in the middle of a word and do not make a diphthong, they are to be divided and pronounced in distinct syllables, as

“cre-ate No-ah ru-in re-enter mu-tu-al”

He excepted compounded words, such as paint-ed, and made a sub-exception in this class, where letters had been doubled, as in cut-ting.

It was “Chapter IV Alterations in the Sounds of Letters,” that had pure Pascal phonics. It included a table for all the letters of the alphabet, with these headings, under which I have included his notations only for the letters b and c:

“The Letters	The Common Sounds	Alter’d sounds
“b.	bee	1. Be short sound
“c soft	see	2. se short sound
“c hard		3. ke short sound”

The Irish Spelling Book, which formally introduced Pascal’s synthetic phonics to Ireland in 1740, was almost certainly the source for Sheridan’s own work on synthetic phonics. Furthermore, the motive for the use of synthetic phonics appears to have been the same for both the anonymous author of the Irish Spelling Book and for Thomas Sheridan. They were interested in fostering correct pronunciation. Since the author of the 1740 speller was anonymous, but was most probably a Dublin schoolmaster, could that author have been Sheridan’s own schoolmaster father? (If the “Samuel Davey” the author mentioned could be traced, that might provide a clue to the author’s identity.) For three generations, the Sheridan family was brilliant, with Richard Brinsley Sheridan in the third generation, the playwright and member of Parliament, being the most flamboyant, best known and wittiest. He made remarks in Parliament such as:

“The Right Honorable Gentleman is indebted to his memory for his jests and to his imagination for his facts. (Treasury of the Familiar, Edited by Ralph L. Woods, The Macmillan Company, New York: 1943, page 403.)

Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s grandfather, Thomas Sheridan, Sr., almost certainly had the intellect to write The Irish Spelling Book.

It should be noted that Dean Jonathan Swift, the author of Gulliver’s Travels and a close friend of Thomas Sheridan, Sr., wrote the following charming little poem on the vowels<sup>18</sup>. Phonetics would seem

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<sup>18</sup> Over a hundred years after Swift’s poem on the vowels was composed, another poem on the vowels was written in France, which was one of a collection of poems, Les Illuminations, by Jean Arthur Rimbaud. Rimbaud’s collected poems caused a sensation in Paris, according to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1963), when they were published in 1886 by a man named Verlaine who had spent two years in prison for seriously wounding the author of the poems, Jean Arthur Rimbaud. This was before Rimbaud dropped out of sight in 1875, turning up many years later in Abyssinia, where he had made a small fortune as a trader in coffee, perfume, gold and ivory, and where he acted as an unofficial government agent working for France outside the civilized world, while living in a hut of palm leaves. Verlaine is presumed to have thought Rimbaud probably dead by 1886, and Rimbaud is presumed not to have known of Verlaine’s publication of his poems. Rimbaud reportedly stopped writing in 1873, the same year

to have been of interest in the Dublin social circle of Thomas Sheridan, Sr. The poem appeared in the Second Book of *The Heart of Oak Books* edited by Charles Eliot Norton, D. C. Heath & Co., Boston: 1895 (1902) (page 96):

“On the Vowels

“We are little airy creatures,  
All of different voice and features;  
One of us in glass is set,  
One of us you’ll find in jet,  
T’other you may see in tin,  
And the fourth a box within.  
If the fifth you should pursue,  
It can never fly from you.”

Swift had provided with his little poem an elegant way to identify short vowel sounds: a-glass, e-jet, i-tin, o-box, and, presumably with an Irish accent, u in the first syllable of pur-sue. Swift had no children of his own and was no schoolmaster himself. Did he write this poem for his schoolmaster friend, Thomas Sheridan, Sr., who may have been interested in phonetics?

Thomas Sheridan, Jr., was concerned with elocution as early as 1756. He had apparently completed the foundation of his highly original work on the phonetic principles of English spelling and pronunciation (true synthetic phonics) by the time he started to give his highly popular lectures on elocution in 1758-59 at Oxford and Cambridge, and in 1761 and later in Edinburgh and Dublin. Sheridan published his idea for the first phonetic pronouncing dictionary in the world in 1761 (see Alston, Volume VI, page 72), received a pension from Lord Bute to proceed with it and published the finished work in 1780. Meanwhile, an Edinburgh, Scotland, resident, William Perry, who was obviously exposed to Sheridan’s lectures in Scotland on phonics, published a dictionary with a phonetic key in 1775. From a title in Alston’s Volume V, *The English Dictionary*, it appears that William Kenrick also did more than show the customary accented syllables in *A New Dictionary of the English Language; Containing Not Only the Explanation of Words ... but Likewise their Orthoepia or Pronunciation*, London: 1773.

Alston’s chronological listing of dictionaries, along with information from other sources on Sheridan’s life, confirm that Sheridan was the first who conceived the idea of a pronouncing dictionary using Pascal synthetic phonics. The prefaces to Sheridan’s 1780 dictionary are impressive documents of astounding scholarship and originality but were obviously the culmination of years of study. Yet, since Sheridan had been lecturing on phonics since 1758, several of Sheridan’s imitators preceded him in the publication of pronouncing dictionaries. Another competitor was Walker, a fellow actor, who succeeded Sheridan in publication but gave Sheridan only faint praise and a faulty history in the “Preface” which

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he published *A Season in Hell*, which the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1963) said was an allegory based on his experiences with Verlaine, with whom the adolescent Rimbaud had traveled after Rimbaud’s involvement in the Paris Commune. It was because of that book that Verlaine tried to kill Rimbaud. Rimbaud’s sonnet on the vowels gave each a different color: “A black, e white, i red, u green, o blue vowels.” Even today in continental Europe, vowels are often printed for beginners in a different color than consonants. Therefore, although a man named Chavee published a work in 1873 associating each vowel with a different color (according to “Lecture,” *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire*, Paris, 1887) it is probable that Rimbaud, born in 1854, received his exposure to colored vowels and the inspiration for his poem while sitting in his first-grade class room somewhere in France about 1860. The idea of letters in color turned up again in the twentieth century in Caleb Gattegno’s beginning reading program, which received considerable publicity about twenty years ago, although Gattegno probably was inspired by the colored Cuisinaire rods for teaching arithmetic, on which Gattegno had been a promoter.

Walker wrote. A portion of Walker's preface is in the 1825 copy of Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English Language, Abridged*, printed at Cooperstown, New York, by H. and E. Phinney. It read in part:

“Mr. Elphinston... in his *Principles of the English Language*, has reduced the chaos to a system, and, by a deep investigation of the analogies of our tongue, has laid the foundation of a just and regular pronunciation.

“After him, Dr. Kenrick contributed a portion of improvement by his *Rhetorical Dictionary* in which the words are divided into syllables as they are pronounced and figures placed over the vowels to indicate the different sounds. But this gentleman has rendered his dictionary extremely imperfect.

“To him succeeded Mr. Sheridan, who not only divided the words into syllables, and placed figures over the vowels, as Dr. Kenrick had done, but, by spelling these syllables as they are pronounced, seemed to complete the idea of a dictionary, and to leave but little expectation of future improvement...”

As mentioned, although Sheridan was the first to conceive of the idea of a pronouncing dictionary, he was preceded in publication of such a dictionary by competitors such as Kenrick. Walker gave Sheridan no credit for having invented the concept of a pronouncing dictionary but seemed to give the credit to Elphinston and Kenrick. Walker also found fault with Sheridan's choice of pronunciations. Sheridan had, indeed, aroused some heated opposition by marking some words with an Irish accent. Walker's defective history, however, including his criticism of Sheridan, may have served as a successful sales tool. Walker's dictionary was in wide use for many years, and in America was endorsed by the same activists who opposed Webster's speller, and, along with Webster's speller, his dictionary, because of its pronunciation and choice of spellings. Years later, Boston “intellectuals” endorsed Worcester's dictionary and its spellings, instead of Webster's brilliant 1828 dictionary. It was not until the 1880's that the Boston “intellectuals” finally stooped to use Webster spellings. (Was it really his spellings to which they objected, or old, conservative, Webster himself?)

The writings of Elphinston, whom Walker wrongly implied was the source for the idea of a pronouncing dictionary, are only listed by Alston from 1787 and afterward, over thirty years after Sheridan started his work. In any event, Elphinston did not even write a dictionary, but was concerned only in spelling reform. Yet Walker omitted mentioning William Perry of Scotland, who wrote *The Royal Standard English Dictionary* in 1775. Nor did Walker mention William Scott, who published in Edinburgh in 1777 *A New Spelling, Pronouncing and Explanatory Dictionary of the English Language*.

Sheridan had given the necessary information for pronouncing English words without the need of respelling, although he also respelled words to show pronunciation. Webster had found a way to do away with such dictionary respelling of English words to show pronunciation, simply by the use of his key and his accent marks, and he did not respell words in his 1828 dictionary. It was this simple and brilliant pronunciation tool which made Webster's speller such a magnificent success for the teaching of reading, but later spellers by other authors altered and spoiled the effectiveness of the pronunciation keys.

Walker implied that the use of numerals in the key and over letters in words to show pronunciation, which numerals were used both by Sheridan and Webster, may have originated with Kenrick. However, whether the use of such numerals did or did not originate with Kenrick is unimportant, because the credit for the idea of a true pronouncing dictionary is obviously Sheridan's.

Sheridan's phonics also further influenced the teaching of spelling, as Perry published an excellent phonic spelling book in 1776 in Scotland. Perry did not prosper with his imitation (and criticism of the vowel system) of Sheridan but went bankrupt, although Alston shows Perry's speller continued to be published in Great Britain. An American publisher, Isaiah Thomas, of Worcester, Massachusetts, in turn, pirated and published Perry's phonic spelling book in 1785 two years after Webster's phonic spelling book came out. This was obviously to compete with Webster's, and it was very popular in America for a great many years, though Perry received none of the proceeds.

The Pascal/Sheridan phonics obviously influenced Noah Webster. Noah Webster wrote his heavily phonic syllabic spelling book, with its keys obviously adapted from Sheridan's work, in 1783, and it and its imitators were used to teach large numbers of beginners in America to read until it began to fade in use about 1826. As Webster remarked in 1840, in a letter to Barnard, appearing in Barnard's publication, the *American Journal of Education*:

“The introduction of my Spelling Book, first published in 1783, produced a great change in the department of spelling; and from the information I can gain, spelling was taught with more care and accuracy for twenty years or more after that period, than it has been since the introduction of multiplied books and studies.”

Webster's speller<sup>19</sup> written toward the end of the eighteenth century made earlier spellers largely obsolete in America, but there had been many earlier spellers which had followed Coote's successful speller written in England at the end of the sixteenth century. As *Spelling Books*, R. C. Alston's list published in England about 1960 shows, despite Coote's great popularity, many other spelling books were published in English through the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth.

One such speller was written by the Reverend Isaac Watts, who was famous in his time and who wrote enormously popular religious material for children. His speller, as mentioned, was praised by the anonymous author of the *The Irish Spelling Book* in 1740. Watts' spelling book, *The Art of Reading and Writing English, or the First Principles and Rules of Pronouncing our Mother-tongue*, came out in London in 1721. A copy of the second London edition of 1722 is in the New York Public Library, and other 1722 copies survive elsewhere, as well as multiple copies of the 1721 edition. Note that this speller which is relatively obscure by today's standards has multiple surviving copies that are six years older than the earliest surviving copy of the *New England Primer*, the 1727 copy. Yet we are asked to believe that vast numbers of the *New England Primer* were printed before 1727, but, unlike Watts' speller,

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<sup>19</sup> James McKeen Cattell's favorite professor before Cattell graduated from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, in 1880 was Francis Andrew March (1825-1911), philologist and advocate of spelling reform, who studied under Noah Webster at Amherst College (from Michael M. Sokal's book on Cattell, *An Education in Psychology*). The February, 1882, edition of *The Primary Teacher*, Vol. V, No. 6, Boston, listed books for primary teachers on page 224, and, under "Reading," showed March's ABC Book, available from Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston, for 25 cents. In a later issue, on page 263, the magazine continued the list of books for primary teachers. Under "Method Manuals, Etc., Etc.:" was "March's ABC Book. Prof. F. A. March. 25 cts. Ginn, Heath & Co." Ginn, Heath & Co. were Boston publishers. March, a native New Englander, in 1879 left Lafayette in Pennsylvania after 50 years there. He went to Massachusetts to take over the direction of the American work on the Oxford English Dictionary. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963) article, "Dictionary" referred to the enormous *New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, which title was later the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The encyclopedia article said that the idea of such a dictionary had been arrived at 70 years before it was actually finished in 1928. It included definitions for all words in English that are recorded from the 600's to the 1900's. (It is remarkable that this *Encyclopedia Britannica* article, which includes information on minor dictionaries, does not even mention Sheridan's landmark work!) No further reference to March's ABC Book has surfaced. It is not listed in Leypoldt's *American Catalogue of books in print* in 1876, or even in the later *American Catalogue* which listed additional books published up to 1885.

unaccountably all disappeared. Watts' spelling books were apparently among those spelling books being imported in the United States and must have been popular. Most of Watt's editions came out in London, England, and some in Dublin, Ireland, but the proof of the popularity of the Watts' spelling book in this country is that a Philadelphia edition appeared in 1771. The last Watts edition shown by Alston is the twelfth edition in Dublin, Ireland, in 1783.

Alston lists large numbers of other spellers, which cannot conveniently be shown here. However, in 1758, in England, a Frenchman, John Gignoux, published the *Child's Best Instructor*, in which, by syllabifying in a different fashion, Gignoux tried to show the pronunciation of English words, which he said were so hard for foreigners to learn. (The "pronunciation" referred to in earlier spellers like Watts' concerned which syllables to accent, not how to pronounce letter sounds.) An endorsement in the form of a poem to Gignoux's 1758 speller appeared on page v, comparing his speller to those of "Dyche, Dilworth, Markham, Dean and Fenning," all of whom must have been popular in 1758 in England or the poet would not have bothered to name them. Dilworth was apparently the most popular in America in mid-century, to judge from Noah Webster's recollection quoted elsewhere in this text. Gignoux's work, of course, shows that in 1758 *The Irish Spelling Book* of 1740 with its true phonics was so generally unknown that there was, effectively, no such thing as "synthetic phonics" in English to help foreigners to learn the language, any more than there was any such thing as a "pronouncing dictionary." It was, curiously, in 1758 that Sheridan began his lectures on synthetic phonics which ultimately resulted in his pronouncing dictionary and in successful phonic spelling books like Perry's and Webster's.

Noah Webster's *The American Spelling Book* was written in 1783, and became an immediate success, displacing Dilworth's and others in America. Webster's method of teaching spelling with synthetic phonics as well as syllabically was apparently dominant in American teaching of reading - and pronunciation - for beginners until 1826. As J. A. Cummings said in the preface to *The Pronouncing Spelling Book*, Boston: 1819:

"The principle objects of a Spelling Book are to teach children to read and spell correctly, and to establish as far as practicable, uniformity in pronunciation."

Nevertheless, not every work used the Webster synthetic phonics. No truly free market ever has uniformity, and the textbook market in those days, unlike today, was truly free. One speller which did not use Webster's synthetic phonics was Caleb Bingham's *The Child's Companion*, published in Boston in January, 1792. It followed the Dilworth approach, using only analytic phonics, with the syllable tables and the arrangement of words with like sounds, as in "Lesson III. Band hand sand land. Rend mend lend send vend. etc.,... Lesson V. Ground found pound round. Dace lace mace pace face" etc. Bingham did mark silent letters.

Many spellers of the 1790-1826 period did, however, use true synthetic phonics, and almost none lacked at least analytic phonics, the approach Bingham used (band, hand, sand, land, etc., in which children learned to pronounce syllables by their analogy to the sounds of other syllables.) As mentioned earlier, Perry's was one of the first real competitors for Webster's speller, being published in Scotland before Webster's speller but in America after Webster's speller. Unlike Bingham and Dilworth, Perry's used a true synthetic phonics approach like that in Webster's, but it is obvious that Perry was inspired by Sheridan and Sheridan's Scottish lectures on elocution. Another speller was C. Alexander's *The Young Ladies' and Gentlemen's Spelling Book* in 1799 which used a true synthetic phonics approach. Webster had so many imitators that he campaigned mightily for copyright laws to protect his own work.

One of the early spelling books which competed with Webster's was written in 1804 by Lindley Murray. Lindley Murray, (1745-1826) according to John Alfred Nietz, (page 66 and 67, *Old Textbooks*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: 1961) was born, reared and educated in



America, where he had been rather successful in business. Yet Murray moved to England in 1784, where he taught for a period before he began to write textbooks. Murray's textbooks were very successful in England, and were widely used in the United States in the first part of the nineteenth century. Murray's first textbook was published in 1799, *The English Reader*, "or Pieces in Prose and Poetry, selected from the best writers, designed to assist young persons to read with Propriety and Effect... to inculcate some of the most important Principles of Piety and Virtue." Nietz said that the Sequel to Murray's *English Reader* was published in 1800, and his text titled the *Introduction to the English Reader* came out in 1801. In 1804, Murray published *The English Spelling Book with Reading Lessons*, meant for beginners. In the 1801 volume, Nietz stated:

'...it has been his aim to form a compilation, which would properly conduct the young learner from the Spelling-book to the English Reader.' ..

According to Rudolph R. Reeder, in his 1900 book, *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, The Macmillan Co., New York: 1900, page 19, school "readers," were the invention of a German, Frederick Eberhard Rochow (1734-1805), who published in 1776 *Der Kinderfreund*. Reeder cited as his source Fechner, *Geschichte des Volksschul-Lesebuches*, Gotha, Germany, 1889, pp. 129-140.

"(Rochow's) book contained about eighty separate selections, mostly of a didactic and religious character, interspersed with interesting bits of information concerning the earth and nature. It was the first step toward secularizing the course in reading in the German elementary schools, and the first school reader in the modern sense of the term. This book was approved by Protestants, Catholics and Jews alike, and was used in the schools of Germany for nearly a hundred years."

The inspiration for Rochow's reader was probably derived from Johann Bernard Basedow's more elaborate *Elementary Book* published in 1774 for Basedow's controversial Philanthropinum school at Dessau, Germany, and from Comenius's 17th century *Orbis Pictus*. Yet Rochow's 1776 reader, and those such as Murray's 1799 reader, were never meant to teach beginning reading, but only to practice reading once it had been learned, just as the medieval primers and the Psalms had been used for the same purpose. These authors did not produce readers whose purpose was to teach children HOW to pronounce print. Such readers were unheard of until 1826 in America, as will be discussed.

Those people who are unfamiliar with the period might surmise that books for very little children written in the late eighteenth century by Mrs. Barbauld and Lady Eleanor Fenn were beginning reading books, to be used in place of syllabic spellers. Yet through most of the eighteenth century, as in the sixteenth century, little three-year-old children were first given the horn book, not story books. By mid-eighteenth century, the battledore, which included a pictured alphabet and syllabarium, began to replace the horn book. After using either, children still had to study the speller. In the speller, they repeated the alphabet and syllabarium before learning words usually arranged in sets of three-letters, and then of four-letters, and so on, once Dilworth had introduced those stages in his 1740 speller. All that Lady Fenn produced were stories meant specifically to match these three-letter, four-letter, and so on, stages of the post-Dilworth spellers. She obviously thought the material could be covered by children from three to five years old. (The numbers of failures must have been pathetic.) Mrs. Barbauld's probable intent also was to have her book used with the battledore and speller. What appears certain, however, is that neither Lady Fenn nor Mrs. Barbauld ever recommended dispensing with the alphabet, syllabarium and spelling, which would have been revolutionary, indeed, in English in the eighteenth century.

That Lady Fenn and the other authors like her, Barbauld and Sarah Trimmer, never meant to throw out the speller for beginners is indicated by entries in R. C. Alston's *A Bibliography of the English*

Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Volume IV, Spelling Books, "Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, England, 1969." Alston's bibliography of known spelling books shows that Fenn and Trimmer actually wrote spellers themselves for little children, and the probability is Mrs. Barbauld would have approved of their spellers which are listed below. The numbers Alston gave their items are shown before their titles. However, Alston did not capitalize the titles as has been done below.

"No. 861 (Trimmer, Sarah) The Little Spelling Book for Young Children. Second Edition, London, Joseph Johnson, 1786.

"No. 863 (Fenn, Lady Eleanor) A Spelling Book, Designed to Render the Acquisition of the Rudiments of Our Native Language Easy and Pleasant.... by Mrs. Teachwell, London, J. Marshall, 1787.

"No. 923 (Fenn, Lady Eleanor) The Infant's Friend. Part I. A Spelling Book. By Mrs. Lovechild. London, E. Newbery, 1797.

"No. 936 (Trimmer, Sarah) The Charity School Spelling Book. Part II. Fourth Edition. London, F. & C. Rivington, 1798.

"No. 937 (Trimmer, Sarah) The Charity School Spelling Book. Part I. Fifth edition. London, F & C. Rivington, 1799." (Issued with No. 936) (Alston's No. 938 lists a sixth edition of Part I in London in 1800, and No. 939 a fifth edition of Part II in London in 1800 and 1807, and a ninth edition of Part II in London in 1809 and 1818.

Note that "Part I" of Lady Eleanor Fenn's last work listed was "spelling" - considered the first step.

Mrs. Barbauld apparently never wrote a spelling book, but the actual content of her book quoted below proves her intention was that spelling should precede reading. Mary F. Thwaite wrote the following in *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading* (Boston, The Horn Book, Inc.: 1972 - copyright 1963, page 189):

"A landmark in the approach to the reading of the very young child is the little work Mrs. Barbauld composed for her infant nephew - *Lessons for Children* (1778-1779). Part one was for children between the ages of two and three, the next two parts for those of the riper age of three, and the fourth for children of four years old. It was perhaps less intended for infants to read, and more as a book to be read to them, although at the very beginning Charles is bidden 'Make haste, sit in Mamma's Lap. Now read your Book'. Simple little phrases are intended to arouse interest in everyday things a tiny child might observe or understand...."

Mrs. Barbauld's 1778 book was published in 1843 by A. Phelps of Greenfield, Mass. and sold by Gould, Kendale & Lincoln and Crocker and Brewster of Boston; F. J. Huntington & Co. and Mahlon Day, of New York; Oliver Steele of Albany, Belknap & Hamersley of Hartford "and the principal Booksellers generally." By 1843, however, other sources show the book would have functioned as a straight sight-word book, since the syllabary and the spelling book were no longer given to beginning readers. Yet eighteenth-century readers would have taken it for granted that the "Advertisement" at the beginning of the book was meant only to apply to children who had learned the alphabet and syllabary. In the academic twilight of 1843 brought on by educational activists, which will be discussed, the "Advertisement" was assumed to apply to rank beginners.

“Advertisement. This little publication was made for a particular child, but the public is welcome to the use of it. It was found that, amidst the multitude of books professedly written for children, there is not one adapted to the comprehension of a child from two to three years old.... Another great defect is the want of good paper, a clear and large type, and large spaces. They only who have actually taught young children, can be sensible how necessary these assistances are. The eye of a child and of a learner cannot catch, as ours can, a small, obscure, ill-formed word, amidst a number of others, all equally unknown to him. To supply these deficiencies is the object of this book....”

It is obvious, however, that this was NOT meant to be the child’s first introduction to print, because the very first page included the request to “Charles” to “Spell that word.” Obviously, Charles could not “spell” (name the letters) in the word being pointed at unless Charles had already learned his alphabet! Therefore, Charles would already have studied his hornbook or battledore. The first page read:

“Barbauld’s Lessons. Part I. Come hither, Charles, come to mamma. Make haste. (Ed.: Each sentence is on separate lines.) Sit in mamma’s lap. Now read your book. Where is the pin to point with? Here is a pin. Do not tear the book. Only bad boys tear books. Charles shall have a pretty new lesson. Spell that word. Good boy. Now go and play. Where is Puss? Puss has got under the table. You cannot catch Puss. Do not pull her by the tail, you hurt her. Stroke poor Puss. You stroke her the wrong way. This is the right way. But, Puss, why did you kill the rabbit?”

That unfortunate final remark may have left the poor over-stressed three-year-old child emotionally upset, despite the misled good intentions of Mrs. Barbauld.

Under the pseudonym “Mrs. Teachwell,” Lady Eleanor Fenn published *Cobwebs to Catch Flies* in 1783. It was (Thwaite, page 72):

“A system of graded reading ‘in short sentences adapted to children from three to eight years’....”

Thwaite added (page 190):

“The first volume consisted of ‘easy lessons in words of three letters up to six letters’ for children of three to five years old.”

Therefore, Lady Fenn’s book certainly appears to have been meant as a reader, but in 1778 and 1783 when Mrs. Barbauld and Lady Fenn wrote, no English writer had ever suggested jettisoning the alphabet and syllabary. As mentioned, the spellers which appeared after 1740, when Dilworth had initiated the practice, were usually arranged in the same three, four, five, and so on, letter sequence which Lady Fenn was using. Children were probably expected to read her “stories” to match whatever level which they had reached in their spellers. The spellers normally included periodic reading selections but with more difficult content than her stories.

With the exception of materials like Lady Fenn’s and Mrs. Barbauld’s, obviously to be used with the speller, most readers in English were written to be used after the spellers.

Murray’s was not the only reader in English. Noah Webster published *An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking* in 1785, and it was America’s first school reader. Caleb Bingham published *The American Preceptor* in 1795 and *The Columbian Orator* in 1797, and there were an increasing number of other readers in English starting in the late eighteenth century. Since the names of these English-language books emphasized the training of the voice in public speaking or elocution, the inspiration for their compilation probably did not come from the German sources mentioned above but

from the influence of Thomas Sheridan, whose lectures developed a great interest in elocution and public speaking in Great Britain, starting about 1758.

Shortly before he died in 1788, Sheridan himself published a reader. It is described in R. C. Alston's *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Volume VI, Rhetoric, Style, Elocution, Prosody, Rhyme, Pronunciation, Spelling Reform*, "Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, England, 1969." The title of Sheridan's book has been capitalized below, which was not done by Alston. Alston wrote that Sheridan's text concerned both spelling and pronunciation, and that it had been reproduced in facsimile by "Menston" in 1968.

Menston was a press used to make reproductions listed by Alston. It appears almost self evident that arranging to make those reproductions (as with the *Irish Spelling Book*) was Alston's own idea. Today's "intellectuals" may not appreciate the contributions of Thomas Sheridan (and the *Irish Spelling Book*), but it is obvious that Alston certainly did

"No. 503 Sheridan, Thomas - *Elements of English: Being a New Method of Teaching the Whole Art of Reading, Both with Regard to Pronunciation and Spelling. Part the First.* London, C. Dilly, 1786."

The first organized set of readers in America was that of Noah Webster (1754-1843). Yet when Noah Webster produced his school series which started with a speller in 1783, he was apparently only following a norm which had already been established in Great Britain. For instance, William Enfield (1741-1797) had a series of at least two books. It consisted of a speller, *A New Introduction to Reading; or, A Collection of Easy Lessons....*, and *The Speaker, or Miscellaneous Pieces Selected from Various Authors, and Disposed under Proper Heads, with a View to Facilitate the Improvement of Youth in Reading and Speaking. To which is Prefixed an Essay on Elocution*, which was obviously a reader. Although their original date of publication in England is unknown, the first is known to have been reprinted in America in 1797 and the second is 1799. Also, William Scott's *Introduction to Spelling and Reading*, a speller, was meant to precede his *Lessons in Elocution*, both originally printed in Edinburgh. (Enfield's and Scott's books are listed in Appendix B.)

Webster's first reader was published in 1785, the *Third Part of a Grammatical Institute of the English Language*. The *First Part* was his speller, and the *Second Part* his grammar. His reader was titled, *An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking*. In 1790, Webster wrote *The Little Reader's Assistant* to come after his speller, which speller included reading selections, so his series, in effect, had three books to practice reading.

The second organized set of readers in America was that of Caleb Bingham (1757-1819), whose *The American Preceptor* was published in 1794, followed by the *Columbian Orator* in 1797. Bingham also published a speller which included reading selections, meant as the first book.

The third widely used series in America, although not written here, was produced by the American, Lindley Murray (1745-1826), writing in England. Murray's first book, *The English Reader*, was published in 1799. Murray also wrote a speller and other readers, which in effect formed a series, as the previous quotation from Nietz pointed out.

Other isolated reading texts were published in America before 1826 which shared one of the main purposes of the upper levels: to practice elocution, very important in both Great Britain and America from the last half of the eighteenth century. As indicated above, Thomas Sheridan, who almost certainly originated the interest in elocution (but obviously not rhetoric), wrote such a book. However, it appears not to have been popular in America. Alston lists many such texts published before 1800 in A

Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Volume VI, Rhetoric, Style, Elocution, Prosody, Rhyme, Pronunciation, Spelling Reform, "Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, England, 1969."

Among such books in use in America were Nathaniel Heaton's *The Columbian Preceptor* of 1800 (and he also wrote *The Columbian Spelling Book* of 1799), Daniel Staniford's *Art of Reading* of 1802, published by West and Richardson in Boston in 1814, *School Dialogues*, First Hallowell Edition, published by Ezekial Goodale in 1814, Dr. Jonathan Barber's *Exercises in Reading and Recitation*, published in York, Pennsylvania in 1825, and T. W. Strong's *Young Scholar's Manual or Companion to the Spelling Book*, published by Denio & Phelps in Greenfield, Massachusetts in 1821 and copyrighted there in 1819, a subject matter book not for beginners. Strong also wrote another book listed below. These are available in the Harvard library but possibly not Heaton's speller nor the second book by Strong.

Nietz listed before 1826 (page 101) Daniel Adams' *The Understanding Reader, or Knowledge before Oratory, Being a New Selection of Lessons* (1803), T. W. Strong's *The Common Reader* (1818), and John Walker's *Elements of Elocution* (1810). (Like the actor, Sheridan, and the schoolteacher, Webster, the actor, Walker, also wrote a pronouncing dictionary, which like Webster's was inspired by Sheridan's work.) Nietz showed on page 62 H. Gaine's *The Art of Speaking*, printed in New York in 1785, Alexander Thomas's *The Orator's Assistant; Being a Selection of Dialogues*, 1797, and William Scott's *Lessons in Elocution* (1814). Nietz stated on page 67 that Scott's book had been used in the Boston schools, but John Pierpont "succeeded in having the School Committee of Boston adopt (his 1823 *The American First Class Book; or Exercises in Reading and Recitation*) to replace Scott's *Lessons*."

It should be noted that the publisher, Phelps, in Greenfield, Massachusetts, was apparently already minimizing the influence of the spelling book on younger children by 1819, with his publication of T. W. Strong's *Young Scholar's Manual or Companion to the Spelling Book*, mentioned above. It was "published by Denio & Phelps" in Greenfield, Massachusetts in 1821 and copyrighted there in 1819 (a subject matter book not for rank beginners). It was preceded by the publication of T. W. Strong's *The Common Reader* (1818), also mentioned above, which was listed by Nietz. *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, shows that a copy of *The Common Reader* is available in the Department of Education Library in Washington. It is a second edition published in Greenfield by Denio & Phelps in 1819. It would be worth while to research the history of "Ansel Phelps" of Greenfield who became the publisher of the critically important *The Franklin Primer* in 1826.

Nevertheless, despite these isolated readers and various series, the most important reading material in most schools in America before 1826 was the Bible, particularly the Psalms and New Testament.

The first major addition to reading series used in America after Webster, Bingham and Murray came in 1817, when Samuel Wood, a highly successful and deeply religious New York publisher who had previously put out a four-book series of spellers, put out a series of readers in that year. Samuel Wood's readers were meant to follow his spellers and not to be used to replace beginning "sound" with "meaning." Wood, who had been a schoolmaster before he was a publisher, did not use synthetic phonics in his books, however, but syllable tables and sound analogies, so his spellers were weaker. However, by 1819, Samuel Wood joined the synthetic phonics group by publishing a Code 8 phonics speller, the *North American Spelling Book* by R. Wiggin. Its preface read, (the compiler) "considers it a complete pronouncing Spelling-Book." Obviously, the intent was that the child should be taught how to pronounce all the words in the spelling book by himself.

It was in 1804 that Lindley Murray wrote (at Holdgate, near York, England, according to his "Introduction,") *An English Spelling Book with Reading Lessons*, a Code 7 book. He also reproduced the first part of it as *A First Book for Children*. His comments (and other indications) show that the first part

of such spelling books were used by beginners, who then repeated the first part again when they had achieved success. The older students, however, used the latter part of the spellers. Murray reproduced the first part of his speller as *The First Book for Children* as an aid to teachers and mothers with little ones. This is, of course, more confirmation that the speller was the beginning book, and that a “primer” was not. Murray said, on page vi.

“It is proper to observe, that some of the reading lessons are taken, either wholly or partly, from the writings of Barbauld; and a few, from those of Trimmer and Edgeworth.”

Murray had the good manners on some selections to admit his sources; many authors of spellers and readers did not. In such children’s books in America, the early nineteenth century was a period of wholesale plagiarism. However, Noah Webster later claimed, apparently with good reason, that Murray had plagiarized him in a wholesale fashion on his grammar. (Webster told of this in “A Philosophical and Practical Grammar of the English Language, - Advertisement,” following the section, “Introduction,” in Noah Webster’s *First Edition of an American Dictionary of the English Language*, published by Foundation for American Christian Education, San Francisco, California, 1983. The Foundation’s edition is a remarkably fine book with excellent prefatory material, besides being remarkably handsome, and they should be congratulated for publishing it. Webster’s original edition of his final dictionary had come out in 1828.)

Murray’s story of the fly caught in the milk (page 43) is presumably from one of the authors Murray mentioned:

“There is a poor fly in the milk.  
Take it out. Put it on this dry cloth.  
Poor thing! It is not quite dead. It moves;  
it shakes its wings; it wants to dry them;  
see how it wipes them with its feet.  
Put the fly on the floor where the sun shines.  
Then it will be dry, and warm.  
Poor fly! I am glad it was not dead.  
I hope it will soon be well.”

Leaving out the question of hygiene, it is a little story likely to develop compassion, and I can recall no such stories in the controlled vocabulary readers I was forced to use in teaching the primary grades for twenty-three years. This little story was copied in other spellers in the early nineteenth century.

Murray, who had plagiarized Webster, was himself also plagiarized. He had written for reading practice, on page 29, after the child would have been in the book perhaps a few months:

“In a few weeks, I hope to read well. I will make the best use of my time.”

In only casually glancing through some pages photocopied from some spellers published in the next twenty years after Murray’s 1804 spelling book came out (in which spellers the “fly” story sometimes appeared), I ran across two which copied Murray’s words as quoted above exactly.

Elihu F. Marshall’s *A Spelling Book of the English Language*, a Code 8 book written at Saratoga Springs in 1819, has on page 23:

“In a few weeks I hope to read well. I will make the best use of my time.”

The Primary Instructor and Improved Spelling Book, Being an Easy System of Teaching the Rudiments of the English Language in Two Parts, a Code 8 book written by Jasper Hazen, Windsor, Vermont, 1822, has on page 86:

“In a few weeks I hope to read well. I will make the best use of my time.”

Jasper Hazen’s reading selections are all at the end of his book and his spelling lists at the beginning, which is why this appears on page 86.

Presumably there are other spellers with the same quotation. Yet, interestingly, that showed that Murray and his plagiarizers were agreed on a very basic fact: children who had only begun school a few months before, should “in a few weeks... hope to read well.” In those days, they learned to read by “sound” from a speller, and almost all spellers rated a Code 7 or above on a scale from one for pure meaning to ten for pure sound. It was exactly as old William Scott Gray admitted in the Bloomfield classroom about 1940 (as quoted earlier from Mitford Mathews Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1966):

“(Gray) explained to the other visitors that what the children were doing was in no sense remarkable. He said that reading experts had long known that children could rather quickly be taught to pronounce words with remarkable glibness....”

Murray said he only used words in his reading selections which had been taught in his spelling lessons, so his material was, surprisingly, “controlled.” Since his spelling lists became very long, very soon, the final effect on vocabulary totals was quite different from the “deaf-mute” controlled vocabulary approach of Gallaudet. On the average, Gallaudet limited the introduction of new words to less than ten per cent of a selection.

The tone of Murray’s speller formed a contrast to Webster’s. While almost all spellers included such little paragraphs as given above for reading practice, many of these paragraphs had a religious tone, which was not true in Murray’s A First Book for Children. Webster’s opening reading lesson, for instance, on page 43 of his book, after children had worked their way through spelling many words, read:

“No man may put off the law of God:  
My joy is in his law all the day.,  
O may I not go in the way of sin!  
Let me not go in the way of ill men.”

Besides including a great deal of additional religious reading, Webster also included little secular selections, probably from the same kind of sources as Murray’s, but heavy with “morals” as were Murray’s.

Dilworth’s speller, which had been so popular in America, and which Noah Webster said he had used as a boy in the 1760’s, taught reading by analytic sound: first the syllable tables, and blends, and then words largely arranged by analogy to show similar sound spellings: “Cub, rub, tub,” etc. Dilworth rated a Code 7 in reading ratings. However, the Revolution sparked American substitutions for Dilworth’s speller, of which Webster’s 1783 synthetic phonics speller, a clear Code 10 on the scale from “meaning” to “sound,” is the most famous.

Another apparent substitute for Dilworth’s speller after the Revolution began was The American Primer, for which title Heartman shows many entries from the critical Revolutionary date of 1776 to 1830, probably covering unrelated books with the same title. In 1813 Mathew Carey published The

American Primer, an analytic phonics Code 7, a copy of which is in the New York Public Library rare book collection, and Alston lists an 1800 edition. The only reference in print I have found to any speller attributed to Mathew Carey other than in Volume IV - Spelling Books of R. C. Alston's bibliography, referred to elsewhere, is a quotation from an 1805 book by an Englishman, John Davis, *Travels of Four Years and a Half in the United States of America*, republished by Henry Holt & Co., Inc., in 1905.

Davis' book is referred to on page 56 of *Readings in American Educational History*, by Edgar W. Knight and Clifton L. Hall, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951, republished in 1970 by Greenwood Press, Publishers, New York. According to the Englishman Davis' anecdote which he dated to 1797 in his 1805 book, he was being considered for a job as a family tutor in South Carolina. Davis built a word-picture of two appalling people, a Southern planter and his wife in Charleston, South Carolina, in which the following appeared:

“Planter. ....What spelling-book do you use?”

“Tutor. What spelling-book, Sir? Indeed - really - upon my word Sir, - any - oh! Noah Webster's, Sir.

“Planter. Ah! I perceive you are a New England man, by giving the preference to Noah Webster.

“Tutor. Sir, I beg your pardon; I am from Old England.

“Planter. Well, no matter for that, - but Mrs. H\_\_\_\_\_, who is an excellent speller, never makes use of any other but Matthew Carey's spelling book. It is a valuable work, the copyright is secured.”

The anecdote just quoted in which the Englishman said, “What spelling-book, Sir? Indeed - really - upon my word Sir, - any - oh! Noah Webster's, Sir,” showed that many spelling books were available in 1797 and that the English tutor knew it!

R. C. Alston's list of spelling books published before 1801 makes it superabundantly clear that many spellers were available at that time. His *Spelling Books*, Volume 4 of *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800*, showed three entries for Carey: *The Columbian Spelling and Reading Book*, (1798?), *The American Primer; or an easy introduction to spelling and reading*, (1800), and *The Child's Guide to Spelling and Reading* (1800). (A copy of the last is in the Library of Congress rare book collection.)

The South Carolina planter's question showed the planter also knew that many spellers were available, just as his later remark showed he knew of Noah Webster's 15-year-old speller originating in far-off New England. However, the anecdote proves Carey was publishing a speller BEFORE 1797, so presumably the (1798?) in Alston's list should be replaced by (1796?) or even earlier. *Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education*, published by the National Institute of Education in Washington, D. C., in 1976, is, astonishingly, useless as a resource for reading instruction history, yet it does list non-reading books published by Mathew Carey of Philadelphia in 1787, 1792 and 1794.

The New York Public Library copy of Mathew Carey's 1813 speller is entitled *The American Primer*, “printed and sold by Mathew Carey, No. 121 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia,” “The Fourth Improved Edition...” Carey's 1813 edition of *The American Primer*, like Dilworth's which it resembled, probably rates a Code 7, because, despite its defects, it is strongly phonic in total effect.



Curiously, the ultimate replacement for Mathew Carey’s “sound”-based spellers was probably the “meaning”-based The Clinton Primer, published in 1830, a copy of which is in the Library of Congress rare book collection. It was written by M. R. Bartlett and published by “Carey & Lea in Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.” who were most probably successors to “Mathew Carey of No. 121 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.” The Clinton Primer of 1830, is a terrible publication, typically post-1826 with its emphasis on “meaning,” and rated as high as Code 4 only because of some inadequate phonic attempts. The effect of The Clinton Primer, of course, reached far beyond Philadelphia, just as Noah Webster’s had reached far beyond New England.

Webster’s was unquestionably the most popular speller in that early period, and Nietz refers to an 1809 edition of Webster’s published in Philadelphia, titled the “Thirtieth Revised Impression” with a footnote stating over 3,000,000 copies had been sold. This number should be compared to the tiny population of the United States in 1809. Population figures for the United States cited in the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), Volume 22, page 814 are:

1790	3,929,214
1800	5,308,483
1810	7,239,881

Nietz also stated on page 14 of his text that most of the more populous states provided copyright protection so Webster received an income to support his family while he wrote his 1806 and 1828 dictionaries. However, as proven by the Englishman Davis’ anecdote about the Charleston planter, South Carolina had been buying Philadelphia school books such as Carey’s in 1797, and it is certain that many other areas were still buying Philadelphia school books in 1832 when the appalling Clinton Primer was published there. This shows that by 1832 the teaching of reading all over America was being effectively sabotaged by the newly organized “experts” who were endorsing such monstrosities as The Clinton Primer.

It is commonly held that books were only printed for local consumption in that period in the United States, and not sold outside their areas, so the influence of school books like those printed by the Carey company would not have been widespread. Yet the Englishman Davis’ comments proved the contrary, as long ago as 1797. Looking at the title pages of other spelling books before 1826, it is astonishing to see the numbers of companies and distributors which are often listed. School books DID travel widely in those day, but this is only what we should have expected.

The following list of titles of spelling books can be given as proof that spellers were meant as the first book for children up to the nineteenth century, even though at that time some spellers called themselves “primers.” These spellers printed from 1784 to 1801 and their description are only samplings for those years from R. C. Alston’s A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Volume IV, Spelling Books, “Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, England, 1969.” Alston did not capitalize the titles, but that has been done below.

“No. 848 Ross, Robert A New Primer, or Little Boy and Girl’s Spelling Book. Bennington, Haswell & Russell, 1784.

“No. 853 Ross, Robert The New American Spelling Book; or a Complete Primer:....New Haven, Thomas & Samuel Green, 1785.

“No. 891 Cook, J. The Westminster Spelling-book; or, a Child’s First Book, on a New Plan.... London, the Author, 1792.

“No. 908. A New Introduction to Reading: or a Collection of Easy Lessons, Arranged on an Improved Plan.... Philadelphia, Henry and Patrick Rice, 1796.

“No. 924 Enfield, William. A New Introduction to Reading; or, a Collection of Easy Lessons,... Fourth Edition,... London, printed: Baltimore, reprinted by John Hayes, 1797.

“No. 943 Anonymous. The Child’s New Spelling Primer; or, First Book for Children.... Dublin, T. Wilkinson, 1799.

“No. 949 Heaton, Benjamin The Columbian Spelling-book; Being an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading,... Wrentham, the Author, 1799.

“No. 950 Anonymous. The American Primer; or an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading. Philadelphia, Mathew Carey, 1800.

“No. 952 Anonymous. The Modern Primer, or a New and Easy Guide to Spelling and Reading.... Elizabeth (Hager’s Town), Thomas Grieves, 1800 (Alston noted that no copy had been located).

“No. 958 Reed, Abner The First Step to Learning: or, Little Children’s Spelling and Reading book. Printed at East-Windsor by Luther Pratt for the Author in 1800.”

Most of these clearly state they are meant to be a child’s first book, and Alston confirms they were all spellers, though sometimes called primers. This sampling of Alston’s entries is taken from his list after 1784, but many others could be given from his list before that date which also establish that the speller was meant as a child’s first book before the nineteenth century, and that the word, “primer,” sometimes only meant “speller.” By the eighteenth century, the speller had replaced the ABC book and eventually even the horn book. The true primer/catechism was not normally the first book at any time.

I find it puzzling that anyone could ever seriously have considered that the New England Primer was meant as the very first reading book, particularly since its title page announced it was meant to help in the “art” of reading, which was how upper level reading material was described in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Its abbreviated material which concerned teaching reading (spelling) was squashed into a few pages at the very beginning, where it could serve as a review of hornbook or speller material, and the rest of the primer was all catechetical material of a very high readability level, including even the rhyming pictured alphabet at the beginning.

Although Alston’s record of spelling books is breathtakingly complete, it is lacking an American one which is mentioned in the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), article, “Doctrine,” on page 80 of Volume V:

“The first to edit a catechism [Ed.: in the United States], so far as is known, was the Jesuit Father Robert Molyneux, an Englishman by birth and a man of extensive learning, who till 1809, laboured among the Catholics in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Copies of this work are not known to exist now, but, in letters to Bishop Carroll, Father Molyneux mentions two catechisms which he issued - one in 1785, “a spelling primer, for children with a Catholic catechism annexed”.

Therefore, in 1785, Father Robert Molyneux issued a spelling primer, with a Catholic catechism attached, of which no copy is available today. Yet like so many others in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he also apparently used the word, “primer,” as synonymous with “speller.”

Mathew Carey, who published the three spelling books referred to earlier, was a very interesting publisher/bookseller/author, and is credited as having been a co-founder of the earliest Sunday Schools (schools to teach reading) in America. This is the probable reason for Carey's having published so many different spellers at such an early date. The Parson Mason Locke Weems fable of George Washington and the cherry tree, and the book containing it, *The Life of George Washington*, were first published by Mathew Carey. Carey himself had been an employee of Benjamin Franklin in Paris, and had been set up in business in Philadelphia by the Marquis de Lafayette. Elizabeth Peabody wrote of Carey's later welcoming Lafayette when Lafayette returned to America in 1824, by which time Carey had become a rich man (*Letters of Elizabeth Palmer Peabody*, Edited by Bruce A. Ronda, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut: 1984, page 71). Carey's biography is given in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913) (Vol. III, p. 346):

“b. in Dublin, Ireland, 28 January, 1760; d. in Philadelphia, U. S. A. 15 September, 1839. He was the first Catholic of prominence in the publishing trade in the United States, and brought out in 1790 the first edition of the Douay Bible printed in America.... in 1779 (Ed.: in Ireland) he published a pamphlet on the ‘Urgent Necessity of an Immediate Repeal of the Whole Penal Code Against Roman Catholics.’... Carey escaped to France where he remained a year. While there he met Lafayette and worked for a time in the printing office of Franklin at Paris. After his return to Ireland he conducted the Dublin ‘Freeman’s Journal.’... On 5 April, 1784, an article attacking Parliament and the Premier was published... He... left Ireland in disguise and emigrated to America, landing in Philadelphia.

“Lafayette visited him in Philadelphia and gave him \$400 to establish the ‘Pennsylvania Herald.’ He began to publish the debates of the House of Assembly in 1785 from notes he took himself, and as this was an innovation in the newspaper business in America, the paper immediately had a large circulation.... In 1796 he was engaged with several others in founding the ‘Sunday School Society,’ the first of its kind established in the United States....”

Sunday schools of the period in America and Great Britain were primarily schools to teach reading to the disadvantaged, and not schools to teach religion, as we know them to be today. As mentioned, Carey's publishing of a speller as early as about 1796 may have been in connection with the Sunday schools.

According to Lawrence A. Cremin in *American Education - The National Experience - 1783 - 1876* (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York: 1980, pages 66-69, the idea of Sunday schools arose in England during the 1780's and was then used in this country in the following twenty years or so in Philadelphia, Boston and Pawtucket. In the first part of the nineteenth century, the Sunday school was numbered among other types of schools such as church schools, charity schools, private schools, and various incorporated schools. The Sunday school existed originally to teach reading and writing on Sunday to children who worked during the week, and it was also intended to keep them off the streets on Sunday. In 1815, Sunday schools were few and were meant for poor children. Yet, by 1830 they had changed into institutions that catered to all children and whose purpose was primarily to teach religion..

Cremin said, however, that such Sunday schools frequently preceded the establishment of common schools in new towns. Cremin quoted the following from the Indiana Sabbath School Union in 1827:

“Let Sabbath schools be established wherever it is practicable. They will answer the double purpose of paving the way for common schools, and of serving as a substitute till they are generally formed.”

Cremin stated that in 1817 the American Sunday-School Union put out its first book, *Mary Butt Sherwood's Little Henry and His Bearer*. That was a sad story about an English orphan who taught the

Bible to another child in India, which story had originally been published in England. An astonishing total of over 6 million copies of similar stories had been printed by the American Sunday-School Union for Sunday school students by 1830.

Cremin said that another organization which had been founded in 1825, the American Tract Society, put out 3 million such works in the following five years, and by 1865 had published 20 million bound books, each of which had 12 or more such tracts, and it also had put out about 250 million single pamphlets.

It is clear that developments in the “Sunday schools” paralleled developments in the government schools. Starting in 1817, the once unorganized and independent Sunday schools appear to have been taken over by the same kind of highly organized activists, and a review of Sunday school reading texts shows the same shift from “sound” to “meaning” that is to be found in the texts that were used in government schools. Moreover, it is found very early. The American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia, published in the critical year 1826 the Union Spelling and Reading Book, which rates only a Code 4 on a scale from “meaning” to “sound” of one to ten.

That activists for government schools first used the Sunday schools as an entering wedge for government control of education is confirmed by the clear admission quoted above by the Indiana Sabbath School Union in 1827:

“Let Sabbath schools be established wherever it is practicable. They will answer the double purpose of paving the way for common schools, and of serving as a substitute till they are generally formed.”

That they were the initial step in most places is further confirmed by Nietz’ comment on page 27. He reported that the only public schools in existence in 1825 when the American Sunday School Union was formed were in New England and New York State.

Fine points concerning Nietz’ statement about the existence of government school in 1824 other than New England and New York State could be argued, of course, because schools certainly existed all over the United States. However, since they were schools with local control and not legislative control, they were not government schools. For instance, about 1803 on River Road in Lyndhurst, New Jersey, a local man set aside some of his land for use by a neighborhood school, asking a token rent of peppercorns each year. That land was used for a town school until about twenty years ago, when the Little Red School House was turned into a museum, being the third schoolhouse on the land, built in the early 1890’s. (My father attended the second schoolhouse on that land in the 1870’s and 1880’s). Yet the original use of the land for a schoolhouse in the early 1800’s was local and free and not controlled by legislation. Since New Jersey state legislation on education did not appear until many years later, the use of that land for a local school therefore did not originally qualify as government education but only as local choice.

The religious materials in Scotland showed the same effect as those in America in moving from “sound” to “meaning.” Key to the First Step in Teaching Children to Read, According to the Lesson System of Education, First American edition from the third Edinburgh edition, published by Jonathan Leavitt, New York, in 1830 and 1831, had as its content religious material and Scripture study, yet it rates only a Code 1. However, following the Sunday school history would add too much to this present history. It should be noted, however, just from the figures quoted by Cremin for Sunday school books for the nineteenth century, that the fable that McGuffey’s shaped the mind of America is ridiculous.

Cremin commented (page 70) that some publications of both groups were also meant to be used for reading instruction, as a series of reading books, and both groups published primers. He thought that their reading materials were just as graded in difficulty as the McGuffey readers.

However, in mentioning McGuffey's series, Cremin acknowledged that it was only one of many American series of the time, and that it was used for the most part only in the Ohio Valley and in parts of the South. In the general literature, I have found no one, other than Cremin, who has ever acknowledged that fact. The fact that Cremin took the time to debunk the McGuffey Myth is greatly to his credit.

Cremin cited in a footnote that the large sales quoted for McGuffey's were estimates provided by Louis M. Dillman, president of American Book Company which had been publishing the McGuffey series since 1890. Cremin said that Dillman's estimate had appeared in Harvey C. Minnich's book, *William Holmes McGuffey and the Peerless Pioneer McGuffey Readers* published at Oxford, Ohio by Miami University. However, Cremin gave the publishing date as 1929 when it actually was 1928, according to the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932.

"Estimates" of sales about 1927 by the president of American Book Company which had swallowed up the original publishers of McGuffey's almost forty years earlier lack credibility. Those figures are discussed later in this history. The figures of Henry H. Vail in *A History of the McGuffey Readers*, The Burrows Brothers Co.: Cleveland: 1911, on the McGuffey Readers did not lack credibility, as Vail had been with the former company and never claimed that McGuffey's blanketed the United States but only that it had been enormously successful in parts of the Midwest and South, despite constant competition. The McGuffey Myth belongs with the New England Primer Fable and the Piltdown Man on history's long list of academic embarrassments. Its continued existence serves as testimony to the incompetence of those "intellectuals" who are presently writing articles and serving on commissions concerned with America's reading problem.

As mentioned, Samuel Wood of New York was a publisher of heavily moralistic books. *The Penny Histories*, by Victor E. Neuburg, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968, states (page 53-55):

"Samuel Wood was born on Long Island in 1760. He was a schoolmaster until the age of forty, when he found that he could not support a family on a teacher's pay, and went into the second-hand book business. His experiences led him to believe that many children's books were unsuitable for young readers, and so he decided to print children's books which he himself had written or compiled. The first of these, *The Young Child's ABC*, or, *First Book*, was published in 1806, and by 1813 he had nearly '50 kinds of little books of his own printing'.... The children's books published by Samuel Wood were distinctly moral in tone, and were generally illustrated, some of them selling for as little as three cents a copy. In general they lacked the attractive qualities of fairy tales and old romances, and bore a somewhat depressing similarity to the books which were popular in England at this time, written by the imitators of Hannah More and 'the cursed Barbauld Crew, those Blights and Blasts of all that is Human in man and child,' as Lamb characterized them."

Many of the terrible selections appearing in spellers of this period, like Murray's, remain as testimony to Lamb's good judgment. Mrs. Barbauld's were sometimes offensively preachy or surprisingly insensitive, one telling, for instance, of a bad little lamb that managed to get eaten alive by young wolves - hardly the kind of story to make little six-year-olds sleep well at night, particularly if they were convinced that, like the bad little lamb, they were themselves "naughty." But many of the other selections were a decided improvement compared to "Look, Spot, look!" In many spellers, as in Webster's, the tone of some of the other reading selections was truly religious, but far gentler and lovelier than the first Webster selection quoted earlier.

By 1810, the following were advertised in a brochure now in the Harvard Library, entitled *School Books, Printed and Sold by Samuel Wood at the Juvenile Book-Store, No. 357, Pearl-Street, New York* (Harvard Call No. Educ 2199.01 bx):

The Young Child's A, B, C or First book  
The New York Primer, or Second Book  
The New York Preceptor, or Third Book  
The New York Spelling Book, or Fourth Book

The names of these books, by today's standards, would indicate a child was given three books before he was taught to spell. The facts, however, are otherwise.

By 1817, Wood was producing *The New York Readers, No. 1, No. 2, No. 3*. In the "Preface" to his 1826 edition of *The New York Reader, No. 1*, he said:

"Having had an opportunity of judging of the public opinion with respect to the practical advantage of conducting children through their first literary pursuits, by a connected series of small books regularly adapted to their early progress, the publisher now ventures to lay before the instructors of youth his first Reader.

"The cordial reception which has been given to the Spelling-Books and their introduction into many of our schools, afford encouragement to hope, that a similar success may attend the application of the same principle to the art of Reading. This principle is founded on that love of variety, and those gratifications with novelty, which are inherent in the youthful mind: to neglect which, in the course of education, would be as unreasonable, in the teacher, as it would be in the gardener to neglect the proper distribution of warmth and moisture, from which his early hopes derive their principal support.

"A frequent succession of books, regularly adapted to the child's progress, not only gratifies him with what is new, and strengthens his confidence in his own efforts, but it enables the teacher to more readily distribute his pupils into classes exactly suited to their individual attainments. A steady, judicious regard to this principle will, it is believed, lead a child further on his way in three months, than, under ordinary circumstances, he would reach in six months, upon the formal plan of one book, so often practiced in schools."

I have not seen a copy of Wood's *The Young Child's A, B, C, or First Book*, but have seen *The New York Primer, or Second Book*, (an 1837 version) and *The New York Spelling Book, or Fourth Book* (an 1822 version). Both are simply spelling books, and both have the syllable tables, word lists, and short reading selections inserted. They are not good spelling books, since they omit teaching the special vowels except by grouping words together which use them, and do not use synthetic phonics. Also the "cuts" showing pictures for words in the 1837 version might cause problems as the children might learn to read those words for meaning instead of sound. Yet the books are, overall, spelling books endorsing "sound," not "meaning" and rate a Code 7. But to judge solely from their titles, without having Wood's honest admission just quoted in which he clearly called them the "Spelling-Books" which he published before his *Readers*, their nature might easily be misinterpreted.

In 1809, James Pike found fault with the current spellers because they had reading selections included. He showed the following testimonial to his own book on page 1 of his Code 10 book, *The Columbian Orthographer, or First Book for Children*:

## “Recommendations

“...To give a death wound, therefore, to the painful, incorrect practice of directing children to read lessons, before they are able to spell and accent common words of three syllables, we cordially recommend the COLUMBIAN ORTHOGRAPHER. This work we approve, because it is, as the first school book ought to be, merely a spelling book....”

This was signed by twelve names, presumably well known at the time, eight of whom have “Reverend” as titles.

All of these sources indicate that the speller, either with or without reading selections included, was definitely the child’s first book in the English-speaking world in the first part of the nineteenth century.

Yet Rudolph R. Reeder, in his 1900 book, *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, The Macmillan Co., New York: 1900, claimed that the Pickets of this period published in 1818 a series of seven books, of which the primer was first and the speller next. He was wrong in his interpretation of this particular series of books by A. Picket, but strangely right about the Pickets themselves. As will be shown, they were highly active in promoting government schools for many years so are associated with the related change in beginning reading methods that arrived in 1826, moving from “sound” spellers to “meaning” primers. In the original Picket books, however, they probably closely paralleled Wood’s four early “sound” spellers. Wood later published in addition a reading series, to be used after his spellers. However, the Picket materials in later versions probably switched from being dominantly a spelling series for beginners to being dominantly a reading series, even for beginners. Obviously, however, this surmise could only be confirmed by a close examination of all the Picket materials. Nevertheless, they do appear to have been only a spelling book series in the earliest versions.

The Picket spellers and readers are almost unknown today but were of real importance. They were widely used for many years, apparently in different Eastern and Midwestern versions, and were written by prominent government school activists. In an attempt to provide background information, all the data available on various editions is summarized in Appendix B at length under an apparently pivotal date for the material of 1815. A brief discussion is given below.

It seems probable that Picket’s original primer was largely an ABC book meant primarily to teach the alphabet, which material had always been the beginning part of spelling books. Some “primers” meant largely only to teach the alphabet were a later development in the so-called “primers” and were in place after 1826. However, the date of Picket’s primer is unknown, but it was probably far earlier and may well have paralleled in intent and design of the first book in Wood’s four-book spelling series, published by 1810. Wood had broken the standard spelling book down into four little books. His first book apparently largely contained the “alphabet” material which had always been at the beginning of the spelling books. In publishing that little “primer” as the first book in spelling, Wood may well have initiated the practice in America of publishing such simple beginning books, and Picket may well have been imitating Wood. (Wood himself may have been inspired in part by Lindley Murray, who had already published the first part of his speller in England as a separate little book for beginners, but it was longer than Wood’s first book. Wood may also have been influenced by the women writers in England whom the famous author, Lamb, called “that cursed Barbauld crew,” such as Lady Eleanor Fenn, who prepared little spellers and readers for beginning readers, as discussed elsewhere.)

Yet the title of Picket’s 1830 revision suggests that Picket may have been conforming by then to the 1826 shift from “sound” to “meaning,” making his introductory book into one of the new “primers” that taught beginning reading by whole words and meaningful stories. What the original date of Picket’s first primer was is unknown, but it presumably was some time after he published his first speller in 1805.

Picket's spellers were still on sale in New York in 1837, as shown by Mahlon Day's 1837 book store textbook list, mentioned in Appendix B.

A. Picket's earlier book (copyrighted in 1814, with a Preface for the February 1815 revision written at Manhattan School, New York, and published again in 1821) was *The Juvenile Spelling Book: Being an Easy introduction to the English Language, Containing Easy and Familiar Lessons in Spelling, With Appropriate Reading Lessons*. The Picket speller was a beginning book and rates a Code 8. In this 1814 edition, however, the attitude of this period is demonstrated by the Preface:

“Not a word or sentiment has been intentionally inserted, which is not consonant with the purity of religion and morality, and calculated effectually to impress upon the tender mind the love of virtue and goodness, and to form a taste for reading.”

Picket's 1814-1815 book also had the “fly” story on page 27, as well as a lot of other little inserts which are very moral.

An 1841 reprint of Picket's later 1823-copyrighted *Picket's Juvenile Spelling Book, or, Analogical Pronouncer of the English Language* by A. Picket - Last Corrected Edition sounds like the particular version to which Reeder referred.

This 1841-reprinted 1823 speller begins with four pages taken from the *Juvenile or Universal Primer* which preceded it. They are exactly what was appearing on battledores of the period: words for every letter of the alphabet, with pictures for each word: “Antelope. Bull. Cat. Dog.”, etc. The advertisement inserted for the reading series on the fly leaf had as the first item in the series:

“The *Juvenile or Universal Primer*; being a First Book for young children: introductory to the *Juvenile Spelling Book*.-48 pages.”

Reeder had said the compilers of the 1818 series were A. and J. W. Picket, principals of the Manhattan school, New York, and cited the journal, *The Academician*, 1818, pp. 12-14, as his source, presumably for their identity. Yet the 1823 spelling book shows it was written only by A. Picket, and it was copyrighted by Charles H. Picket. This 1823 edition reprinted in 1841 advertised six books, not seven. Yet Reeder had called it a seven-book series, presumably meaning that a dictionary should complete it, from a comment he quoted, that the books “form a systematic gradation from the alphabet to Walker's Dictionary.” The probability is that in the circa 1815 form, the material was more of a spelling series, somewhat like Samuel Wood's circa 1808 four-book spelling series, but in the circa 1823 and later form, the material became more of a reading series, like the reading series Samuel Wood published in 1818 in addition to his spelling series, which he continued to publish.

According to C. W. Bardeen's *The School Bulletin*, Syracuse, New York, July, 1893, *The Academician* was published semi-weekly in New York City from February 7, 1818 to 1819, for a total of 25 issues. Albert Picket was president of the Incorporated Society of Teachers, and John W. Picket was corresponding secretary of the group. The publication carried a series of articles on the Lancastrian and Pestalozzian methods, among other things, before the Pickets abandoned the work. Bardeen included this information in a paper he gave at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, which paper was an excellent history of educational journals in New York State. It is very clear that educational journals were widespread in the nineteenth century, being published in many other states after 1840, but *The Academician* was apparently the first educational journal in America, and it failed, presumably because of a lack of interest.

The date of the paper's publication suggests that the first real push for government control of private education had begun by 1818, and that the Pickets were associated with it, apparently along with someone



named Fiske, from the very beginning. That both Fiske and A. Pickett independently wrote spellers, and that the Picketts retained their interest in education after dropping publication of *The Academician*, is obvious from comparing two statements, one below by John A. Nietz (in *Old Textbooks*, University of Pittsburgh Press: 1961, page 18) and the other by H. H. Vail in 1911, quoted later:

“Fiske’s (1803 speller) was followed by several different spellers written by A. Pickett. The *Union Spelling-Book* printed in New York in 1805 was already the third edition.... A second one was *The Juvenile Spelling-Book*... followed by a much larger and more advanced book entitled, *The Juvenile Expositor, or Sequel to the Common Spelling Book*.... Incidentally, later in life Fiske went west and helped found *The Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers in Cincinnati*. This organization did much to advance and improve education in the Ohio Valley.”

Henry H. Vail, in *A History of the McGuffey Readers*, Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1911, adds additional information which seems to confirm that the Picketts were very important early organizers along with Fiske of those peculiarly un-American institutions, government schools.

“While Dr. McGuffey was still at Oxford, Ohio, he took part in the formation of probably the first extended Teachers’ Association formed in the West. There had been a previous association of Cincinnati teachers organized for mutual aid and improvement. This was about to be given up; but at their first anniversary on June 20, 1831, Mr. Albert Pickett, (sic) principal of a private school in Cincinnati, proposed a plan for organizing in one body the instructors in public and private schools and the friends of education. Circulars were sent out and the first meeting of the College of Teachers was held October 3, 1832. A great number of teachers from many states (in) the West and South attended these meetings and took part in the proceedings. Through its (continuance) Dr. McGuffey took an active part in the work. (pages 30-31)

“Cincinnati, in 1837, was the largest city in the West excepting New Orleans and was the great educational center of the West.... The public schools of Cincinnati were then more highly developed than those of any other city in the West. (page 34-35)

“At no time in the history of (the McGuffey) readers have they been without formidable competition. Pickett’s (sic) Readers were published in Cincinnati as early as 1832. Albert Pickett was at one time president of the College of Teachers and his books were published by John W. Pickett (sic), who was probably his brother.... The Pickett Readers, Cobb Readers, Goodrich Readers... were all swept out of the [Ed.: “Western”] schools by the superior qualities of the McGuffey Readers and the persistent energies of their publishers.

“In these books the publishers found space for a little advertising of their wares. In Pickett’s Readers there is printed conspicuously at the top of a page a warm commendation of Pickett’s Readers, written in 1835 by William H. McGuffey, Professor at Miami University, in which he “considers them superior to any other works I have seen. That was before he made his own readers. Mr. Smith [Ed.: McGuffey’s publisher] responded by publishing a strong commendation of one of his books signed by Mr. Albert Pickett. (pages 61, 62, 63)”

As will be shown, it was through the kind of massive organization that was taking place in Cincinnati that the syllabic spellers were pushed out of first grades and replaced with whole word primers starting in 1826.

It was in 1823 that Joshua Leavitt copyrighted in Vermont his *Easy Lessons in Reading; for the Use of the Younger Classes in Common Schools*. The changes that had been gathering noticeable momentum

since at least 1817 can be detected in his carefully worded preface. Years later, in 1847, a man named Joshua Leavitt wrote a primer which was “broadminded” concerning the use of some “sound” for beginners and it was probably the same man. The 1847 book made room for whatever method a teacher preferred: whole words to letters, letters to whole words, or syllables, easy words and spelling. It had an incomplete syllabary, but to have any syllabary at all by 1847 was unusual, and by the standards of books available in 1847, his was conservative, but it was a pathetic substitute for Noah Webster’s Code 10 synthetic phonics speller that had still been in wide use for beginners in 1826. It should be mentioned that in 1831, Jonathan Leavitt of New York published *Key to the First Step in Teaching Children to Read...* first published in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1830, and it was a ghastly Code 1 text. That change-agent publisher, Jonathan Leavitt, was possibly a relative of Joshua Leavitt.

Joshua Leavitt’s carefully phrased plea for change in his 1823 text read:

“The compiler has been excited to the present undertaking, by the representations of several parents and instructors, that there was no reading book to be found at the bookstores, suitable for young children, to be used intermediately, between the Spelling-Book and the English or American Reader. The Testament is much used for this purpose; and, on many accounts, it is admirably adapted for a reading book in schools.... But it is respectfully submitted to the experience of judicious teachers, whether the peculiar structure of scripture language is not calculated to create a tone? I would by no means exclude the Testament from our schools, but am persuaded it would be better to place a book in the hands of learners, written in a more familiar style, until they have formed a habit of correct reading.

“Such a work, I flatter myself, will be found in the following pages....

“Good reading approaches near to the style of graceful and animated conversation...

“It has long been an opinion, with many judicious persons, that children are commonly put forward too fast in their reading. They should be kept at their spellings, until they can readily pronounce common words, at first sight. They will then be prepared to read without that dronish tone, which it is so difficult to unlearn....

“If sufficiently encouraged to proceed, the Author intends, at a future day, to publish a book of ‘Lessons in Elocution,’ on a new plan....”

These quotations were taken from the fifth Edition of this book, published at Keene, N. H., in 1826. Leavitt had copyrighted his book only three years before in Vermont. His plea for “spelling” should not be considered a plea for “sound.” Even Gallaudet’s *Mother’s Primer* included spelling of words learned for meaning, not sound (as in “see-aye-tee, CAT.”) However, the quotations provide sharp proof that the spelling book was the first book for children in New England immediately before 1826. His “easy” book, one of the opening wedges for educational change, would rate perhaps a sixth-grade level today. On page 143, mixed in with a story on George Washington, appeared Parson Weems’ fable, easier than much of the other material in the book:

“When George was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a hatchet! of which, like most boys, he was immoderately fond, and was constantly going about, chopping every thing that came in his way.”

Of course, Parson Weems’ delightful fable could not find its way into our third grade reading books today, and certainly not our second grade books, unless it were emasculated of all its low frequency words and complex syntax, which would take all of the poetry out of it.

Printed at Mt. Pleasant, Ohio, in 1824, for the author, Daniel Williams, was *The Explanatory Reader for the Use of Schools, Containing a Selection of Easy Lessons in Prose and Verse, Adapted to the Juvenile Capacity*. Williams said in his preface concerning his book that it was

“...adapted to the capacity of pupils from five to ten years of age; and (it) may properly occupy a place between the Spelling book, and Murray’s *Introduction to the English Reader*.”

By today’s standard, his book might be at eighth grade level. His book was also one of the things being blown in by the winds for change, but it is useful to remember that textbooks, if successful, produced profits for the author. Profit may have been his most driving consideration.

The 1818 curriculum for the first primary grade schools in Boston, in which the oldest pupils were the First Class and the youngest the Fourth Class, is quoted in Superintendent Philbrick’s “Report” in the *Annual School Report for Boston of 1874*, pages 374-375):

“Those who read in the Testament shall be in the First Class; those in easy reading, in the Second Class; those who spell in two or more syllables, in the Third Class; those learning their letters and monosyllables, in the Fourth Class; and that the books be the same in every school, for each pupil hereafter entering.”

Philbrick added this further quotation:

“A card, a small spelling-book (Kelley’s) and the New Testament were the books originally used.”

It is evident that the “easy reading” was to be the short selections routinely included in the spelling books (although a later edition of Kelley’s speller which is available indicate it was inferior to Webster’s). The “card” most probably was like the *battledores* then in use in England, which were folded cardboard sheets, elaborations of the syllabic horn book. What the quotation makes very clear, however, is that a primer was not in use in Boston primary schools in 1818 to teach children to read, but beginners were given the syllabic spelling approach in a spelling book before any real reading was to be attempted. It should also be noted that the first real reader, as had been the case with Locke and Webster, was part of the Bible. That was soon to change.

Some few books which were essentially spellers, like the *Lafayette Primer* and *New Jersey Instructor*, by Edward C. Quin, published in Caldwell, New Jersey, in 1824, did move much closer to “meaning” with a greater emphasis on words, but these few texts were apparently not very influential. (They will be discussed later.) However, it is interesting that Quin thanked others for their suggestions, which suggestions apparently helped to push him closer to this “meaning” emphasis in 1824. As will be discussed, the public school activists who were also promoters of “meaning” in reading began their work in earnest about 1817, and the results showed up sporadically in places until the critical year of change, 1826. Quin may well have been in contact with such people.

Very clear proof on beginning teaching methods to 1817 is provided by a book by James Kelly published in Philadelphia in 1817, entitled:

An Improved Method of Education Instituted by Dr. Bell... Also Joseph Lancaster’s Method of Teaching,...

Kelly was not the Kelley who wrote the Boston speller in 1818 but was one of the immigrant Irish schoolmasters, who probably himself had learned to read in an illegal hedge school in the late eighteenth century. He minutely described the methods he used first in Ireland in a Lancastrian school with Lancaster's charts (unobtainable now) and then in Philadelphia in a Bell school. The methods matched the make-up of the beginning portion of the spelling books of the period, further proof that children were learning to read by syllable sounds in 1817, even in the new monitorial schools. (Kelly omitted any mention of Bell's "unreiterated spelling" which is discussed later.) However, Kelly recorded that the Philadelphia school in 1817 was using Comly's speller. According to Clifton Johnson (page 205), Comly's speller first appeared in 1806. The 1820 revised copy which I saw rates a Code 7, and a further revision of 1842, signed by John Comly himself, rates only a Code 6. It is curious that Comly's weak speller should have been one of the few texts which survived the 1826 shift to change, which stronger spellers often did not. As shown elsewhere, the 1826 shift weakened Webster's position and pushed the use of his speller out of beginning reading classes, and it apparently also forced its revision, although Webster's probably still rated a Code 10 until the last, and appalling, revision after Webster's death. Yet, astonishingly, Leypoldt's American Catalogue showing books in print in 1876 listed a version of Comly's relatively weak speller as still available, seventy years after it reportedly first appeared!

On John Franklin Jones' Code 7 Analytical Spelling Book, copyrighted in 1822 and published again in 1824 by E. Bliss and E. White, New York and Albany, Jones said, on page 9, "The first part of a spelling book is generally worn out, while the last is hardly soiled." The first part had the alphabet and syllabary, and usually heavy drill on words with short vowels - which meant heavy concentration on "sound." Despite its inadequate syllabary, Jones' book rates a Code 7, heavily "sound." Jones therefore confirmed that, prior to 1826, children were concentrating most on that part of the spelling book which most taught them to read by "sound": its beginning.

## Chapter 13

### The Roots of the 1826 Move from Sound to Meaning, and the Status of Literacy Before that 1826 Programmed Change in Teaching Methods

Of 48 beginning texts available for study which were written apparently by 48 different authors and published (or republished) in America from 1702 through 1825, a clear move from “sound” to “meaning” showed up in only seven, all seven of which rated below Code 7. A curious increased emphasis on “meaning” also showed up in some Code 7 or higher texts, starting in 1802, some of which will also be discussed. The 48 copies of beginning texts (spellers) published in America from 1702 through 1825 on which I had the opportunity to examine editions (a 1737 edition was the earliest I actually saw) were coded from Code One to Code Ten to show the relative emphasis on “meaning” (Code One) or “sound” (Code Ten). These 48 spellers are probably a representative sampling of the numerous spelling texts published or sold in America in that 124-year period. (Not included in this listing of 48 spellers is the Code 10 widely used English speller, Coote’s, dating to the late sixteenth century, nor some other widely used English spellers on which I have not seen copies.)

It is true that some seventeenth century spellers, and possibly some eighteenth, rate a low code because of an inadequate “sound” treatment, but this inadequacy was the apparent result of incompetence, not a deliberate move towards “meaning” and away from “sound.” For instance, this was the case with *The Fannatick’s Primer* written by Henry Adis and given a probable publishing date of 1661. Concerning its odd title, a quotation from Pepys’ diary in Bartlett’s book of quotations shows the “Fannaticks” were a religious sect:

“October 31, 1662: Great talk among people how some of the Fanatiques do say that the end of the world is at hand, and that next Tuesday is to be the day.”

However addled the Fannaticks may have been on other matters, there can be no doubt that Henry Adis’ intentions were pure concerning teaching reading by sound, as he said at the beginning of *The Fannatick’s Primer*:

“For if children should be perfectly acquainted with a syllabical Spelling, and distinct Pronunciation in their first learning, it is that which will conduce much to their future benefit.”

Yet the speller he wrote rates, at most, a Code Six.

A *New Primmer, or Methodical Directions to Attain the True Spelling, Reading and Writing of English* was written by F. D. Pastorius and printed in 1698 by William Bradford in New York. Its “sound” intentions were obviously good, too, but it only rates a Code Five. The difference between these few early inept spellers which rate low codes and those which appeared after 1800 was the fact that the post-1800 spellers were obviously making a deliberate, and not accidental, move away from “sound” towards “meaning.” However, these two inept seventeenth century spellers were in sharp contrast to Coote’s speller which was used massively all through the seventeenth century and which rates a Code 10.

It may be meaningless, and SHOULD be meaningless, yet I have actually heard twentieth century comments to the effect that “phonics” is for rigid conservatives (rightists), and “meaning” in beginning reading is for enlightened liberals (leftists)! It is therefore embarrassingly tempting to tie the deliberate shift in methods in teaching beginning reading after 1800 (such as the Belgian Jacotot’s methods) into the political chaos and widespread sedition in the Western World following the French Revolution, and to

assume that the shift to “meaning” in reading was a leftward one, while a shift to “sound” would have been a rightward one.

As an examination of those texts published after 1825 showed, the switch to “meaning” texts for beginners had become pronounced by 1826 and by 1830 had reached a flood-tide, with some texts rating as low as Code One. Yet only seven of the 48 beginning texts published in America from 1702 through 1825 on which I examined editions rated below a Code Seven, and before 1822 only three rated below a Code Seven. All three of those earliest ones published before 1822 turned out, upon further examination, to have been written by probable change-agents, even though all three authors carried a title quite properly revered by conservatives: “Reverend.”

One of the most spectacular of the change-agents was Reverend Abner Kneeland (if, indeed, as appears probable, the Abner Kneeland who wrote the book described below is the Abner Kneeland discussed by Blumenfeld). Kneeland was the first to move from “sound” toward “meaning” in a speller with a code below seven, and the early date of his book, 1802, suggests that the deliberate movement from “sound” to “meaning” was far older than might otherwise appear.

A late-eighteenth-century practice in English had been to teach children the spelling book, and then the dictionary. (Other languages did not have or need such spelling books for teaching children to read.) When older children studied the English dictionary, they had to memorize not just spellings but whole definitions. It was a ridiculous practice, because vocabulary should be increased through meeting new words in spoken or written contexts, not from the dead columns in the dictionary. Abner Kneeland “improved” this ludicrous practice even further by adding definitions (“meaning”) to a spelling book for beginners. Kneeland published his *American Definition Spelling Book* in 1802, which was revised in 1813 and was republished at Concord by George Hough significantly in 1826. In 1802, spelling books had to concern themselves with “sound” so Kneeland’s made a pretense of being phonic. It did a very inadequate job, though it included a vowel key almost exactly like Webster’s, and began with the syllabary. Overall, however, it rates at best only a Code 6.

Yet Kneeland’s book appeared to be not too influential (though it is interesting that it was republished in the critical year 1826). However, the appearance of his book suggests that the roots of the deliberate switch from “sound” to “meaning” may lie before 1802. As will be shown, the highly influential Scottish philosopher and psychologist Dugald Stewart, in the 1790’s, was criticizing the presumed psychological damage he felt resulted from thoughtless, careless reading, and pronouncing columns of words in spellers was certainly thoughtless. There may very well have been influence from that source, as Stewart is known to have been influential on reading practices later. Stewart was opposed to the extremists of the French Revolution, and gave lectures at the University of Edinburgh also in the 1790’s in opposition to their atheism. Yet Stewart later was in open sympathy with the later, less controversial but leftward-veering change-agents such as Victor Cousin, which will be discussed.

Blumenfeld wrote (pages 94-95):

“Among clergymen drawn to Owenism were Abner Kneeland (1774-1844), and Orestes A. Brownson (1803-1876). Kneeland, a Universalist minister from New England, became intimate with (Robert Dale) Owen and (Frances) Wright in New York, contributed frequently to *The Free Enquirer*, then moved to Boston, where he became the leader of a group known as the First Society of Free Enquirers, and in 1831, began publishing his own weekly, the *Boston Investigator*. In 1835, he was tried and convicted of blasphemy, whereupon a group of noted Unitarians, including William E. Channing, Theodore Parker, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, protested in his behalf. Kneeland, however, served sixty days in jail, after which he emigrated to Iowa to start a communal settlement which never materialized.”

Kneeland's association with that flamboyant woman and public speaker, Frances Wright, would have outraged conservatives even more than his association with the socialist, Owen. Frances Wright was an outspoken supporter of "free love," which was hardly the community norm in the New England of the 1830's. It seems appropriate that the initial entrance of "meaning" into the teaching of beginning reading in America should have been the work of such a spectacular misfit as Abner Kneeland.

Curiously, two other texts came out in the early year of 1802 which veered towards "meaning," though both rate a Code Seven. The other two carried no author's name, although one has subsequently been identified as written by Reverend Samuel Willard. He wrote *The Franklin Primer* of 1802, which will be discussed more at length later. *The Franklin Primer* included some columns of words under "meaning" categories: birds, fishes, insects, etc., which was apparently an unusual practice in beginning books. However, it also showed clearly in another way in an 1803 edition, presently in the Library of Congress, and possibly in the original edition of 1802, that it was endorsing "reading" habits as opposed to "spelling" habits. Word lists in the early pages of that 1803 edition did not go down the page in the customary spelling-column fashion, but across the page in the fashion of a connected reading text. By the time of the 1808 edition, presently in Harvard, the words were, however, arranged in the customary spelling book columns.

Another 1802 speller showed that same unusual direction, across the page instead of down, in its word lists. That was the Code 7 text, *The Child's First Book, Being an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading*, which showed no author but only that it was published by Lincoln and Edmunds, Boston, in 1816, and that it had originally appeared in 1802. The text had a syllabary, and words were arranged in lists by sound analogies instead of by reference to a phonic key, both of which were common approaches. Yet, although the book made no comment on the unusual arrangement, its lists of words ran across and not down the page. Nor was that the only unusual bow to "meaning" in this book. Without specifically saying so, the book rejected the sounding out of words by sequential sounding and blending of phonemes. Instead, it endorsed working out unknown words by their analogy to known whole words, which is, of course, phony phonics. Although it is startling to see the practice recommended in a modified form as early as 1802, it is a fact that by 1840 such "phony phonics," the comparing of one whole word to another whole word to see like parts, had become the norm in Great Britain and America. Page 9 carried this comment:

"In teaching the monosyllables, I would recommend a different method than is usually practiced, viz., Should the child hesitate at the word preach, instead of asking What does p, r, e, spell? the question should be, What does e, a, c, h, spell? Then r, e, a, c, h,; then p, r, e, a, c, h."

This was an enormous bow to "meaning" in beginning reading as early as 1802! Nevertheless, despite the entrance of such whole-word "phonics," note that it still was the norm in 1802 for a child to work out the word for himself. Yet in 1890, a New York City teacher said to Dr. Rice, words to this effect: "How can a child know what a word is if he never saw it before?"

The next speller that rated only a Code 6 (only at its beginning, but a pure Code 1 towards its end) came out in 1815, titled *Pennsylvania Spelling Book*, by "An Association of Teachers." It was copyrighted by Maskell M. Carll and Daniel L. Peck, who were most likely among the compilers mentioned in the preface who felt "some improvements might still be made" in spellers. "The following pages are the result of some twenty years' practice," but whose practice is not mentioned.

A Reverend M. M. Carll showed up, very probably the same man, in 1830 at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. New York Public Library Volume cpv 1262 contains:

“A Report on the State of Education in Pennsylvania, Accompanied with Two Bills for the Establishment of a General System of Public Instruction and Other (?Proceedings), February 11, 1830, Also an Address on the Moral and Political Importance of General Education Delivered at the Franklin Institute February 26, 1830, by Rev. M. M. Carll, Philadelphia, 1830.”

On page 32, it stated:

“The bills are specifically calculated to provide for the education of every child and youth from two to twenty-one years of age.”

The statement appeared elsewhere that it was the most important public measure “since the achievement of our national independence and political freedom.” If this was the same Maskell M. Carll who copyrighted with Daniel L. Peck in 1815 the Pennsylvania Spelling Book, by An Association of Teachers, then it is certain the co-author of that book was one of the movers-and-shakers working for government schools.

The following remark in A Report.... was, I believe, Reverend Carll’s:

“Our children are growing up unprovided with the mental cultivation which is so essential to the formation of character to withstand the temptations to which they must be exposed.”

Yet another remark, made about the same time in Philadelphia which is quoted elsewhere in this history of reading, commented on the high achievement of children at that time!

A book by an M. M. Carll, very possibly the same man, is listed in the American Book Publishing Record - Cumulative 1879-1945, R. R. Bowker Co., 1980. Under the entries for the number code 372 appears;

“M. M. Carll, Mother’s Manual and Infant Instructor (sic) Designed for Infant or Primary Schools and Families. Illustrated With About 300 Cuts, All of Which Are Correctly Explained in the Alphabet of Nature, and Adapted to Regular Course of Infant Instruction. Fourth Edition Improved and Enlarged. New York, Paine and Burgess, 1845....”

Whatever the “Alphabet of Nature” was is unknown, as is the original date of publication before the “Fourth Edition Improved and Enlarged” came out in 1845. However, it is highly likely that the “300 Cuts” were used to teach sight words.

The name, M. M. Carll, showed up again on a book published by A. S. Barnes in 1870, Child’s Book of Natural History. If that book had originally been written by Carll, it was another nice tie to the activists: they loved natural history because it was “science,” and “science” was foolishly expected to disprove traditional religion.

Only one other text rated below Code 7 before 1822. That was The Columbian Spelling Book and Children’s Friend, by “A Friend to Youth,” published by Miller and Hutchins, Providence, Rhode Island, and copyrighted March 2, 1819. It rates a Code 5. (“Columbian” was frequently used in titles. It is obviously necessary to compare the authors, publishers and dates to sort these texts.) “A Friend to Youth” was the same signature Reverend Samuel Willard had used on The Franklin Family Primer of 1802 which rates a Code 7. The Franklin Primer of 1826, also attributed to Willard, rates a Code 4 in the earliest



available edition, although one later edition rates a Code 2. The 1827 sequel to *The Franklin Primer* was entitled *Secondary Lessons, or the Improved Reader* and is also attributed to Willard. It is signed “A Friend of Youth,” a variant of “A Friend to Youth.” *The Columbian Spelling Book...* originated in Providence, Rhode Island, instead of Massachusetts since its author signed its Preface “Providence, April 19, 1819,” later than the copyright date of March 2, 1819, and the title page carries no penciled-in notation by a librarian in the Harvard library that its author was Reverend Samuel Willard, as was done on the 1826 and 1827 texts. Nevertheless, it seems likely *The Columbian Spelling Book* was also written by Reverend Willard. This is not only because of the signature, “A Friend to Youth,” but primarily because its “meaning” approach, almost unheard of at that early date, agrees with that of *The Franklin Primer* of 1802 by using the same “meaning” device of listing phonetically dissimilar words in “meaning” categories: Plants, Apparel, Eatables, Utensils. Such category lists had been present in *The Franklin Primer* of 1802, but not the *New England Primer*, after which the 1802 text pretended to be modeled. It is true such categories had been used as long ago as some eight hundred years or so before in the teaching of Latin, but not in the teaching of beginning reading. Such categories clearly concern a language’s meaning, and not its sound.

In the “Preface” to *The Columbian Spelling Book*, the author, “A Friend to Youth,” said:

“The writer of the following pages has no other apology to offer for intruding this work upon a discerning publick, than a desire to facilitate the progress of the infant mind.

“All that can be attempted with young children, is to inculcate the leading principles, and awaken the curiosity to farther inquiry.

“The ease with which young pupils have been observed to come forward by the practice of uniting pleasing reading with spelling lessons, affords a striking proof of its utility. But one great inconvenience attending this practice, is, the method with which spelling books are generally arranged.

“The writer, therefore, offers this arrangement as one, thought to be well calculated to instruct in this way....

“Many of (the selections) are in style of dialogue, as this species of writing is generally more pleasing to children than any other. “*The Cobweb to Catch Flies*,” a work of this kind, and from which many of the following lessons are selected, has been used to very great advantage in alluring young pupils to a love of reading. Sketches of Grammar and Geography have also been thrown into this form; not for this reason only; that it is more interesting to children, but that it in some measure prevents their reading fast, and with that monotony, which the young learner often acquires, and which is so difficult to be corrected in after years....”

After years of teaching second and third grade children who had learned to read with the “meaning” method, I can agree with “A Friend to Youth” that the “meaning” method certainly stops children from “reading fast,” but it also just as certainly sharply increases their monotonous droning.

The author left no doubt that he was endorsing learning to read by “meaning” as the superior - but new - approach: “The ease with which young pupils have been observed to come forward by the practice of uniting pleasing reading with spelling lessons, affords a striking proof of its utility. But one great inconvenience attending this practice, is, the method with which spelling books are generally arranged.”

A generous rating on *The Columbian Spelling Book...* is Code 5, because it at least began with the alphabet and syllable tables on pages 5, 6, and 7, but then the bottom of page 7 had four sentences, such

as “Am I to go up?” Page 8 had the normal sound blends for the spellers, “bla, ble, bli, blo, blu,” etc. Pages 9 and 10 (which may have covered short vowels, and therefore been more favorable to “sound”) were missing. But page 11 contained more whole-word “meaning” sentences, and page 12 contained word columns arranged by “meaning” categories, not “sound”: “Plants, Apparel, Eatables, Utensils.” Page 13 contained more sentences. Page 14 contained single syllable words, with only some arranged by sound analogies. The book continued in this fashion with heavy quantities of reading selections in comparison to word lists, through two syllable words, with only occasional arrangement by sound analogies, no phonics unless it received some treatment on the missing pages 9 and 10, and only one religious reference on the bottom of page 98.

The original Franklin Primer of about 1802 had been extremely religious, and announced that its intention was to replace the New England Primer, since it stated it was meant as:

“...a substitute for the old Primer, which has of late become almost obsolete.”

This was a bizarre and manifestly untrue statement, as Heartman’s checklist showed enormous numbers of editions of the New England Primer were being produced from the latter part of the eighteenth century until at least 1830. The statement therefore sounds like disinformation, which is a typical tool of change-agents when they are promoting their own materials for their own purposes. Reverend Willard’s works showed a sharp drop in religious emphasis in the 1819 and later works (if, indeed, he wrote the 1819 speller as well as the 1826 and 1827 texts). This certainly suggests Reverend Willard was not a typical old-fashioned New England minister who thought children should be drilled in and memorize the catechism. Willard’s motive in making such a bizarre statement in his highly religious 1802 primer can, of course, only be surmised. Perhaps his highly religious 1802 primer was only meant to weaken the market position of the hopelessly conservative and highly religious New England Primer, which was actually a catechism meant to teach religion to children, and not a beginning reading book. To some extent, Willard must have been successful in doing so, since his 88-page primer of 1802 had come out in seven more editions apparently all of 84 pages by 1807. It also came out in an “Improved Edition” of 72 pages by Manning & Loring of Boston in 1812, which revision I have not seen.

The Columbian speller, obviously, was very different from earlier spellers and shows multiple signs of change-agent thinking, whether it was or was not written by that curious man, Reverend Samuel Willard. Reverend Willard appears in his own way to have been as far from being a traditional minister as Reverend Abner Kneeland and Reverend M. M. Carll, Kneeland being the author of the first low code text just described, and Carll probably being one of the authors of the second text described. “Reverend” before their names, as with Reverend Gallaudet, served to disarm the religious American public and to make it receptive to their ideas. The American public was accustomed to give great respect to the title “reverend,” but these activists very possibly did not deserve such respect.

I found only four beginning reading texts or spellers below Code 7 which appeared between 1822 and 1826. One was a toy book, The American Primer, rating a Code 6, in 1822, which it is unlikely would have been used as a school book, and another in 1822 was the Child’s Instructor, a Code 3, showing real influence from the change agents. (Clifton Johnson quoted on pages 235-239 from an 1808 The Child’s Instructor, published in Philadelphia, which had some of the same content. Yet, from Johnson’s over-all description which is not too explicit, the 1808 volume does not sound extreme but more like a Mrs. Barbauld-type reader. The 1808 volume, of course, would have to be seen before it could be given a “Code” rating or before it could be identified as an earlier edition of the 1822 work, which 1822 work strongly shows the influence of the change-agents.)

For 1824, I found two others below Code 7. As mentioned elsewhere, Edward C. Quin was the author of the 1824 Code 3 or 4 The Lafayette Primer. It suggests by some of its content that Quin may have been

one of the schoolmasters emigrating from Ireland. The title page on the 1824 Lafayette Primer stated, "Without the Repetition of the Alphabet; Peculiarly Adapted for the Use of Primary and Lancastrian Schools." With some use of the syllabary, the book rated between Code 3 and 4. It did use separated syllables on words. However, to drop the memorizing of the alphabet and to learn letters only from syllables and words was certainly a major move towards meaning. Quin thanked unnamed others for their assistance, who presumably gave him his "advanced" ideas, and those people very probably were among the activists. Yet there is no way to confirm this. Nor is there any way to find the background on the curious Code 4 1824 The Catholic School Book, which may have been written with similar "assistance" or may not have been meant as a beginning book at all, but possibly only meant to review some of the speller content which a child already may have covered before moving into much catechetical material, in a fashion not unlike that of The New England Primer. Except for a few pages at the beginning, the book is a reader of largely religious material, just as The Franklin Primer of 1802 had been.

Curiously, the 1824 The Catholic School Book included lists of words by "meaning" categories in the beginning portion of the book. Such "meaning" categories had not been used in the New England Primer but had been used in Reverend Willard's The Franklin Primer of 1802 and in the anonymously written The Child's First Book.... of 1802, as well as in The Columbian Spelling Book of 1819.

The presence of such category lists and the low code number on The Catholic School Book tend to suggest that activists were giving their "assistance" to Catholic publishers as well as to the "lucky" Protestant groups before 1826. It was disturbing to have found that the material published for Protestant Sunday school societies by 1826 had switched to a "meaning" emphasis, as discussed elsewhere, and the same influences may have been at work on the Catholic publishers.

The four lower-than-Code-7 texts published in the four years between 1822 and 1826 very possibly all received influence from activists. That is because such probable influence is so readily identifiable on the three lower than Code 7 texts which have been described which were published in the nineteen years between 1802 and 1821.

Other spellers after 1818 were far weaker and may have had ties to the activists, even though they rated Code 7 or above. These spelling books imitated Webster in teaching sound and in giving a pronouncing key, but they also usually implicitly denigrated Webster by endorsing Walker's orthography and phonics key instead of Webster's. The phonic keys on the post-1818 spellers were sharply inferior, as discussed later. Certainly questions exist concerning Cobb and his spellers of 1821 and 1825, discussed later, and concerning some other spellers listed along with Cobb's. However, almost all of these spellers published after 1818 simply chipped away at the strengths of Webster's speller without actually dropping below a strong Code 7 or higher.

The movement from "sound" toward "meaning" in beginning reading instruction was obviously originating in a small group of people who consistently showed ties to the Owenites and to the other activists for government schools. That movement from "sound" to "meaning" only became decisive, however, in 1826. Before that date, the use of "sound" for beginning readers was overwhelmingly dominant.

### The Status of Literacy Before 1826

Wide testimony has been printed concerning the high literacy in America in these early years. It resulted from teaching beginning reading by "sound" instead of "meaning." One unwitting testimony appears in, of all places, Reverend Samuel Willard's 1826 The Franklin Primer. A portion of one of the narrative selections reads on page 36:

“Hark! What sound is that? The stage is coming. Ask George to go for the newspaper. I hope I shall have a letter from your Aunt Mary. It is more than a month since I wrote to her.”

Before 1826, therefore, ordinary American families were buying newspapers which were regularly delivered by stage-coaches with the rest of the mail. Ordinary American families were reading and sending periodic letters the same way, by stage-coach mail. The “readability level” of the newspapers and letters of that stage-coach period is breathtakingly high.

Willard’s was not the only children’s reading book with a selection referring to the regular delivery of newspapers to ordinary American families in the early nineteenth century. Clifton Johnson included the following selection in his book, *Old-Time Schools and School-Books*, published by The Macmillan Company in 1904 and reprinted by Peter Smith, New York, in 1935. The selection Johnson quoted on pages 298 and 299 of his book was from *The Monitorial Reader* by Adams published in Concord, New Hampshire in 1839. From other parts than those shown below of the selection which Johnson quoted, it was obviously about rural American families some time before 1839. Since the selection concerned adults with half-grown children in 1839 or before, the adults all would have learned to read more than thirteen years before, which means before 1826. That was the critical date at which change really began in the method for teaching beginning reading, when “sound” was dropped and replaced by “meaning.” The pertinent part of Johnson’s selection reads:

“After all, the lowest, the most degraded class of borrowers, are NEWSPAPER BORROWERS; fellows who have not soul enough to subscribe for a newspaper, yet long to know its contents; who watch with lynx-eyed vigilance for the arrival of the mail, and when their more generous neighbor receives his paper, send their boys with messages like the following.

““Mr. Borrowall wishes you would be kind enough to (give) him your paper for one minute. There is something particular in it, that he wants to see; he’ll send it back before you want to read it.”“

Yet “reading expert” ignoramuses in the 1920’s, trailing meaningless university degrees, claimed illiteracy was widespread in America at that time, as will be referred to elsewhere. Even a scholar of the stature of the philologist, Mario Pei, of Columbia University was misled by their disinformation in his book, *The Story of Language*, (J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1949; Mentor Books, 1960). Incredibly, Pei said (page 241):

“In our own land, a population that was barely twenty per cent literate at the time of the Revolution was still only forty per cent literate in 1840.”

Mario Pei was unparalleled as a scholar of language. (His lucid and useful writings on language appear to have been largely suppressed, casualties of the ongoing war against language skills and real learning, or “truth,” that has been carried on by Paul Johnson’s kind of “intellectuals” since before the French Revolution). However, for Mario Pei’s information on education, he was obviously depending on academic “experts,” and he was predictably misled. In total contradiction to the disinformation he was given is the following comment by John Adams in 1765, quoted by John W. Whitehead in *Parents’ Rights*, Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois: 1985. Who could know more about the status of literacy in America in 1765 than John Adams who lived in America then? Whitehead took the quotation from *The Works of John Adams*, Charles Adams, III, Ed., Boston, 1851.

“(A) native of America who cannot read or write is as rare an appearance... as a comet or an earthquake.”

Mario Pei's being misled about literacy levels in America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century was no accident. The rationale for government schools was that they were essential in order to cure cultural ailments like illiteracy. Therefore, unsettling testimony like President Adams' that illiteracy in America in the eighteenth century was as rare as a comet had to be buried, to be replaced with the lie that literacy in America was rare before the advent of the glorious government schools. What the government schools actually succeeded in doing after 1826 was to turn vast numbers of literate America's children into functional illiterates.

It should be mentioned here that Mario Pei fell victim to other disinformation or historical "unthink," outside his field of specialty, which was languages. When it came to an historical framework in which to place his study of languages, he was apparently at the mercy of the same kind of "experts," which would account for the following extraordinarily ignorant comment from page 350 of the same text:

"The Middle Ages, concerned with eternal, not temporal things, gave the problem of language no thought, save where a language served as a tool in the great process of spreading religious propaganda. It remained for the Renaissance to resume speculation on language with the help of a new, eclectic, empirical, inductive point of view."

Such an error from a scholar like Pei is startling. Furthermore, Pei contradicted himself on page 75, when he said:

"Another variant of the Greek alphabet was adapted for the use of the Goths by their bishop Wulfila in the fourth century.... Still another version of the Greek alphabet was devised by two bishops from Constantinople, Cyril and Methodius, for the Slavs to whom they brought Christianity in the ninth century.... The result was the Cyrillic alphabet used today by... Russians, Ukrainians, Serbs and Bulgars."

Pei apparently did not know that the Irish monks about the seventh century turned Gaelic into a written language and shortly after the English monks turned Anglo-Saxon into a written language, the first two written languages in Western Europe based on the Latin alphabet. (Ogham and runes had not been based on the Latin alphabet.) The Christian Irish and English monks were hardly giving the "problem of language no thought" except for "religious propaganda." This is not only because their newly invented vernacular writing was not normally used for religious texts which were in Latin, but because the Irish monks used their newly invented Gaelic writing to record ancient Celtic pagan tales, and Anglo-Saxon monks used their newly invented Anglo-Saxon writing to record their pagan tale, Beowulf! Furthermore, concerning the "problem of language," as the Celtic pagan tales were copied in the following centuries, the Irish scribes were careful to retain the archaic Gaelic in the tales, even though it was becoming almost like a foreign tongue. That they did so has not only been an enormous help to modern scholars but obviously indicates the old monks had a great interest in "the problem of language."

On page 362 and 363, Pei had said very reasonably:

"The grammatical order prevailing in Greek and Latin, and passed on by those languages to those of the modern western world is to some extent symbolical of mental and even of social order. Most of the sloppy and confused thinking of today can be traced to the abandonment of the principles of order in the teaching of languages (particularly English) in the schools. The trained, logical minds of the past, which we occasionally admire and the absence of which we occasionally deplore, were firmly anchored to principles of order, in sociology as well as in language."

The concern of the literate Christian Irish in the seventh century with the grammar which Pei felt was so important was so intense that they wrote many Latin grammars, discussed by Louis Holtz in *Donat et la Tradition de l'Enseignement Grammatical*, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, 1981. Furthermore, a complex parody on Latin grammar, highly original, was written in that period and is generally attributed to an Irish Christian, Fergal. How many grammar parodies do we have today, and how many people would read or understand them even if they existed? In addition to those and to the Donat grammars, major and minor, attention to the many-volumed Priscian grammars was intense in the period before 900. It was in the margins of some of these Latin Priscian works that Irish monks at St. Gall Monastery, Switzerland, wrote in Gaelic before 800 A. D. such comments as, "It is very cold," and "Nightfall and time for supper," which comments have been quoted elsewhere in this history. After 1,000 A. D., the study of Latin grammar remained the backbone of education, and even the cultural degeneracy in the universities in the late Middle Ages was primarily a degeneracy in the study of grammar, which had been perverted from its real purpose. By the late Middle Ages, even vernacular grammars were being prepared. Yet Pei accepted the description of this enormously long period from the fall of Rome in the fifth century to the Renaissance in the fifteenth century, ONE THOUSAND YEARS, as one which gave "the problem of language no thought," until the "Renaissance" arrived. What the "Renaissance" scholars did was to pillage the old monasteries for their copies of Priscian's grammars and Quintilian's rhetorics (more "language"), which they announced they had "discovered."

The following is one more of the hosts of historical sources which testify to high literacy in America up to the early 1830's. It is taken from a pamphlet in the New York Public Library, Call Number cpv 1265, *An Address Delivered at the Request of the Members of the Apprentices' Library Company of Philadelphia*, 23 November, 1832, by John Sergeant, LL.D, President of the Institute in Philadelphia. It was printed by James Kay, Jun., & Co., and the quoted remarks are from pages 5 to 9:

"The progressive dissemination of knowledge is a marked characteristic of the age we live in. It distinguishes especially the country in which our lot is cast.... Of the truth of this general assertion no one who looks around him can entertain a doubt. Advert for a moment to a single proof. The ability to read, as has been intimated, was once a mark of uncommon learning; the want of it is now a mark of extraordinary ignorance.

"This may, at first view, appear to be a minute circumstance; but the contrast is immense between ages characterized by the possession or the want of even so simple an attainment. When every child is taught to read, when every apprentice to a mechanic art has a claim upon his master by his indentures to be instructed in this humble element, and even considerably more; when, as may almost be said, every man, woman and child is accustomed in some degree to the use of books, has the capacity to consult them, and to draw knowledge from them; when books are actually published for persons of all ages and all conditions, and of every variety of taste and inclination; it requires no depth of reflection to perceive, that an intellectual condition must exist, very different from that of a period when none but clerks could read, and when, to the very body of mankind, all books were but sealed books."

This American, who had no reason to dissemble, testified that literacy was almost universal in America for all classes of people in 1832. However, by 1832 the change in beginning reading instruction which had started in 1826 was well underway. America was therefore about to be swamped very soon with "functional illiterates," the newly invented and expensive products of the change-agents and their newly established government schools.

Conditions among the poorer classes were not so good in England and Wales as in America. Although they were still generally using the syllable "sound" approach before 1826 in England and Wales, some children of the poor in these countries received no schooling at all. Yet general literacy was

far better there than is often acknowledged, undoubtedly because it is possible to learn to read with the syllable “sound” method rather rapidly so that elaborate schooling was not necessary to produce basic literacy. The following quotation is from page 338 of George Birkbeck, Pioneer of Adult Education, by Thomas Kelly, Liverpool, At the University Press: (some time after 1956), concerning over-all literacy in England and Wales in 1840:

“...on the average about three quarters of the adult population had some knowledge of reading....”

As is referred to elsewhere, the huge sales of penny literature in England before 1800 are a mute testimony to widespread literacy among the English poor in the eighteenth century.

Additional testimony on literacy and attitudes towards literacy in England in the eighteenth and nineteenth century are given in “Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900” in Past and Present, Number 42, 1969, the periodical of the Past and Present Society, Oxford, England. The article, which has been discussed earlier, was written by Professor Lawrence Stone of Princeton University in the United States.

Stone wrote on page 93 that the quick increase in population and the heavy movement into urban areas about 1800 strained the existing education facilities in England. Investigations in the early 1800’s claimed that almost a third of poor children in the urban slums in England never entered a school, and the existing schools were not only inadequate but overcrowded. He added however, concerning those contemporary claims:

“Statistical evidence of the effect of these conditions in depressing the level of urban literacy is at present almost non-existent....”

Stone’s comments, turned inside out, provide the astonishing statements that more than two-thirds of the urban slum poor in England in the early nineteenth century did attend a school at some point, since less than one-third did not, and that there is absolutely no statistical evidence of any kind confirming urban illiteracy in England in the early nineteenth century, before the establishment of the government-supported schools that were supposed to cure that never-confirmed illiteracy!

As referred to earlier, the attitude of the privileged classes towards education of the poor was often negative. Writing and reading had been taught separately for centuries. While teaching a little “reading” might have been acceptable for the poor, teaching “writing” was often frowned on by their “betters,” obviously because it gave the poor too much power.

Stone wrote on page 89 that, in order to defuse the opposition to her Mendips school, Hannah More said,

“I allow of no writing.”

He added that, when the National Society associated with the Anglican Church began to promote elementary education, it also made the comment:

“...it is not proposed that the children of the poor be... taught to write and cipher”

Stone said that the Wesleyan Methodists had completely banned writing from their schools.

Stone wrote on page 130:

“As late as 1839 it was estimated that two-thirds of the Bradford weavers could read, but only a quarter could also write. In the coalmining district of northeast England in 1858, 78 per cent of the colliers could read, but only 64 per cent could also write - mostly only their own names. In private weekly schools at that time, 93 per cent of the students were learning to read, but only 43 per cent to write.”

As has been discussed elsewhere, the lack of ability to “write” in the absence of having been taught to write does not indicate illiteracy. As the above quotation confirms, it is possible to know how to read without knowing how to write.

Concerning the literacy in Scotland, Kelly also quoted (pages 338-339) R. K. Webb’s writings, E.H.R. LXV, 349-50, and “Literacy among the Working Classes in Nineteenth Century Scotland,” in *Scottish Historical Review*, XXXIII (1954) 100-14:

“the commonest figure of literacy (i.e. ability to read) for the ‘forties would seem to hover about two-thirds to three-quarters of the working classes, perhaps nearer the latter than the former.’

“In the rural areas of the Lowlands, where the Scottish tradition of universal literacy still held sway, the position was better. ‘The crucial elements of the working classes,’ Webb concludes, ‘- the artisans, mechanics, and skilled labourers - were almost universally literate and of a fairly high degree of attainment.’”

It is obvious that the only reason that one-quarter of the working class could not read was that they had never been taught, since those in the “rural areas of the Lowlands” and the “crucial elements of the working classes” “were almost universally literate,” just like the Americans discussed by the 1832 speaker who is quoted above. The literate Scottish adults in the ‘forties would have been taught with the syllable method before 1830. By contrast to this relatively high degree of literacy before the spread of government schools, note in a later section of this history the appalling literacy results achieved in the government schools in England by the 1870’s, at which time compulsory attendance laws had almost all children in school at least for several years and the “meaning” method had replaced the “sound” method in the teaching of beginning reading.

The condition of beginning reading instruction in Ireland at the turn of the nineteenth century is particularly interesting, since education for the Catholic Irish had been outlawed by the Penal Laws since the 1690’s until shortly before 1830, but had been carried on anyway in the furtive “hedge schools.” Note in the following quotations the mention of the “spelling book” which was taught by the “sound” of English, and of students becoming fluent in Latin, which they undoubtedly also learned to read by “sound.” Those Irish “hedge schools” of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century exported to America numbers of schoolmasters proficient in Latin. During that period, many “hedge schools” were undoubtedly still teaching in Gaelic. Yet enough were teaching in English or teaching in English after starting in Gaelic to show that literacy in English was no problem for the Irish when they used the English spelling book based on the syllabarium, and when “sound” was used in teaching that spelling book. However, under the appalling and degrading social circumstances that resulted from the Penal Laws, which laws debased far more than education for the Catholic Irish, illiteracy must have been common, but so was a high degree of literacy for many. That literacy grew from the firm foundation of learning to read by “sound,” not “meaning.”



A mocking commentary on these effective hedge schools was given by W. B. Yeats, in *Representative Irish Tales*, who was quoted in the article, "William Carleton," (1798-1869), in *Irish Literature*, Bigelow, Smith & Company, New York: 1904, Justin McCarthy, Editor.

"His education, such as it was, was beaten into him by hedge schoolmasters. Like other peasants of his time, he learned to read out of the Chap-books - 'Freney, the Robber,' 'Rogues and Rapparees' or else, maybe, from the undesirable pages of 'Laugh and Be Fat'.... He sat under three schoolmasters in succession.... They were a queer race, bred by Government in its endeavor to put down Catholic education. The thing being forbidden, the peasantry had sent their children to learn reading and writing, and a little Latin even, under the 'hips and haws' of the hedges. The sons of plowmen were hard at work construing Virgil and Horace, so great a joy is there in illegality.

"When Carleton was about fourteen, he set out as 'A Poor Scholar,' meaning to travel into Munster in search of more perfect education. 'The Poor Scholar' was then common enough in Ireland. Many still remember him and his little bottle of ink. When a boy showed great attention to his books, he would be singled out to be a priest, and a subscription raised to start him on his way to Maynooth. Every peasant's house, as he trudged upon his road, would open its door to him, such honor had learning and piety among the poor. Carleton, however, plainly was intended for nothing of the kind. He did not get farther than Granard, where he dreamed that he was chased by a mad bull, and taking this for an evil omen, went home."

A less mocking account is given by Henry Giles (page 1280, Volume IV,) in the article "The Irish Intellect." Giles had been born in County Wexford November 1, 1809. Though born a Catholic, he became a Unitarian minister and died at Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1882, having come to America in 1840. This is an excerpt from a collection of his works published in 1845:

"The Catholic Irish in those hard times when education was thus forbidden them, carried their literary studies into the silent fields, and amidst bushes and brambles conned Homer, Virgil, Euclid or the spelling book; and this was the origin of what has been called 'the hedge-school.' The old Irish hedge-school should be held in immortal honor, as the last refuge of a people's mind and as the last sanctuary of persecuted intellect. The Irish who dared all penalties for their faith, dared no less for their understanding. They were as zealous martyrs for scholarship as for conscience. Even while the penal laws were still in force, peasants who spoke Latin could be found among the hills of southern Ireland, and at all times classical studies have been popular among the Irish."

John O'Keeffe (1747-1833) (Vol. VII, *Irish Literature*, p. 2770 and following), wrote this in *From the Recollections of John O'Keeffe*, 2 vols., 1826. O'Keeffe had been a writer of successful plays who tragically had gone blind in mid-life:

"In my early times, all the great outlets from Dublin had, inside the hedges, parallel footpaths with the road, and the stile, where the hedges divided the fields, were models for stiles all over the civilized world... in my time, the word village was not known, but every group of cabins had a piper and a schoolmaster, and before every cabin door, in fine weather, there was the Norah, or Kathleen, at her spinning wheel (no woman ever worked out of doors, or in the fields)."

The result of these hedge schools, which by Giles' testimony used the spelling book, was a large degree of literacy. This is evident from the quotations which follow from the article, "Irish Fairy and Folk Tales," by Charles Welsh (Vol. III, *Irish Literature*, pages xii-xxi):

“...The very first collections of fairy tales and folk tales are, of course, to be found in the old Chap-books. ‘They are,’ says Mr. W. B. Yeats, ‘to be found brown with turf smoke on cottage shelves, and are, or were, sold on every hand by the peddlars, but cannot be found in any library of this city of the Sassanach (London). The Royal Fairy Tales, The Hibernian Tales, and The Legends of the Fairies are the fairy literature of the people.’

“Of a certain volume, The Hibernian Tales, Thackeray writes pleasantly in his Irish Sketch Book, remarking, ‘So great is the superiority of the old tales over the new, in fancy, dramatic interest, and humor, that one cannot help fancying that Hibernia must have been a very superior country to Ireland.’

“‘These Hibernian novels, too,’ he continues, ‘are evidently intended for the hedge-school universities. They have the old tricks and some of the old plots that one has read in many popular legends of almost all countries.... The Black Thief is worthy of the Arabian Nights...’ And after telling us the Chap-book version of the story of Hudden, Dudden, and Donald, and of the Spaeman, he says, ‘And so we shut up the hedge-school library, and close the Galway Nights Entertainments....’

“It is significant of how Ireland’s contribution to English literature in every department has been ignored by the English, and in consequence by the entire literary world, that in the... great collections of Chap-books made by the elder and the younger Boswell, which are now in the library of Harvard University, there are scarcely any of Irish origin, though England and Scotland are fully represented; and yet during the period covered by these collections, as these remarks by Thackeray and W. B. Yeats would indicate, the output of this literature was as large as, if not larger than, that of either England or Scotland. If it had not been for a certain purchase made by Thackeray at Ennis when on his tour through Ireland, and for a certain rainy day in Galway about 1830, the English people would probably never have known that the Irish people had their chap-books from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century....”

Thackeray and Yeats were talking about Chap-books in English, and their wide Irish market not only before government schools spread but even earlier when the government had forbidden the existence of schools for Catholics. Furthermore, there was no mention of teaching to read by “meaning” in any of these excerpts concerning the hedge-schools, but only of the spelling book. Yet a high degree of true literacy existed in that period in Ireland when the emphasis in teaching beginning reading in English was on “sound,” and not on “meaning.”

Eventually the Penal Laws were repealed and government schools were established in Ireland, presumably producing the same percentage as in England of that newly invented category, the “functional illiterates.” “Functional illiterates” arrived on the scene at the same time as the teaching of reading by sight-words and “meaning.” These government schools, however, mandated that Irish beginners be taught only in the English language, so they did “achieve” something else. The Gaelic language which was in wide use in Ireland in 1800 and which had survived for over two thousand years was almost wiped out by 1900 through these government schools. With the near disappearance of the Gaelic language, much of its written literature disappeared as well.

To summarize, a high degree of literacy was generally and easily obtainable all over the English-speaking world in 1800 when children were taught to read by the syllable “sound” method. At that time, only two conditions were recognized concerning print, and those conditions were “literacy” and “illiteracy.” “Functional illiteracy,” the result of being able to remember only a limited number of whole sight-words by their “meaning” and being unable to “listen” to the sound of print, did not yet exist in the

English-speaking world. In 1800, “sight-words” learned for their “meaning” instead of their “sound” did not yet exist anywhere in the teaching of reading in English, even for the deaf.

## Chapter 14

### That First Group of Activists

In 1826, a group of scientists and educators with futuristic ideas and activist inclinations arrived together at Robert Owen's socialist utopia in New Harmony, Indiana, which property Owens had acquired in 1824. It was in that critical year for activists of 1826 that Noah Webster's synthetic phonics spelling method to teach beginning reading was simultaneously challenged by three new books for beginners. These three new "whole word" primers, challenging not only the phonic syllable method but the speller itself, showed New Harmony themes. All three showed strong ties to activists for government schools, and one of the three showed a great preoccupation with "science." Government schools, and that kind of "science" which appeared to emphasize the senses so as to de-emphasize the soul, were both very high on New Harmony's agenda.

Further, none of these three 1826 primers showed any genuine concern for religious themes. Yet religious themes had been very evident in many of the reading selections in the spelling books that the new "primers" were attempting. The omission of such material could hardly have been accidental.

It should clearly be kept in mind that, almost from the beginning of Christianity, little children had practiced the sounds of their newly learned syllables by reading religious material, such as the Psalms, or the Pater Noster, Ave Maria and Credo. Much later, spelling books in English routinely included some short religious paragraphs among their reading selections. Yet, in less than ten years, this practice of almost two millenia, of giving beginning readers religious material to read, was to fade, "accidentally."

Samuel Blumenfeld's original historical research, reported in his book, *Is Public Education Necessary?* The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho, (1981, 1985) traced the roots of government education in America to three dominant sources. (The Massachusetts colony schools were NOT the dominant source. Schools which descended from that source were effectively dying out when these three groups revived them.)

One source was the Owenite socialist activists who arrived openly on the educational scene after the failure of Robert Owen's New Harmony utopia about 1828.

Another source was those Boston Unitarians who were determined to improve America because they were sure only they knew best how to do so - the same group who came to the defense of Abner Kneeland when he was tried for blasphemy. Through control of schools, they thought they would be able to shape and improve the minds of the population. They had been hard at work since about 1817, since by 1818 they had forced the founding of the Boston public primary schools, which, as Blumenfeld showed, were totally unnecessary because of existing facilities and the resultant high literacy level in Boston.

The third source was originally independent of either of these. As Blumenfeld showed, many of the Protestant clergy of the time were openly opposed to government schools like those being promoted by some Boston Unitarians. Nevertheless, some narrow-minded members of the Protestant churches were concerned about the heavy immigration of Catholics. Those people believed government schools could act as a Protestant influence on Catholic children. They were ultimately to get a very unpleasant surprise. The government schools for which they had worked did not only outlaw Catholic influence on children, but Protestant influence as well!

The above inadequate summary, of course, cannot do justice to Blumenfeld's extraordinarily important *Is Public Education Necessary?* which reports on his research.

However, as Blumenfeld showed, immediately after the failure of the New Harmony utopia in 1828, a great and purportedly “spontaneous” flowering of interest in public education sprang up all over the United States. Yet it was obviously not spontaneous, but was instead the result of organized Owenite activities and of the Boston-Brahmin (largely Unitarian) influence. There were very, very few government schools in America in 1826, and yet, as shown by incontrovertible historical evidence from the period, the vast majority of the population was not only literate (as the result of the existing private educational facilities) but was surprisingly well informed. No need existed at all for the “public education” that the activists had started promoting in 1818, which promotion moved into high gear in 1826 and which then exploded after 1828.

### The Franklin Primer of 1826

Blumenfeld reported that the New Harmony experiment did not get really underway until January 18, 1826, when what was called the “Boatload of Knowledge,” filled with scientists and educators of the period, arrived at New Harmony, Indiana, after having traveled from Pittsburgh down the Ohio and up the Wabash rivers.

Only shortly after, on May 25, 1826, an education convention met in Franklin County in western Massachusetts. This was one of many organized groups in education that proliferated in the United States after the arrival of the “Boatload of Knowledge” at New Harmony, Indiana. The Franklin convention approved the Code 4 Franklin Primer, obviously named after Franklin county, copyrighted on June 29, 1826. No copy of the first edition has ever been located, but only the second and some later editions, as recorded by Heartman in his listing of non-New England primers. Yet it is self-evident that the 1826 primer could not have been written by a convention, but only approved by a convention. The author of the 1826 primer can be identified as “A Friend to Youth,” since he wrote its sequels. As discussed earlier, Reverend Samuel Willard who wrote the 1802 Franklin Primer named after Benjamin Franklin is credited as being “A Friend to Youth.”

William Russell, the editor of the American Journal of Education, praised the Franklin Primer in October, 1826 (page 638) and in doing so made it clear that the push for government schools was, indeed, tied to the push to replace the spellers’ “sound” approach with the new primers’ “meaning” approach. He referred to the Franklin County convention which had adopted the reader, and identified it as a convention of “school committees,” which were boards of education for such tax-supported schools as existed:

“Amidst the indications of approaching legislative measures for elevating the standard of instruction in common schools, it is gratifying to observe the spirit of improvement at work in narrower spheres, and a county convention of school committees taking the business of practical reformation in their own hands.... The method adopted in the Franklin Primer is simple and natural. We have here no useless columns of rare and hard words, which the scholar will hardly meet again in the course of a lifetime’s reading.... This little book is one of the most ingenious improvements in this branch of instruction, that has hitherto been recorded in this Journal....”

Russell praised the Franklin Primer because it would “enable the child to commence with reading and descend to spelling.”

“The infant does not learn to recognize a tree as such by studying first the roots, then the trunk, then the twigs, then the branches, then the leaves. His eye and his mind grasp the whole object, and do not descend to particulars till afterward: he does not analyze until compelled to do so....”

“To apply the principle involved in this illustration to the business of teaching reading, is no new thing in some countries; and in these this method has been found invariably successful. A fondness for system is now fast displacing it, but the more modern plan neither teaches faster nor more thoroughly.”

In this, he was probably referring to two groups: to the followers of Jacotot in Belgium and to the followers of Johann Bernard Basedow in Germany. Starting in 1770 with his own daughter and in 1774 in his famed Philanthropinum school, Basedow had moved the teaching of reading up from the syllable to the word but used phonics when doing so, which is discussed in one of my previous unpublished books, *The Case for the Prosecution* (1981). One of Basedow’s followers was Friedrich Gedike, who used whole words for an analytic phonic approach in 1779, and implicitly endorsed guessing! Gedike’s writing is quoted at length by Mathews, pages 39-41 of *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, University of Chicago Press, 1966. Mathews reported that Gedike was followed by Ernst Christian Trapp and Philip Wackernagel who did use straight sight words. Basedow had many other followers using analytic phonics on whole words, out of whom eventually developed the German analytic synthetic phonics method.

Russell was definitely referring to the Belgian, Jean Joseph Jacotot, whose work has been discussed previously. *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913 (Volume VIII, pages 265-266) gave a brief biography of Jacotot (1770 - 1840):

“A member of the House of Representatives during the Hundred Days, he expressed his preference for the empire, and, at the time of the Second Restoration, his hostility to the Bourbons made it necessary for him to leave France.”

The article said Jacotot had taught in the college of his native city since 1789, and, after leaving France for Belgium:

“...taught privately at Mons and Brussels, and in 1818 was appointed professor of the French language and literature in the University of Louvain. The Revolution of 1830 allowed him to return to France.”

Jacotot’s works carried the common title, *Enseignement Universel*. The first was *Languge Maternelle* published in Louvain in 1822. Jacotot believed that knowledge in any area was a key to other subjects, and said:

“All is in all.”

Jacotot’s philosophy emphasized “wholes” and affected his ideas on teaching reading. Jacotot was the first true “whole language” advocate, with his recommendation that children learn to read by dealing with the “whole” of Fenelon’s *Adventures of Telemaque*. Jacotot had taught his Dutch-speaking students at the University of Louvain in 1818 to speak French by having them simultaneously memorize a French book while translating it into Dutch. According to Mitford Mathews, Jacotot and his method became famous with the publication of *Jacotot’s Universal Instruction and The Mother Tongue*. Jacotot explained that he believed children should also begin with a “whole” just as his Dutch students at the university had done. (Reading troubles which were originated by university “intellectuals” have a long history!) Mathews had stated that Jacotot expected children to go through the whole of *Les aventures de Telemaque* and then probably to repeat it in order to learn to read, but an 1887 article in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie* reported otherwise, saying that Jacotot wrote that a child need cover only six lessons and fifty lines of text to learn to read, analyzing them phonetically as he progressed.

Obviously, Jacotot was a charlatan, but he was a highly successful and very famous one, and certainly one of the principal subjects of Russell's remarks, the other probably being Gedike. Jacotot's work is described at length in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire*, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris: 1887, in the article "Lecture", by J. Guillaume, page 1545:

"Jacotot presents to his pupil the first sentence of *Telemaque*: 'Calypso was inconsolable over the departure of Ulysses.' The teacher reads aloud; the pupil repeats; then he is made to write this sentence, and one verifies that he distinguishes all the words, all the syllables, all the letters. One keeps the pupil on this first lesson until he knows it perfectly. One passes next to the second sentence, then to the third, that the pupil studies in the same manner ...Six lessons and fifty lines of *Telemaque* are sufficient for teaching reading...."

Jacotot's method was ludicrous and obviously based on "meaning," but it had not abandoned sound, although his eighteenth-century predecessors in France, Nicolas Adam in 1787 and the Abbe de Radonvillier in 1768, as discussed elsewhere, appear to have done so. Gedike of Germany in the late seventeenth century had not abandoned "sound" either, though he is often wrongly credited with having done so, and though two others of Basedow's followers did, Trapp and Wackernagel. Therefore, very few of the known methods of teaching reading of alphabetic print up to 1826, and none of the widely used methods, had abandoned "sound" for a total emphasis on "meaning," as was being done now in English.

The 1826 Franklin Primer was obviously popular, since it had at least 24 editions by 1840. The American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, has a 24th edition that was put out in 1840. This 54-page 1840 copy lists three companies as publishers: Phelps & Ingersoll, Greenfield; Crocker & Brewster, Boston; and Mahlon Day, New York. The use of the book was therefore obviously widespread for a long period of time, far outside of Franklin County and the place where it was originally printed, Greenfield, Massachusetts. The Library of Congress has an 1830 ninth edition in which the syllable tables were replaced with syllabicated whole-words as examples of only some syllables: "ba-by, la-zy," etc. That change increased further the move away from "sound" and toward "meaning" for teaching beginning reading, and it qualifies that particular edition for the even lower rating of Code 3.

Harvard has an 1843 copy of the pure sight-word book, Mrs. Barbauld's *Easy Lessons*, also put out by A. Phelps of Greenfield, Massachusetts, the probable successor to the 1840 Phelps & Ingersoll just mentioned. *Easy Lessons* contained Mrs. Barbauld's "Charles" stories. Yet, as mentioned earlier, Mrs. Barbauld's material could never have been meant as straight sight-word material when it was written in 1778.

What is particularly interesting about this sight-word 1843 text is the advertising it carries on its cover for the series of readers beginning with the Franklin Primer:

"Extract from a review of the Franklin Primer, Improved Reader and General Class Book, in the *Christian Examiner and General Review*, published in Boston, Liverpool and London.

"In these Books the Author has carried forward his plan of facile instruction more completely than is done in any similar book in our language which has come to our knowledge."

In addition, the whole back cover of this 1843 book advertised these "New and Popular School Books." Yet the Franklin Primer was seventeen years old by 1843, and the second book in the series, *The Improved Reader or Sequel to the Primer*, was only a year younger. The advertisements were probably almost as old as the readers themselves, and were simply being reprinted just like the readers themselves.

The advertisements on the back cover read:

“New and Popular School Books.

The FRANKLIN PRIMER, designed as a primary book for children.

The IMPROVED READER, or Sequel to the Primer.

The GENERAL CLASS-BOOK. This is designed as a reading book for the higher classes.

The POPULAR READER, intended as a Reading Book for the first classes in Schools and Academies, throughout the United States.

“ The object of these four books is to impart to the child by an easy and gradual process (commencing with the alphabet) such a knowledge of the English language as will enable him to read with propriety, understanding and grace, in every book written in a style either simple or elegant.

“These Books have also received the approval of a Convention called for the purpose of promoting the cause of Education in Common Schools. This convention was largely attended, and consisted of Teachers and Delegates from five states. They have also been favorably noticed by many of the most distinguished Professors and successful Teachers in New England. The following notices are subjoined, which are but a small part of those which have been received.

“They have been lately reviewed and noticed with approbation in the ‘Revue Encyclopedique,’ (published in the city of Paris) one of the most distinguished Scientific Journals published in Europe. The following is an extract. ‘Cette serie de lectures est faite dans un excellent esprit, et par une personne, qui a evidemment etudie, et approfondi le sujet qu’elle aborde.’

““We can say with truth that they (the Primer, Reader and General Class-Book) are certainly well adapted to the purpose for which they are intended.’ - North American Review.

““They are intended to obviate prevailing evils in the manner of teaching the English language, and though susceptible of some improvement, are on the whole, excellently adapted to their object.’ - American Journal of Education.

““I found them so peculiarly adapted to the wants of children in the early stages of education, that I recommended their introduction into our schools at once.’ - Hon. W. B. Calhoun, late Chairman of the Committee on Education in the Legislature of Massachusetts, and Speaker of the House.

“The Franklin Primer. - A writer in the Christian Register, while recommending the American Lyceum, speaks incidentally of this book as follows: - ‘That excellent little book, the best perhaps of its kind, in the English language.’“

The approval of the Franklin Primer in the same review which approved the American Lyceum is intriguing. Samuel Blumenfeld outlined the background of the American Lyceum in *Is Public Education Necessary?* (pages 111-112):

“At about the time that the socialists decided to make public education the primary instrument of their efforts to reform the character of man preliminary to their radical reform of society, American educators began to organize into substantial pressure groups in favor of public education. The man most responsible for this development was Josiah Holbrook, founder of the American Lyceum movement. A plan for the Lyceum organization, originally conceived as a



‘society for mutual instruction,’ was first made public by Holbrook in a letter to the Editor in the October 1826 issue of the American Journal of Education.... Holbrook wrote:

“Each board of delegates shall appoint a representative, to meet representatives from other boards who shall be styled the Board of Mutual Education for a given State, and it might be advantageous to have also a General Board embracing the United States.”

Blumenfeld wrote, on page 124, that the following appeared in the September 1828 American Journal of Education:

“The fifty or sixty branches of the American Lyceum already established, contemplate a National Institution for the diffusion of knowledge, and the introduction of a uniform and improved system of popular education.”

Blumenfeld commented further on page 125:

“In the spring of 1829, Boston formed its Lyceum under the name of the Boston Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Its statement of purpose was signed by William E. Channing and twenty-nine other members of the Boston elite... In February, 1830, delegates from fourteen county Lyceums met in Boston to form a Massachusetts State Lyceum.... Holbrook had also called a teachers convention in conjunction with the Lyceum meeting... At that convention a vote was passed ‘recommending that a general association of persons, engaged and interested in the business of instruction, be formed.’ The result was the American Institute of Instruction, the first academic organization of its kind in America...”

Holbrook’s letter of October, 1826, resulted in a network of such groups throughout the United States, capped by a national “lyceum” by February, 1830, only three years and four months after he wrote his letter!

Blumenfeld added, on page 138 and 139:

“With the new Pennsylvania school law passed in 1834, Holbrook spent the following year organizing the teachers of that state into Lyceums and countering attempts to repeal the law. His efforts were successful. At about this time, Holbrook thought of organizing a Universal Lyceum with Lord Brougham, the British liberal Parliamentarian, as president. Lord Brougham had been a friend of Robert Owen’s for years, and Holbrook’s idea is another of these tell-tale clues that suggest strongly that Holbrook was a covert Owenite. The idea, however, never got off the ground.

“In any case, by 1835, largely through the untiring work of Josiah Holbrook, the educators of America had been organized into a solid body of support for public education. In state after state, legislatures began to establish the foundations of tax-supported public educational systems...by 1835, American educators were looking toward Prussia for their model of a perfect state-controlled system. Selling this system to the American people, who were so very satisfied and comfortable with their educational freedom and private institutions, would take another ten years.”

It was common practice in that period to print endorsements of school books on their covers, and sometimes the endorsements even included well known names, but such endorsements were commonly vague and read something like this: “In the time available to examine this book cursorily, I have concluded that it is a fine school book.” (Endorsements sometimes came perilously close to Abraham

Lincoln's famous endorsement which ran about like this: for those who like this kind of a book, this is the kind of a book they will like.) Most commonly, endorsements were only from other school personnel.

The contrast between such routine endorsements on other school books and the kind received for the Franklin Primer is therefore spectacular! For instance, this is the first record I have turned up of political clout (Calhoun's in Massachusetts) being used to force a change in reading methods. It is even more astonishing that reading books first published in rural Greenfield, Massachusetts, should be praised as the best reading series in English in a magazine published in Boston, Liverpool and London. However, it is absolutely mind-boggling that a series of beginning reading books from a small town in western Massachusetts should be praised in "one of the most distinguished Scientific Journals published in Europe," in Paris (though that reviewer assumed the author was a woman.) The author of The Franklin Primer must have had powerful friends. A tie to Josiah Holbrook's burgeoning American Lyceum which was promoting public education is also suggested by the review in the Christian Register which mentioned and praised both.

Perhaps the French journal read the preface to the second book in the series, portions of which are quoted below. What the author, listed only as "A Friend to Youth," proposed was the reading methods with which America has been saddled since 1826: a total shift from "sound" in beginning reading to "meaning," and the dropping of the speller for beginners.

In the "meaning" method after 1826, the whole words were pronounced for the child, so he did not "hear" the individual sounds of the letters. Yet Gallaudet's version of the "meaning" method in addition (or instead) used a frustration level. About ninety per cent or more of the words in the selection were already known, so the "meaning" of the unknown ten per cent or so could be guessed from the context, without "frustration." Therefore, the unknown words did not have to be "heard" at all to determine their meaning. Gallaudet's sight-word method promoted context guessing far more than earlier sight-word methods. That is why, in the readers produced since 1930 which use the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method approach of 1930, which is actually Gallaudet's "frustration level" approach, such words as "pony" are far more likely to be misread by a synonym such as "horse." Children are heavily drilled in their school materials in the use of such context guessing. It is true teachers using the Gray and Gates approach do pronounce new words first at the blackboard. Yet even the initial introduction of a new word promotes context guessing, since a new word is commonly introduced only in the context of a sentence. The teacher passes her hand under the sentence while reading it, which obviously keeps the sentence's "meaning" paramount.

The author of the Franklin Primer did endorse "spelling" of the words to be met in the "stories," but this only meant naming letters in sight-words. As his preface will show, that had nothing to do with decoding words by sound. See-aye-tee spells the printed word, cat, but it does not suggest its sound. Even Gallaudet's deaf-mute students learned to spell words by their letter names, but they never were taught to speak.

The "Friend to Youth" who wrote the 1826 Franklin Primer and the 1827 Improved Reader was probably Reverend Samuel Willard. He clearly explained his aims on the title page of the Improved Reader, using as a slogan almost the same words as had been used on Samuel Putnam's Analytical Reader of 1826, which the 1827 "Friend to Youth" attributed to St. Paul:

"I would rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

This recalls another oft-repeated saying, that the Devil knows how to quote Scripture.

“A Friend to Youth” enlarged on the “experts” common 1826 theme, turning it to his own purposes, in his preface:

“If a common spelling-book is ever to be used, it is not, I think, to be either the first or the second (book to be put) into the hands of a child.

“It is the opinion of some, who speculated much on the subject, and who are entitled to great respect, that reading should commence with the pronunciation of sentences, while spelling is made a subsequent business. That this theory is incomparably better than that, which has come down from our fathers, and which has hitherto controlled our practice, there is perhaps no reasonable doubt. The author must be allowed to believe that there is an intermediate course far better than either. For him, it is hard to conceive, how the child is to arrive at such a ready distinction of one word from another, as even tolerable reading must require, without meeting and surmounting the principal labors and difficulties of spelling. To distinguish cat from rat, for instance, he must observe the diversity of the letters c and r in the two words: to distinguish eat from ate, he must observe the different arrangement of the letters; that is, he must spell mentally, if he does not do it orally.... those who have read volumes and libraries without first learning to spell, are generally bad spellers and bad readers through the whole of their lives...

“The exercises in this book, however, will perhaps be found equally well adapted to the views of those, who would have the sentences read before the words are spelled, and of those, who prefer the opposite method; and the author is perfectly willing both experiments should be made, though he is satisfied that orthography should in general, if not always, precede sentential reading. In either case, it is hoped, the book will not be laid aside, till the learner is able to spell every word it contains.

“For the convenience of pupils and teachers, points are prefixed to such words as require most attention.... These words it may be well to have read in syllables, before the sentences are read, and afterwards spelled with closed books.

“A formal treatise on pronunciation, or any scheme of notation for the different sounds of letters, appears to be unreasonable in the first, or second book in the course of education. Doubtless it is a matter of great importance, that the child should acquire and fix in his mind a correct pronunciation of words, as fast as he has occasion to use them. But this may be most readily learned from the voice of the teacher; who, if not thoroughly acquainted with this branch of instruction, should have a dictionary always before him, to which he may look, as a guide to guiding others. If it be thought, this would require the same words to be often pronounced in order to fix the pronunciation in the mind of the child, it may be observed that the task will be greatly facilitated by the obvious signification of the words, which are already familiar to the ear, and by the analogous sounds of letters, which will be in some measure perceived by the pupil, long before he is capable of comprehending the whole system.

“The leading design of this compilation is to introduce the child, by an easy and gradual progress, to an acquaintance with the most important words; to an acquaintance with their meaning, as well as their visible forms, that he may early acquire a taste for reading, and be more incomparably capable of oral instruction than he would otherwise be. With this in view, the exercises in general have been so selected and arranged, as to bring forward a moderate number of new words in each lesson. These words are defined and illustrated....

“Other lessons, while they illustrate the use of words, and train the eye and the voice to reading, are calculated to... store the mind with... useful information. The author pretends to no

great originality either in the design, or the execution. He hopes, however, that some material improvements have been made on the best books of the kind before extant....”

Buried in his wordy explanation is the precise recipe for the basal reader sight-word method, except that his approach included “oral spelling,” i.e., naming all the letters in sight-words to be memorized, which refinement was later called the ABC method. Note the claim to some vocabulary control in this second book of the series: “to bring forward a moderate number of new words in each lesson.”

The first book in the series, the 1826 Franklin Primer from Franklin County, Massachusetts, should not be confused with the far newer and totally different, widely used and heavily advertised The Franklin Primer of 1873, a sight-word book, also called in a later edition the Webster-Franklin Primer, because it used Webster instead of Worcester orthography. This was written by G. S. Hillard and L. J. Campbell. Yet, in Nila Banton Smith’s “history,” she completely omitted the widely used 1873 Franklin Primer and instead claimed one of its authors, G. S. Hillard, wrote an 1831 Franklin Primer of which no record can be located. When the 1826 primer from Franklin County was published, Hillard, who was born in 1808, would have been only 17 or 18 years old! The 1831 book Smith claimed to have seen could have been a later edition of the 1826 primer from Franklin County, Massachusetts. Yet Smith claimed on page 57 that Hillard wrote all the readers from Franklin County: The Franklin Primer, The Improved Reader, The General Classbook, and The Popular Reader. Smith then described on pages 57 and 58, as the beginning content of that elusive 1831 Franklin Primer, the beginning content of the 1802 Samuel Willard primer named after Benjamin Franklin and not Franklin County, on which Heartman showed no later edition than 1812!

This suggests it would be a waste of time looking for an 1831 “Hillard” primer, as there probably really is no such thing. However, I have found Nila Banton Smith’s “confusions” sometimes seem to serve very clear purposes and the purpose in this case seems to be to bury Hillard’s widely used 1873 Franklin Primer. It obviously played an important role in the switch back from “sound” to “meaning” in Boston in 1878 which was the work of activists, as will be discussed later.

The 1826 Franklin Primer immediately became popular as a replacement for the spelling book for beginners. Edgeworth’s 1799 primer had apparently not been successful, so the 1826 Franklin Primer was apparently the first really successful story-book “primer” opposition to the syllable-method spelling book for beginners. The 1826 Franklin Primer jettisoned most of the spelling book syllable “sound” approach for the whole word “meaning” approach, even though it began with an introductory syllable table. The Franklin Primer showed the influence from “whole word” enthusiasts in Great Britain who were opposing the syllable method, the spelling book, or both, such as John Wood of the Edinburgh Sessional School in Scotland about 1826, Andrew Bell of the monitorial schools before 1823, and Richard Edgeworth in Ireland in 1798 and 1799.

However, Richard Edgeworth had said in his 1798 “Practical Education” that he endorsed phonics, even though he rejected the syllabary and the spelling of whole words. His “phonics” therefore had to have been analytic phonics, in which whole words are not broken apart. What kind of analytic phonics Edgeworth used, and how effective it was, could only be determined from examining the “primer” that Edgeworth wrote a year later, in 1799, which Alston significantly did not include in his volume on spelling books, but in another volume. By doing that, Alston confirmed that Edgeworth did not use the spelling to teach beginning reading.

According to the article on Maria Edgeworth in the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire, what Richard Edgeworth used in his 1799 “primer” was “direct syllabication.” The Dictionnaire article said that Edgeworth had recommended that in one of the portions that he contributed to the 1798 book, Practical Education, on which his daughter, Maria, was a co-author:

“The chapter on tasks outlined the method of direct syllabication for teaching of reading.”

To the Frenchman who wrote that Dictionnaire article, and who was used to the term in France, that would have meant that Edgeworth only taught whole syllables (ba, be, bi, bo, bu) without having a child spell the syllables as he recited them (b-a, ba, etc.) However, since Edgeworth is known to have jettisoned the syllabary, that means that Edgeworth’s kind of “immediate syllabication” had to have been on whole words, without “spelling.” Edgeworth reported in his 1798 book that he did use phonic markings on words, but, since children were not supposed to “spell” the words in his 1799 primer either by sound (cuh-ah-tuh) or by letters (c - a - t,) that meant that they used only whole word, analytic phonics, which is the comparing of whole words to each other.

Despite the fact that it used purely analytic phonics, Edgeworth’s 1799 “primer” may have been an adequately phonic text from its description in *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Volume VI, Rhetoric, Style, Elocution, Prosody, Rhyme, Pronunciation, Spelling Reform*, “Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, England, 1969.” Richard Edgeworth claimed in the 1798 book, *Practical Education*, that he had originated his own phonetic markings for words before he ever saw Thomas Sheridan’s phonetic scheme. However, as discussed elsewhere, because of puzzling remarks attributed to Edgeworth, who was the very first person writing in the English language to drop the spelling book for beginners, he may have made a pronounced move from teaching by “sound” to teaching by “meaning” in that 1799 “primer,” despite his analytic phonics. To judge from any records that I have ever seen, Edgeworth was certainly the first English author to drop the spelling-book syllabary and then to attempt to teach beginning reading in a book teaching whole words, which he labeled a “primer.”

Yet I have turned up no reference to Edgeworth’s 1799 “primer” having been in actual use anywhere, while it is obvious from materials published in the early nineteenth century that Edgeworth’s 1798 *Practical Education* was widely read. The failure of Edgeworth’s 1799 “primer” to show up in the writings of the time certainly suggests that there was something very wrong with that “primer.”

Although it is true that the 1826 Franklin Primer, at least initially, did include a syllabary, “primers” without any syllabaries had become the norm to teach beginning reading in English, instead of spelling books, on both sides of the Atlantic not long after 1826. The record demonstrates that the massive sea-change in beginning reading methods, the dropping of the “sound” syllabary spelling method that had been used to teach beginning reading by “sound” instead of “meaning” for more than two thousand years, and the replacement of that ancient, successful method by whole-word “primers,” which were NOT successful, had most probably been initiated by Edgeworth, himself, in 1799. Despite the fact that his 1799 “primer” does not appear to have been successful, Edgeworth’s whole-word “primer” method that he introduced for beginning reading in that book was in almost universal use in the English language before 1830, except in poverty-stricken or backwoods areas, although the oral “spelling” of sight-words persisted until about 1870. That certainly suggests that Edgeworth had enormous influence.

Although no attention at all has ever been given to it, it seems very likely that Edgeworth was ultimately more influential, in a negative way, on the teaching of beginning reading in English, than Noah Webster was influential in a positive way. (The title of the Edgeworth book has been capitalized below, which was not done by Alston.) Alston’s description of the Edgeworth text is quoted below.

“No. 514. (Edgeworth, Maria, & Richard Lovell) *A Rational Primer*. By the Authors of *Practical Education*.... Bristol, Biggs & Cottle for J. Johnson (London), 1799. (Pronunciation; phonetic spelling.) The pagination is erratic. Pronunciation indicated by the use of diacritical marks.”

Because of Richard Edgeworth's intense aversion to the use of the syllabary in beginning reading, as expressed in his 1798 book, *Essays on Practical Education*, it is highly probable that he did not include the syllabary in his book, *A Rational Primer*. However, Edgeworth certainly must have included directions for pronunciation, so he was not totally avoiding "sound" as John Wood did. It would be of great interest to see Edgeworth's 1799 book, to determine whether or not it was the first story-book beginning reading book in English. It almost certainly was the first to omit the spelling-columns introduction to the beginning reading of English that had been uniformly used until then. The fact that Alston did not include Edgeworth's 1799 work on pronunciation with his lists of spelling books, when he did include Webster's and Perry's works on pronunciation on that list, certainly raises unanswered questions about the nature of Edgeworth's 1799 "pronunciation" material. Edgeworth's 1799 book was apparently the very first whole-word, probably "story-book primer" approach to the teaching of beginning reading in English, and it must have been of far more long-term influence than has been recognized..

Only two years after the 1826 Franklin Primer was published (or possibly earlier) John Wood of the Edinburgh Sessional School published by 1828 a whole-word primer, called *The First Book*, which will be discussed later. This clearly and totally crossed the line from "sound" to "meaning" which the Edgeworth 1799 work did not, since it included diacritical marks. Even the Franklin Primer had not totally moved from "sound" to "meaning." Nor did Andrew Bell's circa 1823 inferior materials move totally from "sound" to "meaning." (Bell's materials are discussed in Part 6 which concentrates on developments in Great Britain.) The 1828 Wood text was in no sense one of the old spellers, but instead one of the first of the new totally "meaning" primers. (Possibly in an unlocated edition earlier than 1828 it was the very first, earlier even than the 1826 Worcester primer discussed below which had also totally crossed the line from "sound" to "meaning.") The Wood text intentionally dropped the syllable method, and, with it, all reference to "sound," and it made no use of diacritical marks. Wood's primer was reprinted in Boston by 1830.

The Franklin text showed the influence of the dreadful conversational-style books for little children like Mrs. Barbauld's which became popular in England towards the end of the eighteenth century. Those books were utterly silly, boring and empty, particularly of religious content. Yet no child's book published in Massachusetts in 1826, of course, could be totally devoid of religious content, so The Franklin Primer had a very minimal amount. The essential change, however, was dropping the phonic syllabic spelling book word-list approach with its emphasis on "sound" for beginners and replacing it with whole-word narratives with the emphasis on "meaning." The Franklin Primer did, however, list the "new" words used in its "stories."

It is recorded that an "Easy Reader" was introduced in the Boston primary schools eight years after they were started in 1818 (from Superintendent Philbrick's Boston 1874 Annual School Report, pages 374-375). The introduction of an "Easy Reader" would therefore have been in 1826, and very possibly it was The Franklin Primer.

Those who believe that building a better mouse trap automatically brings the world to your door will have no trouble in accounting for the rapid success of the Franklin Primer. However, those who believe in the value of advertising will suspect that the rapid success was more likely the work of dedicated promoters.

### Samuel Worcester's Primer of 1826

The second successful whole word book appearing in that critical year of 1826 was more daring than the Franklin Primer and totally dropped the ancient syllabary. It was Samuel Worcester's *A Primer of the*

English Language for the Use of Families and Schools, a clear Code 1. It was copyrighted in Boston on October 9, 1826, by its publisher, Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins.

The reference to the publisher, “Hilliard,” suggests a tie with someone at Harvard with this 1826 primer, just as such a tie is suggested with the 1877 Franklin text, as will be discussed later. Between 1800 and 1802, William Hilliard founded his privately owned company, later owned jointly by him and others, known as University Press. This privately owned company was the printer for Harvard’s material for most, or possibly all, of the nineteenth century. (Harvard University Press is now the press of Harvard.) After Hilliard relinquished ownership of University Press, it passed in 1842 into the ownership of Charles R. Metcalf and others, then in 1859 into the ownership of Welch, Bigelow and Co., Cambridge, and by 1878 into the ownership of John Wilson & Son, Cambridge. Publishers Book Bindery, Inc., Winchester, Massachusetts, were, I believe, the publishers of Stephen Daye and His Successors (on which I do not know the date). Pages 22 to 25 give the history on University Press until 1895, and the sequence of owners (although they give the Wilsons’ arrival as 1879, while a copy of a text in the Harvard library shows the Wilsons were printing as the University Press by 1878). A text by Zachos published in 1864 shows that John Wilson & Son who acquired the University Press in 1878 were in business in Boston as early as 1864. As is proven by a Harvard copy of the Hillard and Campbell Franklin Primer (completely unrelated to the 1826 Franklin Primer), John Wilson & Son took over University Press by 1878, not 1879 as stated in the above history. It therefore appears probable that Wilson bought out Welch, Bigelow and Co. during 1878.

However, if Hilliard were already in control of the company acting as Harvard’s press in 1826 when the Worcester reader was published, and even though it is probable the commercial publisher Hilliard was also routinely printing non-Harvard materials as well, a possible tie exists between the introduction of the radical “meaning” approach Worcester reader printed by one of Hilliard’s companies in 1826 and some person or persons at Harvard. The influential Worcester series remained in print until it was replaced by the first series of G. S. Hillard (not Hilliard) in the late 1850’s, who was the same Hillard who later wrote the 1873 Franklin Primer with L. J. Campbell. The 1873 Franklin Primer was therefore in a very real sense the “descendant” of the 1826 Worcester primer.

In 1844, William Russell, the activist/editor/elocutionist, whose biography is discussed elsewhere, wrote Primer, or First Steps in Spelling and Reading, a Code 4 “meaning” text, and Spelling Book, or Second Course of Lessons in Spelling and Reading. Published by Charles Tappan, Boston, the books were part of “Russell’s Elementary Series,” which also included Russell’s Primary Reader and The American Common School Reader and Speaker. In Russell’s speller, on page 8, he said he was using Worcester’s orthography, which was “being sanctioned by the University Press of Cambridge.” (That “orthography” was from the Worcester who wrote a dictionary in competition with Noah Webster’s, not the Samuel Worcester who wrote the primer.) The University Press was therefore highly influential in 1844, and was probably so eighteen years earlier when one of its owners, Hilliard, was associated with the printing of the Worcester primer.

The 1826 Worcester reader was a pure sight-word text, despite its using uncontrolled vocabulary, and despite its requiring oral spelling of letter names in whole words. It totally omitted phonics and the syllable tables, and, most meaningfully, it contained NO SYLLABICATION. It also contained only one religious reference, but gobs of natural history, and even a story on a visit to a museum. There is no question that Worcester meant the book to be a radical change, as his opening paragraph in his “Directions to Teachers” said:

“In order to teach this PRIMER, it will be absolutely essential that the instructor should abandon the common method of teaching children to read and spell.”

The Worcester text met the unqualified endorsement of William Russell in the *American Journal of Education* in June 1826, (page 379, Volume I, No. VI) before Worcester's book had even been published:

“Reading Book for Infants - It is with uncommon pleasure that we inform our readers of the above publication. It is now in preparation by Mr. Samuel Worcester of Gloucester, Massachusetts, a gentleman eminently qualified for the undertaking.

“This proposed book is to contain a series of reading and spelling lessons combined. It will embrace all or most of the valuable improvements suggested by the recent English publication on the instruction of infants.... From what we have seen of the manuscript, and the designs, we have no hesitation in recommending it as the most ingenious and practical volume which has yet appeared, for the purposes of domestic instruction or of primary schools.”

What “the recent English publication on the instruction of infants” was is unknown. It must have endorsed throwing out the syllabary and syllabic spelling book and teaching whole words for “meaning,” and it also appeared to be tied to infant schools, suggesting the Owenite influence. It would be of great interest if it could be located.

According to Blumenfeld, one of the public school activists was George B. Emerson, a graduate of Harvard in 1817, principal of Boston's first public high school in 1821 and prominent as an activist for public schools in the 1830's and 1840's. (Such American “high schools,” were meant to be government-controlled, like the primary schools which were under government control from their inception. High schools in America were one of the innovations of the activists and were ultimately to take the place of the privately owned academies, as well as most of the Latin grammar schools, which were not grammar schools as we know them.) It is of interest that the activist Emerson wrote the following endorsement for Worcester's books in 1841, reprinted in a copy of Worcester's Second Book:

“Ever since I first became acquainted with Mr. Worcester's books they have seemed to me better adapted, than any other series that has come to my knowledge, to the capacities and wants both of learners and teachers of the Elementary Schools.”

Worcester's dreadful sight-word book prospered mightily and was used in the first permanent state normal school training classes, at Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1839. Private normal schools had existed prior to 1839. Blumenfeld reported (page 133) that Samuel R. Hall's popular book, *Lectures on School Keeping*, was published in 1829 and that Hall became the director of Phillips Academy's new seminary for teachers at Andover when it opened in September, 1830, the first of its kind in America. J. Orville Taylor, a public school activist who published the *Common School Assistant* starting in January, 1836, advertised in his February, 1839, issue his own private six-months training school for teachers from May 1 to October 31, 1839, and said “The class of fifty which went through this course last summer are now receiving, on an average, \$30 per month and board, for teaching. The coming class will be limited to one hundred.” Whether Taylor's 1838 class was his first is not known, but it would have received the “best” in training: in Taylor's October, 1837 issue, he said Rev. T. H. Gallaudet's sight word *The Mother's Primer*:

“...is the best manual we have seen for teaching children the first steps in spelling. This little work, and Town's Spelling Book are the best helps a child can have, during the first stages of an education.”

Not surprisingly, Taylor himself published *Town's Spelling Book* which taught meanings along with spellings. Noah Webster took the time to denounce Salem Town's work as incompetent. Its wounded publisher, Taylor, referred to this comment of Webster's in Taylor's periodical, the *Common School*



Assistant. But Salem Town prospered, despite Webster's denunciation, writing a reading series in 1844 and appearing as the senior author later on the highly successful *The Progressive Series* with Nelson M. Holbrook, which was being published by 1855 and still being printed in the late 1860's.

After 1839, state-supported normal schools for teachers began to multiply, such as the normal school in Lexington, Massachusetts, using Worcester's book. So did the teachers' periodic institutes in most of the United States which demonstrated the "best" in methods, and Worcester's was acknowledged as using the "best." Teachers' institutes had begun as temporary normal schools in 1837 (or possibly before) and assumed the "institute" form in 1843 in New York State<sup>20</sup>, after which they proliferated almost everywhere in the United States and reached a vastly greater teacher population than the relatively costly normal schools. Huge numbers of teachers attended these institutes for short periods in the summer or during released time in the school year. Such attendance led to job approval or advancement. "Institutes" are discussed further later in this history. These job-qualifying mechanisms apparently served as the ultimate pipeline for moving whole-word teaching such as that in Worcester's primer into American schools as the standard method. Such teachers' "institutes" were enormously widespread and influential in America until the twentieth century, although reference to them has also dropped into education history's "black hole." While it does not give education credits, the New Jersey teachers' convention which has been held each November since the early years of the century, during which all New Jersey public schools close, and which has large numbers of workshops for teachers, is an obvious outgrowth of such institutes.

The parallel to present practice from these nineteenth century institutes which promoted the "best" methods is obvious. A teacher can be certified by the state in which she teaches as a "reading specialist" only if she submits to wholesale propaganda in state-approved courses, the content of which always favors the deaf-mute method. I speak from personal experience, as after obtaining a master's degree in natural history, I had gone about half-way through a program for a master's degree in reading instruction in New Jersey when I dropped out because of that kind of appalling content. It is curious that no one has ever challenged such government "certifications" as un-Constitutional infringements on the Bill of Rights.

#### Dr. John M. Keagy's Primer of 1826, and Its Multiple Relationships

The third radically different 1826 reading book for beginners was copyrighted in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on December 21, 1826, (on the opposite, eastern side of the mountains from the Pittsburgh/Ohio River jumping-off place for the 1826 Boatload of Knowledge).

That 1826 book, in its preface for teachers, showed the clearest agreement with the ideals of that New Harmony Boatload of Knowledge, although much of its text for children was not new, as its author felt the time for his implementing all his ideas for teaching beginning reading had not yet come. The book was written by a medical doctor who had practiced only a few years, John M. Keagy (1792-1837), who had been born in Strasburg, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Keagy had become involved in education because of his interest in the new Lancastrian and Pestalozzian movements, and in the new concern about the training of teachers.

Yet Pestalozzi had not really been an innovator. His ideas were only a development in a straight line from the seventeenth century English philosopher, John Locke, through the German founder in 1774 of the Philanthropinum School, Johann Bernhard Basedow. Both of the latter taught that things must be known before they can be named. That idea flowered (or, too frequently, deteriorated) into the massive "object teaching" of the 1800's, and it is such "object teaching" which is associated with Pestalozzi's

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<sup>20</sup> Source: *The School Bulletin*, Syracuse, N. Y., May, 1876, page 177

name. Object teaching had many forms, some of which seem to have had some worth, but most of which seem to have been bad. One of the worst - and apparently prevalent - forms is demonstrated in the 1862 text, *Object Lessons Prepared for Teachers of Primary Schools*, by A. S. Welch, A. S. Barnes & Co., New York and Chicago. That appalling book is discussed later. However, Keagy thought, like Pestalozzi, that things must be known before they can be named. That will become obvious from the quotations from Keagy's preface which are given later.

In discussing Keagy's critically important preface, it is necessary to give considerable biographical information on certain people and to give information on their ideas. Most of these people appeared to be intimately associated with the changes in education which were taking place: the move to government schools, and the move to "meaning" in place of "sound" in beginning reading. Such information, therefore, is not digression but is necessary background, particularly since these people are almost unknown today. They can best be described as a trans-Atlantic intellectual clique, informal members of which included the New England intellectuals and Owen, Brougham, Stewart, et al in Great Britain. The background on some of these men will be discussed later.

Keagy first taught school at the Asbury College in Baltimore in 1818. It is recorded that he later taught at the Classical Academy, Harrisburg, in 1826, and at the Penn Charter School, Philadelphia, 1830-35. Yet Keagy must have been in Harrisburg as early as 1824, as he published an earlier book there that year, which was an essay and not a textbook. Curiously, in this 1824 essay, Keagy publicly declared war on the old-spelling book in words that suggested already planned group action. What else could his words, the "Engine of Reform" imply, except the pre-existence of a group determined to act? Voices crying alone in wildernesses do not speak of "Engines of Reform" but only of hopes of recruiting the support which is presently non-existent.

As Mathews showed in his bibliography (page 212), Keagy said that his 1824 work was an extract of articles he had "written some years ago, and first published in the *Morning Chronicle of Baltimore*, in the Spring of 1819." He would have been about 27 in 1819. Mitford Mathews (page 81) wrote concerning Keagy's 1824 book, *An Essay on English Education Together With Some Observations on the Present Mode of Teaching the English Language*, the essence of which Keagy said he had written as early as 1819:

"In this he commented on the 'absurdity of teaching by Spelling Books,' believing that this prevented children from thinking of what they were reading. He said: 'Our language is generally taught in such a way as to establish habits of reading without thinking.' He thought when the 'Engine of Reform' was set in motion 'the present spelling book system, the unlucky invention of ignorant and barbarous times, will then no more paralyse the energies of the youthful mind.'"

Therefore, Keagy's use of the phrase, the "Engine of Reform" apparently dates back to 1819.

A variation of Keagy's "Engine of Reform" phrase was used by the Scot, Brougham, in 1825, who spoke of "setting in motion the great engine of instruction." Brougham's work in England is discussed at length later. Brougham said in the last paragraph of his famous and widely read 1825 *Practical Observations*: "Never was the disposition more universal among the rich to lend the requisite assistance in setting in motion the great engine of instruction...."

Keagy was openly recognized as an activist by 1826, as shown by the following remark from William Russell's *American Journal of Education*, pages 672 and following (I believe the November, 1826, issue):

"The following article is extracted from the *Christian Monitor*, published at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and edited by J. M. Keagy, M.D., a gentleman who is extensively known as a

zealous friend to the improvement of education. The Monitor is one of the papers I have mentioned as containing a distinct department for the subject of education.

“The usual plan of teaching to read without thought, has the origin in the use of spelling books and all this is the greatest barrier now existing to intellectual improvement...”

No doubt can exist that Keagy was a member of activist groups seven years later, as in 1831 he was chairman of a committee of the Philadelphia Association of Teachers. In 1835, Keagy:

“...led in calling the State Educational Convention at West Chester, which effected a permanent organization, of which he was made vice president, having as its stated purpose the ‘advancement of education throughout the State, especially through the medium of schools and lyceums, and to cooperate with other lyceums in the diffusion of useful knowledge.’ To promote the same end, Keagy assisted in founding and contributed to the Monthly Journal of Education, (January, 1835), which became the Schoolmaster and Advocate of Education in 1836..... Keagy was a man of practical piety, a worker in the American Sunday School Union, and a devout Methodist.... His death, caused by pulmonary consumption, occurred in his forty-fifth year.”

The source for the biographical data on Keagy given above and previously, other than that quoted from Mathews and the American Journal of Education, is the Dictionary of American Biography, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1934, 1962, Volume VII, pages 266-267.

The year of Keagy’s death was 1837. The fact that Keagy was active in the American Sunday School Union, presumably for years prior to his death in 1837, may account for the fact that Sunday school materials also shifted heavily towards “meaning” about 1826.

In James Pyle Wickersham’s History of Education in Pennsylvania... From the Time the Swedish Settled on the Delaware to the Present Day, Inquirer Publishing Company, 1886, page 220, he gave a brief biography of John M. Keagy, M. D. The differences in this account from the earlier accounts may simply concern exact names for the various schools in which Keagy taught. Wickersham said that Keagy:

“...was born in Martic Township, Lancaster County, about the year 1795. He was of German descent. He studied medicine but relinquishing the practice he opened a school in Harrisburg in 1826. A building was soon erected for the school and planned to suit the master. The school room was arranged for one hundred pupils, fifty of each sex, separated by a partition placed in the middle longitudinally, and composed of a series of long blackboards sliding vertically in posts to the ceiling to admit of turning the room into a single whole when required. The manager and his assistant occupied the space at each end of the dividing blackboard and had the entire school in view. The desks were shaped like the letter u with the openings toward the wall. In each opening there was a single desk for the monitor who sat facing 9 pupils who occupied seats at the desk in his immediate front. This arrangement was according to the Lancastrian plan. After teaching very successfully in Harrisburg for several years, he was elected to a position in the Friends’ Public School, Philadelphia, and subsequently to a professorship in Dickinson College; the latter he did not live to fill. While in Philadelphia, Dr. Keagy was an active member of the Philadelphia Association of Teachers and in 1831 his name appears as the chairman of a committee of that body, appended to a circular, doubtless the product of his pen, addressed ‘To Teachers and Friends of Education Throughout the State of Pennsylvania’ urging them among other things to investigate those principles appertaining to the philosophy of the mind, its faculties, and arrangement, the [relationship]... between the moral, intellectual and physical powers and the best method of development. ‘To awaken public attention to the importance of education is to [discuss] existing systems and methods of instruction, by instituting a series of lectures on the

subject, and the publication of a .. periodical devoted to those interests and [to promote] annually a general convention of teachers....”

Wickersham included more on Keagy’s later activities and mentioned both Keagy’s 1819 and 1824 papers and his 1826 book.

It was in the year 1818 that young Dr. Keagy started teaching, and it was in that same school year (1818-1819) that he wrote the newspaper articles published in the spring of 1819 on which his 1824 book was based. The 1819 articles also presumably attacked the spelling book as an anachronism.

The year 1818 was also the year that the Boston primary schools were started, as the result of the work of activists, even though the extraordinarily high literacy in Boston demonstrated no need for public primary schools (as discussed in *Is Public Education Necessary?* by Samuel Blumenfeld). Boston already had, of course, its grammar schools for older children who could already read.

The year 1818 as well as 1826 therefore appears to have been a critical one for education activists. This is evident, for instance from the peculiarly different spelling book copyrighted on March 22, 1819, by Miller and Hutchens in Providence, Rhode Island, *The Columbian Spelling Book*, which is discussed elsewhere, and which obviously must have been written in 1818. *The Columbian Spelling Book* was a sharp departure from the Webster “sound” approach and was heavily geared to “meaning,” with much “entertaining” content but almost no religious content. Although it had syllable tables, it had no vowel markings and almost no phonetic arrangement by sound analogies on the word lists.

It was in 1818 that Lord Brougham was energetically working in Parliament for government-supported education in England, as discussed elsewhere.

It was also in 1818 that the Pickets started the first American education periodical, referred to elsewhere. As mentioned, the Pickets were later involved in activist groups after their move to Ohio in the 1830’s.

It was also in the year 1818 that Joseph Lancaster came to this country, to promote his “monitorial” education scheme, the credit for the invention of which was disputed by Andrew Bell of England and himself. The truth is that the monitorial system (in which older pupils teach younger pupils, to cut down on the need for adult instructors) is as old as humanity itself. But Lancaster and Bell carried that method which is natural in private families to ridiculous limits in organized schools.

### On Reverend Andrew Bell

The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1963, Volume 3, page 439, spoke of Andrew Bell (1753-1832) as a pioneer in the monitorial school movement. A native of Edinburgh, Scotland, and a graduate of a school there, Bell was reported to have made a very great deal of money in Virginia growing tobacco, where he had gone after graduation to work as a tutor. He was (apparently later) ordained in the Church of England and left for Madras, India, where he used his monitorial school idea in an orphan school. In 1797, he returned to London and published a book, *An Experiment in Education*, on his monitorial system. Bell’s approach did not become popular until Joseph Lancaster adapted it in a school Lancaster began in 1801 in Southwark, but Lancaster and Bell had an apparently-bitter falling out. Robert Owen also used Bell’s ideas in his school in New Lanark. In 1811, a society to use Bell’s ideas was formed, the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church, and Bell became its superintendent. When Bell died at Cheltenham on Jan. 27, 1832., he left a great deal of money to back educational programs in Scotland. As the source for its biography on Bell, the *Encyclopedia* cited J. D. Meiklejohn, *An Old Educational Reformer* (1881).

It is curious, however, that Bell made his “fortune” in America during the Revolutionary War!

The activities of Andrew Bell are discussed at length in Part 6, on developments in Great Britain.

### On Joseph Lancaster

It was recorded in Readings in American Educational History, by Edgar W. Knight and Clifton L. Hall (Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951 and Greenwood Press, New York, 1970), page 134, that Lancaster claimed in his advertising of his monitorial school method that:

“...often a lad from fourteen to eighteen years of age, can be rendered competent to the government of a school containing from 200 to 1000 scholars. The expense of Education for each individual will also diminish...”

Lancaster was widely known, since his work was extensively discussed in the widely-read Edinburgh Review. Relatively rapid communication was possible even in the early nineteenth century among activists in Scotland, England and America because of such publicity in widely-read publications, particularly in the highly influential journal, the Edinburgh Review. As discussed elsewhere, Lord Brougham had been one of the founders of the Edinburgh Review. Knight and Hall in Readings in American Educational History recorded:

“After Lancaster fell out with the British and Foreign School Society, which had been established in 1808, he came to this country in 1818, visited and lectured in the principal cities of Virginia....”

Yet Alec Ellis in A History of Children’s Reading and Literature, Pergamon Press, Oxford (et al): 1968 (page 2), said the British and Foreign School Society was founded in 1814, growing out of the earlier Lancastrian Society, so the society’s name in 1808 was not correctly shown by Knight and Hall.

Lancaster did not lecture solely in Virginia. In his letters to his daughter quoted by Knight and Hall, Lancaster showed his great concern with raising money from those to whom he gave lectures. He wrote her from Richmond, Virginia, October 18, 1819:

“My Dear Child,

“I lectured twice at Fredericksburgh - only 84 people attended, but the produce was 42 dollars....

“...The people here are not like the Bostonians; they do not put in buttons - bad silver and copper - forged notes and bits of tin; but they pay their 50 cents each and call it cheap....”

Lancaster had obviously lectured in Boston earlier than October, 1819, but, in defense of the majority of those old Bostonians, it was a minority of Bostonians who attended Lancaster’s lectures, and they would have been the same activists who pushed in the unnecessary primary schools in 1818.

Just as we can depend on the government officials of today to endorse idiotic education schemes like Lancaster’s monitorial schools, Knight and Hall recorded that Lancaster had the support of Governor Clinton of New York, Governor Wolcott of Connecticut, and Archibald D. Murphey ““father of the public schools of North Carolina.”” Knight and Hall stated:

“...many other intelligent people advocated the [Lancaster monitorial] system.”

Intelligent?!

Knight and Hall recorded that North Carolina had a Lancastrian academy by 1814, and Philadelphia in 1817. Keagy obviously opened one in 1826, based on Lancaster's approach. Boston certainly had "monitorial" schools at least by 1823, perhaps based on both Lancaster's and Bell's approaches. William Bentley Fowle, who became the second publisher of Horace Mann's *The Common School Journal*, copyrighted the following book in 1839 (republished in 1858):

"The Bible Reader, Being a New Selection of Reading Lessons from the Holy Scriptures, for the Use of Schools and Families, by William Bentley Fowle, Author of the *Primary Reader* and *Various Other School Books*.

"...Whence is it that the Scriptures are so little read in our schools when the conviction is so general that the Bible ought to be a school-book, if it be not that a suitable selection could not be found? After reading the Scriptures more than seventeen years in his own school, where are female children of all ages, and of every denomination of Christians, the compiler has endeavored to meet his own wants...."

In *The Bible Reader*, Fowle claimed 17 years teaching experience in 1839 (and claimed that at least he had continued to teach the Bible in his school). On the spelling book Fowle wrote in 1824, *The Rational Guide to Reading and Orthography*, he described himself as "Instructor of the Monitorial School, Boston." He was later "Principal of the Female Monitorial School in Boston" (from the title page of the 1849 reprint of his 1842 *The Common School Speller*). According to the *American Journal of Education*, Volume I, 1826, page 165, the monitorial school in Boston opened on October 14, 1823, with eight scholars "under the care of William B. Fowle." (In the September, 1826, issue of the *Journal*, Russell recorded that Fowle's speller had previously been adopted in the city of Boston, so Fowle had influential friends.) Presumably Fowle had taught somewhere for about a year before that. However, the reference establishes that Boston had a monitorial school by 1823, but that there was so little need for it that it could enroll only eight pupils!

### On Infant Schools

Besides the idea of monitorial schools, of which Keagy's and Fowle's were examples, the other wild enthusiasm of the period in education was the infant school. However, the infant school idea was NOT a wild enthusiasm with the general public but only with the activists.

Infant schools had been originated by the Scottish socialist, Robert Owen, in the very late eighteenth century, and he had been involved with others like Lord Brougham, who will be discussed, in promoting infant schools in England by 1818. However, infant schools did not begin to spread in America till after 1826.

It was in the environment of such "improvements" in education: government primary schools, monitorial schools, and infant schools where toddlers from two to seven were separated from their homes, that many of the reading "improvements" began to flourish like mushrooms after a deluge. These "improvements" will be better understood, however, after describing the last of the three major textbook "departures" of 1826: the Keagy primer, which was copyrighted immediately after the Franklin and the Worcester primers.

### On the Content of Keagy's Primer

Keagy's book, *The Pestalozzian Primer*, with its December 21, 1826, copyright, was published in 1827. In his comments addressed to teachers at the end of this book, Keagy revealed that he was very widely read in natural science and philosophy. That was only to be expected. The *Dictionary of American Biography* had stated that although Keagy thoroughly knew many languages, French, German, Hebrew, Latin and Greek, his real interest was science. From 1833 to 1835, he was a trustee of Dickinson College, where, at the time he died, he had just been appointed the professor of natural science.

The opening two pages of the introduction to Keagy's 1826 book can only be described (astonishing at that date!) as pure psychological theory. Considering his overall views, Keagy may be considered a trans-Atlantic devotee of Dugald Stewart of the University of Edinburgh, a "philosopher" who was effectively writing on psychology and apparently expressed opinions on reading as early as 1793, which will be discussed later.

The highly intellectual Keagy may also have been reading a newly available book about 1818. According to William S. Sahakian, (*History of Psychology*, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., Itasca, Illinois, Revised Edition, 1981, page 451), the first textbook on psychology had become available in 1816 in Germany. In Sahakian's section, "Landmarks in the History of Psychology," he showed for 1816:

"Publication of the first textbook on psychology, *A Textbook of Psychology*, by Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841), the father of experimental pedagogy and the founder of mathematical psychology."

Therefore, Keagy may have been influenced by Herbart, as well as being influenced by the Scottish philosopher/psychologist Dugald Stewart to whom he referred in 1832, as will be shown. However, I do not know whether Herbart discussed reading in his work, but, if so, his comments would have been some twenty years later than Stewart's.

Keagy mentioned in his introduction that he was influenced in his ideas on education by Francis Joseph Neef, who had studied under Johann Pestalozzi before coming to America. Keagy said he named his book after Pestalozzi because that "celebrated reformer in Education, who is still living in Switzerland..." began by using sensible objects and oral explanations. The theme of Keagy's book was knowledge of real things, through the senses. But Keagy said the only books in education that he drew on were "Murray's spelling book and Neef's method of teaching" although he commented that his book was very different from either of those. It should be noted that the date of the copyright of his book, December 21, 1826, was not very long after the January, 1826, arrival of the celebrated "Boatload of Knowledge" at New Harmony. Could Keagy have been with Neef, whom he admired, and the other educators in January, 1826, when they arrived at New Harmony, not so very far from Harrisburg? One thing is certain from reading Keagy's book: none of the educators on that Boatload of Knowledge could have been more knowledgeable on the current educational theories than Dr. Keagy! However, it is extremely puzzling that so little attention has previously been given in the literature on education to complex, active Dr. Keagy who so obviously affected American educational history.

What is so astounding about the book Keagy wrote in 1826 is that in his introduction he recommended the pure DEAF-MUTE sight-word method of teaching reading to hearing children as IDEAL and did so because it protected meaning! He even recommended the use of high-frequency (familiar) words! It had only been in 1817 that Gallaudet had started a small American school in Connecticut for deaf-mutes which used that method.

Apparently the only two texts which had ever before deliberately recommended beginning with pure sight words without spelling for hearing children were printed in France in the previous century.

According to the article “Lecture” in the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire, referred to previously, a short article by the Abbe de Radonvillier in 1768 had recommended the use of whole words to teach reading because he felt the approach (Code 1) did not demand so much intelligence as the syllable approach. It is likely that the Abbe de Radonvillier was influenced by the Abbe de l’Epee’s school for deaf-mutes founded in Paris about 1760. A more systematic work by Nicolas Adam in France in 1787 had also endorsed sight words in teaching reading (Code 1) for the same reason. He felt it was easier.

In Germany, in 1779 and 1791, Friedrich Gedike, Johann Bernhard Basedow’s disciple, had used a whole-word method with some analytic phonics to teach reading, probably influenced both by Basedow and the French 1744 Quadrille approach discussed previously. Basedow had been one of the first, in his Philanthropinum school in 1774 and earlier in 1770, with his own daughter, to move the teaching of reading up from the syllable level to the word level, as discussed at length in my 1981 book, *The Case for the Prosecution*. Basedow, however, used Code 10 Pascal phonics on words (as described in the article “Johann Bernhard Basedow and the Philanthropinum” in Henry B. Barnard’s, *American Journal of Education*, 1857, which was unconnected with the earlier journal of that name). Although Gedike’s approach appears to have been inadequate, he was not ignoring letter sounds. Nor was Jacotot in Belgium in the early 1820’s. Jacotot endorsed reading by “whole words” but drilled on every single letter in every single word.

Therefore, the only two programs before Keagy which had endorsed teaching pure Code 1 sight words to beginners with normal hearing were the 1768 method of Abbe de Radonvillier and the 1787 method of Nicolas Adam. Yet neither had used whole words for beginning readers to INCREASE understanding. They were, therefore, NOT endorsing “meaning” as opposed to “sound” but were simply trying to make learning to read easier. How, then, did Keagy come up with his idea to endorse the deaf-mute sight-word method because it presumably protected “meaning” which “sound” presumably did not? Keagy also, astonishingly, correctly equated the sight-word method with Chinese characters! Since de l’Epee apparently thought that his method protected “meaning,” as shown by his comments which been quoted elsewhere, it seems highly likely that Keagy had read de l’Epee’s writings.

#### Possible Sources for Keagy’s Adoption of the Deaf-Mute Method

##### William Channing Woodbridge

Biographical material given in Samuel L. Blumenfeld’s *Is Public Education Necessary?* (The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho - 1981, 1985) suggests a possible connection between Keagy and Gallaudet, who used de l’Epee’s “meaning” sight-word approach. The connection exists in the person of William Channing Woodbridge (1794-1845). Woodbridge was very involved in activist circles in the 1820’s such as those in which Keagy moved.

Blumenfeld recorded (page 135) that Woodbridge:

“...was a cousin of William Ellery Channing and had gone to Yale with Holbrook. He was therefore susceptible to the influences of both men.”

Woodbridge had graduated from Yale in 1810 with Josiah Holbrook, and from 1808 to 1810 Gallaudet had been a tutor at Yale, according to Gallaudet’s biography by William Andrus Alcott, referred to elsewhere in this text. It is therefore probable that a friendship or at the least an acquaintance



among these three men, Gallaudet, Woodbridge and Holbrook, dated back to 1808 and that the senior and therefore authoritative member of the group from that point on was Gallaudet. Woodbridge later was employed at Gallaudet's Hartford Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb from 1817 to 1821, so Woodbridge obviously would have been subservient to Gallaudet at that point.

In August, 1830, Woodbridge acquired the editorship of the American Journal of Education from William Russell but renamed it the American Annals of Education. In Woodbridge's very first issue of August, 1830, he published a letter from Gallaudet recommending the deaf-mute method for hearing children (although Gallaudet did not state openly that it was the deaf-mute method). Woodbridge must have strongly supported the deaf-mute approach, therefore, in 1830. At the very least, Woodbridge certainly must have realized, from his own four years of employment in Gallaudet's Asylum, that what Gallaudet was recommending for hearing children in 1830 was the same approach that had been used for deaf children.

As will be shown, Gallaudet had used the method informally with the little deaf-mute girl, Alice Cogswell, before he went to Europe in 1814, and had been given a copy of de L'Epee's work by her father at that time. Gallaudet may, of course, have known of de l'Epee's method before 1814.

These educational "movers and shakers" of the 1820's were a relatively small group. Keagy is recorded as a public school activist by 1826 in the American Journal of Education, referred to elsewhere, but was writing to "improve" education as early as 1819, so he might be considered an activist from that date. It is possible Gallaudet's ideas had percolated through this relatively small activist group between 1821 and 1825 through the agency of Woodbridge and ultimately reached Keagy, before Woodbridge went to Fellenberg's Hofwyl in 1825. Gallaudet had been teaching his own children by the deaf-mute method since 1823, only two years after Woodbridge left his school. Gallaudet said on August 6, 1830 in a letter to an editor (quoted by Mitford Mathews, pages 55-56) that he had used the method with his own family for seven years. Gallaudet's children must have been too young to be taught reading while Woodbridge was still at Gallaudet's asylum in 1821, but Gallaudet must already have had the idea of using the deaf-mute method with hearing children. Furthermore, as will be shown, Gallaudet had been lecturing in many states since about 1818 to raise money for his school, and this could have been a source of Keagy's knowledge of methods for teaching the deaf.

Blumenfeld wrote (page 136):

"In 1825, Woodbridge went to Europe, visited Hofwyl and got to know Fellenberg. He became a convert to the agricultural school idea. In 1828 and 1829, Woodbridge spent about a year at Hofwyl studying its operations in detail."

Blumenfeld discussed Hofwyl on page 88, which had become renowned as:

"...the experimental school at Hofwyl, Switzerland, founded in 1809 by Emanuel von Fellenberg, in which manual labor, for the first time, was combined with literature and science to form a unique curriculum. All four of Robert Owen's sons had attended Hofwyl...."

"The senior Robert Owen had visited Hofwyl in 1817 and converted Fellenberg to his way of thinking. In his autobiography, Owen wrote: 'I agreed to send my sons and place them under M. de Fellenberg's especial care and direction. I have ever remembered this visit with unmixed pleasure, from the gratification I experienced in the friendly, frank, confidential communication of mind to mind on all subjects, enhanced by the mutual confidence each had in the other.'"

The past had, indeed, been buried when early nineteenth century intellectuals could believe that Fellenberg's was the first ("unique") institution ever to combine manual labor and intellectual activity. It is true that classical Rome had contempt for manual work. Yet, since at least the sixth century A. D., Christian monks thought very differently with their Latin motto meaning, "Work, study, pray." Fellenberg's followers were obviously leaving out the last admonition. St. Columbanus of Ireland, who founded monasteries in Europe, the last of which was Bobbio in northern Italy about the end of the sixth century, did manual work in the fields, wearing white gloves while he worked so that his hands would not be soiled when he said the Mass. Yet St. Columbanus is also renowned for his knowledge of the classics, so he combined manual labor with literature in the sixth century, as, indeed, did other monks in Italy and elsewhere. Labor and learning were combined in monasteries some thirteen hundred years before Fellenberg arrived on the scene, with his "new" idea of combining labor and learning.

The ties among all these activists are numerous: besides Woodbridge's undisputed long-term contact with Gallaudet, Woodbridge had gone to Yale with Holbrook, and Holbrook had opened a school modeled on Hofwyl on his farm in 1819. This may have given Woodbridge, Holbrook's ex-classmate at Yale, the idea to go to Hofwyl himself. Keagy in his activist work on education would have been associating with such people who were also doing activist work on education, all of whom showed many intertwining relationships. That is shown further by the following facts.

#### William Andrus Alcott

According to \*ZAN-180 Reel 293-294, in the New York Public Library, on American Annals of Education from 1826 to 1839 (which began as the American Journal of Education), William Andrus Alcott (1798-1859) became the editor in 1837-38, and Fordyce Michael Hubbard (1809-1888) was the editor in 1839. By 1840, since Horace Mann's Common School Journal promoting government schools was successful, the need must have no longer existed for American Annals, which presumably is why it was eventually permitted to expire.

William Andrus Alcott, the third editor, had been a school teacher who eventually became a medical doctor, apparently some time after 1839. He was the cousin of Bronson Alcott "with whom, in early life, he had travelled in Virginia and the Carolinas," according to page 15 of F. B. Sanborn's Bronson Alcott, at Alcott House, England, and Fruitlands, New England 1842-1844. Bronson Alcott wrote from England on June 30, 1842, to his cousin, William Andrus Alcott, when Bronson Alcott spent four months there and visited Alcott House near London, the school that had been named after him, so the 1842 letter indicates that the cousins had remained friends over the years (and also confirms Alcott's influence in England). During his time in London, Bronson Alcott:

“...called on [Robert] Owen, Carlyle, George Thompson, and other friends, to whom Emerson and Garrison had given him letters...” (pages 15 and 24 of Bronson Alcott etc., by F. B. Sanborn, The Torch Press, Cedar Rapids, Iowa: 1908).

This, of course, establishes probable ties between the Americans Emerson and Bronson Alcott and the Scottish socialist Robert Owen. Ties among such people are multiple and confirm the existence of the informal trans-Atlantic intellectual clique.

Bronson Alcott, the cousin of the third editor of the journal, William Andrus Alcott, was, as shown elsewhere, also a very close associate of William Russell, the first editor of the American Journal of Education. Josiah Holbrook's ex-classmate at Yale, William Channing Woodbridge, was the second editor.

Bronson Alcott and his cousin, William Andrus Alcott, the third editor of the publication, had been touring in Virginia and the Carolinas, next door to Georgia, “in early life,” as stated by Sanborn, above. Russell had a tie to Georgia. When the penniless Russell first came to America from Scotland, he came to Georgia, then briefly returned to Scotland, and then came back to Georgia, as discussed below. Concerning Russell’s ties with possible activists, Barnard’s American Journal of Education, No. VIII, March, 1857 (which had no connection with the earlier journal with that name), said in a biography of William Russell that he had been a tutor in the family of a “distinguished Georgia statesman.” Barnard also recorded that when Russell was in New Haven, he taught in the New Township Academy and the “Hopkins Grammar School - the preparatory classical seminary connected with Yale College.” Gallaudet, Woodbridge and Holbrook all had ties to Yale. The Yale grammar school had very possibly been named after someone in Gallaudet’s mother’s family, the Hopkins.

As discussed, Woodbridge, the next editor after Russell, had graduated from Yale with Josiah Holbrook, who was an arch-activist. (See *Is Public Education Necessary?* by Samuel Blumenfeld). Woodbridge worked later for Gallaudet in his school for the deaf. As mentioned, Gallaudet was a tutor at Yale in 1808 and therefore must have known both Woodbridge and Holbrook ever since they had been students at Yale.

Not only was Editor Woodbridge a close associate of Gallaudet, but so was Editor William Andrus Alcott. William Andrus Alcott’s close association with Gallaudet dates from possibly 1825 and definitely from early 1826 in promoting public schools, according to Alcott’s own testimony, quoted later. Gallaudet resigned from the asylum in 1830 because the work was supposed to be too demanding. Yet, according to William Andrus Alcott, Gallaudet had done more than possibly anyone else to work for public schools in the years from 1825 to 1835. That raises the question of what was first in importance on Gallaudet’s agenda in 1830 when he chose to resign from the asylum.

### William Russell (1798-1873)

William Russell’s October, 1826, issue of the American Journal of Education carried a letter from Josiah Holbrook suggesting the formation of “associations for mutual instruction” which became the American Lyceum movement (Blumenfeld, pages 111-112). It was at an American Lyceum meeting that Keagy endorsed the deaf-mute method, citing the writings of the Scot philosopher, Stewart, as justification. As Blumenfeld recorded (page 113), Holbrook who had graduated from Yale in 1810 was still attending lectures there before 1819 on geology which were given by Professor Silliman, a friend of William Maclure. Maclure had jointly founded the New Harmony socialist community with Robert Owen about 1824.

Furthermore, it is obvious that Russell in 1826 was at first only someone’s hireling as an editor, as Barnard’s article recorded, concerning Russell’s move to Boston from New Haven:

“Soon after this change of occupation, he was invited to take the editorial charge of the American Journal of Education published in Boston, first by Mr. Thomas B. Wait(sp?), in 1826, and next by Mr. S. G. Goodrich, and subsequently by Messrs. Carter and Hendee. Mr. Russell continued to conduct this periodical for nearly three years from the date of its publication.”

Since Russell was “invited” to be the journal’s first editor, it is certain that he did not found - or fund - the new journal. Some unknown other person or persons did. The “publishers” to whom Goodrich referred were almost certainly only the printers. Therefore, the actual founders of the journal are unknown.

When Russell fled Boston, as recorded elsewhere in this history, apparently abandoning not only his wife but his bills, he was replaced as editor by Holbrook's classmate and William Ellery Channing's cousin, William Channing Woodbridge, who had worked with Gallaudet in teaching deaf-mutes.

### Samuel Griswold Goodrich (1793-1860)

The second printer (not editor) of the American Journal of Education, S. G. Goodrich, was the publisher/author Samuel G. (Peter Parley) Goodrich, who also put out a successful four-book sight-word series of readers, the first book of which was Parley's Picture Book: Or, First Reader, and the second, Parley's Little Reader (copyrighted in 1836). (A revised version of that series was still in print and for sale in 1928, according to the United States Catalog.) The series was very popular in the Midwest, and, according to Vail's history of the McGuffey readers, had been a very powerful competitor in the early years.

According to Mary F. Thwaite in *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading* (The Hornbook, Inc., Boston, Massachusetts: 1972, first published in Great Britain in 1963, page 98), when Samuel G. Goodrich was ten years old, he had admired Hannah More's *The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*. Mrs. Thwaite wrote:

“Twenty years later, in 1823, already an ‘instructor of youth,’ [Goodrich] visited (England) and met (her).... Inspired by the example of Hannah More in writing and publishing her tracts, he set up his own publishing business in Boston in 1826....”

Goodrich's rapid and great success as a publisher after 1826 paralleled the astonishing success of John Newbery (1713-1767) in England after 1745 and Isaiah Thomas (1749-1831) in New England after 1775. Those three publishers achieved their massive successes in markets that had already been filled with other publishers when they arrived. Yet none of those pre-existing publishers ever experienced the good “luck” experienced by the magical three, Newbery, Thomas and Goodrich. Admittedly, those three were very competent publishers, but they certainly were not the only competent publishers in their eras. Did those three publishers just have better “luck” than the other publishers, or was their “luck” the result of the endorsement of interested and powerful people who could promote their wares?

Goodrich's setting up his publishing business in Boston in 1826 is just one more publishing event that occurred in that critical year of 1826, besides the founding of the American Journal of Education, the founding of the American Lyceum movement, the arrival of the “boatland of knowledge” in New Harmony, and the publishing of the first three primers in the history of the English language to endorse the sight-word “meaning” method for beginning reading, the Franklin, the Worcester, and the Keagy primers. (However, the Keagy primer only endorsed the sight-word method but did not use it. Keagy said in his introduction, quoted at length later, “Ten or fifteen years hence may be the time for publishing a work modelled on these principles....” which would be after what Keagy called the “engine of reform” did its work)

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), for the most part Goodrich was self-educated and first became a book-seller and publisher in Hartford, Connecticut. Goodrich had been born in Ridgefield, Connecticut, on August 19, 1793, so that means that before his arrival in Boston in 1826, at the age of 32 or 33, this self-educated (and therefore originally impoverished) young man had already been a school teacher (according to Thwaite), a bookseller and publisher in Hartford, Connecticut, and a tourist in England by 1823 at the age of 29 or 30.

Where did Goodrich, the originally impoverished young “instructor of youth” get the considerable amount of money that it took to visit England in 1823? Where did Goodrich get the money to set up his own publishing business in Hartford and then to set one up in Boston in that critical change-agent year of

1826? Gallaudet's trip to England and France in 1815 to study the teaching of deaf-mutes had been underwritten by others, and so was Gallaudet's school for the deaf. Were the originally impoverished young Goodrich's obviously expensive activities up to 1826, before Goodrich was 32 or 33 years old, also underwritten by others who were dedicated to "change," the same kind of change that Goodrich is known to have promoted later?

Concerning Gallaudet's probable ties to Samuel G. Goodrich, William Andrus Alcott, in his biography of Gallaudet, quoted more at length later, wrote:

"The list of [Gallaudet's] labors in the cause of education might be greatly extended. I might speak of his connection with the American Lyceum, which held some of its meetings in Hartford; and of his labors in behalf of the Goodrich Association, as it was then deemed...."

So there was something called the Goodrich Association (presumably after about 1830) which was concerned with "education" and Gallaudet labored "in behalf" of it. Had that Goodrich Association that was concerned with education been set up by Samuel G. Goodrich?

Another possible tie between Goodrich and Gallaudet concerns a play about the Abbe de l'Epee that was already mentioned in Part 3. The Thompson English translation of the French play, *The Abbe de l'Epee* by Jean Nicolas Bouilly (1763-1842) reportedly had an 1818 edition published by S. G. Goodrich of Hartford. That means that Goodrich was already publishing materials in Hartford by 1818 when Goodrich was only 24 or 25 years old. Woodbridge, the second editor of the *Journal of Education* in 1830 in Boston (while Goodrich was presumably still the printer of the *Journal of Education* in Boston), had been working in Gallaudet's school for the deaf in Hartford in 1818 when Goodrich published the translated edition of that play in Hartford. Gallaudet had founded his school in 1817 after returning from France with the deaf-mute Clerc who had been trained by Sicard, de l'Epee's successor. Since the translated play's preface had been written by the deaf-mute and teacher of the deaf, Clerc, whom Gallaudet had brought from France only two years before, there is a possible and surprising connection between Gallaudet and Goodrich as early as 1818. Both Gallaudet and Goodrich were then near the beginning of their highly successful careers. However, Goodrich's publication of the translated play about de l'Epee also clearly identified Goodrich, like Gallaudet, as one of the widespread promoters of de l'Epee's "meaning" work for the deaf.

Goodrich also certainly endorsed the "meaning" method in beginning reading for hearing children, since he wrote and published his own sight-word, "meaning"-method reading series, as discussed elsewhere. Goodrich also took the time to belittle Noah Webster's once massively used "sound" spelling book for beginners. In Goodrich's story, "A Talk About Books," on page II of the second book of Goodrich's reading series, a child said to Mr. Parley:

"Now there is old Mrs. Birchwhip, the school mistress, down at the North-End; she is always cross, and somehow or other, whenever I think of her, I think of an old spelling book, on brown paper, with a blue cover and frightful pictures."

Peter Parley answered:

"So you think a disagreeable teacher, is like an old spelling book?"

The child responded:

"Yes, and I had rather not learn to read than learn of Mrs. Birchwhip, who looks like an old book...."

The “old spelling book... with a blue cover” was obviously Noah Webster’s, and Webster was the father-in-law of S. G. Goodrich’s cousin. Some of Webster’s enemies were among those closest to him. Goodrich expanded his own sales - and the sight-word method - in 1836 at Webster’s and the spelling book’s expense, so it was not surprising that he should be chosen as the second publisher (printer) of the *Journal/Annals*.

### John Braidwood

Keagy, however, may very well have been aware, additionally and perhaps independently of possible association with Woodbridge, et al, of the conflict concerning methods for teaching the deaf, which was so acute between the Abbe Charles Michel de L’Epee and Samuel Heinecke. (Blumenfeld lists as a relatively recently-printed source concerning that conflict *The Exchange of Letters Between Samuel Heinecke and Abbe Charles Michel de l’Epee* by Christopher A. Garnett, Jr., New York: Vantage Press, 1968.)

Keagy may have built his ideas for teaching reading to hearing children by the deaf-mute method on the ideas behind that conflict: the virtues of teaching by “meaning” vs. the virtues of teaching by “sound.” *Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900* published by the National Institute of Education in Washington, D. C., lists as one of the books in their library *The Method of Educating the Deaf and Dumb; Confirmed by Long Experience*. London: George Cooke (etc.), 1801, by Abbe De L’Epee. This 1801 English translation which contains the famous exchange of letters between de l’Epee and Heinecke may very well have been made available for young American medical students like Keagy after 1801, because of the fact that in the future they might very likely have to deal with the problem of deafness in some patients. That 1801 translation might also, of course, have been available to Gallaudet and provided the ideas which he used in teaching little Alice Cogswell to read sight words, even before Gallaudet had gone to study in Paris.

Concerning the actual contents of the book, the National Institute of Education publication, *Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education* lists a copy of the Abbe de L’Epee’s book in French and Latin and stated it “Contains a lengthy argument in Latin, among schools for the deaf and dumb, concerning methods of education.” Anyone reading de L’Epee’s book, available in English after an 1801 London printing, would have been well aware of the different methods and of the nature of the arguments for and against phonics or sight words in teaching the deaf. (The 1801 English translation is discussed further in Chapter 8 and Appendix E.)

But there is an additional reason for thinking Keagy may have been well grounded in current methods for teaching deaf-mutes. An earlier phonic approach for teaching the deaf, before Heinecke of Germany started his work, was the work of Thomas Braidwood of Edinburgh, Scotland, who opened a school for the deaf in 1760. Alexander Graham Bell gave a paper, “The Growth of the Oral Method in America,” on October 10, 1917, at the fiftieth anniversary of the Clarke School in Northampton, Massachusetts. In it, he told of the arrival of John Braidwood, the black-sheep grandson of Thomas Braidwood, to America in 1812, “with the object of founding in this country a school for the Deaf....”

### American Efforts to Teach the Deaf Before John Braidwood’s Day By Francis Green and Dr. William Thornton

An even earlier attempt to teach the deaf to speak had been made in America, according to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913, Volume V, page 317:

“Francis Green, a native of Boston, 1742, whose son was a deaf-mute, was the earliest advocate of deaf-mute education in America. In his ‘Vox Oculis Subjecta,’ published in London, 1783, he describes the method by which the deaf-mute may be taught to speak.”

Green’s additional efforts concerning the teaching of the deaf are referred to later.

A further concern for teaching the deaf before Braidwood arrived in America in 1812 was shown by one of the most fascinating of our early patriots, who is almost unknown today. Again, Alexander Graham Bell is the source for the information on this man, Dr. William Thornton, and his plan for teaching the deaf. Thornton’s method was based on an amended alphabet to represent “sound” more perfectly, to be used by everyone, both the hearing and the deaf. It is curious that such a remarkable and once-famous personality as Bell described, who also totally endorsed “sound” as the method to teach reading for both the hearing and the deaf, has almost totally dropped out of our history books.

On December 9, 1916, Alexander Graham Bell presented a paper before the Columbia(?) Historical Society, “A Sketch on the Life of Dr. William Thornton and His Essay on ‘Teaching the Deaf or Surd, and Consequently Dumb, to Speak. “It was reproduced in Records - Volume 20, Columbia(?) Historical Society, Washington, D. C., which was printed in 1917 by the Press of the New Era Printing Company, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. It is presently available at the New York Public Library under Call Number NYPL IAA 20-1917. The paper read in part:

“William Thornton \* the author of the first American publication upon the teaching of the deaf, was born in the West Indies in 1761. His parents were English and he himself was sent to England to be educated. He studied medicine in Edinburgh under Dr. Brown(?), graduating in 1784, and then continued his study in Paris. He also traveled extensively in Europe but while still a young man he came to this country and the year 1793 found him married to an American and settled in Washington, D. C. He was already a doctor of medicine, an architect, a painter, a writer, an inventor, and a philanthropist. An old notice says of him that, ‘He was a scholar and a gentleman, full of talent and eccentricity....’

“As an inventor, he was much interested in all machines worked by steam, and he experimented with Fitch upon steamboats before Fulton began his work. Thornton also contrived a means of converting sawdust into planks, an invention which has recently been revived.

“At the end of the last century, such men as Franklin and Noah Webster were interested in the project of a phonetic reform of the English language, and, in 1793, Thornton published his views upon the subject in (an)... essay entitled ‘Cadmus.’ \*\* The appendix to this is upon ‘The Mode of Teaching the Deaf or Surd, and Consequently Dumb, to Speak,’ and is, as before mentioned, the first publication of its kind in America. (Ed.: This is not strictly true: As mentioned, the American Green published a book, in London on the topic in 1783.)

“In this same year, 1793, Thornton’s plans for the Capitol then about to be built in Washington were accepted by the President and work on it commenced at once. Thornton received for his designs 500 dollars and a lot in the city. In 1814, the British burnt the still unfinished building. The new Capitol afterwards erected was on a far grander scale than the old one had been, although from drawings still extant, it seems probable that the central portion of the present capitol was built somewhat on the lines of Thornton’s plan.

“In 1791, the President had appointed the commissioners to lay out the city of Washington, and to attend to the construction of Government buildings. In 1794, Thornton was made one of these officers. From the records, it appears that a decided improvement was noticed in all the

business of the commissioners after Thornton's appointment. It also appears that Thornton himself insisted very strongly that grandeur was necessary in the capitol city of the United States, and it is greatly due to his efforts that Washington is the beautiful city we now know.

"In the early days of the republic, all patents had to be examined by the Secretary of State and two others of the cabinet officers. A little later, the secretary of state was in sole charge, but in 1803 \*\*\* it was necessary to have a special superintendent of patents." Thornton was the first to occupy this position, and to him is due, in a great measure, the present patent system of the United States. The value he set upon the department under his charge is shown in the account of what happened during the invasion of Washington by the British in 1814.

"Thornton, seeing that a British gun was being aimed at the patent office, rode up to the enemy's ranks, and placing himself in front of the gun, called out, 'Are you Englishmen, or Goths and Vandals? This is the Patent Office, the depository of the inventive genius of America, in which the whole civilized world is concerned. Would you destroy it? If so, fire away, and let the charge pass through my body.' By this effort, the records and (models)... of the patent office were saved. Thornton carried them off to his country home where he kept them until peace was firmly established.

"Thornton died in 1828, leaving no descendants. He was buried in the Congressional Cemetery with the honor paid to senators and representatives, his body being followed to the grave by the President of the United States and members of his Cabinet."

Bell said in his footnotes:

\*"The writer is chiefly indebted for information to an article on Dr. Thornton by Gloria Brown in the Architectural Record of September, 1896. See also Annals (I, 90) and Cyclopaedia of Political Science for Political Economy and United States History, edited by John J. Halor, 1884, Volume III, p. 126, MHGB."

\*\*"See Proceedings of American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, 1793, Volume III, p. 262-319 MHGB."

\*\*\*"Miss Brown gives this date as 1803 in MHGB."

Alexander Graham Bell then outlined Thornton's ideas on teaching the deaf to speak with an expanded alphabet. Thornton had said:

"When he has learned the true sounds of the 30 letters in the English language, he will be capable of reading as well as of speaking and ought to have a catalog of objects designed or represented that he may assess proper ideas to proper (things). Thus a child may be taught to read, to speak, to understand others, to write and obtain knowledge of things at the same time."

Thornton wanted the deaf to be taught to speak by showing them how to make sounds with their mouths. He said:

"As the pupil will be taught to read, to speak, to write and understand things at once, the teacher should force him to leave no name unpronounced...."

Thornton was introducing the deaf to language through "sound," not "meaning."

The Unfortunate History of John Braidwood (17??-1820)



The first organized attempt to teach the deaf in America dates from the time when John Braidwood arrived in Baltimore in 1812, and it was in Baltimore that Keagy started teaching in 1818 at the age of 26. Keagy was probably living not far from Baltimore in 1812, presumably still in Lancaster County in Pennsylvania. When Braidwood arrived in Baltimore in 1812, Keagy would have been an impressionable 20 years of age, probably studying medicine at that time and possibly familiar with the Abbe de L'Epee's book. Alexander Graham Bell said the following about Braidwood in his 1917 paper:

“Upon his arrival in America (Braidwood) advertised extensively that he would open a school for the Deaf in Baltimore on the first of July 1812; and Colonel William Bolling, who proposed to send his deaf son to him, advanced six hundred dollars to help him start the school. Unfortunately this had the very opposite effect: The school was never opened, and Braidwood started off on a wild course of dissipation until the money was exhausted and he landed in jail. Col. Bolling had to advance another six hundred dollars to get him out of jail; and in return for these accommodations Braidwood agreed to reside with Col. Bolling as tutor to his children... in Virginia....”

So Braidwood, who endorsed phonics for the deaf, “advertised widely” in Baltimore in 1812 and then became notorious for his misbehavior. His spectacular behavior must have attracted much attention, and hardly reflected favorably on his ideas - including “phonics” for the deaf. But it is easy to see that Keagy may very well have been exposed to what is, for most people, the unfamiliar subject of methods for teaching the deaf. Keagy's ideas on teaching hearing children in the same way that De L'Epee taught deaf children may have grown out of this exposure.

John Braidwood was certainly known outside of Baltimore after he arrived in America in 1812. In Bell's 1917 paper, he referred to a letter written by Reverend Thomas Gallaudet of Connecticut from Edinburgh, Scotland, on September 22, 1815. Gallaudet was in Edinburgh at a school licensed to use the Braidwood method, and Gallaudet was also attempting, unsuccessfully, to get a license to use the Braidwood method from the Braidwood family which held the rights.

“I have been corresponding with Mr. Thomas Braidwood on this subject.... This morning I received a positive refusal to my application. The reason for this which Mr. Braidwood assigned is that his brother, Mr. Jno Braidwood is in our country - the same gentleman of whom we heard as being in Virginia. The truth is he left this place a few years since in disgrace.... He conducted (a school) so badly and contracted so many debts that he was obliged to abscond. What dependence can be placed on such a character.”

The 1815 letter shows that Gallaudet and his associates in Connecticut had been familiar with the Braidwood method, so much so that Gallaudet went to England to learn it, and also that John Braidwood was “the same gentleman of whom we heard as being in Virginia.” Informed people in Connecticut in 1815, therefore, not only knew Braidwood was in America, but that Braidwood had left Baltimore for Virginia. Since Gallaudet's circle knew of Braidwood's work and movements in 1815 in far-off Connecticut, Keagy might certainly have known of them in Pennsylvania.

John Braidwood was still attracting attention in America in 1817, according to Alexander Graham Bell's 1917 paper. Braidwood's friend, Colonel Bolling, arranged for a school for the deaf to be opened on June 20, 1817, in connection with the Classical School of Rev. John Kirkpatrick in Manchester, Virginia. Bell wrote:

“All went well during the rest of the year 1817, and the school attracted a great deal of public attention. In 1818, however, by the middle of March, Braidwood’s numerous ‘irregularities’ compelled Kirkpatrick to sever all connection with him.”

By 1819, Kirkpatrick dropped his work with the deaf, and John Braidwood died, “a victim to the bottle,” in the autumn of 1820, in Manchester, Virginia.

The point is that Braidwood’s school in Virginia was attracting “a great deal of public attention” in the school year 1817-1818, as his proposed, but never-opened, Baltimore school had in the year 1812, and young Dr. Keagy started teaching himself in 1818. Keagy might have been well aware of the unfortunate Braidwood enterprise.

Keagy’s citing Neef and Murray as helpful seems very strange, when it is a fact that both wrote books to teach spelling and reading which were totally phonic and syllabic in their approach. Keagy’s odd new idea of using the deaf-mute method to teach hearing children to read certainly did not come from either of these two sources but must have come from knowledge of methods of teaching the deaf. Such knowledge could have come from news reports on Braidwood. It could also have been obtained from reading about Gallaudet’s work in America after Gallaudet returned in 1817 or from meeting someone who had been in contact with Gallaudet. Gallaudet is recorded as having toured to raise support for his school over a period of many years starting about 1818, and this public activity of Gallaudet’s is, of course, a very likely source for Keagy’s idea. Possibly, Keagy’s idea grew from all these sources. In addition, Keagy may have developed the idea of teaching hearing children to read by the sight-word deaf-mute method from his reading of the works of the Scot philosopher, Dugald Stewart, which, as will be discussed, implicitly support that idea. It is conceivable - even likely - that Stewart himself made the explicit suggestion somewhere in his writings that children be taught to read by “meaning” instead of “sound,” although I have been unable to find it.

### Keagy’s Specific Recommendations

In the following quotation from his 1826 book, Keagy actually refers to the:

“...manner that some teachers of the deaf and dumb commence the reading business with their pupils.”

The fact that Keagy qualifies the word, “teachers,” with the word “some” is proof that he was aware there was not a uniformity of methods.

On page 10 of his introduction, Keagy wrote:

“After a child has been about two years exercised in a thinking and oral course, he may be taught reading. And here he should not be taught his letters at first; but whole words should be presented to his eyes, after the same manner that some teachers of the deaf and dumb commence the reading business with their pupils. This is the surest method of making them learn to read understandingly. The most familiar words should be given him.... It is better not to give him words of more than two syllables. These lessons should be read as if they were Chinese symbols, without paying any attention to the letters, but special regard to the meaning. When the child can read whole words with facility, then, and not till then, let him be taught his alphabet, and syllabic spelling.... The reason why we have not followed this course in the present work is, that the public is not yet ready for receiving such views with a favorable eye, much less for acting on them. Ten or fifteen years hence may be the time for publishing a work modelled on these principles....”

What was to be done, and to what was Keagy referring, which would alter the public's attitudes "in ten or fifteen years"? Was the "Engine of Reform" to which he referred elsewhere supposed to achieve its purposes by that date, more or less on schedule? It is of great interest that it was almost exactly ten years later, in 1835, that the Reverend Thomas Gallaudet published *The Mother's Primer*, a book using the pure deaf-mute approach of his school but meant for beginning readers with normal hearing. That was probably the kind of deaf-mute approach, with no "sound" teaching whatsoever, that Keagy said the public was not ready for receiving in 1826.

While it is true that the sight-word method first arrived in America in 1826, the same year that Keagy wrote his book, and while it is true that the sight-word method almost immediately took over beginning reading instruction in America, it still did not use the pure deaf-mute approach which Keagy was apparently endorsing. In the pure deaf-mute approach, the meaning of words is implied only by pictures and context, and no "sound" teaching is used at all, such as lip reading. The pure deaf-mute method for deaf-mutes does employ finger spelling of words (from its beginning, as by de l'Epee, but apparently only after a basic sight-word vocabulary, as by Gallaudet). Yet finger-spelling of words does nothing to demonstrate "sound" any more than did the oral naming of letters in the sight-words in Gallaudet's book for hearing children. When a child using Gallaudet's book recited the letters in a sight word (such as reciting "see-aye-tee" for the word, "cat"), the child was not using any more of the real sound of that word than a deaf-mute did who finger-spelled the same letters in that word instead of reciting them.

By contrast to the true deaf-mute-method used in Gallaudet's 1835 *The Mother's Primer*, in the sight-word methods that took over after 1826, "new" words had to be pronounced aloud first by teachers. That was presumably to aid "elocution," which was the great change-agent enthusiasm of the day, promoted primarily by William Russell after 1826, which enthusiasm lasted until the 1870's. Yet the real reason for the teachers' pronouncing all the "new" words was that the children would have been unable to read new words by themselves once the "sound" spelling book for beginners had been dropped. Therefore, because of the 1826 "elocution" approach in which the teachers had to pronounce all the new words aloud for the children, the sight-word method of 1826 was definitely not the total deaf-mute approach that Gallaudet used in his 1835 primer, even though sight-words were certainly part of that deaf-mute method. By contrast, in Gallaudet's primer, pictures at the beginning, and then the context of sight-word selections later on, were supposed to demonstrate the meanings of all new words for the children, so that teachers did not have to pronounce any of those new words first. However, it should be noted here, as elsewhere, that Gallaudet openly admitted that it would take longer for children to learn to read if they used *The Mother's Primer*!

Gallaudet's 1835 book was highly successful and was endorsed, with vehemence, by Horace Mann. As mentioned elsewhere, J. Orville Taylor, of New York State, recommended Gallaudet's *The Mother's Primer* glowingly in his *Common School Assistant* issue of October, 1837. *The Mother's Primer* used a very carefully controlled sight-word vocabulary. When I analyzed the introduction of new words in the sight-word reading selections in *The Mother's Primer*, I found that they usually comprised ten per cent or less of each selection. The use of such a "frustration level" assured that learners could guess the meaning of the new words embedded in the context of previously-learned sight words. Gallaudet's unacknowledged but apparent use of a "frustration level" was the most virulent idea in *The Mother's Primer*. It is only such a strictly controlled vocabulary which makes the use of the pure deaf-mute "guessing" method possible for hearing children. Gallaudet had the children "spell" the sight-words (i.e., name the letters) after the beginning portion of the book, in which only sight words were taught, from which sight words they eventually learned the letters. Gallaudet's deaf children, however, at the same stage of learning, undoubtedly would also have had to "spell" the words, or to name the letters, but they would have done so by finger-spelling. Gallaudet's use of "spelling" for hearing children was exactly comparable to the use of finger "spelling" for deaf students.

Of course, Gallaudet's pure deaf-mute sight-word method using a "frustration level" could only be used in the first or second grade in those days on very simple selections for hearing children. That is because "experts" did not yet have Thorndike's list of the 10,000 commonest words which makes it possible to avoid sound altogether and to depend solely on guessing to work out the meaning of new words. Therefore, even with Gallaudet's pure deaf-mute sight-word method, some "sound" had to be used in the higher grades for hearing children since the teacher had to read aloud the new words which could not be guessed. Furthermore, in all sight-word programs for hearing children, "sound" entered through spelling and elocution in the upper grades for those who stayed in school that long.

Even with the late introduction of some sound, the disabled readers turned out by *The Mother's Primer*, and other sight word books such as Cobb's and Angell's, must have been legion. Yet, just as today, they were largely hidden, because most readers had achieved at least the state of "functional illiteracy," a condition which can only result from the fakery of teaching alphabetic print like Chinese characters. Once functional illiterates know the three hundred commonest words composing about seventy-five per cent of most reading materials, or the thousand highest frequency words composing ninety percent of most reading materials, or the three to nine thousand composing about ninety-eight percent, they can GUESS, GUESS, GUESS their way through simple material. Their difficulty only shows up when they are faced with the most important lowest frequency words which they cannot "hear."

Keagy even endorsed the sentence method of teaching reading, forty-six years before Farnham introduced it in Binghamton, New York. As mentioned, Jacotot had used the "sentence" as the reading unit in Belgium, on which he had children analyze the words, syllables, and letters. However, unlike Jacotot, Keagy anticipated to some degree William James' sentence/stream-of-consciousness ideas. Keagy said on pages 9-11 of his introduction:

"Here, it may be stated that we think in whole phrases as well as in single words, just as we think in whole scenes as well as in individual pictures, and parts of a scene.... It is indeed not enough that the individual words should be understood, but the whole scene represented by a phrase must be realized by the pupil. A very simple and effectual way of leading him to do this, is to ask him how he would draw a picture of what he has read, on his slate. He will instantly catch the clue and give you the full sense of the sentence. This exercise we have made use of with... singular success...."

Unfortunately, Keagy does not say who "we" were or when "we" used it. Keagy wrote his book in 1826, the same year he opened his school. Had the approach been used in Keagy's brand-new school? Or did he know about Gallaudet's use of sight words since 1823 with Gallaudet's own family, and had others in Gallaudet's and Woodbridge's circle been trying the deaf-mute sight-word method? Or was Keagy referring to practices in one of the Owenite infant schools or in John Wood's Edinburgh Sessional School?

Keagy spoke with approval of the infant schools of Wilson and Wilderspin in London, the last only begun in 1824, the same year Owen acquired the New Harmony community, and Keagy was writing his book only two years later! The first infant school, of course, had been Robert Owen's in Scotland. The whole idea of infant schools (the taking of toddlers from their mothers to subject them to institutionalized training) was the socialist Owen's, as Robert Owen felt "socialized" character could be most effectively shaped by starting in infancy. John Dewey's "socializing" ideas reach at least as far back as Robert Owen. Both the socialist-atheist Owen and the socialist-atheist Dewey would be delighted if they could see our present-day rush toward government-licensed nursery schools which, mandating a separation of church and state, must be devoid of any religious influence.

Keagy's knowledgeability by 1826 on such matters as Owen's invention of infant schools suggests another possible tie to the Boatload of Knowledge, as his "sentence" ideas may have referred to work in Owen's schools in Great Britain. It is interesting that English infant schools use the sentence/picture approach even today. When touring English "open-classroom" schools in 1972, I saw the sentence/picture approach in wide use for beginning readers. Commonly, the teacher wrote a sentence, and the child illustrated it, or the child copied the teacher's sentence and illustrated it. An English reading program was even built on the idea: Breakthrough to Literacy (also published in this country, but I do not recall the publisher.) High-frequency word-cards were filed in a little folder, and a child selected words from the folder (which obviously had initially to be read to him) and placed the words in the slot in a little plastic stick to form a sentence for himself. The sentence could then be copied on a sheet of paper and illustrated. Keagy's "drawing" idea may have come from the infant schools in England - or possibly vice versa. It is also conceivable the sentence ideas grew from the eighteenth century "Typographical Scrutore" of Du Mas discussed previously. Keagy's sentence ideas, however, have no apparent connection to Farnham's 1870 sentence method, which was handled differently.

Six years after copyrighting his primer, in 1832, John Miller Keagy gave an address before Holbrook's American Lyceum. Portions are quoted in Mitford Mathews Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, The University of Chicago Press, 1966, page 65:

"It is in the spelling book that the almost universal habit of reading without thinking is acquired, the tendency of which, says Dugald Stewart, is to abolish the intellectual faculties.... the child... should by no means be taught his letters, or spelling at first, but whole words should be presented to him, to be pronounced at sight. This is the surest method of learning to read understandingly and speedily. He should read his lessons as if the words were Chinese symbols, without paying any attention to the individual letters, but with special regard to the meaning. When the little pupil can read a series of such lessons with facility, then, and not till then, let him be taught to analyze his words or name his letters, and learn to spell."

Keagy was referring to the fact that the Scottish philosopher and psychologist Dugald Stewart (1753-1828) had stated, probably first during the 1790's, that habits of reading without thinking which had been acquired in childhood caused an atrophying of intellectual power. Whether Stewart applied this idea himself to the spelling book for beginners is unknown, but certainly the spelling book for beginners was a natural target for anyone who held such views.

The other two 1826 American authors discussed who wrote the Franklin and Worcester primers made no mention of the deaf-mute method or the fact that learning "whole words" without dividing them into syllables was just like learning Chinese. Yet Keagy discussed both of these ideas very precisely, but also said the public was not yet ready to introduce beginners to reading solely by "meaning" and without any "sound." However, he believed the time would come in about ten or fifteen years to teach by the pure deaf-mute "meaning" method. It seems hardly coincidental that it was almost ten years later that Gallaudet's deaf-mute "meaning" method 1835 Mother's Primer was published!

### The Influence of John Wood on American Instruction

The open attack on the syllable method in Stewart's Scotland did not materialize until John Wood, whose first book or primer has already been mentioned, published in 1828 the Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School. The second edition of this was reprinted by Munroe and Francis in Boston in 1830. Whether Stewart influenced Wood, or whether Keagy and Worcester influenced Wood, is unknown, but it is certain that Wood's beginning reading textbook, First Book of the Edinburgh Sessional School, almost immediately hopped the Atlantic from Scotland to America. In their 1830 reprint of Wood's Account..., Munroe and Francis were advertising:

“LEE’S SPELLING BOOK... By THOMAS J. LEE, esq. This work was written in 1821....

“PRIMARY SCHOOL BOOK. A spelling book for small children; being an abridgment of the preceding work for Primary Schools, and adopted by the School Committee of Boston, &c. Fourth edition; to which is added the First Book of the Edinburgh Sessional School.

“We venture to pronounce this the cheapest Spelling Book extant... having, in addition to the original, the whole of Wood’s First Book, so largely spoken of in this volume.”

Lee’s 1821 speller did an inferior job of teaching by sound; its “abridgement,” an 1832 copy of which is at Harvard, is atrocious for beginners. Yet it is interesting that the “adopted” speller is apparently complete in this old 1832 copy, which suggests the speller section did not get heavy use, but most of Wood’s reading material, Wood’s “First Book,” which was bound before the speller is missing: it was apparently worn out by poor little Boston children of 1832, who were forced to recite its sight-word content without being taught really to read. However, it must have been a great consolation to their parents to know that the “School Committee of Boston” had approved their beginning textbook as thorough and efficient, and to know that their textbook would have delighted the American activist, Keagy, and probably the Scot philosopher to whom he referred, Dugald Stewart.

Munroe & Francis of Boston also had an office in New York, listed as “C. S. Francis.” Reprinting Wood’s First Book and his Account of the Sessional School was not their only change-agent activity. They also printed in 1829, a copy of which is in the American Antiquarian Society Collections in Worcester, Massachusetts, the Boston School Primer; or First Book for Children, with Watts’s Catechism. The cover carries the date 1829, but inside is the date 1831. The first half of the book is apparently the catechism: straight text, which a beginning reader would be incapable of reading. The portion, Boston School Primer, begins about halfway through. Munroe & Francis put out another 1831 edition which is in the Harvard collection. It lacks the beginning material on the Worcester copy, which was presumably Watts’ catechism, though it is not identified as such inside. The title page of the Harvard copy reads only, Boston School Primer, or First Book. The alphabet is omitted at the beginning. The first page consists of two-letter whole words, and sentences built from them. The top has a picture of an apple, with a sentence next it, and the large and small “a”, and a picture of a bear with such a sentence and large and small “b.” Each page introduces two letters of the alphabet at the top. By the time “o” and “p” are reached, the rest of the page is running text. On a scale of 1 to 10, with pure “meaning” rating a Code 1, and pure “sound” rating a Code 10, this 1829 Boston book scores a straight Code 1.

Both the Boston and the American Antiquarian copies of the Boston School Primer have the same “Preface.” Since Munroe & Francis’ speller had been adopted by the Boston School Committee, it seems only reasonable to assume that The Boston School Primer was adopted as well, particularly in view of the book’s name. The “Preface” shows the kind of activism that Webster was up against:

“In Dr. Wood’s account of his school in Edinburgh, the excellent management of which has drawn forth so much praise from all the Journals acquainted with its arrangement, he says that he has thrown out of his system the old practice of learning children to sing or say unmeaning syllables.

““After the child has mastered the alphabet, he is immediately instructed in the reading of WORDS of two letters. It will be remarked, that we have here used the term words and not syllables.

In most other schools, it is the practice to make the pupil rhyme over every possible combination of two letters into syllables, whether forming words or not; e. g. ba, be, bi, bo, bu, by; ca, ce, ci, co, cu, cy ; da, de, &c. &c. through all the combinations of a vowel with a consonant prefixed; and afterwards in a like manner, ab, eb, ib, ob, ub ; ac, ec, ic, oc, uc, ; ad, ed, &c. &c. through all the combinations of a vowel with a consonant subjoined. With the exception of the alphabet, no part of the children's education was found so dull, and irksome, as this; while they were, during the whole of this long preliminary process, kept quite in the dark with regard to its ultimate object. The conductors of the school were so sensible of these objections, that they felt an anxious desire to see this part of its procedure either abridged or enlivened. The present one had undoubtedly the merit of being founded on systematic principles, and had possibly, they conceived, been dictated by necessity.

“To carry the experiment into effect, an elementary book was prepared, containing no unmeaning sounds, but words only which were familiar to the children, and which they were called upon to explain. No sooner was it introduced, than its good effects in inspiring animation and activity, where all had hitherto been cold and spiritless, were immediately apparent. The pleasure, which the children experienced in finding themselves already able to read the words, which they had been accustomed to speak, was not unlike the delight of the infant in his first attempts to pronounce those words, which he has been accustomed to hear. And, when they were desired to explain them, or rather to give examples of their application, the whole assumed the appearance, far more of an amusement, than of a task; and the only difficulty was to restrain them, so as to allow each to give his answer in his turn.’

“We have, in our Primer, introduced Dr. Wood's plan, and the reading lessons are all adapted to infant minds.”

(Picture of a hand and pointing finger) Munroe & Francis have published “Wood's Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School.”

The cheery tone of Wood's comments is depressingly familiar. It sounds like the article, “The Child's Reading Steps Made Easier,” that appeared in the New York Times, in March, 1932, announcing Arthur I. Gates' deaf-mute-method Macmillan readers. That article did not mention, of course, that Gates' readers for hearing children were intentionally based on a method that had been used to teach deaf-mutes written language for almost two centuries. Today's “whole language” reading method is getting the same kind of publicity: that it developed from an enormous concern for the welfare of children, because teaching children to read by phonics (“sound”) instead of the “meaning” of the “whole language” in print is supposed to lower their reading comprehension. As my mother was fond of saying, and as her parents said to her, “Paper never refuses ink.”

What Wood never alluded to was the curious fact that, since about 800 B. C. in ancient Greece, the syllable method had been used successfully and almost uniformly for 2,600 years for hearing children all over the Western World. The word method had almost never intentionally been used for hearing children till the 1820's. A minor exception was the use of the French Quadrille method which did have some acceptance in the eighteenth century in France and Prussia, as discussed elsewhere. Concerning other promotions of the word method, however, almost no one in the eighteenth century paid any real attention to the Abbe de Radonviller and his follower, Nicholas Adam, when they recommended teaching by words, nor did almost anyone pay attention to Gedike's disciples, Trapp and Wackernagel. Gedike, himself, taught a kind of analytic phonics instead of sight words. Earlier, in the seventeenth century, the use of whole words in beginning reading by John Bunyan and some others seems to have resulted from ignorance. They seemed to be unaware that they were doing something different from what had always been the norm.

Why, then, did the 2,600-year-long almost-uninterrupted practice of teaching children to read by memorizing the sounds of printed syllables suddenly become intolerable in the 1820's in Scotland and America, and specifically because it interfered with "meaning"? None of the few, earlier sporadic uses of the whole-word method had been promoted because they protected "meaning," and yet the protection of "meaning" was the rationale for introducing the sight-word method in the 1820's.

Plato, Aristotle, Julius Caesar, Quintilian, St. Augustine, St. Jerome (the great translator of the Bible), St. Thomas Aquinas (the great philosopher), Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, the presumably unknown authors of the King James translation of the Bible, Leonardo da Vinci, etc., etc., all learned to read by the syllable "sound" method, because no other method of teaching reading was known in their days. Are we seriously to question whether or not they got the "meaning" of what they were reading?



## **Chapter 15**

### **The Wrong Use of Pictures Entered the Newfangled Primers and Promoted Conflicting Reflexes**

Another development arrived with the “whole word” approach and it was definitely related to Gallaudet’s approach. Almost the only way his deaf students could learn the meaning of whole printed words was with pictures, and a great emphasis on pictures, as definitions for printed whole words, appeared at this time. But eye movements used in studying pictures are very different from eye movements used in following print, and it is probable that using pictures at the beginning of reading instruction to identify printed words interferes with proper conditioned reflexes in reading print. (Obviously, the use of pictures solely to arouse a child’s interest would not do so, as such pictures would not become part of the reading act itself. They would be as extraneous to the print as other objects or pictures in the classroom. In my opinion, removing all pictures from children’s primers is not only unnecessary but undesirable.)

Guy Thomas Buswell of the University of Chicago wrote *How People Look at Pictures, A Study of the Psychology of Perception in Art*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois: 1935. In his “Acknowledgment” dated February, 1935, Buswell said, “The investigation reported in this monograph was made possible by an appropriation from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This grant was supplemented by a small sum given by the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago.” Buswell said (page 9):

“Ordinarily a person is entirely unconscious of the characteristics of these tiny movements of his eyes and it is entirely impossible for him to describe them accurately even when he gives his close attention to them. Eye movements are unconscious adjustments to the demands of attention during a visual experience.”

Since before 1922, Buswell had studied eye movements in the act of reading. Not surprisingly, he found “the demands of attention” were vastly different when reading than when looking at pictures. Eye movements in reading alphabetic print move from left to right, and then drop to the beginning of the next line, repeating the left to right movement. This left-to-right movement is rhythmic for a good reader, with fixations at a few points along the line. The time spent at each pause is also fairly rhythmic. Good adult readers grasp a little more than an averaged-size word in each fixation. But eye movements when examining a picture are random: up and down, left and right, from one corner to another, with long fixations in one spot, but short in another. Such movements, of course, have no pattern and no rhythm and are obviously not automatic conditioned reflexes but are dependent on the wanderings of attention.

Dr. Hilde Mosse in *The Complete Handbook of Children’s Reading Disorders*, Human Sciences Press, New York: 1982, Volume I, pages 132-139, referred to the rhythmic movement in reading as a conditioned reflex. She said “linear dyslexia” could be the result when young children were obsessed with comic books, because the comic-book pictures with their randomly placed text in balloons interfered with acquiring the automatic movements needed in reading.

In their book, *Inside the Brain*, A Mentor Book, New American Library, New York and Scarborough, Ontario: 1980, Dr. William H. Calvin and Dr. George A. Ojemann made the following statement on page 30:

“An occasional reading deficit follows left-frontal-lobe damage, above the frontal language area. There the defect seems to be in tracking the printed words, as that area of brain is also involved in voluntary control of eye movements.”

Obviously, they were distinguishing in this remark between movements which were involuntary, the automatic conditioned reflex used in the reading act, and movements which were not, the “voluntary control of eye movements” that is the result of the wandering conscious attention used in looking at pictures.

What has this to do with the period immediately after 1826, when American reading skills were being systematically damaged by teaching for “meaning” instead of for “sound” and the “sound” spellers were being replaced with “meaning” sight-word primers for beginners? The question of the proper automatic conditioned reflexes for eye movements when reading directly concerns the arrival, en masse, of “pictorial primers” for little children just learning to read, starting in 1828, one of which was The Christmas School Primer passed over as unimportant by Nila Banton Smith.

Of course, for a hundred years or so before 1826, children’s books had illustrations, but they were not used to identify printed words. Illustrations had gradually increased in quantity and quality. Some of the most delightful (which children would enjoy today) are found in *The Butterfly’s Ball* and *the Grasshopper’s Feast*, by William Roscoe (1753-1831). He was:

“a Member of Parliament and a Liverpool banker, who went in for serious authorship. He had written this trifle for his own son, and it soon won outstanding and enduring popularity.”

The above comment was by Mary F. Thwaite, in her book, *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, 1963, published by the Horn Book, Inc., in Boston in 1972 (pages 85, 86, 191).

*The Butterfly’s Ball* and *the Grasshopper’s Feast* was first published by John Harris on January 1, 1807, with engravings by William Mulready (1786-1863), and sold for “a shilling plain or one and sixpence coloured.” Still, the illustrations in such books were largely meant either for children who could not read - and so would have the story read to them - or for children who could already read very well - so the illustrations would have no influence on their reading skills. It was only after 1826 that pictures were included, in huge quantities, for children who were just learning to read, which pictures were meant to help in identifying words. The multitudinous pictures would interfere with acquiring proper left-to-right eye movements because of the constantly wandering eye movements needed to study them.

It is true that pictures were present in the cardboard battledores to demonstrate letter sounds (such as “a” for apple). Pictures were also present in the *New England Primer*, and in spellers. Yet their purpose was not to identify words. Their use was only incidental to the reading of text.

An unusual speller, with an unusual number of pictures, called, *Oram’s American Primer*, was copyrighted in the 36th year of independence, or 1811 or 1812, and was not surprisingly reprinted in 1829, by George Long in Philadelphia, when the emphasis on pictures increased. A copy of this is at the Library of Congress. The 1829 reprint may have varied from the 1811 or 1812 original, but it still followed the old spelling book pattern, although it pictured objects for the letters of the alphabet before it covered the syllabary. However, it also had illustrations on the top of some pages, as the mammoth on one page, with a discussion in small print underneath that it is obvious a child was not expected to read: “The bones of this great animal have been found in different parts of the United States and Siberia. A skeleton of one exhibited at Philadelphia Museum was of the following dimensions: height of shoulder...” given in feet and inches! It is obvious the information was for an adult to use to amuse the child looking

at the picture, which might make the child more willing to deal with the book's spelling lists of words like, "bad, bag, ban, bar..." for the reading of which, obviously, the pictures could be of no help!

Samuel Wood used pictures in his four spelling books, in print by 1809. The highest was the New York Spelling Book, or Fourth Book. His purpose was obviously to remove the tedium of spelling. On the side of some pages ran a list of words, which were pictured, "boy, bat, cow, dog." The vast majority of words had to be learned without pictures. Although his book was inadequately phonic, it began with a syllabary and arranged many words by phonetic analogies. He was therefore obviously not trying to demonstrate words by picturing them, either in his Fourth Book or in *The Young Child's ABC* or First Book.

Samuel Worcester in his 1826 primer was the first deliberately to teach whole words from pictures, but he limited it, although, if phrases are included which were only partially illustrated by pictures, ten pages in his book contain this kind of treatment. The bulk of his book, however was handled differently.

The first book that taught words heavily from pictures was *The American Primer, Designed as the First Book for Children*, published at Brookfield, Massachusetts, by E. and G. Merriam in 1828. (As mentioned elsewhere, it seems likely E. & G. Merriam were the forerunners of G. and C. Merriam of Springfield, Massachusetts, who copyrighted *The Easy Primer; Containing Children's First Lessons in Reading and Spelling* in 1833. This company copyrighted the revision of Webster's spelling book in 1857, which revision was also copyrighted by Webster's children. The revision gutted Webster's speller so that it could no longer function as a phonic text. The same firm also, of course, published Webster's dictionary, called later the Merriam-Webster Dictionary.)

The pattern of *The American Primer, Designed as the First Book for Children*, was definitely not that of the old spellers, although it started off with the alphabet on pages three and four, with the letters in mixed arrangement on five, followed by an abbreviated syllabary at the top of page six and long sentences on the bottom, obviously for the child to repeat: "The eye of God is on us all the day," and so on. On the next page were pictures of a hat, a dog, an ox and an owl with the words next to them, and more whole sentences for the child to repeat, obviously after someone else had read them to him. Page 8 picked up the rest of the syllabary and three-letter blends (These were parts of words which were usually included after the syllabary, such as bla, ble, bli, etc.) This was followed on page 8 with three-letter short vowel words for a, e, and i. The picture treatment resumed on page 9, with pictures for a cat, a rat, a leg, a bee and a spoon, with the words next them and sentences. The picture/word treatment, continued, with sentences on the same page, and short o and u words appeared, plus "silent 'e'" patterns. The sentences gradually became longer and the pictures faded. Little phonic arrangement occurred in most of the book, despite the short-vowel and "silent 'e'" word patterns, until the end, when words were arranged by sound analogy. The analogy phonics was introduced too late to be of much use, and the book rates only a Code 3. It included very sparse references to religion, which may have been meant to disarm buyers in the highly religious Massachusetts of the 1820's. Just enough moral references were inserted to deflect criticism.

Merriam's book had been relatively tame, even though it was a parody of the old spellers. It was Jonathan Lamb who plainly stated the "meaning" case, in *The Child's Primer, or First Book for Primary Schools*, published in Burlington, Vermont, in 1830 by Chauncey Goodrich, but copyrighted on November 4, 1828. (Noah Webster's son-in-law was named Chauncey Goodrich. It is an unusual name, but the two were only distant cousins. However, Noah Webster's son-in-law, Chauncey Goodrich, had a cousin known as "Peter Parley," the prolific and enormously successful textbook author/publisher, Samuel G. Goodrich (1793-1860), mentioned earlier, for whom Nathaniel Hawthorne had written a text.)

In his "Advertisement" at the beginning of *The Child's Primer, or First Book for Primary Schools*, Jonathan Lamb said:

“As the author has not designed the many cuts he has placed in his book as mere embellishments for pleasing children, he ventures to premise the following directions for their use.

“Direct the child’s attention to the cut, and explain its parts and its use. Exhibit, in the next place, the word representing the name of the object, and require the child to repeat the letters which compose that name, first by looking at them in the book, and afterwards, either from memory, or by selecting and putting together the proper letters from an alphabet prepared for the purpose, by pasting each letter on a separate piece of wood or paste-board.”

In theory, Lamb was dumping sound. Yet he began his book with a complete alphabet and syllabary, and arranged his pictures under vowel categories, the first being “Section IV. the various sounds of the vowel ‘a.’” The words ran down one side of each page, and the matching pictures on the other. If the pictures were disregarded, Lamb was teaching by relatively heavy sound, and the book might then rate a Code 6. What was critically different was the massive introduction of pictures at the very beginning stage, which provided no reason for a child to form the habit of moving from left to right in his eye movements or to practice phonetic word attack, despite the phonics. By page 35, Lamb introduced phrases, “The sun” and a picture of a sun, and by page 37 longer phrases and sentences: “A new hat. It will keep your head warm,” next to a picture of a hat. At this point, left-to-right movement began, and by page 39 Lamb introduced short paragraphs.

Since Lamb’s book was 72 pages long, some of the damage done to eye movements by its pictured beginning was probably repaired.

## Chapter 16

### Sanity Re-entered “Reading Instruction” in 1829, In the Person of the Anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster

The sudden appearance in 1826 of at least three texts advocating teaching children by “meaning” instead of “sound,” the Franklin, the Worcester and the Keagy, (even though Keagy did so only in his preface), indicates that the idea was shared by some common group of people. The record indicates that the group was trans-Atlantic, involving persons in Scotland, England and America. Besides the Scot, John Wood, of the Edinburgh Sessional School, the group probably included Lord Brougham, George Birkbeck, Robert Owen and Reverend Andrew Bell (all Scots who ended up in England), the Scot, Dugald Stewart, who was Brougham and Birkbeck’s ex-professor at the University of Edinburgh, the Scot, William Russell, and most of the Boston intellectuals named by Blumenthal in his book, *Is Public Education Necessary?*.

Another Scot, Professor Pillans, was advocating in public lectures by Christmas, 1827, the methods in use in John Wood’s Edinburgh Sessional School. Wood’s 1828 reading text discarding the syllabary had been based on the actual practices Wood had used in his school for some time previously. Wood’s 1828 text was described by the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster who is quoted below. The Scottish Schoolmaster either saw that 1828 text or an earlier version, possibly when he visited Wood’s school in 1826. A description of that reading text in use in Wood’s school appeared in the Schoolmaster’s book published in 1829.

This very interesting 1829 book which attacked John Wood’s Edinburgh Sessional School was compiled by a Scottish parochial schoolmaster who had been teaching in the Scottish elementary schools of the Church of Scotland for 30 years. Because of his long experience as a schoolmaster, he was a supremely competent judge of what the highly praised Sessional School was actually achieving in the teaching of elementary school students. His book was entitled, *Letters Addressed to the Parochial Schoolmasters of Scotland, Concerning the New Method of Tuition. Containing Strictures on Professor Pillans’ “Principles of Elementary Teaching”.... “By a Schoolmaster,”* Edinburgh: 1829. The book was a collection of letters published between November 30, 1827, and August 15, 1828, with additional material after that written by the Schoolmaster. The Schoolmaster was responding to Pillans’ remarks in his lectures and book vilifying the Church of Scotland Presbyterian parish schools (page 48):

“He seems to consider all seminaries of this description, under which almost every respectable school in our country may still be ranked, as nurseries of vice as well as ‘slaughter-houses of intellect,’ which he has elegantly designated them in another part of his book; and he appears to be as firmly persuaded that the new mode of training will ultimately eradicate every evil propensity from the infant mind, as the benevolent Owen of New Lanark was....”

The “new mode of training” was the revived monitorial approach, in which older pupils taught younger ones under a schoolmaster overseeing all. The Scottish Schoolmaster discussed the approach, about whose previously ill-fated history he was well informed (page 20-23):

“You may remember that I formerly hinted that the most prominent part of the Professor’s plan for the reformation of our schools is the introduction of the monitorial or Lancasterian method of tuition....”

The Schoolmaster reviewed the history of the conflict between Dr. Bell and Joseph Lancaster concerning each one's version of monitorial schools in the early 1800's:

"...The Whigs...took the part of Lancaster. The Edinburgh Review was loud in his praise, and held up to public admiration the merits of the plan, which the writer alleged was destined to banish ignorance from the face of the earth. \* The Quarterly, as in duty bound, decried the methods of Lancaster, and extolled those of Dr. Bell: by such a conflict, the public mind was highly excited.... philanthropists stepped forward and made large advances for the discharge of (Lancaster's) debts....

From some passages in the 'Letters to Mr Kennedy,' (Ed.: by Professor Pillans) it is presumed that the articles alluded to were written by the same individual that penned these letters.

"Lancaster, now exonerated from all concern about money matters, set about the promulgation of his system in good earnest. Provided with pictures representing the old school in all its deformities, together with splendid drawings of the several positions of the class according to the new mode, he itinerated through all England.... One evening that I was present at his lecture, he hazarded the attempt of substituting living subjects instead of pictures; but finding the perverse urchins much more unmanageable than his inanimated figures, he abruptly dismissed them, and continued to descant on the orderlines (sic) of the painted little fellows on the board. From England, he extended his peregrinations to Scotland and Ireland, and latterly to America, where, I believe, he is still labouring....

"No scheme was ever concerted for the improvement of our species that obtained a fairer chance of success than the one in question: it had kings and nobles for its nursing fathers, learned doctors for teachers, and the periodical press to proclaim its merits throughout the world; and what, let me ask, has been the effect of this highly favoured and widely promulgated system?.... Every unprejudiced person... cannot fail of being convinced... it has proved a complete failure.... yet, strange to tell, it is lauded by its advocates, and other vague declaimers that they enlist in their service, as the source of incalculable good to mankind; and in their ravings about the rapid diffusion of knowledge, they characterize it as one of the chief agents in accelerating the march of mind...."

Note that the change-agents who were promoting monitorial schools were also characterized by "their ravings about the rapid diffusion of knowledge." This suggests they were associated with Brougham, Birkbeck, et al whose use of that phrase, "diffusion of knowledge," will be discussed. Note that Lancaster had, 20 years before, received the endorsement of Brougham's Edinburgh Review, which will also be discussed, and that publication was to a large extent the source of Lancaster's fame.

The Schoolmaster further discussed the monitorial method (page 48):

"The Professor has furnished us with specimens of the method of communicating knowledge practised in the Sessional School of Edinburgh, which, in his estimation, is the very beau ideal of scholastic discipline. You all know that in this school the great mass of young creatures that attend it are parcelled out into sections and subdivisions, and placed under the tuition of monitors, the duty of the master being chiefly the preservation of order, and the hearing of appeals. What can there be in the nature of this classification and mode of tuition calculated to produce such wonderful effects?.... It is painful to be compelled, by the provoking humbug of the sticklers of the new school, to speak slightingly of the unpaid labours of this worthy man[Ed.: John Wood], whose personal exertions in the cause of the education of the children of the poor are above all praise.

(Page 4) “The Professor refers not to Circus Place School, where your masters and misses are taught after the new plan, but proposes to lead his pupils to witness the wonders performed at the Davies Street and Market Street Schools, where the children of the poor are instructed. In August 1826, I had occasion to be in Edinburgh, and hearing much said in praise of the method of tuition practiced in the Sessional School (Market Street), I prevailed upon a friend of mine to accompany me to see it, that I might make myself acquainted with their method of communicating instruction. On entering, our ears were assailed by the clamour of monitors and the clattering of slates: but we had scarcely time to look around us, when a young man walked up to us and civilly intimated that strangers were not admitted on that day, but if we would call to-morrow, at a certain hour, we would be shewn the whole operations of the school. When we arrived, next day, at the time appointed, the whole concern wore a different aspect; several visitors, besides ourselves, had just popped in; the monitors were on the alert; and all was going on quietly.

“Mr. Wood, a gentleman well known for his philanthropic exertions in the cause of the education of the lower orders, and who is, in reality, willing to spend and to be spent in this good work, received us very politely, and presently proceeded to make the farthest advanced classes go on with some of the exercises of the day.... upon the whole, the exhibition was respectable.... But my wonder on this score was considerably abated, when informed, by my companion, that Mr Wood, himself, was in the habit of employing several hours each day in instructing the class alluded to, while the ordinary teacher was superintending the general business of the school....

(Page 6) “We went round and surveyed the many little classes in the background, who were employed under the direction of their respective monitors. This great mass of little creatures served only to invest, with a kind of magnificence, the ostentatious parade of showing off the acquirements of their more highly gifted and better taught school-fellows. To the uninitiated spectator the machinery seems to move as if it worked well, but, to use the words of the poet,

“--“Tis like a watch that wants both hands,  
As useless when it goes as when it stands.’

“I enquired at several of the boys in the junior classes how long they had been at school, and learned that they had attended long to little purpose....

(Page 7) “Instead of the Professor being mortified, as he says he is, that the parochial teachers have not adopted the plan of teaching propagated by Bell and Lancaster, he ought rather to applaud their self-denial in not having followed it; for no plan was ever formed that tends more to their elevation. Instead of a teacher having his bodily and mental energies cramped, by leaning over a desk, for hours together, attempting to make his chuffy-cheeked disciples distinguish f from long s, &c., the teacher, after the new plan, is raised, as it were, from the teasing occupation of a drill-sergeant to that of a brigadier-general, while he stands erect on an elevated situation, eyeing, with elation of heart, his numerous divisions and subdivisions marching and counter-marching in the vale below.”

The emphasis was on the “intellectual” approach. In essence, that meant disposing of anything which had to do with memorizing texts and rules, and replacing it with endless discussion of “meaning.” Of course, the syllabary and “sound” in reading were anathema: whole words had to be learned instead for “meaning.” (It should be self-evident to any competent teacher that very little learning was going to take place under these “improved” conditions, just as it was self-evident to the Schoolmaster.)

The Schoolmaster made a pertinent comment about holding schools responsible for the level of a child’s intelligence instead of a child’s learning (page 15):

“If the lathie Jock be not quite so bright in his ideas as could be wished, the blame will be laid to the charge of the dominie’s want of skill in ‘the cultivation of thought,’ or his want of energy in producing ‘mental activity.’”

He commented further on the “intellectual plan” (pages 38-39):

“The method of teaching grammar without making the learner commit the rules to memory is, to say the least of it, very uncertain....

“Another obvious deficiency of the intellectual plan is, that it leaves nothing for the learner to do when out of school. To commit to memory elementary rules or passages of poetry, &c. would, it is said, tend only to load it with words, without imparting ideas to the understanding. These innovators never seem to reflect, that such employment of their leisure hours at home has a powerful effect in improving the memory of children, a faculty not only of the utmost advantage in the acquirement of a good education, but also of inestimable advantage in the common concerns of life....”

In endorsing the memorization of texts by children, the Scottish Schoolmaster was only following in the footsteps of the ancient Roman schoolmaster, Quintilian, who had said in Book One of *The Institutio Oratoria* (as translated by Charles Edgar Little, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1951, page 26):

“In the earliest writing exercises time should not be wasted on ordinary words, but upon those chosen for the knowledge they give of the inner meaning of his native tongue. At a slightly later stage the maxims given to copy should be of moral value. This again suggests the wisdom of making children learn by heart such thoughts expressed in prose or poetry, and this will also strengthen the memory.”

But the “movers and shakers” not only thought they knew more than the Scottish Schoolmaster, but than Quintilian!

In Letter VII (page 32), the Schoolmaster wrote:

“But in reality, if a teacher has to subsist by his profession, he has no choice with respect to his mode of procedure for he will speedily find, if he attempts the Intellectual Plan, as Pillans pompously terms it, he will find it totally impracticable in a public school; so that he will be forced to revert to what our author elegantly denominates, ‘The no-meaning Plan,’ or fall, as the sailors say, quite aback. The new method is not more at variance with nature than it is with the common practice of mankind in every species of instruction.”

The Schoolmaster quoted Pillans (page 44):

“...the extraordinary success attending the benevolent exertions of Mr John Wood has diffused... a spirit of imitation and improvement among the teachers of Edinburgh and its neighbourhood....”

To this, the Schoolmaster responded:

“Now, this is the veriest fudge that ever was penned. I have it from authority that can be most confidently relied on, that no teacher of any repute in Edinburgh has made the most remote



approximation to the new plan. The local schools, indeed, established in that city for the instruction of the children of the poor belonging to each parish, and public hospitals, being under the superintendance and direction of the principal promoters of the new scheme, are of course conducted upon this principle; but exhibit no flattering results....”

In making a point about something else, the Schoolmaster unintentionally described what was the routine achievement of children in reading up to that time, when learning by “sound” had not yet been questioned (page 106):

“Can it be supposed for a moment, that the progress of knowledge and of taste, in a child, is in any respect commensurate with the advancement he can make in acquiring the art of reading? Between the age of five and eight, a child may be taught to read, with fluency, any of our best authors in prose or in verse....”

The Scottish Schoolmaster (who certainly should have known what he was talking about) added his testimony to the flood of testimony before that time that there was nothing at all difficult in teaching almost any child to read fluently by a very early age by “sound.” The Schoolmaster had obviously never heard of “functional illiteracy.” Functional illiteracy is the memorization by the “meaning” method of such a limited number of sight-words that a “psycholinguistic reader,” who is unable to read by “sound,” cannot even make accurate context guesses on unknown words.

The Schoolmaster criticized Professor Pillans’ first principle, which is quoted below (from pages 31-32 of the Schoolmaster’s text):

“The first of these principles, which I consider as laying the foundation of all good teaching is, that a child in being taught to read, should be taught at the same time to understand what he reads.”

To this, the Schoolmaster answered:

“That the principle laid down, however rational it may appear to those who have never been engaged in teaching, nor have ever reflected on the subject, is self-evident, or even practicable, I deny.... The imitative powers of a child of four years old, especially with respect to sounds, are exceedingly acute; whereas the reasoning faculty is as yet in nonage, or, at the best, so feeble, as to be incapable of successful tutorage. Is it not wise, then, for a teacher to follow Nature rather than anticipate her - to endeavor to obtain a correct pronunciation of words before he makes any attempt to explain their meaning?”

In his criticism of Professor Pillans, the Schoolmaster said this about the teaching of the alphabet and what immediately followed (pages 32-34):

“What a fuss about teaching the A B C; a part of education that, in general, may be completed in half-a-dozen of lessons, even in the common way. As soon, however, as this is accomplished, he plunges at once’ says the Professor, ‘in medias res.’

“‘He (the pupil) is not detained long after the Alphabet is known in pronouncing b a, ba, &c. but begins to spell, pronounce and give the meaning of such words as be, me, he, ox, ax, &c. Thus from the very outset, he is accustomed to attach ideas to words. For example, take the first word named, when the child says b-e - be; and the question being asked what he means by be, answers, ‘I am,’ or, ‘if I be good, I shall be happy’ - hence we obtain an assurance that he has an idea corresponding to the term.’

“O! Mr Pillans, great you may be as a Latinist - eminent you may be as a teacher of grown-up lads - but, surely, you have never filled the humble office of an ABCDarian, else you would know that a little chuffy disciple of four years of age, on being asked the meaning of be, previous to any parrotical tutoring on the subject, would neither answer ‘I am,’ nor say, ‘If I be good, I shall be happy’ - but he would stare! ay, stare with open mouth, till the answer be put into it by the teacher; and, in that case, what ‘assurance has he that the pupil has an idea corresponding to the term?’

“‘In such a monosyllable as ox, each will describe or characterise the animal according to the circumstances in which he has been accustomed to see it...’

“Now, what useful purpose is served by thus puzzling infants of four or five years old with matters that they will most certainly know at ten, without any other help than their own observation....

“Do not suppose, however, that I consider the definition of words an unnecessary part of education; on the contrary, when the proper time arrives for acquiring it by the scholar’s own exertions, I consider such a training indispensable to the acquirement of a good education. The explanation, too, of the meaning of difficult passages as the learner advances in his reading, I hold to be of the utmost importance.”

Letter II (on pages 9 and 10) in the Schoolmaster’s book was written by his opponent who defended Professor Pillan’s ideas on education, and, with them, Wood’s school. Its author wrote, approvingly:

“The system is that of which, for several years, the Edinburgh Sessional School has been regarded as the model. The characteristic object of this system, besides communicating more useful knowledge to the young than the old method, is to cultivate thought, and produce mental activity. Adapted to this system, a set of books was drawn up by Mr Wood .... The arrangement of the old books merely accomplished the object of teaching the children to read, and in Mr Wood’s books this object is judiciously attained. But in addition to this, and beyond the contemplation of the old plan, the simplest word, the shortest monosyllable, in his first book, embodies an idea which easily admits of an explanation, at once intelligible and interesting to the humblest child that has just mastered the alphabet.... From the beginning of the first book to the end of the set, not a word or idea is permitted to pass without an explanation from the master or monitor, and without that explanation being fully digested in the mind of the pupil....”

Note the use of the words, “useful knowledge,” suggesting influence from Brougham’s group, which will be discussed. Letter III on page 13 was the Schoolmaster’s response to Letter II from his opponent. He referred to the remark by the author of Letter II, concerning Wood’s book for beginners:

“Would not any one, on perusing this sentence, be led to believe that Mr Wood’s first book for children differed greatly from other initiatory manuals, and that his system must in some measure be developed in it? On examining the book, however, he will find it exactly similar to other Reading made Easies of the old school.”

As discussed elsewhere, variations on the words “reading made easy” as a title originated on spelling books as early as the seventeenth century. By the nineteenth century<sup>21</sup>, the “easy” element was the

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<sup>21</sup> According to Dr. H. B. Wilbur on pages 27 and 28 of his book, *Suggestions on the Principles and Methods of Elementary Instruction*, Albany, 1862, referred to elsewhere in this text, the Home and Colonial Society of

controlling of words by letter length: first two-letter words, then three, and so on, which approach had first been used by Dilworth in his spelling book of 1740. At some point in the nineteenth century, the words began to be introduced in context, rather than in lists, which was, of course, a critical change, as it promoted context-guessing.

Whether the earlier books arranged on word length to which the Schoolmaster referred had used only these context selections, not preceded by word lists, is unknown. Yet the Schoolmaster confirmed that the earlier reading-made-easies all had begun with the syllabary, so they would still have had a firm “sound” basis. The Schoolmaster indicated in a footnote on page 17 what was the really meaningful change in Wood’s book: the omission of the syllabary. Yet what is startling is that the Schoolmaster himself did not seem to realize that an enormous change had occurred: moving totally from “sound” to “meaning.” But then, how could he realize its import? The move from “sound” to “meaning” had never been intentionally taken before, ever since the alphabet was first completed in Greece about 800 B. C., except for de L’Epee in his school for deaf mutes. The Abbe de Radonviller, Nicolas Adam, Gedike, Wackernagel, Trapp and a few others who promoted teaching by whole words did not say that they were moving from “sound” to “meaning.” But Wood did grasp the fact that he was moving from “sound” to “meaning,” even though the Schoolmaster did not.

“The only difference in point of arrangement, between Mr Wood’s first book and the little manuals generally used in the old schools, consists in his having discarded the ba, be, method of exercising the learner in the name sounds of the letters; and though he has been much lauded for so important an invention, it is doubtful whether it be in reality an improvement.”

The Schoolmaster continued in Letter III:

“But lest this should not be credited by those who have not seen the little work in question, I shall extract a few short sentences from it at random, as a specimen of Mr Wood’s manner of ‘embodying ideas,’ as your correspondent expresses it: - ‘Try it; ply at it.’ ‘If I pry, I am a spy.’ ‘Fly up to the sky.’ ‘The ox, the ass, and the elk.’ ‘Did you see the Tay or the Dee?’ ‘Who go in, and who go out?’ ‘My gig was in the bog.’ ‘God sets a door as it were on the sea, and says to it, - Thus far must thou come.’ ‘The sun set in a dim ray,’ &c. Now these sentences are very simple to be sure; but there is only one of them self-explanatory, and that is the second. What connection is there between a gig and a bog? The sun setting in a dim ray, is as Polonius would have said, a ‘vile phrase;’ and as to the door on the sea, it is I presume intended as an exercise on the figurative.”

In Letter VIII (pages 35 and following), the Schoolmaster discusses “Wood’s Method of Exercising his Advanced Classes...”

“As this extract (of questioning of an advanced class in grammar and vocabulary) is quoted by Mr. Pillans from the report of a deputation of intelligent persons sent by the Town-Council of Dundee to Edinburgh, to collect such information as might be useful in improving their own

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England recommended a “Reading Made Easy” method to make “the threshold of knowledge, no longer a source of continual sorrow and disgust.” Wilbur, the Superintendent of the New York State Asylum for Idiots, who unfortunately endorsed the teaching of sight words, called theirs “a rather clumsy phonic method.” Since E. A. Sheldon of the Oswego Normal School modeled his object lessons on the Home and Colonial Society’s work in England, he presumably modeled his so-called “phonic” reading method on their approach. Sheldon’s method was sight words with phony phonics, and so, presumably, was the method of the Home and Colonial Society of England. Obviously, the term, “Reading Made Easy,” never had any firm meaning at any point in time, any more than the term, “phonics,” has had.

schools, it may reasonably be concluded that it affords the very best specimen of the attainments of the pupils of Mr Wood in grammar and verbal criticism. Now, what is there in all this that deserves the epithet new? Is it not the mode of questioning practised by every teacher of English in exercising his farthest advanced classes....? O, but, says Mr Pillans, all this instruction is imparted merely by viva voce communication, without having recourse to grammars and dictionaries. So much the less does it tend to the improvement of the learner, as it precludes the necessity of any application on his part.... If this observation be just, as I verily believe it is, it follows that the new method is the least useful in training boys to habits of diligence and activity that has ever been devised. Instead, therefore, of its deserving the epithet intellectual, its application should be the parrotical method of teaching; for certainly, no plan of communicating instruction to the young can be more mechanical or superficial; and, I am firmly persuaded, that had a poor dominie, instead of John Wood, Esq., Advocate, and Sheriff of Peebles-shire, attempted to bring such a scheme into general practice, both he and his plan would have been treated with contempt by the learned and influential classes, and would have been laughed to scorn by the very vulgar....”

Note that those associated with a town (i.e., government) school were visiting and that the Schoolmaster had said Wood’s method was most in practice in such town schools in Edinburgh. Here, again, is the association of “government” schools and the move from “sound” to “meaning” in reading. In a broader sense, as can be seen from the comments above, the move was away from establishing conditioned reflexes (learning) by real teaching and replacing it with endless wheel-spinning activities called “intellectual.” The parallel to the late Middle Ages is obvious: real study of grammar, logic and rhetoric was replaced by “disputations,” which were endless verbal arguments, and academic achievement plummeted.

From the Schoolmaster’s comments, John Wood was obviously a man of some social standing in Edinburgh, and presumably a lawyer (being referred to as an “advocate”) as Brougham himself was. Since Wood’s school had been in operation “several years” by 1828, he was possibly in the same age-group as Brougham and Birkbeck. Had Wood gone also to the University of Edinburgh, studied under Stewart, and possibly met Brougham and Birkbeck there?

At the very least, both Stewart and Brougham are quoted by a contemporary as having given “approbation and patronage” to Wood’s school. One of the letters the Schoolmaster included was by someone who had defended John Wood’s Sessional School, written apparently shortly after November 30, 1827:

“...(the school’s) practical results have commanded for it the approbation and patronage of such men as Professor Stewart, Brougham, Malthus, and Hume.”

Obviously, this would not have been David Hume (1711-1776), but very possibly Malthus was Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), the English economist who invented the theory that population is supposed to outstrip resources. Professor Dugald Stewart of the University of Edinburgh and the Scot Brougham, a member of the British Parliament, will be discussed more fully later. The parochial Schoolmaster replied in the next letter, presumably early in 1828:

“As to the parade of great names that my opponent brings forward to vouch for the excellence of the new method of teaching, they weigh no more with me than if he had substituted in their stead Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego; for although Stewart, Brougham, Malthus, and Hume be very eminent men in their own vocations, they might nevertheless prove but indifferent schoolmasters.”

It is of great interest that the defender of Wood's school which was introducing the "meaning" method in reading specifically mentioned that Professor Dugald Stewart of Edinburgh University, who was concerned with reading only for understanding, was one of those who gave the Edinburgh Sessional School his approval and patronage. However, that Brougham was more closely associated with the Edinburgh change-agents than the other "greats" quoted is suggested by the mocking answer to the Schoolmaster by his opponent in Letter IV, when this time the Schoolmaster's opponent brings up only Wood's and Brougham's names:

"Yes, Sir, Wood is a quack, and Brougham is easily gulled, their names are a shadow - their philanthropy is a dream - "

The Scottish parochial Schoolmaster had made the following statement in his first letter of November 30, 1827, "On the Announcement of Professor Pillan's Lectures to Teachers" and the remark certainly suggests the lectures were connected with organized activity for educational "reform:"

"...first, it may be necessary, for the information of those of you who do not visit Edinburgh annually, to remark, that there has sprung up, in that city, a new species of illuminati, who entertain notions concerning the instruction of children that, I fear, can never be realized, till the order of nature be reversed, and the 'infant of days' exceed, in mental capacity, the bearded man - in short, till old heads grow upon young shoulders.... I believe, their intentions are in the highest degree laudable.... The fact is, that this band of worthies includes in it several of the most respectable public men in the city, almost all that portion of the clergy who style themselves par excellence Evangelists, and many of their followers. One of the chief agitators in this respectable body is Professor Pillans...."

The following pamphlet was filed with others in a book available from the general stacks of the New York Public Library at 42nd Street. The title page read:

"Letter to the Reverend George M. Musgrave, A.M., Chaplain to the Downham Union, Norfolk, from John Wood, Esq., Compiler of the Edinburgh Sessional School Books, Containing Strictures on a Protest and Pamphlet Termed a Justification of the Protest Against the First and Second Books of the Edinburgh Sessional School Being Admitted into the Workhouse of the Dock Union, by the Rev. Kirby Trimmer, Curate of Stanhope, Norfolk."

The following page reproduced Trimmer's "Protest" which began with the same title as Wood quoted in the above and then read,

"For the following reasons: -

"Because the said books do not contain the doctrine of the Trinity, neither acknowledging the essence of the Holy Ghost, nor the Godhead of the Son.

"Because no allusion is made in them to either (Ed.: in his church) of the Christian Sacraments, no mention of the Resurrection, Christ, or of his coming to judge the world.

"Because though mention is soon made of the 'Evil One' assuring Eve she shall not die, it is no where hinted that the temptations of Satan are continued to the descendants of Eve.

"Because there is an assertion that a certain man and woman 'told a lie to Saint Peter,' which is not a fair account of that portion of Scripture; the children ought to be instructed that the lie was told not unto men but unto God.

“Because in the Scripture History department of these books unwarranted liberties are taken with the authorized version of the Scripture. - thus, for example, the ‘burnt-offerings’ of Noah are merely called his ‘vows.’

“Because in these portions of Scripture History, which are extended to many pages, a Scriptural style is adopted, and the words of Scripture often borrowed, but the one not distinguished from the other, so that the children will be able to know (which they ought to do) when they are and when they are not reading the words of Scripture.

“Because most of the leading doctrines of Scripture are withheld; that such a system of religious instruction is highly objectionable, and the assurance that the children will be taught the absent doctrines not at all satisfactory.

“Lastly, Because it is absurd to teach pauper children in an agricultural district, and whose occupations are for the most part those of crow keeping, pig minding, and turnip pulling, that minerals are, as the case may be, ‘brilliant,’ ‘opaque,’ ‘malleable,’ ‘ductile,’ or ‘fusible;’ and because such a system of education is not suited to that situation in which it has pleased Providence to place the agricultural poor.”

Note the teaching of what passed for “science” in Wood’s material, particularly concerning “geology,” the great enthusiasm of the change-agents of the period.

That was all Wood reproduced of Trimmer’s pamphlet, but he answered it with his “letter,” dated “Edinburgh, May 23, 1836.”

“...I observe it stated by my opponent, much to my surprise, that he has actually succeeded in inducing other clergymen of the district to subscribe his Protest.”

Wood then attempted to show that he, himself, was in very good standing with the Church of Scotland. Yet all that is certain from his remarks is that he was in good standing with a small Committee of that church. Change-agents, then as now, apparently insinuated themselves into such positions of influence:

(Page 9) “Among the other measures resorted to by the Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for the diffusion of religious Education, they have very lately availed themselves of an advantageous opportunity of acquiring from its former directors the Edinburgh Sessional School with a view of converting it into a seminary for the training of teachers. Among the inducements to this arrangement, they have paid me the compliment to include a desire to obtain my services in the superintendence of that establishment.... They (refer to) what appears to them ‘the unspeakable importance of having such an establishment in connection with the religious institutes of the country, and of its operations being commenced under the inspection of an individual of Mr. Wood’s ...qualifications.’”

This quotation gives background information on what was happening to the Edinburgh Sessional School in 1836, only about eight years after it had become famous on both sides of the Atlantic. John Wood referred to the Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Activists always operate through grabbing control of organizations at the top through committees, and activists know how to get themselves appointed to run the committees. Note that this “Committee” was interested in “the diffusion of religious Education,” and “diffusion” was an activist buzzword at that time. Wood mentioned “an advantageous opportunity of acquiring” the Edinburgh Sessional School “from its former directors,” so

that teachers could be trained, obviously in Wood's methods, as he said the committee "desire to obtain my services in the superintendence of that establishment." Furthermore, it would influence all Scotland, as "an establishment in connection with the religious institutes of the country...."

Considering the gullibility of many of the "liberal" clergy in all religious denominations in the twentieth century, it is not surprising that they had their counterparts back then, too, in the Church of Scotland. As quoted elsewhere in this history, Orestes Brownson testified that the intent of American activists in 1829 and 1830 was to establish government schools with compulsory attendance laws, and to undermine religion without making an open attack on it. The same drive appears to have been under way in Scotland, and may very well have originated in Scotland. From statements already quoted, it is certain Brougham and Stewart were interested in the Edinburgh Sessional School. Therefore, were Brougham and Stewart, or their associates, possibly among the directors who were making such an "advantageous" offer to turn the Sessional School over to the Church of Scotland so that future teachers could be trained to teach in the exact same "meaning" way that Wood did?

Wood produced the disturbing fact that his terrible reading books were also in use in English schools in Norfolk county, run by the National School system associated with the Church of England, which at that time used Dr. Andrew Bell's version of the monitorial system.

Wood said (page 11) that his Edinburgh monitorial school used "much" from Bell's monitorial system:

"But Sir, believe me, nothing can be further from my wish than to place myself in an attitude of hostility to the National School system. Much have we borrowed from Dr. Bell and his system...."

Wood then discussed his reading books which taught sight-words for "meaning" but which no longer taught children to read independently. With these remarks, he was attempting to justify the way in which he taught religion. Wood said, since his books started simply, so, therefore, did the religious teaching. His argument is worthless: children had gone from the speller to the Psalter - and the whole religious catechism - for generations, and so earlier children had obviously not needed his "vocabulary control" nor his "simple" religious teaching. Yet after Wood threw out the speller with the "sound" approach for teaching reading, children could no longer really read so they certainly could not read the catechism or Psalter.

However, Bell's use of the term, "National School system," should certainly also be duly noted. The term, "National" education, had first appeared in Chalotais's famous 1763 work proposing state control of education, which was discussed in Part 4. Ever since 1763, the use of the term, "National," had been almost guaranteed to be paired with the word, "education" in any work written by change agents such as Bell. Not surprisingly, therefore, "National" education, although non-existent in 1763, is in place virtually everywhere in the world today. Chalotais, of course, thought that how much education and what education people had should be controlled by the state, but he also thought that most people should be denied even simple literacy or they might be too hard to keep in their places. Chalotais made that aim very clear in his scheme for "National" education, a portion of which is quoted elsewhere. Therefore, Chalotais's "national" education was actually intended to suppress education for most people, instead of to promote it. He was intensely opposed to the Christian Brothers' and others then-widespread education of the poor, and it was precisely that opposition which had inspired his proposal for "national" education.

Wood justified his empty books, devoid of really meaningful religious content, with these remarks (page 12):

“On the contrary, as in teaching our children the art of reading, we have begun with the shortest words, so also we have taught that by means of the simple truths of religion they should be gradually led to those that are more abstruse... Now it cannot be alleged that, either in the Sessional School, for whose use the books in question were framed, nor in those, into which they have been adopted, the great doctrine of the Trinity is left untaught....

“Suffer me then to enable you to furnish those who wish for it with an explanation of their nature and construction. The first of them is literally a simple Primer beginning with ABC and ending with words of six letters. In it immediately after the alphabet follow words of two letters, accompanied with such short detached sentences as so slender materials could enable me to frame. Hitherto no attempt is made by means of reading to convey to the pupil religious instruction... (He mentioned the book next covered three letter words.) No sooner, however, is the pupil able to master words of four letters, and thus to read a whole lesson connected with religious instruction, than this is in our little Primer straightway presented to him....”

For generations in Scotland and England, children had been expected to be able to move from the Psalter into the whole Bible, of which, of course, the Psalter is a part. What is more, children had done so at a very early age. But Wood said (page 16):

“As the pupils, when commencing their Second Book, are not yet capable of reading the Bible for themselves, I have in the beginning of this Work continued my Scripture lessons.”

It was these “Scripture” lessons, so badly written, to which Reverend Trimmer objected. If the children had not been limited to a sight-word book like Wood’s, they could have been reading the actual Bible, instead of his objectionable paraphrases.

Yet the Reverend Trimmer, like the Scottish Schoolmaster, did not realize in 1836 the harm that would come from the Edinburgh Sessional School texts by their dropping of “sound” as the initial step and their replacing it with “meaning.” Most people did not even realize it was happening. The fact that it is possible to read by “meaning” without the use of “sound,” as a deaf-mute can read, apparently never occurred to almost anyone outside the activists’ groups until after the damage was done, in the 1840’s. Even then they did not clearly understand why reading ability had dropped so sharply, any more than most people today understand why we have a massive reading problem. The “teaching for meaning” poison in first grade reading, to the unwary, sounds persuasive, just as it does today with the “whole language” poison in first grade. The speller was widely dropped as a beginning book after 1828. By 1848, the Scottish Schoolmasters realized that harm was being done with purely “meaning” whole-word primers and prepared a phonic whole-word “primer,” discussed elsewhere. What is disturbing is that it took about twenty years before the harm Wood was doing to reading was realized by others concerned with the schools. Yet they realized far sooner the harm being done to religion.

Centralized, government control of education would make it possible for such change-agents as Brougham to get themselves appointed to exercise that control. Change-agents would then be in a position to “improve” society when they could take the control of children’s minds away from their parents and their churches, which tend to be stubbornly opposed to the kind of “progress” endorsed by change-agents. It is therefore interesting that the high-minded activist, Professor Pillans, endorsed centralized government control through “legislation.” The Schoolmaster wrote (pages 29-30):

“Let it also be understood, that whatever I may advance in praise of the modicum of instruction communicated in our parish schools, I do not by any means wish to contend that they are not, in general, susceptible of considerable improvement: my sole object in the present remarks is to shew, that the plans proposed for their reformation by Professor Pillans, would, if



adopted, have a contrary effect. ‘A cursory review,’ says he, ‘of the history of our parish schools might justify, at the very outset, some suspicion of imperfection and abuse.’ What is there, you may ask, in the history of our schools, calculated to create such a suspicion? ‘The want of legislative interference,’ says our author. ‘But might not this circumstance,’ you reply, ‘which arouses his suspicions, be quoted by those who are of a different way of thinking as evidence of the fidelity with which the persons invested with the management of them had discharged their duty; since in so considerable a portion of time no legislative interference was deemed necessary.’ The Professor appears, however, to entertain suspicions of every institution, how excellent soever it may be, that is old and unreformed.....

“There is one general argument continually in the mouths of the advocates of the new scheme, which they conceive ought to have considerable weight in exploding the old method, and that is, its want of adaptation to the present advanced state of civilization: ‘when so much improvement has been made in arts and manufactures,’ say they, is it not a shame that so very little alteration has been effected in the method of instructing our children?”

This exact argument occurred in the preface to the first book of Oliver Angell’s 1830 series of readers in America, a Code 1 text clearly modeled on the Franklin Primer of 1826. But the Schoolmaster (that delightful man!) made an appropriate reply:

“These sticklers for improvement in the method of teaching seem never to reflect that there exists a very material and obvious distinction between the process of storing a boy’s head with ideas and that of the manufacture of the bonnet that covers it.”

What is most notable about this little 1829 publication is the learned, charming sanity of the statements of the parochial Scottish Schoolmaster, compared to the vacuous, pompous statements of his opponent who was defending Professor Pillans, and to the quotations of Professor Pillans himself.

The parochial Scottish Schoolmaster’s comment on August 15, 1828, on the book, *Letters to T. F. Kennedy, Esq., M. P.*, which had just recently been published by Professor James Pillans, would apply equally well, however, to the current wordy promotion of “whole language.” He said:

“...we have now a complete development of the Professor’s views, in his *Letters* lately published, addressed to T. F. Kennedy, Esq., M. P.... These letters contain many hints that may be useful to teachers, as well as much mummery that they would do well to reject. In fact, one may justly say of this publication what Sheridan once said of the speech of a political opponent in Parliament, ‘that it contains much that is new, and much that is true; but unfortunately, what is new is not true, and what is true is not new.’”

Actually, over-emphasis on “meaning” is as fallacious in all subjects as it is in reading, but a reasonable emphasis on “meaning” improves learning. Dr. Hilde Mosse in her great work, *The Complete Handbook of Childrens’ Reading Disorders*, (two volumes, 1982, Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York) quoted Dr. Wilder Penfield, the famous neurologist/brain surgeon, concerning the fact that we can learn (“condition”) only those things on which we focus conscious attention at the time they are being learned. Understanding the meaning of a new subject permits the conscious mind to organize that new material logically and to associate it with previously learned (“conditioned”) material.

The conscious mind uses only that part of the brain that Dr. Wilder Penfield, in his book, *The Mystery of the Mind*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1975, named the “higher brain mechanism”) After gaining an understanding of new material, the “higher brain mechanism,” which is conscious, can then file that new material efficiently in the brain’s memory banks, but they are

unconscious. Dr. Penfield named those unconscious memory banks the “automatic sensory motor mechanism.”

To the extent possible, therefore, all new material should be presented in a meaningful framework so as to facilitate this conditioning (learning). But we should never lose sight of the fact that this discerning of “meaning” is carried out by the conscious mind only in that part of the brain called the “higher brain mechanism,” and it is incapable of storing “conditioned” or learned material.

In computer terms, the material brain is what the conscious human soul (which is immaterial) uses as its computer to interface with the material world. A computer is “hardware” and it employs “software.” The human soul can only discern “meaning” through that conscious part of the brain that is like the computer hardware (the part of the brain that Dr. Penfield called the “higher brain mechanism”), and it can only store learned material on the unconscious part of the brain that is like a computer’s software (the part of the brain that Dr. Penfield called the “automatic sensory motor mechanism). Anything the brain “learns,” therefore, is like the data that a computer (the hardware) records on its software (its floppy disks or its hard-drive).

Endless discussions of “meaning” which do not introduce any new material to be organized and learned (filed) is analogous to turning on a computer (the hardware), banging on the keyboard for a few hours, and then turning off the computer without “saving” or filing anything on its software.

Because of its very nature, the “thinking” or conscious higher brain mechanism cannot be “conditioned” (cannot store data or skills). Therefore, it cannot be “taught” to perform “higher level thinking skills,” the teaching of which is the current time-wasting nonsense in American schools. The term “thinking skills” is the ultimate oxymoron, actually a contradiction in terms.

Yet the computer analogy is insufficient, since a computer is lifeless and incapable of growth. In contrast, it does appear probable that the higher brain mechanism (through which the conscious mind “sees” the world) can be strengthened through general education exactly as a muscle is toned, thereby improving the mind’s ability to view the world. But, as a muscle cannot be “conditioned” to perform any particular act, neither can the higher brain mechanism be “conditioned” to perform a particular act.

It is interesting that experiments with rats in deprived and enriched environments have shown that those in the enriched environments developed brains which weighed more. The analogy to increasing brain function and increasing muscle function through exercise therefore appears possible. But such development is generalized. It is unlike the teaching (or conditioning) of skills and information which are specific, discrete and non-transferable. (From my own experience, I know that conditioned skills are non-transferable. After having been a rapid touch-typist for some forty years, I was astonished to find that I had a very limited visual memory of the keyboard. When away from the typewriter, if I tried to visualize the keyboard, I had to reach with my fingers for many letters to “see” where they were located. My “touch” memory obviously had not transferred to my “visual” memory.)

When reading the following, keep in mind the nature of learning: it is the storing of conditioned reflexes in the brain’s unconscious automatic sensory motor mechanism. In order to learn anything (or to “condition” it), it is true we must focus conscious attention (“thinking”) on it while it is being learned, and, in addition, practice is usually necessary to retain most learning. Yet reasoning, or “thinking” itself cannot be learned, but only such material as discrete facts and the intellectual framework or scaffolding in which to place such facts, as well as physical movements such as typing, dancing, or driving. Language itself is based on automatic conditioned reflexes (“learning”). The brain stores the syntax of a language, its word syllables and its word meanings. A little child beginning school has already acquired his own language through imitation and practice and should at that point be using it unconsciously and

automatically. He should not constantly be asked to focus conscious attention on the automatic act of speech by asking him the meanings of ordinary words already in his working vocabulary. It seems probable that the focusing of conscious attention on what should by then be his automatic language could result in stuttering, among other things.

Key to the First Step in Teaching Children To Read, According to the Lesson System of Education, First American from Third Edinburgh Edition, published by Jonathan Leavitt of New York, obviously grew out of the influence of the Edinburgh Sessional School. It is impossible to describe the appalling material. In the Scottish “religious” school which produced this text, the Bible itself was being dispensed with, because it was felt previous generations of Scots had reached the next world ignorant of the meaning of the Bible they had read all their lives since they had lacked the wonderful Lesson System to teach them to read it for meaning. (!) The ghastly lessons, a kind of child-torture, are based on Bible content, and were supposed to make it possible for future generations of Scots to avoid the error of reading without concentrating on “meaning.” Yet these “lessons” concentrated on defining basic words and syntax and might have caused language problems in little children, since those little children were already using those words and that syntax completely automatically to clothe their conscious thoughts.

If the wording of the text’s title (“lesson system”) had been original in Edinburgh, then the Edinburgh “improvements” apparently spread later to Glasgow, and then, of all places, to Portland, Maine. If that is what actually happened (which does appear likely), it demonstrated the enormous influence of the circa 1818-1840 activists. In 1836, J. U. Parsons, “Late Principal of the Indiana Teachers Seminary,” was the author of the Analytical Spelling Book published by William Hyde, of Portland, Maine, the apparent successor to Shirley and Hyde of Portland. Shirley and Hyde in 1828 had published *Infant Schools - Infant Education*, “By a Friend to the Poor,” which had been written in May, 1827. Since Hyde’s company published the “infant school” material in Maine as early as 1828, it is probable that Hyde was an activist publisher. Parsons’ Analytical Spelling Book was not a beginning book but, from the description, his beginning book sounded like Code 1 material. It was the credit Parsons gave for his beginning book, Parson’s Analytical Primer, that was interesting. Parsons said his ideas for it came from something called “Gaul’s Lesson System of Glasgow.” That title suggests a possible inspiration from Edinburgh’s appalling “Lesson System” and that it had spread as far as a teacher’s college in Indiana (presumably the state of Indiana) in which Parsons taught before 1836!

The “Lesson System” concentrating on “meaning” that had reached America was an extension of Wood’s ideas. Wood’s influence from Edinburgh traveled in the opposite direction, also, to Germany. Barnard’s Journal translated the article, “Catechism on Methods of Teaching,” by Dr. Herman Wimmer of Germany, from Diesterweg’s *Alman Jahrbuch* for 1855 and 1856:

“Why is it important never to read meaningless syllables and unintelligible words?

“Because the pupil will read in future as he is taught. Therefore, he ought to get accustomed from the beginning to seek in all that he reads a proper idea.”

Wood’s ideas also traveled to Holland. An article in Barnard’s Journal in 1860, entitled “Primary School at the Hague” reported on methods there with the Prinsen reading series, described as a phonic method to spell words. The article said of the Prinsen system:

“All the combinations of letters used form words, as in Mr. Wood’s plan, and the teacher is careful to require an explanation of every word as it occurs.”

Wood had said in 1836 that his Edinburgh school was to become a teacher’s college, and it apparently became the Scotland Training College of Edinburgh. James Carrs(?) of the Scotland Training College,

Edinburgh, wrote an article in the September, 1860, *Barnard's Journal*, on page 277, "Subjects and Methods of Early Education." His article demonstrated that Wood's ideas were still dominant in the college in 1860:

"Lessons consisting of columns of single words, and much more of columns of syllables or parts of words, are not suitable.... (The pupil) should be engaged in a conversational lesson on the subject he has been reading about, which shall embody the words he has read. This will give a practical aspect to all he reads, and secure from the beginning the habit of reading with understanding."

The author went on to recommend that children of four and a half be taught to read, beginning with short two- and three-letter English words, which were to be learned as wholes because the spellings were irregular (obviously being learned by "meaning" and not by "sound"). Later, he recommended teaching diluted phonics and word-attack skills. He showed as a reference for his ideas:

"The reader will find the argument for carrying the child's understanding along with what he reads, and the manner of doing so, fully stated in Pillan's First Letter on the Principles of Elementary Education."

Yet the "improvements" of the "intellectual" plan of Professor Pillans of the University of Edinburgh had resulted in throwing out of school most of those things which can be learned: the "sound" pronunciation of words and the rules of grammar, which had been taught by professional teachers like the parochial Schoolmaster with his thirty years of experience. Instead, children were plagued by being asked to define the meaning of the ordinary words in their working vocabularies, which they already knew or they could not have been able to speak their own languages. They were not eventually to be taught grammar from a grammar book. Their time was spent on essentially meaningless verbal discussion, called the "Intellectual Plan," instead of being spent on acquiring the automatic conditioned reflexes which underlie skilled reading and the knowledge of grammar.

## Chapter 17

### Concerning the Trans-Atlantic Movers-and-Shakers

The “new method” concerned emphasis on “meaning” in all areas. Dugald Stewart’s ideas on reading for “meaning” had formed the rationale for the switch from “sound” to “meaning,” as specifically mentioned by Keagy. Stewart was also in general sympathy with the intellectual climate of the elite, praising, at the end of his own life, the work of pantheist/statist Cousin who was a darling of the Boston intellectuals, and the work of Birkbeck and Brougham’s “societies for the diffusion of useful knowledge.” Furthermore, Stewart was involved in a long controversy in the early 1800’s, (see A Letter to Rev. Ingles and what followed) which resulted in many people besides himself writing essays, concerning the influence of ministers in the appointment of professors at the University of Edinburgh. This at least suggests the possibility of his hostility to established religion. That hostility was characteristic of “liberals” in the early nineteenth century.

The very reasonable objection will be made that, if there were a group consciously cooperating with each other to install government education and “improvements” in reading on both sides of the Atlantic, they should have left some clear, written account of their conscious association. Yet that is not necessarily the case, as is demonstrated by the autobiography of Orestes Brownson. Orestes Brownson testified that he personally had helped to organize a secret group whose object was to control education and to oppose traditional religion, which will be discussed later. Brownson’s testimony cannot reasonably be doubted. Yet he was the ONLY one who ever referred to the existence of that large group. Brownson’s brief testimony provides the ONLY record of that obviously influential secret group’s existence!

#### On Henry Lord Brougham, and His Work on Education and Infant Schools

Brougham in an anthology of his writings for the Edinburgh Review chose to omit ALL his writings on education, which is very curious since his work on education is acknowledged to be among his most important activities. Is it possible that he was really trying to bury the record? The reason he gave for omitting that material is anything but persuasive. In the Preface to Volume I, signed “Cannes, November, 1855,” of Contributions to the Edinburgh Review, by Henry, Lord Brougham, in 3 volumes, (Richard Griffin and Co., Publishers to the University of Glasgow, 1856), Brougham said:

“The reason for omitting in this publication almost all the papers on the slave trade, slavery, charitable trusts, or education is that the greater part of the measures discussed have long since been adopted by the Legislature, and that the measures connected with Education which unfortunately have not yet been adopted, or consistently supported in Parliament (are covered) by the papers in the Review, so that the Author’s speeches contain both the doctrines and the arguments which would be found in these papers.”

The “charitable trusts” issue was the smokescreen Brougham had used in 1818 to cover his push for government schools. His work on that sounded like extreme McCarthyism, and reviving what happened might have been embarrassing. But that he should also totally omit his writings on education and his push for government schools defies a reasonable explanation.

Brougham’s autobiography, *The Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham, Written by Himself*, in Three Volumes (William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1871) contained nothing at all on education that I could find in a quick perusal except a little material on Brougham’s being appointed Rector at the University of Glasgow by the students in 1825, and a little material on his founding of the secular London University. That he chose to omit mention of his promotion of government schools in his

own THREE-VOLUME autobiography, as well as in his collection of Edinburgh Review articles, was clearly deliberate.

However, that Brougham spent his time before 1834 as a change-agent is proven by his own testimony in his letter to Edward Lytton Bulwer, Esq., M. P., sent from Paris on March 12, 1834:

“...my life, except four years, was continued sacrifice of interest to my principles as a Reformer and friend of liberty....”

That remark has overtones of the French Revolution that took place some forty years before and that did a lot of reforming in the name of liberty.

Only passing mention is made in most present-day sources concerning the educational climate of Brougham’s time. Therefore, it is necessary to provide background material on the great push being made at that time by organized groups to take over the education of the young, to shape the teachers of the young and to control the textbooks for the young. By then, government schools were firmly in place in France, having been one of the first fruits of the French Revolution, and were also in place in Prussia, where the minds of children were being shaped by the state. The following background material is quoted from an 1877 or earlier source, and, incidentally, confirms Brougham’s intense involvement with the education of the very young.

The material appeared in an article discussing the education of young children in Sonnenschein’s Cyclopaedia of Education, published by Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1877(?) and 1889, and by C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York. Infant schools were discussed on page 519, the remark being made:

“The first infant school in the United Kingdom, (was) that at New Lanark, by the falls of Clyde....” [in Scotland].

The article stated that David Dale and Richard Arkwright had set up a cotton mill there in 1783, and eventually opened a school at the cotton mill for child workers. Robert Owen was Dale’s son-in-law, and was among those who took over the mill when Dale retired. Owen added to the school already in existence a school for little children. Pastor J. F. Oberlin in northeast France had formed before this time a famous school for children from two to six in his parish, in which he taught children reading and showed them pictures and maps. Oberlin’s school was obviously a refinement of the centuries-old practice of pastors assuming some responsibility for the basic education of the young in their parishes, such as seeing that they learned the catechism and how to read. It was Owen’s aims which were so different from those of parish schools: he was intentionally trying to mold children’s personalities. Robert Owen’s was the first true infant school in the world. Until the atheist/socialist Owen appeared on the scene, no one had ever questioned that the molding of the personality of “infants,” or children under six years old, was the responsibility of their own parents, principally their mothers. Owen put his infant school under the charge of James Buchanan. The article stated further:

“In June 1816, Mr. Owen, describing the schools as they then were to a Committee of the House of Commons, said: - ‘The children are received into a preparatory training school at the age of three, in which they are perpetually superintended to prevent their acquiring bad habits, to give them good ones, and to form their dispositions to mutual kindness and a sincere desire to contribute all in their power to benefit each other. These effects are chiefly accomplished by example and practice, precept being found of little use and not comprehended by them at this early age. The children are taught also whatever may be supposed useful that they can understand.... In this training school the children remain two or three years... in the superior school... they are taught to read, write, account, and the girls, in addition, to sew.’

“As the fame of the reforms accomplished in New Lanark spread, thousands of tourists visited the place, and the more enlightened went away desirous of copying elsewhere some at least of Mr. Owen’s plans. Thus Brougham, Lord Lansdowne, John Smith, James Mill, Joseph Wilson, and others, in 1818, opened an ‘asylum for infancy’ in Brewer’s Green, afterwards removed to Vincent Square, Westminster, and borrowed James Buchanan to conduct it. In London Buchanan made the acquaintance of Samuel Wilderspin, then clerk of the New Jerusalem Church, Waterloo Road, to whom he taught his methods of dealing with young children. Seeing the success of the Westminster school, Mr. Wilson, in 1820, opened one in Spitalfields, and on the recommendation of Buchanan gave the charge of it to Wilderspin. When the new master, accompanied by his wife, appeared on the scene of his labours, he found the room filled by a crowd of little boys and girls, running, laughing, and shouting. He tried to get silence, but his commands were not heeded, and indeed not heard. Each group that he quieted broke into disorder as soon as he left it. At last, almost in despair, he snatched off the bright cap which his wife was wearing and dangled it at the end of a pole. This aroused the curiosity and arrested the attention of the young mob, and the battle was won.

“By altering Buchanan’s methods a little (sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse), and by drawing a distinction between infant asylums and infant schools, Wilderspin persuaded himself that he was the founder of the latter, and, what is more to the purpose, he persuaded the Prime Minister, and got placed upon the civil list.

“Wilderspin was never skillful in the organization of a school, but he was a good gallery teacher and a good missionary. The zeal and activity which he displayed in promoting the establishment of infant schools brought him into notice, and he was made superintendent of the Dublin model schools of the Irish Commissioners. His attainments, however, were too humble for him to retain the post.”

Wilderspin’s school received far more complimentary treatment in a book written in America in May, 1827. Harvard library has a copy of an 1828 edition published by Shirley & Hyde, Portland, entitled on the cover, *Infant Schools*, and on the title page, *Infant Education*, “By a Friend to the Poor.” The book appears to have been Owenite propaganda. It cited Wilderspin’s school at Quaker Street, Spitalfields, which it said was opened on July 2, 1820. The book outlined the nature of Wilderspin’s ridiculous “teaching.” After discussing Wilderspin’s school, it discussed the Bristol School, run by a man whose name was blurred (possibly Goyder). The reading methods at that Bristol School were described: an incomplete, alphabetically mixed syllabary, a vowel table omitting diphthongs, a picture alphabet with non-phonetic examples (owl for o, ship for s, and wheel for w), and sight-words given for numerals at the beginning of the book along with the digits (one, two, three, etc.), something which is characteristic of a “meaning” method but which is never done with a “sound” method. By the 1820’s, it is obvious the infant schools had moved from “sound” towards “meaning.”

However, the record shows that Brougham (and others, including James Mill who presumably was the Mill who had praised his Edinburgh professor, Dugald Stewart) had imported Owen’s infant school to London as early as 1818, and had even obtained Owen’s teacher, Buchanan!

The push for organized education and for controlling the education of toddlers was also carried on by others in Scotland, and resulted in one of the world’s first normal schools by 1827. The Sonnenschein’s *Cyclopaedia of Education* 1877(?) and 1889 article mentioned David Stow, born at Paisley, Scotland, in 1793, who with his “fellow workers” set up Sunday Schools in the city between 1817 to 1824 for about nine thousand children, followed by a weekday school. The *Cyclopaedia* article quoted Stow:

““Prevention is better than cure,” was our motto’ says Mr. Stow, ‘and to begin well we cannot begin too early. My first object, therefore, was to begin with children under six years of age, before their intellectual and moral habits were fully formed.’“

The article stated further that the teacher of the weekday school was David Caughie, and continued:

“Other schools for infants and for older children followed, and in 1827 the Glasgow Normal Seminary was formed. Here Stow’s ‘training system’ was fully developed and exhibited, and here persons came to learn it....

“While the Glasgow merchant was working out one system of education in the dirt and squalor of a great industrial capital, an English clergyman was exemplifying another system in the rural quiet of a Surrey village. The Rev. Charles Mayo, D.D., was one of the many visitors to Yverdon whose enthusiasm was kindled by the enthusiasm of Pestalozzi.... Aided by Miss Mayo, his sister, he set up a school at Cheam for the children of the upper classes, and thence from time to time issued little books of ‘Lessons’ on the method of the master. The interest which Mr. John Stuckey Reynolds felt in the establishment of infant schools brought him into contact with the Mayos, and in conjunction with them he conceived the idea of applying the principles of Pestalozzi to the schools of the poor. The result was the establishment in 1836 of the Home and Colonial School Society for the purpose of supplying infant school teachers.”

The shortcomings in the Mayo approach are discussed later in this history. Furthermore, biographies of Pestalozzi suggest that his reputation is considerably overblown. (H. B. Wilbur’s 1862 book, referred to elsewhere, is an excellent partial critique of Pestalozzi’s faulty methods, particularly as ludicrously practiced by the Mayos in their “object lessons.”)

Pestalozzi is, however, on a straight line with all the “improvers” in education. All of them have received vast numbers of visitors and vast publicity. “Tourists” flocked to de l’ Elee’s school in Paris, and to Owen’s school at New Lanark, just as they flocked to John Wood’s school in Edinburgh, and to Colonel Parker’s schools in Quincy, Massachusetts, and Chicago, Illinois. Mayo, therefore, after having visited Pestalozzi, ended up by 1836 founding a training school for infant school teachers, just as Stow founded a normal school at Glasgow in 1827.

All of these events served to make it respectable for outside organizations to replace parents in the training of their little toddlers. Instead of having the freedom to move about in their own homes, the toddlers were crammed into galleries in a totally unnatural, organized fashion. To treat toddlers in such a regimented way, as so many sardines in a can, was something that had never happened in the history of the world before, except perhaps in Sparta. The “dame schools” never had such large groups of children and followed no such organized programs, any more than mothers do in their own homes. But Brougham not only approved of regimented infant schools but helped to found what was probably the first regimented infant school in England!

No doubt can possibly exist of Brougham’s great interest in education. In 1825, he published *Practical Observations upon the Education of the People, Addressed to The Working Classes and Their Employers*. It was circulated in vast numbers and endorsed the founding of libraries and the publishing of books for working people, as well as the formation of study groups for them, such as resulted in the founding of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. These were seemingly worthy aims. A copy in the New York Public Library makes it clear some of the publishing expense for his *Observations* was underwritten by others, and not paid for by the purchasing public. The New York Public Library copy was printed in Manchester:



“Printed by Archibald Prentice (with the Permission of the Author) For Gratuitous Distribution to the Readers of the Manchester Gazette, 19th March, 1825” “Printed by A. Prentice, Gazette Office.”

Since this was a 26-page pamphlet, it must have been a considerable expense in that day for that newspaper. Did the newspaper pay all the cost?

Brougham dedicated this ultimately famous publication “To George Birkbeck, M.D., F.R.S., President of the London Mechanics Institution.” Brougham’s remarks printed immediately under that 1825 dedication are illuminating:

“As I have chiefly in deference to your opinion, sanctioned by that of our fellow-labourers in the North, undertaken to make the following pages public at the present moment, I beg leave to inscribe them with your name.”

By fellow-labourers in the North, did he mean Scotland as well as Manchester? At the very least, this comment confirms group action by 1825. Brougham continued:

“You are aware that they contain a portion of a larger discourse, which more pressing but less agreeable pursuits have long prevented me from finishing, upon the important subject of Popular Education, in its three branches, Infant Schools, Elementary Schools (for reading and writing,) and Adult Schools. It is only with the second of these branches that the Legislature can safely interfere. Any meddling on the part of Government with the first would be inexpedient; with the last, perilous to civil and religious liberty. In conformity with this opinion, I have brought the question of Elementary Education repeatedly before Parliament, where the lukewarmness of many, and the honest and by me ever to be respected scruples of some, have hitherto much obstructed my design: the other two branches belong to the country at large. Having, in concert with those friends who hold the same doctrines, endeavoured to establish Infant Schools, it seems to follow from the same view of the subject, that I should lend any little help in my power towards fixing public attention upon the Education of Adults; by discussing the best means of aiding the people in using the knowledge gained at schools, for their moral and intellectual improvement.”

I could find no trace of his ever having published his book on “Popular Education, in its three branches” on which he said he had been working for a long time. Brougham’s remarks, establish, however, beyond any possible doubt that he had actively concerned himself with elementary education for a long time before 1825, since it was one of those “three branches” of that “larger discourse” he had been writing, which he had been “long prevented” from finishing. It is also a clearly established fact that Brougham’s interest in infant schools dated at least from 1818. He continued:

“A considerable portion of the Observations was inserted in the Edinburgh Review, together with a good deal of other matter, and with one or two statements in which I do not altogether concur.”

Brougham had very much concerned himself with primary education, and in doing so endorsed the infant schools founded by the socialist/atheist Robert Owen at Lanark, and opposed the teaching of reading to young children in the manner used by Bell and Lancaster. Lancaster used the “sound” method, and Bell had used the “sound” method to a large extent initially although he eventually replaced it with an atrocious “improvement” (as discussed elsewhere). Brougham’s opinion appears in a speech he gave before the House of Commons on June 29, 1820. It was reported in *The Pamphleteer*, Vol. XVI, No.

XXXII (pages 260-261). In the third-person account, it also said he had mentioned the Westminster school, obviously the infant school he had helped found in 1818:

“...He anticipated that dame-schools would get into better hands, and be better conducted. One school of that most interesting class was but a short walk from where he now stood. If a child was neglected till six years of age, no education afterward could recover it.... But if dame schools were better regulated and adapted to the example of the school in Westminster and the examples of Fellenberg and Lanark... (etc.) (Ed.: to the effect that poverty and crime in England would be greatly reduced). But learning was not all, nor the principal consideration - moral habits were acquired, they were kept out of nurseries of obscenity, vulgarity, vice and blasphemy.”

Brougham was equating being raised in poverty to being raised surrounded by “obscenity, vulgarity, vice and blasphemy.” The upper classes were apparently willing to accept this description which served Brougham’s infant-school purposes so conveniently, but it is highly improbable that it was generally the case, since it is natural for parents to show loving care for their children, whether the parents are poor or rich. Notice also that it is implicitly an attack on the integrity of the family, which attack has been so successful in the twentieth century.

“The ages at which they attend in Westminster were 3, 4, and 5 to 7. Nothing was required in such a school but a steady, sober, and even temper. With that learnt, more or less was of little consequence; the moral discipline was the great consideration. The great objection made by his friend, M. Fellenberg, to the Lancaster and Bell systems of education, was, that children learnt too rapidly - that they became machines. There were one hundred of the children in the School at Westminster who did little more than attend to the discipline of the School, and even by this much good was done.... Who could deny, that children thus educated were prepared, though not perhaps, fully prepared, to defy the shocks and buffetings of the world infinitely better than they whose progress was more showy but who became only educated machines..... Once more he apologized (loud cheers) and moved for leave to bring in a bill for the education of the poor in England and Wales.”

From this, it is obvious that Brougham disapproved of the fact that both Lancaster and Bell tried to teach children to read. Brougham’s argument is a familiar one. Teaching young children to read is supposed to be bad for them. Teach them instead to socialize. Brougham sounded like John Dewey.

Brougham did include in one of his books an article on the subject of reading, but I do not know the date he compiled the book. That book of Brougham’s was included in 1876 in *The American Catalogue*, under the Direction of F. Leypoldt, *Subject Entries of Books in Print and for Sale (Including Reprints and Importations)* July, 1876, “Compiled by Lynds E. Jones.” It showed, on page 359 under “Reading” and its listings for A. Potter, that Potter’s “Observations on Reading” was part of Lord H. Brougham’s *Discourses on Science and Literature*, which book Harper had for sale in 1876 for 75 cents. The probability is that it concerned only the kinds of books to read, and not how to teach reading. As referred to elsewhere, Harper’s had published material by Brougham as early as the 1820’s and perhaps this was a reprint of that early material. A. Potter was most probably Rt. Rev. Dr. Alonzo R. Potter, who wrote with George B. Emerson *The School and the Schoolmaster*, published in Boston in 1843. Samuel Blumenfeld mentioned Potter on page 230 of *Is Public Education Necessary?* 1982, 1985, The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho:

“In May 1842, (Horace) Mann was the principal speaker at the New York State Convention of School Superintendents at Utica. The convention was attended by such luminaries in the public school movement as Joseph Henry, Alonzo Potter, John Griscom, George B. Emerson, and Thomas H. Gallaudet, father of the whole-word method of reading instruction. The main theme

running through the convention was that the non-sectarian common school was replacing the church as the instructor in morality.”

That Brougham included Potter’s material in his book is not only additional confirmation of Brougham’s interest in the topic of reading materials, but that strong ties existed between government school activists in Britain and government school activists in America.

Brougham had certainly written, somewhere, about Dugald Stewart’s psychological explanation for the actions of an orator. That Brougham had written such material was mentioned in an article which also concerned Dugald Stewart’s psychological explanation for the act of reading. The article appeared in Volume II of Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, 1844, on pages 217 and following. It was a summary of a paper by Rev. J. Wills, read by Dr. Anster (which will be quoted at greater length later):

“(Rev. J. Wills) then went at considerable length to apply the same reasoning to the case of the orator, as adduced by Mr. Stewart, and more fully described by Lord Brougham....”

Brougham had “more fully described” Stewart’s ideas on the psychology of oratory, and Brougham may very well have done the same for Stewart’s ideas on the psychology of reading. This might be confirmed if only Brougham’s article referred to by “Rev. J. Wills” could be located.

Brougham certainly aroused opposition. Concerning his so-called drive against “charitable abuses” and presumed misuse of charitable funds, in the New York Public Library volume, Biography AN pv 184, is a pamphlet, Brougham Reviewed, Especially with Reference to his Conduct in Parliament During Last Season, in a Letter to the Editor of the Westmorland Gazette by A Loyal Independent - Kendal, Printed by Airey and Bellingham, 1818.

“...Mr. B. is an unfit person to represent any county whatever....

“(Brougham) is now directing public attention to his Bill for appointing a Commission to enquire into the Abuses in Charities connected with the Education of the Poor. With regard to the purpose of this Bill, there can be but one opinion and one sentiment. Great abuses, there is much reason to believe, do exist and the correction of them is earnestly to be desired - every man will rejoice to see Charitable Funds restored to the Poor which may have been diverted, by whatever means, from their original destination, especially when the funds were designed for the education of those who might otherwise have been destitute of that inestimable benefit. The object was truly deserving the attention of Parliament. But, in this, as in every other act of legislation, the rules of prudence are to be attended to with a care proportionate to the magnitude of the good proposed. Among these indispensable rules, is (not) to resort to powers which cannot be called into action without the sacrifice of a principle more valuable than the one we are laboring to establish.

“(The legislation) proposed to enact that certain Commissioners should be appointed, empowered to split and divide themselves, and prosecute their inquiries, each portion having the same powers as were vested in the whole; that it should be lawful for them to hold their sittings where they chose, and to command the attendance of whom they chose; examine upon oath “touching any matter or thing relating to estates or funds, as aforesaid, or to the state of education of the classes aforesaid; and in case he or she should refuse to answer to and before the said Commissioners” (in such a manner, no doubt, as they might deem satisfactory), then they “are authorized to take and apprehend such person, and commit him or her to such prison as, in their judgment, shall be most proper or convenient, and to remain without bill of mainprize until he or she &c.”

“Great wits are said to be closely allied to madmen; not so much, however, it should seem, as strenuous reformers to rigorous enslavers.

“Over whom were these inquisitors to have this monstrous power? Over everyone in England and Wales, including more especially the Trustees of Charitable Schools, far the greatest proportion of whom, among us, are respectable Yeomanry.”

Under “reformers” like Brougham, no one was to have the luxury of “Taking the Fifth,” any more than he could have done under Hitler, Stalin or Genghis Khan. Yet this was the man whom Holbrook found so admirable that he wanted him to head up a Universal Lyceum (Blumenfeld, page 138), in effect a world Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

Brougham’s own writings condemn him, as pages 23 and 24 from his Practical Observations upon the Education of the People (1825) prove, which were based on his 1818 “charitable abuses” red herring. As instances of such “abuses,” he wrote that other people in England (not himself) had donated money to set up such charities as an orphanage for 65 girls and clothing for 101 destitute boys. He said he thought that money (not his own) would have been better used founding infant schools. Kind-hearted Brougham said:

“The immediate consequence of such provisions is, to promote idleness and poverty.... It is therefore a sacred duty which everyone owes to the community, to refrain from giving contributions to begin such funds; and if he has already become a yearly contributor, it is equally his duty to withdraw his assistance, unless one condition is complied with, - namely, that no new objects shall be taken into the establishment.”

The long period from about 1818 when Brougham started his “charitable abuses” campaign till after the mid-nineteenth century was the setting for Charles Dickens’ stories concerning the appalling poverty of some groups of people in England. Yet Brougham thought, not only that aid to the poor should not increase after 1818, but it would have been better never to have started it! Brougham obviously had his eyes on the huge private contributions for charity from the compassionate in England, which he wanted to turn to his own uses. What he tried to do in the early nineteenth century was achieved in the early twentieth century in America, when some privately funded charitable “foundations” fell under the control of the kind of “liberals” who have used those huge funds ever since to promote their own agendas. Of course, Brougham’s variety of “liberal” was one of the early nineteenth century kinds, who endorsed “laissez faire” economics, the rationale for his callous and un-Christian approach to the poor. Most of our present-day “liberals” are at the other end of the spectrum. Instead of endorsing no economic controls whatsoever, they endorse the antithesis: economic tyranny.

One of the speeches which Brougham omitted from his biography and collected works is in the New York Public Library, Pamphlets- \*c.p.v. 716, Mr. Brougham’s Speech on the Education of the Poor. The Speech of Henry Brougham, Esq., M. P., in the House of Commons, May 8, 1818, on the Education of the Poor, and Charitable Abuses. London: Printed for James Ridgway, Piccadilly, 1818. Although portions of that material are not quoted here, the very existence of this New York copy demonstrates that by 1818 such a pamphlet was being circulated. The printing of the copy proves that Brougham’s campaign against private education (i.e., “charitable abuses,”) and in favor of government education (i.e., “education of the poor,”) was in full swing by 1818, and undoubtedly reaching America in the form of such pamphlets.

As the previous quotation makes clear, Brougham had been speaking on the subject in Parliament since 1817. “Reform” began showing up in America just about the same time, in 1817, with the campaign for Boston government primary schools, founded in 1818, also based on the presumed need to educate the poor. (Samuel Blumenfeld’s *Is Public Education Necessary?* proves that there was no illiteracy problem,

for the poor or any other group, in Boston at the time.) It is interesting that the penniless Russell first arrived in Georgia from Scotland in the same year of 1817, and within the next year made another expensive round trip to and from Scotland, certainly suggesting that he might have been a courier. The House of Commons has always been awash with speeches, just as has the U. S. Congress. Yet few of these speeches ever get distributed as Brougham's were, so he and his cohorts were obviously carrying on an organized (and probably expensive) publicity blitz of huge proportions by 1818. Yet, about forty years later, Brougham chose to suppress ALL of his material which had been used to promote government schools! Did he and his cohorts have something to hide?

J. P. Morgan made the remark:

“A man always has two reasons for doing anything - a good reason and the real reason.”

The quotation is from *The Treasury of the Familiar*, Ralph L. Woods, The Macmillan Company, New York: 1942, page 660. Brougham and Birkbeck's Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge certainly had such a good reason: the spread of knowledge to all people. Yet the following quotation raises the possibility that there were separate “real” reasons. It is from the *St. James Chronicle*, May, 1825, and was quoted in John George Goddard's *George Birkbeck, The Pioneer of Popular Education*, C. W. Bardeen, Publishers, Syracuse, New York (and London), 1884 (page 73-74). It was also quoted in *George Birkbeck, Pioneer of Adult Education*, by Thomas Kelly, Liverpool, At The University Press: 1957 (pages 106-107). The underlined portions are some of those that appeared in the longer 1884 quotation but were omitted in the quotation from after 1956. Such remarks tend to be filtered out of material published after 1920.

“A scheme more completely adapted for the destruction of this empire could not have been invented by the author of evil himself than that which the depraved ambition of some men, the vanity of others, and the supineness of a third and more important class of men, has so nearly perfected. It is nothing to the purpose to tell us that Mr. Brougham, or Dr. Birkbeck or Mr. Huskisson cannot design the ruin of the country..... We say that whatever their motives may be, every step which they take in setting up the laborers as a separate or independent class, is a step taken, and a long one too, toward that fatal result. Sylla, Cataline and Caesar, had all different objects, but they pursued their objects by the same means, the severing of the lower classes from their superiors.... Mr. Brougham wishes, perhaps, for merely political purposes, to count a noisy mob on his side; Dr. Birkbeck's motive may be purely professional; Mr. Huskisson's no more than innocently pedantic; they are all three, however, scattering the seeds of evil, the extent of which the wisest among them cannot anticipate.”

Kelly added following this quotation (pages 107-108):

“What lay behind this hostility? In the first place there was the fear among property-owners that any kind of education was a threat to their possessions.... But there were many, and particularly among churchmen, who while not opposed to education as such were opposed to this particular kind of education. To them, the movement smacked of Whiggery, Radicalism, Benthamism, rationalism, and Unitarianism. They were particularly alarmed at the prominence of Brougham. ‘Much, undoubtedly, of the alarm which those institutions have occasioned, and of the opposition they have experienced,’ wrote the *Quarterly Review*, ‘is to be attributed to the patronage and advocacy of (Mr. Brougham). It is his singular infelicity to prejudice every cause which he undertakes to advance. \* Another critic, while admitting the sincerity of Birkbeck in disclaiming all political interest, declared that through his associates the Institution had become the tool of a party. ‘Liberty and independence were the themes of every harangue, and violent party spirit pervaded every meeting.

\*\*“There was more here than mere political or religious prejudice. Birkbeck and his friends believed that education would necessarily make men more virtuous: their opponents argued that mere intellectual education, without moral education, was bound to have immoral tendencies. The case was moderately argued by the Quarterly Review:

““But, we shall be told, that if these lectures do not teach religion, which is no part of the business of Dr. Birkbeck or his coadjutors, they do not unteach it: while the habits of attention, sobriety, and the general elevation of mind which may be thus promoted, will be favourable to the mechanic’s character, and dispose his mind towards religion. We are willing to believe this.... Still it is their duty, if not to teach religious principles, to keep in view that there are such principles, and that they are all important.... Every mode of instruction, for whomsoever intended, which so teaches learning, science or art, as to make them seem all in all, and fails to connect them with the higher object of all education, the fitting of man for his ultimate destiny, we consider to be both incomplete and pernicious. \*\*\*

\*“Quarterly Review, XXXII, 413 (Oct. 1825).”

\*\*“London Journal of Arts and Sciences, IX, (1825), 369-70....”

\*\*\*“Quarterly Review, XXXII, 421-2.”

Brougham is acknowledged to have been a friend of Owen’s. So, apparently, was Birkbeck. Birkbeck’s feelings about Owen’s work are evident from Birkbeck’s letter to Owen quoted by Thomas Kelly in his *George Birkbeck, Pioneer of Adult Education*, Liverpool, At the University Press: 1957, page 125:

“Sept. 23rd 1830

“My Dear Sir,

“I am exceedingly anxious for the success of your benevolent endeavours, and were it in my power, would most gladly co-operate with you. I am however engaged to the utmost of my leisure time, with measures which I believe to be of great importance; and remotely if not directly contributory to the success of your projects. I cannot therefore promise to be efficacious as a member of your projected Committee, and consequently had better not be placed upon it. I have indeed a great objection to be an idle name in any valuable undertaking.

“You will I hope feel assured, that altho’ I thus decline this nomination, I am deeply interested in the promotion of your views; which, the more they are developed by you (and they still admit of further development), the more they connect themselves with the best objects and the best hopes of the human species.

“With great regard,

I remain ever, my dear sir,

Very faithfy. yours

GEORGE BIRKBECK” \*\*

\*\*“Holyoake House, Owen MSS., 287”

The founding of the Edinburgh Review had been the idea of an English writer and Anglican priest, Sydney Smith (1771-1845) who lived in Edinburgh in 1798 and who studied moral philosophy there under Dugald Stewart at the University of Edinburgh. According to the article on Sydney Smith in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963, Vol. 20, p. 834), Smith wished to start a periodical to publish material written by young people who wanted changes. Smith wrote in October, 1802, in the preface to a collection of his own articles in the *Edinburgh Review*:

“I was appointed editor and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number”.

There obviously were many good reasons for discontented young people in Great Britain at the time. The *Edinburgh Review*, the organ for the Whigs, was jointly founded in 1802 by Sydney Smith, Francis Jeffrey, and Henry Brougham (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Vol. 17, “Periodicals,” page 513). It continued publication for over a hundred years, until 1929. Its competitor, the organ for the Tories, the *Quarterly Review*, began publication in 1809.

Sydney Smith continued to write for the *Edinburgh Review* for many years. One of the positions Smith took in his lifetime was in favor of Catholic emancipation, and he also wrote an unpublished text on misrule in Ireland. Yet he was afraid to publish it and his widow later destroyed it after she was urged to do so.

Note the parallel between what happened to Smith’s manuscript, some time after he died in 1845, and what happened to Lakanal’s manuscript after Lakanal’s death, which was, like Smith’s, also in 1845. As has been discussed in Part 3 of this history, Joseph Lakanal’s manuscript disappeared mysteriously, apparently on the very day of his death. Lakanal’s manuscript concerned the period of the French Revolution from about 1789 to 1799. For most of those years, Lakanal had been a prominent legislator. Smith’s manuscript was destroyed probably in the year of his death, 1845, or shortly after. Lakanal’s disappeared in 1845, so both disappearances took place in the same general time frame.

Lakanal’s manuscript had been completed for five years before his death, with only the title page in print, which fact is itself very strange. Others obviously knew of the existence of the manuscript, as well as the author of Lakanal’s short biography, quoted in Part 3, who had “often seen the manuscript volume.”

One such person who might have known of Lakanal’s book was Lord Brougham. As has been discussed in Part 3, the author of Lakanal’s short biography recorded:

“We assisted one day at a visit that Lord Brougham made to the *ex-conventionnel*. ‘Your Lord,’ said Lakanal to Lord Brougham, who answered him, ‘Dear Citizen.’”

Lakanal’s great work had been begun while Lakanal was in America, and was finished in Paris in 1840. The work was very possibly discussed and perhaps even shown to Brougham when he visited Lakanal after Lakanal returned to Paris carrying his unfinished history with him. Was there some material in Lakanal’s history so embarrassing to some persons in France, England, or America that they had his book stolen on the very day of his death? After all, it is an attested fact from that close friend of Lakanal, as previously quoted in Part 3, that:

“[Lakanal’s history] mysteriously disappeared at the moment of the death of Lakanal!”

Brougham’s own biographical writings suggest that Brougham preferred sanitized history, since he apparently omitted most of his enormous activities on education. It is a recorded fact that someone had Sydney Smith’s history suppressed, and it is probable that someone did the same for Lakanal’s history. Was Brougham, who had close contact with both Smith and Lakanal, perhaps involved in the suppression in 1845 or shortly after of both of these works?

Brougham had been, like Sydney Smith, a student of Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh University, and it was Brougham who wrote widely and long on education. Stewart was widely acknowledged as a very influential professor, so his ideas on education, and the possible effect of these ideas on Brougham, are important. A summary on Stewart’s ideas will be given later.

The biography of Henry Peter Brougham (1778-1868) is given in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963, page 280-281, Vol. 4). Born of parents who were neither rich nor powerful, Brougham himself was active in British politics for over 30 years, and became lord chancellor of England from 1830 to 1834. He had entered Edinburgh University at 13 (not unusual at the time), and had studied under the famous Dugald Stewart, and then became a lawyer in Scotland in 1800. Brougham wrote many articles for the newly-established *Edinburgh Review*, and five scientific papers that he wrote before he was 20 were so highly regarded that they earned him membership in the Royal Society when he went to London in 1803. Brougham is credited with having eventually done important work in the abolition of slavery, in education, in legal reform, and in other areas. Brougham was a gifted speaker, a talent of great use for promoting his programs in the House of Commons. Brougham was one of the founders of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge and of the non-denominational University of London.

However, there is a problem with the lengthy, admiring biography on Brougham in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which has far more detail than is mentioned above. The problem appears in almost any mainstream biographies written after about 1920. "Mainstream" in publishing since about 1920 has meant "liberal," and such liberal sources tend to filter out data which might be considered negative in the eyes of conservatives. The result is that arch-liberals are usually unofficially canonized. Amos Bronson Alcott's biography in the 1963 *Encyclopedia Britannica* is a case in point. Without doubting Alcott's misplaced good intentions, the fact is that Alcott was weird and that his emotional brainwashing of children, as reported first-hand (and usually approvingly) by Elizabeth Peabody, was monstrous. Yet Alcott appears in the biography as a gentle reformer. Brougham was on the side of the angels concerning slavery, but was he therefore necessarily equally so concerning education? His co-founder of the *Edinburgh Review* had written at length in defense of Catholic rights. Yet for some reason Brougham's writings were opposed by the English cardinal, John Henry Newman. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. X, page 800:

"(Newman) wrote forcibly against the shallow enlightenment of Brougham...."

Something must have been gravely askew in Brougham's positions in the eyes of such conservatives as Cardinal Newman.

Brougham was a member of the Royal Society, presumably a glittering achievement. *Insight* (October 1, 1990, page 62) has an article, "Exhibit Lifts the Veil of Obscurity," on the English 18th century painter, Joseph Wright, a member of the Lunar Society, a similar group, which was described in the following excerpt. (Reprinted with permission of *Insight*. Copyright 1990, News World Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.)

"[The Lunar Society was] 'a microcosm of that European movement of the 17th and 18th Enlightenment,' (by) David Fraser, head of the Derby Art Gallery and Museum, in the exhibit catalog....

"Wright's second great scientific painting, 'The Air Pump,' is rather more ominous.... in this case, the philosopher is demonstrating the concept of the vacuum by placing a dove in a glass container and pumping out the air, suffocating the bird. No wonder the two little girls in the audience look appalled.

"Actually, by Wright's time it had become customary to use an artificial lung in the air pump for demonstration, a more humane solution, though one that would make for a less dramatic scene. Not that squeamishness was a hallmark of the early empirical scientists. Samuel Pepys, for instance, enthusiastically recorded a meeting of the Royal Society in London where the gathered gentlemen did experiments on a dog's spine to everyone's satisfaction except the dog's."



Gentlemen?! But from such men came the Unenlightenment, and the fact that Brougham was tried and not found wanting by such a group in the early nineteenth century may be no character endorsement, if the Royal Society still had the same kind of “gentlemen.” Two faults, such inhuman abuse of animals as that on the Royal Society dog, and obscenity, or indifference to these two faults, are curious themes which turn up in the biographies of some historically famous “intellectuals.” To be endorsed by such people is anything but a compliment.

Paul Johnson’s book, *Intellectuals*, documents grossly immoral behavior in the lives of some famous intellectuals. The characters of some of the most highly visible ones has also been grossly deficient. Rousseau, for instance, ludicrously considered education’s messiah, said himself that he had put his own children by his common-law wife in orphanages as soon as they were born. Yet the name of this deformed personality has unfortunately been permitted to deface the soaring ceiling of the lobby of the magnificent Library of Congress, because of the harmful nonsense Rousseau wrote about the education of children! Yet mainstream “histories” endorse such “intellectuals” by bowing respectfully before them (Paul Johnson excluded).

Brougham was intimately associated with the movement towards state control of education, though it was far longer in arriving in England in force than in America (to the credit of England). His involvement apparently dated at least from his joining an ex-classmate from Edinburgh University, George Birkbeck, in promoting what were called “institutes” for the education of lower-class adults.

According to Lawrence A. Cremin in *American Education - The National Experience - 1783 - 1876* (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York: 1980, pages 314-315), the roots of the institutes lay in the Andersonian Institution, Glasgow, founded from a bequest from Professor John Anderson. Anderson wanted a system of popular education established which would be available to all classes and to both men and women. George Birkbeck, who at the time was a young professor at the Andersonian Institution, put out an announcement on a series of lectures in natural philosophy, meant for artisans and mechanics. He later moved to London, where he practiced medicine, and, with Birkbeck, worked to set up the London Institute for the Diffusion of Science, Literature and the Arts. Later, Birkbeck gave some lectures on natural and experimental philosophy to mechanics and artisans.

Cremin said that while Birkbeck was in London, he renewed his association with Henry Brougham, who had been his classmate at the University of Edinburgh. Both men worked for the reform of English education. Brougham gave an address, “Practical Observations Upon the Education of the People,” in 1824 which was published in 1825 and which had twenty editions in a year. Brougham said the question was not whether to educate but people how to do so. He pushed for the development of libraries, clubs, forums, and mechanics’ institutes like those in Glasgow and London.

Cremin stated that, in America, mechanics’ institutes and Brougham’s writings were reported generally, including in the *American Journal of Education*, of which William Russell was editor.

Cremin cited the following entries in the *American Journal of Education*: Vol. I, 629-630, 1826 and vol. II, 216, 1827.

Cremin reported that when the American, Holbrook, proposed a Universal Lyceum some ten years later, meant for the whole world, he suggested Brougham as its president.

Some of Brougham’s writings were published in the Harper Family Library. The Family Library had 187 titles and was widely sold. Cremin recorded (pages 303-304) that the Harper publishing firm was founded in New York City in 1817 by James and John Harper, and by the late 1820’s was widely

considered to be the biggest book publisher in America. The Family Library included words by Bacon, Locke, Paley, Franklin, Brougham, George Combe, (the Scottish phrenologist), and the American, Richard, Henry Dana. As the publication of his works by the large Harper company makes clear, Brougham was very influential in both Great Britain and America by the 1820's.

### Concerning the Influence of Dugald Stewart on Brougham, and the Possible Earlier Influences on Stewart

Brougham and Birkbeck had studied under Dugald Stewart at the University of Edinburgh. According to Thomas Kelly in his *George Birkbeck, Pioneer of Adult Education, Liverpool*, At the University Press, 1957:

“Everyone... went to hear Professor Dugald Stewart lecture on moral philosophy. According to Godard, Birkbeck took down his addresses in shorthand.... Cockburn has left us a magnificent portrait. Stewart, he says, ‘Breathed the love of virtue into whole generations of pupils. To many, his lectures were like the opening of the heavens....’” (page 15)

The quotation suggests Stewart was something like a charismatic prophet - or a demagogue. Yet his works, which I have looked over casually, are pleasant enough, but anything but “the opening of the heavens.” What is most noticeable about his philosophy/psychology texts are that they seem to have suggested the form for William James’ 1890 psychology text. There is another parallel: when James went to lecture at Columbia in 1908, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963) he was received with wild enthusiasm. Yet his writings were not inspiring, either.

Something else must have been the cause of the wild enthusiasm in Edinburgh about 1800 and in New York about 1900. The record suggests it was the rejection of traditional religion, with all its inconvenient requirements. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen made a remark that went about like this: Some people who love humanity in the general, find it very difficult to love humanity in the particular. The ideas swelling the heads of the intellectuals about that time concerned loving humanity in the general, such as with the developing socialism. It was possible, therefore, for students to take a nice, self-congratulatory emotional trip without having to do anything concrete which interfered with their own comfort and convenience. After all, everything that was wrong in the world was “society’s” fault, not theirs.

Kelly continued, on page 26:

“At the time of Garnett’s resignation from Anderson Institution, Birkbeck was a newly fledged graduate, contemplating, no doubt, a career in medicine.... He decided to apply, and secured the support of not only Garnett but of Dugald Stewart, Playfair, and others. On 18 November, 1799, he was appointed....”

So Birkbeck’s appointment at the Anderson Institution in Glasgow in 1799 was partly through the personal influence of Stewart, and Birkbeck soon after began the work there that resulted in the famous mechanics institutes.

One wonders what kind of “moral philosophy” was absorbed by Brougham from Stewart, since Brougham was later considered so disreputable by many. Also, Birkbeck, who slavishly recorded Stewart’s lectures and so must have absorbed them, apparently did not find them in too much conflict with the ideas of the Scottish atheistic socialist, Robert Owen, since Birkbeck endorsed Owen so wholeheartedly (according to his letter to Owen previously quoted).

Birkbeck did not stay long at the Anderson Institution in Glasgow, but it may be noted that William Russell graduated from the University of Glasgow about 1817. Brougham, who had not been in Scotland in many years, was nevertheless elected rector of the University of Glasgow by its students in 1825. The students therefore thought as well of the radical Brougham in 1825 as the Columbia students thought of William James in 1908 when James' lecture there was so enthusiastically received, as mentioned in the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) account of James' life, and as the University of Edinburgh students thought of Stewart about 1800.

Brougham and his close friend, Birkbeck, were clearly influenced in their thinking by their famous professor, Dugald Stewart. Did Stewart's ideas on how knowledge is acquired - or not acquired - possibly have shaped Brougham's and Birkbeck's thoughts on education? If so, what had influenced the development of Dugald Stewart's own ideas on education and on how the mind is shaped? In particular, what might have influenced Stewart's ideas on the teaching of beginning reading? As Keagy's statements demonstrate, Stewart certainly did have some kind of influence on the spreading movement to teach beginning reading by "meaning."

An early influence on Stewart's thinking about the act of reading could conceivably have been the writings of Isaac Watts. *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, has an illustration on page 63 showing the cover of a book, *Improvement of the Mind*, by Isaac Watts, republished by A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, in 1866. Therefore, Watts obviously concerned himself, as did Stewart, with how the mind is "improved." The cover showed that it was a "School Edition with Denman's Questions," and it also carried a quotation from Dr. Johnson, "Whoever has the care of instructing others, may be charged with deficiency in his duty, if this Book is not recommended." Watts' ideas on "improving" the mind must have been powerfully influential, to be endorsed by the famous dictionary author, Samuel Johnson, in mid-eighteenth century England, and then to be reprinted over a hundred years later for school children in America. The American edition is described on page 68 of *Early American Textbooks*, but with a date of 1850, presumably the copyright date, and the words, "A collection of essays counseling readers on how knowledge can be acquired and retained." Isaac Watts wrote at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Conceivably, some of his advice to "readers on how knowledge can be acquired and retained" may have influenced Dugald Stewart in his ideas, but I have not seen Watts' book to see if there is a resemblance.

Bishop Joseph Butler was a definite eighteenth-century influence on Stewart since Stewart specifically quoted him in one of his books. One of the many American editions of Dugald Stewart's *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* was printed in Boston in 1821 by Wells and Lilly. Stewart (1753-1828) quoted on pages 242-243 a remark concerning reading without thinking, which had appeared in the preface to Dr. Butler's *Fifteen Sermons* (1726). It was this remark of Butler's, which was probably only casual, that may have been partially responsible along with de l'Épée's influence for sparking the "reading for meaning" affliction that has beset us ever since. That is because Professor Stewart of the University of Edinburgh elaborated on Butler's remark, and Stewart was an enormously influential man. The Bishop Butler referred to by Stewart is listed in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963) (Vol. 4, page 482), as Joseph Butler (1692-1752), a moral philosopher and a Church-of-England bishop in Durham, whose works were well known in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The eighteenth-century works of Benjamin Franklin very probably also had some influence on Stewart's thinking about the mind and about the act of reading. It is therefore pertinent to quote material concerning Franklin's own educational background and Franklin's resultant ideas on education as they showed up in Franklin's written work. Franklin rejected the ancient Latin curriculum, and endorsed education in modern languages, which rejection very possibly reflected his own lack of Latin training. Presumably Franklin's other views were also shaped, at least to some degree, by his own educational history.

In Benjamin Franklin on Education (Teachers College, Columbia University, New York: 1960's?) John Hardin Best quoted from The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, Max Farrand, Ed., 1949, concerning Franklin's own education:

“From my infancy, I was passionately fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was laid out in the purchasing of books. I was very fond of voyages. My first acquisition was Bunyan's works in separate little volumes. I afterwards sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's historical collections; they were small chapmen's books and cheap, forty or fifty in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read. I have since often regretted that at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be bred to divinity. There was among them Plutarch's Lives, in which I read abundantly, and I still think the time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of Defoe's called an Essay on Projects and another of Dr. Mather's called Essays to do Good, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

“This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother, James, returned from England with a press and letters to set up his business in Boston.... I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded and signed the indenture, when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made a great progress in the business and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books.”

The books that Franklin had read by the age of twelve are enormously impressive, but he was, of course a genius. How was this genius educated - in classes for the “gifted and talented?”

Best stated on page 3 that Franklin's father's business was that of a tallow chandler and soap boiler. Born in 1706, Franklin was put in Boston Grammar school at eight but stayed less than a year as his father found it too expensive. Franklin then went with a writing and arithmetic master, George Brownell, where he wrote well but failed arithmetic, leaving by the age of ten, after which he received no more formal education! Best said:

“He found that with Cocker's arithmetic book he could master figures on his own.”

Franklin, therefore, had very little contact with formal education, particularly with classical Latin, but nevertheless published in 1751 his ideas on what a formal education should include. Best reproduced, starting on page 165, Franklin's Idea of the English School, Sketch'd out for the Consideration of the Trustees of the Philadelphia Academy.

“It is expected that every Scholar to be admitted into this School be at least able to pronounce and divide the Syllables in Reading, and to write a legible Hand.”

Franklin obviously endorsed learning to read by “sound” with the syllabary. Franklin clearly defined what we today call “reading” as having learned “to pronounce and divide the Syllables,” and he expected that to have been achieved BEFORE a child even began school! Yet, as will be seen later, Franklin eventually introduced a very unsettling idea concerning advanced reading (or elocution), very possibly based on Butler's suggestion. That idea of Franklin's may have unwittingly become one of the sources for the switch from “sound” to “meaning” in beginning reading.

“...First or lowest Class.

“Let the first Class learn the English Grammar Rules, and at the same time let particular Care be taken to improve them in Orthography...

“Let the Pieces read by the Scholars in this Class be short, such as Croxall’s Fables, and little Stories. In giving the Lesson, let it be read to them, let the Meaning of the difficult Words in it be explained to them, and let them con it over by themselves before they are called to read to the Master, or Usher; who is to take particular Care that they do not read too fast, and that they duly observe the Stops and Pauses....”

The advice up to this point was probably standard enough, except for the lesson’s being read to the children first. Note that “to read” meant only to pronounce (after dividing) syllables. Note that the children were likely to “read too fast” if not stopped. Children were therefore not expected to have any difficulty with “decoding” in 1751 when the first step in “decoding” was to divide words into syllables. After words were broken up into their syllables, children could then simply pronounce already-memorized syllable sounds or work out any new syllable sounds.

“The Second Class to be taught

“Reading with Attention, and with proper Modulations of the Voice Some short Pieces, not exceeding the Length of a Spectator, to be given this Class as Lessons (and some of the easier Spectators would be very suitable for the Purpose). These Lessons might be given over Night as tasks, the Scholars to study them against the Morning. Let it then be required of them to give an Account, first of the Parts of Speech, and Construction of one or two Sentences, this will oblige them to recur frequently to their Grammar and fix its principal Rules in their Memory. Next of the Intention of the Writer, or the Scope of the Piece, the Meaning of each Sentence, and of every uncommon word. This would early acquaint them with the Meaning and Force of Words, and give them that most necessary Habit, of Reading with Attention.”

The advice up to the last line was not surprising, but in the last line Franklin touched the heart of the matter concerning “reading comprehension.” The attention necessary for reading comprehension to take place can be either voluntary or involuntary. When the reading process itself is a healthy automatic conditioned reflex like normal walking, attention to the content arising from that healthy act of reading is voluntary. It is not involuntary as with a disabled reader who must use his consciousness to guess at the print in order to read anything at all. The voluntary attention of a healthy reader can be encouraged but can never be forced as with a disabled reader. A healthy reader’s attention can only be made “habitual” in the sense that choosing to brush one’s teeth in the morning is “habitual”: It is a voluntary act that has become easier to repeat because of the framework of routine, yet still voluntary. Yet Franklin had raised the topic of reading for meaning, and he elaborated on it later.

Franklin’s next comment concerned “elocution,” but the practice he mentioned, unobjectionable in itself, was to be abused in the next century, by which time children were no longer expected to be able to decode anything for themselves without help.

“...the Master then to read the Piece with the proper Modulations of Voice, due Emphasis, and suitable Action, where Action is required, and put the Youth on imitating his Manner.

“It is requir’d that they should first study and understand the Lessons, before they are put upon reading them properly, to which End each Boy should have an English Dictionary to help him over Difficulties. When our Boys read English to us, we are apt to imagine they understand what they read because we do, and because ‘tis their Mother Tongue. But they often read as

Parrots speak, knowing little nor anything of the Meaning. And it is impossible a Reader should give the due Modulation to his Voice, and pronounce properly, unless his Understanding goes before his Tongue, and makes him Master of the Sentiment. Accustoming Boys to read aloud what they do not first understand, is the Cause of those even set Tones so common among Readers, which when they have once got a Habit of using, they find so difficult to correct: by which Means, among Fifty Readers we scarcely find a good One. For want of good Reading, Pieces publish'd with a View to influence the Minds of Men for their own or the public Benefit, lose Half their Force. Were there but one good Reader in a Neighbourhood, a publick Orator might be heard throughout a Nation with the same Advantages, and have the same Effect on his Audience, as if they stood within the Reach of his voice....”

The last paragraph is extraordinary. Boys (note the disregard of “girls”!) were presumed to read with “even set tones” because they did not understand the content. Good orators were presumed to be able to deliver a message because they did not speak with “even set tones.” Even though the audiences listening to orators would not have had access to dictionaries to check unknown words, the audiences were presumed to be able to understand them because of their superior delivery. Franklin therefore is making the EMOTIVE content of oral speech responsible for carrying its meaning!

Yet Franklin, himself, before he was twelve years old, brilliant as he was, certainly could not have thoroughly understood all the heavy reading material he covered. In the material just quoted, Franklin endorsed silent reading first as opposed to oral reading because with oral reading the boys might acquire the bad habit of reading without attention to “meaning.” It is startling, indeed, to find Benjamin Franklin to be the first on record to endorse silent reading for “meaning” (unless possibly Dr. Butler did so first in his 1726 book).

However, Franklin’s recommendations for the third, fourth and fifth classes were not startling, though undoubtedly novel in those days when Latin, not vernacular, schools were the norm.

Although Franklin had written very few articles, the “Family Library” published by the Harper firm in New York in the 1820’s included works by Franklin. As has been shown, one of the articles Franklin wrote concerned schools, and probably that article was influenced by Butler.

Franklin also wrote, of course, Poor Richard’s Almanack, published from 1732 to 1757, according to John Hardin Best, in Benjamin Franklin on Education (Teachers College, Columbia University, New York: 1960’s?). Best said:

“As an agent of mass education the Almanack was unparalleled. Its folk wisdom and enlightened perceptions were generally laced with an earthy Colonial humor....”

The huge success of the Almanack is just one more indication of the high literacy in America in those years.

Besides possibly being influenced by Butler’s and Franklin’s writings, Stewart’s ideas were almost certainly affected by Rousseau’s offensive nonsense, which was perceived as credible in the gullible eighteenth century.

The comments of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) concerning reading, in his book, Emile (1762), are quoted by Thwaite in from Primer to Pleasure (pages 65-66):

“Reading is the curse of childhood, yet it is almost the only occupation you can find for children. Emile at twelve years old will hardly know what a book is.” (p. 80, Book II) “The child

who reads ceases to think, he only reads.” “He is acquiring words, not knowledge.” (page 131, Book III)

The last two sentences must have intrigued Dugald Stewart since they only paraphrase his ultimate theme.

Butler, Franklin, Rousseau and Stewart objected to the use of language without thought, and yet the repeating of language without thought of its meaning is undoubtedly as old as mankind. It appears in Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Act III, Scene 2, Line 81. Hamlet’s guilty uncle finds it impossible to pray, saying:

“My words fly up, my thoughts remain below,  
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.”

The phenomenon is explained by automaticity. The neurosurgeon, Dr. Wilder Penfield, said the brain’s automatic sensory motor mechanism can perform learned functions, such as reciting memorized prayers or reading, with or WITHOUT the presence of conscious attention. With a certain type of epilepsy, for instance, it was possible for an accomplished pianist to play selections with great accuracy, even when his “higher brain mechanism” through which his conscious mind operated was totally blacked out. This specific case was cited in Penfield’s *The Mystery of the Mind*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1975, page 39.

Dugald Stewart’s works were actually psychology texts. In casually looking over the three volumes of *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, their resemblance to William James’ psychology text is marked, in tone and content. It is true that the Scottish Commonsense philosophers, such as the younger Thomas Brown (1778-1820), reportedly all provided:

“...a systematic classification of the various powers of the mind”

That description was given by Bruce A. Ronda in *Letters of Elizabeth Palmer Peabody* (1984), page 67. But reading that three-volume work of Stewart’s is like reading a first draft of James’ *Principles of Psychology*. Even the quotations in the body of Stewart’s work and the anecdotal footnotes as on page 134 are highly reminiscent of James’ treatment.

It seems likely William James was well acquainted with Stewart’s works, even to the point of using an apparent paraphrase of one of his expressions. Stewart had made the following comment on page 135 of Volume III of his *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, concerning religious enthusiasm:

“...the infectious tendency of religious enthusiasm; a tendency...very justly ascribe(d), in a great measure, to the violent bodily agitations which it is apt to produce and the rapidity with which such agitations are propagated among a crowd.... ...some other instances of the same kind which occurred in Scotland, at the time of Mr. Whitefields’s visit to this country, are stated, upon incomparable authority....”

William James included on page 653 of his *Principles of Psychology*, in his chapter, “The Perception of Reality,” a section headed, “The influence of Emotion and Active Impulse on Belief”:

“The reason of the belief is undoubtedly the bodily commotion which the exciting idea sets up. ‘Nothing which I can feel like that can be false.’ All our religious and supernatural beliefs are of this order.”

Note the resemblance in the discussion of religious feelings between Stewart's "violent bodily agitations" and James "bodily commotion." Stewart had claimed "bodily agitations" of "religious enthusiasm" were infectious; James claimed "bodily commotions" were the CAUSE of belief, making faith dependent on emotion instead of intellect. James' ludicrous conclusion is in keeping with his philosophy of "pragmatism," which itself is irrational.

Another striking similarity between the views of Stewart and James concerns the faulty definition both gave for the human will.

Stewart said he believed in the human will and rebuked Diderot for his opinion, which Stewart quoted (I believe from page 587 of the Carey edition listed below, but on this section my notes are not clear). Diderot had said:

"Examine the memory, and you will see that the word liberty is a word devoid of meaning, that there are not, and that there cannot be, free beings, that we are only what accords with the general order, with our organization, our education, and the chain of events. These dispose us inevitably. We can no more conceivably act without a motive (etc.) .... the motive is always exterior and foreign, fastened upon us by some cause distinct from ourselves."

Thus spake Diderot, the famed encyclopedist of the "Enlightenment," which ended in the blood-soaked French Revolution for "liberte, equalite, et fraternite." The personal convenience of Diderot's denial of free will should not be overlooked, however, as it probably helped to cushion any uneasiness this ex-student for the Roman Catholic priesthood might have felt about his own spiritual health. The "freedom" Diderot was denying was described very clearly by Francis Canavan, S. J., Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Fordham University, in the January 20, 1992 issue of the Catholic Eye:

"So far is the Catholic Church from denying our freedom that it insists on it. Cardinal Ratzinger, for instance, has spoken of 'God's unconditional respect for the freedom of His creature.' Pope John Paul II has said: 'All of God's action in human history respects the free will of the human "I".' In Catholic teaching, only God can save us, but not without our free consent."

Yet Stewart claimed that he, himself, believed in free will but, when he defined free will as being identical to "attention," instead of being the human ability to make choices between alternatives, he cancelled out any meaning to his belief. Stewart said in Volume 3, page 341 and following of the Carey Philadelphia edition mentioned below:

"I have been accused of overlooking, in the preceding chapter, a very important distinction between voluntary and involuntary attention. In some cases (it is said) attention attaches itself spontaneously to its object. In others it requires a painful effort to keep at study - nay, when we will to fix it on one subject, we find it perpetually wandering to another. The fact on which the criticism is founded must unquestionably be admitted, but the conclusion drawn from it is nevertheless erroneous.... when I am anxious to attend to a particular subject, I am apt to say that I will to attend to it, and when I forget my purpose, that my attention is involuntary; whereas the fact is, that the unintended distraction... was the effect of a particular volition of the mind, exerted in consequence of a momentary forgetfulness of my general purpose. Indeed, to those who are at all accustomed to precision in the use of language, the phrase involuntary attention must appear a manifest contradiction in terms."



The same error, wrongly equating attention with will, appeared on page 291 of James' *Principles of Psychology* written in 1890. Possibly James acquired the error from Stewart. As will be discussed, it had an exceedingly baleful effect on the teaching of reading:

"...when we see (as in the chapter on the will we shall see) that volition is nothing but attention; .....we must admit that the question whether attention involves such a principle of spiritual activity or not is metaphysical as well as psychological, and is well worthy of all the pains we can bestow on its solution. It is in fact the pivotal question of metaphysics, the very hinge on which our picture of the world shall swing from materialism, fatalism, monism, towards spiritualism, freedom, pluralism, - or else the other way...."

Stewart also clearly connected "attention" with "reading," as did James' followers, as will be shown. Chapter II of Stewart's first volume of March 13, 1792, text was entitled, "Of Attention." It was in this chapter that Stewart said the following, implicitly denying what today is called automatic behavior in reading:

"When we read a book (especially in a language which is not perfectly familiar to us), we must perceive successively every different letter, and must afterwards combine these letters into syllables and words, before we comprehend the meaning of a sentence. This process, however, passes through the mind, without leaving any trace in the memory."

Stewart's opinions on reading were obviously well known in the English-speaking intellectual world for a long time afterwards. In Volume II of *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 1844, on pages 217 and following, a summary appears of a paper by Rev. J. Wills, read by Dr. Anster. The elaborate discussion below primarily outlines Wills' views, only mentioning Stewart's in contrast. Stewart is mentioned by name, but most of the references to "he" are to the author, Dr. Wills.

"...upon Mr. Stewart's attempt to explain certain processes of the Human Understanding, on the supposition that it acquires, by habit, an acceleration of the succession of ideas, so great as to escape the consciousness. After having observed that Mr. Stewart's error consisted, not in his reasoning, but in having failed to observe that his facts are themselves complex results which demand a minute analysis... the author proceeded to a detailed investigation of the several examples....

"The author next entered on a detailed view of Mr. Stewart's example of a person reading, and showed that the same reasoning is applicable. He noticed the complication of trains of thought, which, according to Mr. Stewart's theory, must be simultaneously proceeding; and also observed, that his theory could not stop short at any point of these, and that wherever he might attempt to stop, an explanation should be given, which ought to supersede his whole theory. He then pursued the inquiry as in the previous example, by investigating the mind's progress in learning to read, and deduced similar conclusions. These he also confirmed, by noticing the various errors which occur in reading and printing; of these he showed, that they illustrate the effect of the combinations or complex conceptions previously formed to supply even the want of many of the component parts; so that the letter is inferred from the general form of the syllable, and the syllable from that of the word, rather than the contrary process. From this example he concluded, that the mind, by repeated acts of attention, acquires a stock of syllabic and vocal associations, of which the act of reading is a combined result; that by a further extension, written sentences may become combined with a process of thought, and that every reader possesses some range of thought thus symbolized by habit; and finally, that the general inference to be drawn from this and other similar examples is, that by means of habit, groups of signs, of movements,

facts, thoughts, sensations or phenomena, may acquire varied relations to each other; and that these being acquired, the combination alone becomes the object of notice....

“After several observations on the comparative difficulties of Mr. Stewart’s method and his own, the author noticed the distinction between the previous cases, in which there is an apparent character of combination, and others in which a difficulty must seem to arise from continuity. He then went at considerable length to apply the same reasoning to the case of the orator, as adduced by Mr. Stewart, and more fully described by Lord Brougham....

“...he observed, in conclusion, that Mr. Stewart had set out with a notion adapted to lead him astray....”

In the author’s complicated exposition, he had endorsed sound, not meaning, for beginning reading:

“...the mind, by repeated acts of attention, acquires a stock of syllabic and vocal associations, of which the act of reading is a combined result.... by means of habit, groups of signs... acquire varied relations to each other; ...being acquired, the combination alone becomes the object of notice.”

That author wrote his refutation half a century after Stewart’s conclusions, by which time teaching for “meaning” had replaced teaching for “sound” in Great Britain and America. The author also mentioned Lord Brougham, seemingly of like mind to Stewart, and Brougham was one of the moving forces for government schools in England. Not surprisingly, therefore, opposition to phonics became apparent in England, too, in the same time-frame. In *A History of Children’s Reading and Literature* by Alec Ellis (Pergamon Press, Oxford, England, and elsewhere), he stated on page 18:

“Kay-Shuttleworth compiled *The First Phonic Reading Book* (1843) which was approved by the Committee of Council on Education, but was subjected to scathing criticism in *The Quarterly Review*.”

The point for this history is that Dugald Stewart and his views, which would have included his views on reading, were very influential, reaching not only his students Brougham and Birkbeck in his own time, but reaching the psychologist James in the next century. Yet information on Dugald Stewart and on his influence on psychology and education have all but disappeared.

The preface to Stewart’s third philosophy/psychology volume, *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind*, is dated November 24, 1826, and it was published in 1827. An edition was published in America by Carey, Lee & Carey in Philadelphia. The senior Mathew Carey was the refugee Irishman who had received a loan from Lafayette in Paris, while working as a printer for Benjamin Franklin in Paris, to come to America and who was the first to print Parson Weems’ fable of George Washington and the cherry tree. He was the same Carey, by then a rich man according to Elizabeth Peabody (as quoted elsewhere in this text), who greeted Lafayette on his return to America in 1824. The Carey concern had a very prestigious trade, printing the *Philadelphia Journal of the Medical and Physical Sciences*, the *American Quarterly Review* and *English Common Law Reports*. The Carey company agents’ page for these journals showed how very many they dealt with, and confirmed that communication by printed matter all though the United States was very efficient in those early days. In Boston alone the company listed three agents: Munroe and Francis; Hilliard, Gray and Company; and Richardson and Lord. The company even listed agents in Canada and Mexico!

The illusion that communication was difficult before the appearance of the telephone, radio and television should be contested. It is true that the telephone, radio and television have brought the gift of

immediacy but they have generally taken away the far more important quality of carefully crafted and researched thought. We have largely traded in the use of carefully written journals and books, as the medium of communication between separated areas, for conversations which are often empty of meaningful content. By doing so, Hegelian cultural “progress” has taken a giant step backwards. It is probable that the contrasting of any paragraph, chosen at random, from any journal sold in America in the early nineteenth century, with any paragraph, taken at random, from the TV evening news in 1991 would make that clear. It would also make clear that the language, itself, has deteriorated.

People did communicate with great precision by printed matter over vast distances in earlier days, as the background given for Dugald Stewart makes clear. Stewart is shown as a member of the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg, of the Royal Academy of Berlin and of Naples, of the Philosophical Society of Cambridge and of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia and of Boston. Furthermore, in Stewart’s 1826 Volume 3, in his remarks concerning Indian sign language, he referred to the Transactions, page 116, of the American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia, 1819), and to a later work of 1823 reporting on an expedition ordered by the U. S. Government to the Rocky Mountains in 1819 and 1820. Two-way communication between the United States and Scotland was obviously in fine working order before 1826! Stewart said (Volume 3 of 1826, page 20):

“...we are given to understand that there actually exists a system of visible signs, intelligible wherever Indians are to be found, over the whole American continent....”

How long Stewart had been a member of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia is not known, though he referred to a copy of their Transactions from 1819. As a member, however, he would have been interested in their back issues, one of which concerned teaching language to deaf-mutes, and “phonics.” The following appears in R. C. Alston’s *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800*, Volume VI, Rhetoric, Style, Elocution, Prosody, Rhyme, Pronunciation, Spelling Reform, “Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, England, 1969.” (The title has been capitalized below, which was not done by Alston.) Alston’s comments are quoted exactly.

“No. 506. Thornton, William. *Cadmus: or a Treatise on the Elements of Written Language*,... Philadelphia, R. Aitken, 1793. (Phonetics; pronunciation; spelling-reform; surdo-mutism.) Includes an important section on teaching the deaf and dumb to speak. Originally published in the Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, III, 1793, 262-319 published again in Philadelphia, 1796”

This is another possible indication that Stewart was well versed on methods for teaching the deaf, which is discussed further below.

Stewart also wrote *Philosophical Essays* in 1810 and *The Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers* in 1828, and presumably other similar materials. However, his three-volume *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* was his most important work, the first volume appearing in 1792, the second in 1814, and the last, written in 1826, in 1827. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963) noted in its short article concerning Stewart, as a member of the Scottish school, that his views were largely those of his predecessor, Reid. Yet Keagy quoted Stewart, not Reid, concerning reading, and so did the speaker from Ireland mentioned elsewhere in this history. In his 1826 volume, Stewart demonstrated his familiarity with the problems of language for deaf-mutes and with the Indian sign language. It is also apparent Stewart concerned himself with reading, probably building on Reid’s earlier comments concerning language.

In Volume 3, page 341 (1826), Stewart quoted Thomas Reid (1710-1796) on language:

“From what cause does it happen, that a good speaker no sooner conceives what he would express, than the letters, syllables and words arrange themselves according to innumerable rules of speech, while he never thinks of these rules.... Yet all this may be done by habit.

Yet Stewart made it clear in the “Advertisement” to his second volume, dated November 22, 1813, and published in 1814, that his own consideration of language did not wait until the preparation of his third volume which was completed only in 1826 and published in 1827. In 1813, Stewart referred to:

“The third volume (of which the chief materials are already prepared....)”

Stewart stated in 1813 that one of the principal subjects in the anticipated third volume was language, which belonged:

“...in strict propriety to the second part of my work, but the size of the volume has prevented me from entering on the consideration... at present.... Much, indeed, still remains to be done in maturing, digesting, and arranging many of the doctrines which I was accustomed to introduce into my lectures....”

Stewart was specifically interested in the skill of writing, since he referred on page 91 of his *Philosophical Essays* of 1810 to Warburton’s history of writing.

The inference is that the material on “language” had been covered in his lectures, which were enormously popular with students, two of whom were Lord Brougham and Brougham’s close friend, George Birkbeck. The philosopher/psychologist James Mill (1773-1836) said, in his article “Association of Ideas,” (from *History of Psychology*, by William Sahakian, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., Itaska, Illinois, 1981: page 58):

“The idea of Professor Dugald Stewart delivering a lecture, recalls the idea of the delight with which I heard him; that, the idea of the studies in which it engaged me; that, the trains of thought which succeeded; and each epoch of my mental history, the succeeding one, till the present moment....”

In his third volume, Stewart showed a remarkable knowledge of methods for teaching the deaf, and, it can be presumed from his earlier comments, the knowledge was not new to him. He may very well have referred to it in his other works or in articles. On page 19 of the 1826 Volume 3, he referred to the work of Braidwood in teaching speech to deaf-mutes and revealed he personally knew Braidwood. In various places from pages 281 to 285, Stewart referred to the Abbe de l’Epee and to his follower, Sicard, who used manual language to teach the deaf, the same method used by Gallaudet.

But it was in his earlier volumes that the objection to reading without concentrating attention on meaning appears, to which Keagy must have been referring in 1832.

Stewart discussed the question of attention in Volume 1, (page 400 and 408), of an 1808 Brattleboro, Vermont, edition printed by William Fessenden:

“In general, whenever habits of inattention, and an incapacity of observation are very remarkable, they will be found to be arisen from some defect of early education. I already remarked that, when nature is allowed free scope, the curiosity, during early youth, is alive to every external object, and to every external occurrence, while the powers of the imagination and reflection do not display themselves till a much later period: the former till about the age of

puberty, and the latter till we approach manhood. It sometimes, however, happens, that, in consequence of a peculiar disposition of mind, or of an infirm bodily constitution, a child is led to seek amusement from books, and to lose a relish for those recreations which are suited to his age. In such an instance, the ordinary progress of the intellectual powers is prematurely quickened, but that best of all education is lost, which nature has prepared both for the philosopher and the man of the world, amidst the active sports and the hazardous activities of childhood. It is from these alone, that we can acquire, not only that force of character which is suited to the more arduous (sets) of life, but that complete and prompt command of attention to things external, without which the highest endowments of understanding, however they may fit a man for the solitary speculations of the closet, are but of little use in the practice of affairs, or for enabling him to profit by personal experience.... Where, however, such habits of inattention have unfortunately been contracted, we ought not to despair of them as perfectly incurable....”

Stewart also made the following comments concerning attention, some from Volume II, which I believe I copied from Chapter VI of the 1821 edition by Wells and Lilly of Boston:

“Attention is a voluntary act; it requires an active exertion to begin and continue it; and it may be continued (as long as) we will, but consciousness is involuntary, and of no continuance, changing with every (thought)....”(page 60, Volume II)

“The distinction between attention and consciousness is pointed out by Dr. Reid in his Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man....” (page 70, Volume II)

“...that the plan of reading which is commonly followed is very different from that which I have been recommending will not be disputed. Most people read merely to pass an idle hour... and a considerable number... to the display which they are afterwards to make of their literary acquisitions....” (page 242, volume II)

“In general, I believe, it may be laid down as a rule that those who carry about with them a great degree of acquired information, which they have always at command, or who have rendered their own discoveries so familiar to them, as always to be in a condition to explain them without recollection, are very seldom possessed of much invention or even of much quickness of apprehension.” (page 408, Volume I, 1808 Vermont edition)

“Nothing, in truth, has such tendency to weaken not only the powers of invention, but the intellectual powers in general, as a habit of extensive and various reading, without reflection. The activity and force of the mind are gradually impaired, in consequence of disuse, and not infrequently, all our principles and opinions come to be lost in the infinite multiplicity and discordance of our acquired ideas. By confining our ambition to pursuing the truth with modesty and candour, and learning to value our acquisitions only as far as they contribute to making us wiser and happier, we may perhaps be obliged to sacrifice the temporary admiration of the common dispensers of literary fame. We may rest assured, that it is in this way only we can hope to make real progress in knowledge, and to enrich the world with useful inventions.” (page 243, Volume II)

When stripped of its reasonable tone, this excerpt shows that Stewart was recommending that people read less, because of the “infinite multiplicity and discordance of... acquired ideas” caused by wide reading. In his own way, therefore, Stewart was “drowning the books” just like the Viking invaders of Ireland a thousand years before.

Robert Owen wanted to subject little two-year-olds to his institutional training so that he could shape their adult minds. The idea of the importance of very early training was, of course, not new with Owen. Dugald Stewart referred to it (page 344, Volume II) and quoted John Locke on the importance of early training:

“Hence it would appear, that he who has the power of modeling the habitual conceptions of an infant mind, is, in great measure, the arbiter of its future happiness or misery. By guarding against the spectres conjured up by his superstitious weakness, and presenting to it only images of what is good, lovely, and happy, he may secure through life a perpetual sunshine to the soul, and may perhaps make some provision against the physical evils to which humanity is exposed....”

To Owen, of course, religion was “superstition” against which the child should be “guarded,” and Owen believed that “he who has the power of modeling the... infant mind...” should NOT be the infant’s parents. It was after Owen founded the infant schools and infant schools became widespread that the shaping of infant minds began to be taken away from their parents.

Besides commenting on the long-term effects of “educating” toddlers, which became Brougham’s concern in his work on infant schools, Stewart revealed his great familiarity with the problems of teaching the deaf, on pages 281 to 295 of Volume II, and elsewhere. He referred to the Abbe de l’Epee and his successor, Sicard, and to articles concerning this work “in some of the continental journals.” Stewart had, himself, offered to work with a particular unfortunate deaf-blind child in Scotland (who did show some improvement in sight as the years progressed despite very inept surgery). Stewart also referred to Sicard’s use of manual sign language for the deaf. As mentioned, Stewart even said he personally knew Braidwood and referred to Braidwood’s “dumb pupils, from whatever part of the country they came” (on page 19, I believe).

Stewart therefore discussed at length the deaf and dumb, Braidwood, the Abbe de l’Epee, Sicard, deaf-mute sign-language, Indian sign-language, “words,” and, apart from the problems of the deaf, the presumed overpowering necessity for all people to read only for “meaning” so that their brains did not, in effect, atrophy.

Yet nowhere could I find that Stewart connected the two ideas: the teaching of sight-words, as given to the deaf, to hearing children, to assure “reading for meaning.” Stewart may have done so in articles I did not see, or the jump to that unfortunate conclusion may have been made by Stewart’s followers, such as Keagy. Nevertheless, Stewart’s general ideas provided a firm foundation for the promotion of the “meaning” method to teach beginning reading.

Stewart appears to have been very much a man of his era. By inference, he endorsed Brougham’s Society for the Diffusion of Useful knowledge, and, although he stated he opposed the atheism of the French Revolution, he clearly was not one with the religious conservatives. Both of these views are found in his comments from *The Philosophy of the Active or Moral Powers of Man*, in his preface signed “Kinneil House, April 16, 1828:”

“The large and perhaps disproportionate space which I have allowed in these volumes to the Doctrines of Natural Religions..... the substance of lectures given in the University of Edinburgh in the year 1792-3 and for almost 20 years afterward... (Ed.: He stated he intended this to be in opposition to the atheists of the French Revolution.) - my attention was thus imperatively called to this part of my course in a greater degree than to any other by the aspect of the times when, entered upon the duties of my office as Professor of Moral Philosophy I published for the use of my students, in November 1793, a small Manual under the title of *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, which I afterward used as a textbook as well, to go with my lectures at the University. The second

part of this Manual contains some Principles expressed in nearly the same words and it gives me heartfelt satisfaction to believe that, in consequence of the more general diffusion of knowledge among all ranks of people, such discussions are now become much less necessary than they seemed to me to be at that period....In this belief I am confirmed by the eagerness with which the "Library of Useful Knowledge" has been (received) by that class of readers for whom it is more peculiarly intended....

"I cannot conclude this Preface without expressing the satisfaction I have felt on observing among the more liberal writers in France a reviving taste for the Philosophy of the Human Mind. To this no one has contributed more than Victor Cousin, so well known, and so honorably distinguished, as the object of Jesuitical persecution; a persecution which appears to have followed him beyond the limits of his own country."

Blumenfeld in *Is Public Education Necessary?* (page 140 and following) gave the following background on Cousin. To what degree Stewart endorsed Cousin's particular ideas on the following would be of interest:

"Both the *American Journal of Education* and its successor, the *Annals of Education*, ran numerous articles on Prussian education. But it wasn't until Victor Cousin, a French professor of philosophy who was highly regarded by the Harvard liberals, had published his report on the Prussian public school system in 1833, that American educators began to think seriously of using the Prussian system as the model for the national public school system they hoped to establish in America. It had everything the reformers wanted: full state financial support via taxation, compulsory attendance, truant officers, punishments for recalcitrant parents, graded classrooms, uniform curriculum, and teachers trained by the state...

"That Victor Cousin should have been the one to write the report was both fitting and appropriate. Cousin had gained considerable notoriety as a great admirer and interpreter of the German transcendentalist philosophers - Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel - and he became the chief channel through which their pantheism and subjective idealism were introduced to French and New England intellectuals...."

That Cousin was himself a pantheist, whose ideas should have been resisted by Christians and Jews, is evident from this comment of his, quoted on page 144 of *Is Public Education Necessary?* (?:)

"The God of consciousness is not an abstract God, a solitary king... He is... infinite and finite both together: a trinity, in fine, being at once God, nature, and humanity."

Blumenfeld stated further (pages 149-153), concerning Cousin's appointment immediately after the shift in power in France in 1830, which had made the movers in the French Revolution (and their ideas!) acceptable again:

"...in 1830, Cousin was sent to Prussia by the French minister of education to find out why the Prussian system was so much better developed than the French.... his report...completed in June of 1831... was translated into English by Sarah Austin, a noted liberal Englishwoman, whose husband had been studying law in Germany.... Mrs. Austin's translation first appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1833 before it came out in book form in 1834. In December 1833, the *American Annals of Education* reprinted large extracts of the report as printed in the *Edinburgh Review*. It commented: 'Such is the account of a system of schools acknowledged to be the best in the world, given by a distinguished philosopher....'

“...The publication of Cousin’s Report in 1833 in the Edinburgh Review was enough to activate the liberals into greater effort in behalf of public education. Holbrook’s Lyceum movement was in full swing, teacher’s conventions were being organized in many towns, the American Institute of Instruction was preparing for its fourth annual meeting, the School Agents’ Society was sending its operatives across the country to awaken slumbering educators in remote districts, and the Cousin report gave the New England intellectuals the perfect snobbish appeal which added immeasurably to the public school movement’s prestige: philosophy’s seal of approval as given by the ‘first philosopher of the age.’”

By 1828, the year of Stewart’s death, Stewart had kind words to say about the pantheist and statist Cousin who was a clear enemy of Christianity and Judaism, as well as an enemy of the political ideals of such figures as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. They opposed state tyranny, and that is what was being proposed by Cousin in the field of education.

Stewart had sparked a major conflict in Edinburgh University shortly after 1800 (recorded in a series of papers pro and con) over ministers appointing professors. Whatever the merits of that particular case, it suggests the possibility of Stewart’s aversion to traditional religion.

Stewart also appears to have been an uncritical supporter of the work of Brougham’s group in “diffusing useful knowledge” and founding mechanics’ libraries. On the surface, of course, these aims were exemplary. Yet an English writer recognized the hidden poison of the movement: it was separating the body politic into opposing groups: the “working” class versus the “privileged” class and such separation invited civil war. Karl Marx spelled out that artificial separation more clearly, and with it succeeded in making the twentieth century overwhelmingly the bloodiest in human history.

In summary, Stewart appears to have been in agreement with the “improved” intellectual climate of the late 1820’s, which included not only his ex-students Brougham and Birkbeck, but men such as Cousins. Yet most people do not adopt new philosophies after middle age, and Stewart was old at that time. The probability is that those “new” philosophies were only Stewart’s old ones in a new packaging, fundamentally the same as those he had taught at the University of Edinburgh to Birkbeck, Brougham and so many others. It may well have been Stewart who inspired both Birkbeck and Brougham with the desire to do the actual work involved in converting education and society to such philosophies.

One of those philosophies concerned teaching reading for “meaning” instead of “sound,” and Stewart’s writings were certainly used to justify that change. The ultimate conversion of education to that particular philosophy was successful beyond belief.



## **Chapter 18**

### **The Evidence Suggests Deliberate Cooperation Among Movers-and-Shakers to Bring About Their Braver, Newer World**

Orestes Brownson (1803-1876) was involved in 1829 and 1830 with the son of Robert Owen, the famous Scottish socialist, and with other activists associated with the famous, early, attempted socialist utopia in New Harmony, Indiana. Blumenfeld's book (pages 95, 96, and 113) quoted from Brownson's autobiography, *The Convert*, concerning the agendas of the people with whom Brownson was involved at that time:

“The great object was to get rid of Christianity, and to convert our churches into halls of science. The plan was not to make open attacks on religion... but to establish a system of state, - we said national - schools, from which all religion was to be excluded, in which nothing was to be taught but such knowledge as is verifiable by the senses, and to which all parents were to be compelled by law to send their children.... The first thing to be done was to get this system of schools established. For this purpose, a secret society was formed, and the whole country was to be organized somewhat on the plan of the carbonari of Italy, or as were the revolutionists throughout Europe by Bazard preparatory to the revolutions of 1820 and 1830. This organization was commenced in 1829, in the city of New York, and to my own knowledge was effected throughout a considerable part of New York State. How far it was extended in other states, or whether it is still kept up I know not, for I abandoned it in the latter part of the year 1830.... It would be worth inquiring, if there were any means of ascertaining how large a share of this secret infidel society, with its members all through the country unsuspected by the public, and unknown to each other, yet all known to a central committee, and moved by it, have had in giving the extraordinary impulse to godless education which all must have remarked since 1830....

“How far the secret organization extended, I do not know: but I do know that a considerable portion of the State of New York was organized, for I was myself one of the agents organizing it.”

Brownson went on to become a well-known lecturer, and was influential in shaping the early education of Father Isaac Hecker, before Hecker became a Catholic convert and founded the Paulist Fathers (discussed in a biography of Father Hecker by Boniface Hanley, O.F.M., in *The Anthonian*, Vol. 57, 4th Quarter, 1983). Brownson was an associate of people like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Elizabeth Peabody, and the Transcendentalists, before Brownson himself became a Catholic convert.

The point is that, although Brownson was a colorful man, he does not appear to have been an unreliable man, so his testimony may be taken at face value: He testified that “movers and shakers” in 1829 and 1830 were consciously trying to shape American education secretly, and to establish government schools and mandatory attendance laws in order to remove religion from American society. There were obviously many members of this secret society, but his is the only known testimony to its existence. It would therefore appear that such activist groups leave little trace in the records. Brownson's personal knowledge of such a secret group, which clearly emanated from the Owenites, dated from 1829. That group may well have had an older parent group in the Owenite circle. The record suggests that the sudden switch in America from the “syllable” (“sound”) method, which had been the norm in 1825, to the “word” (“meaning”) method, which had become the norm by about 1830, was very likely one of the achievements of such a group, as was the eventual establishment of government schools in America and

Great Britain. After all, the “word” method for English has always been the siamese twin to the movement for government schools: Wherever government schools arrived in America and Great Britain, the “meaning” method for learning to read has always arrived attached to them.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) in its article on secret societies (Vol. 20, p. 264), the purpose of secrecy is either to strengthen relationships among members or to exert power over outsiders. The public may have no objection to the former purpose but has great objection to the latter. The public rightfully objects to anyone’s trying to place hidden “controls” on its freedom.

In the 1820’s, secret societies were rampant in Europe, including such groups as the revolutionary Carbonari in Italy. The memory of the ill-famed Illuminati in Europe was still fresh, of which Pestalozzi had been a member (which group only surfaced in the 1790’s because of the accidental death of a courier who was carrying incriminating papers). That Pestalozzi was a member of the Illuminati, of course, only confirms that it is unfortunately not impossible for well-known educational reformers to be associated with the most lunatic and extreme of secret societies! It may be appropriate to call the Illuminati the intellectuals’ Ku Klux Klan. The opposition to such secret societies was intense in the early nineteenth century.

Two influential meaning-method primers published by two different companies in two different years, 1828 and 1844, were clearly related to each other in content. They shared another similarity which suggests that they had a possible connection with the secret societies of the change-agents of the period . Both of these meaning-method primers used the rather rarely seen printers’ asterism, a mark consisting of three asterisks in the form of a triangle, and they used it in a fashion which was abnormal, particularly in view of the mania for secret societies and for subterfuge which was so popular at that time.

Various definitions were given for the word “asterism” in the Britannica World Language Dictionary, Edition of Funk & Wagnall’s Standard (1965) but only one concerned three asterisks forming the shape of a triangle. The dictionary used three separate categories to define the word, “asterism.” Definition 1 concerned printing, and 1a was for a set of asterisks. Definition 1b was for three asterisks in the shape of a triangle, placed in front of a selection so as to draw attention to it.. Definition 2 had two sections, both under the category, astronomy. Definition 2a meant a group of stars, and 2b meant a constellation.. Definition 3 concerned the ability of some mineral crystals to produce a star shape when light is reflected from or sent through them.

It is obvious that only definition 1b, using an asterism to draw attention to a printed item, concerned the use of the asterism on the 1826 Franklin Primer, in an 1828 edition, and its use on the 1844 book described below. On the back cover of the 1828 edition of the Franklin Primer, the name of its publishers, “A. Phelps and A. Clark,” was preceded by an asterism with its point facing down. The placement of an asterism in that position is very curious. Why would publishers wish to call attention to their own name? Was the use of the asterism before that name possibly meant to announce that the publishers were members of some select group and therefore worthy of assistance from any other members of the same group who happened to see the symbol?

The triangular asterism with its point facing down is also found indented and preceding the first words, “The plan of this primer,” in the final paragraph in the preface (called “Advertisement”) to William Russell’s 1844 Primer of First Steps in Spelling and Reading, published by another publisher than that of the Franklin Primer. Since, according to the Britannica definition 1b, the asterism in the form of a triangle is used to call attention to something, attention was obviously being called to “The plan of this primer.” Russell’s primer with the triangular asterism used the same sight-word meaning-method “plan” as Reverend Willard’s ground-breaking, “meaning”-method 1826 Franklin Primer which had the triangular asterism immediately before the publishers’ name on an 1828 edition.

The argument could very reasonably be made that the use of the asterism in these two cases may have been meaningless. However, its use on materials by known activists (by the publishers of the critically important Franklin Primer, and by the Scot, William Russell, whose change-agent history is given later) does raise doubts. Furthermore, since I found the triangular asterism on only about ten of the hundreds of nineteenth century reading texts I examined, the rarity of its use should be considered along with the doubts. (One later reader on which it appeared was a copy of Swinton's Second Reader, copyright 1882, published by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor and Company, New York and Chicago. On the back of the title page, all Swinton's Readers were listed, followed by an asterism and this note in italics: "All the above books are handsomely bound in cloth, similar to this book, and in all respects of mechanical execution and illustration are of the highest order of excellence.")

The words immediately following the triangular asterism on the 1844 text are "The plan of this primer" and the "plan" of Russell's 1844 primer is almost identical with the sight-word meaning-method plan of the 1828 copy of the 1826 Franklin primer which also carried the triangular asterism, except for far greater vocabulary control in the 1844 copy. Why would a printer "decorate" the beginning of the final paragraph on a page with a triangular asterism unless the words immediately following the asterism were of considerable importance? Those words were, of course, "The plan of this primer...." and the "plan" was the teaching of beginning reading purely by meaning, and not by sound.

Since the early nineteenth century was a period overrun with secret societies, is it possible that the triangular asterism was to indicate to those who would recognize it that "The plan of this primer," the meaning-method, was officially endorsed by some group? Is it possible that the triangular asterism preceding "A. Phelps and A. Clark," the publishers of the 1828 copy of the 1826 The Franklin Primer and its sequel, the Improved Reader, meant that their meaning-method series was to receive all possible assistance from that "in" crowd? If so, this might explain the extraordinary fact that the Franklin Primer and the three books which eventually followed it were, as later announced on the cover of A. Phelps' printing of Mrs. Barbauld's Easy Lessons (1843):

"...reviewed and noticed with approbation in the 'Revue Encyclopedique,' (published in the city of Paris) one of the most distinguished Scientific Journals published in Europe."

Why should a leading scientific journal in Paris, published in French, pay any attention at all to reading books for five-year-old children published in English in far-off western Massachusetts? Why did that flimsy, little, rural Franklin Primer written in English receive attention in Paris worthy of the pompous and philosophical 1822 French text written by the Belgian university professor Jacotot? Jacotot's Universal Instruction (mentioned elsewhere) had, it should be remarked, promoted a very different kind of "word" method because it actually endorsed "sound," even though it was a grossly incompetent approach.

It is interesting that the 1828 copy of the 1826 The Franklin Primer with the intriguing triangular asterism carried immediately under its title a long endorsement from The American Journal of Education, whose editor was the same William Russell who wrote the 1844 comparable primer, carrying the triangular asterism immediately before the words, "The plan of this primer," which plan was the teaching of beginning reading by "meaning" instead of "sound."

The biography of William Russell, who wrote the endorsement quoted on the 1828 copy and who wrote the 1844 primer, is very interesting. According to the Dictionary of American Biography, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934 - 1962, William Russell was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1798 and died in the United States in 1873. However, the details in this biographical account of a man who was essentially unknown by 1934 when the material was published strongly indicate that the 1934 account had

to have been lifted almost wholesale from a highly complimentary account written about 1873 or so, at which time William Russell would still have been well known. That account, very probably, was from Russell's obituary in some circa 1873 periodical. According to the biographical account in the Dictionary of American Biography, Russell had entered the University of Glasgow in 1811. The account stated, however, that:

“He did not receive a degree upon completing his studies, because he could not afford the journey to Oxford or Cambridge, which alone had the privilege of granting degrees at that time. He had decided to devote his life to teaching, but before he was able to establish himself in his native city, a pulmonary ailment made it necessary for him to seek a warmer climate. Accordingly, he sailed for Georgia early in 1817. He seems to have improved here sufficiently to take employment as a tutor in the home of Judge John McPherson Berrien of Savannah. Later in the year he revisited Glasgow, and was convinced that the Scottish climate was too severe for his health.

“Returning to Savannah in 1818, he conducted a private school for about two years.....”

The account then said that Russell married Ursula Wood, one of the teachers, and the daughter of Reverend Luke Wood of Somers, Connecticut, which probably influenced Russell's move in 1822 to New Haven, Connecticut, where he and his wife conducted a school. He then became headmaster of the Hopkins Grammar School, and also gave elocution and oratory lessons to Yale students. The biographical account continued::

“Suffering a recurrence of his ailment, he resigned and moved to Boston, where, for five years, he gave instruction in elocution in several schools and to students attending Harvard College. In 1826 he became first editor of the American Journal of Education, carrying on his editorial work at night. During this period he gave many lectures on educational topics before teachers' institutes, reading circles, and lyceums, and took an active part in the discussions of the Transcendentalists in Boston and neighboring towns. Late in 1830 he removed to Philadelphia with Amos Bronson Alcott, and the following year established a school for girls in connection with the academy at Germantown. He organized the first teachers' association in Philadelphia (1831) and founded a Journal of Education there a year later. In 1833 he withdrew from the Germantown academy and established a school for girls in Philadelphia, where he remained until 1838. Returning then to Boston, he again taught elocution and later, in partnership with James E. Murdoch, opened a school of speech. From 1842 to 1844, he resided in Andover, teaching elocution and oratory at Phillips Academy, the theological seminary, and Abbot Academy... Although he removed to Medford, Mass., in 1846... he lectured periodically [at many schools such as] Brown University, Union Theological Seminary, and Princeton.

“In 1849, he founded the Merrimack Normal Institute, at Merrimack, N. H., a private normal school which he conducted successfully until 1852. The year following he taught in the normal school at Providence, R. I. In response to an invitation from the town of Lancaster, Mass., he opened the New England Normal Institute there on May 11, 1853, but because of failing health, closed it in 1855. During the two years of its existence, it became an important center of Pestalozzianism in the United States. He resided in Lancaster until his death, devoting his later years to lecturing and writing for various teachers' journals. He was one of the organizers of the American Institute of Instruction, and did much to further its important work.... “

The inconsistencies in this biographical account, which probably originated about 1873, are glaring and badly need criticism. William Russell lacked the money to go from Glasgow in Scotland to Oxford or Cambridge in England to receive his degree “because he could not afford the journey.” Yet, “before he

was able to establish himself in his native city,” and within a year or so of the time he lacked the money to travel from Scotland to England, “he sailed for Georgia” all the way across the Atlantic Ocean! If he really had failing health, he could hardly have gone as a working sailor. After he came to America, presumably near penniless, his only source for money appeared to have been from tutoring in a private home of a very influential man. Yet with that puny income, THE VERY SAME YEAR, he sailed across the Atlantic and went back to Scotland! Russell came back to Savannah in America by 1818, having made three one-way trips all the way across the Atlantic in one year, after he had been unable to pay for transportation only shortly before merely to go from Scotland down to England! Not too long before, immigrants from Great Britain to America had signed “indentures” promising many years of service to whoever paid for their ONE-WAY tickets across the ocean. Yet the penniless Russell somehow paid for THREE passages across the Atlantic in less than two years!

The biography refers to Russell’s great successes with his schools. What is glaring, instead, is the obvious fact that he never “established himself” as a teacher anywhere! Instead, he was a confirmed job-hopper. He spent only four years in Savannah, Georgia, three years in New Haven, Connecticut, five years in Boston, three years in Germantown, Pennsylvania, five years in Philadelphia, four years in Boston again, two years in Andover, Massachusetts, presumably two years in East Windsor, Connecticut, (or else the two years from 1844 to 1846 are unaccounted for), three years in Medford, Massachusetts, two years in Merrimack, New Hampshire, one year in Providence, Rhode Island, and two years in Lancaster, Massachusetts, teaching in his normal school.

Russell then closed his normal school “because of failing health” in 1855. Yet he remained in Lancaster “lecturing and writing” (which obviously also means traveling) the rest of his life, his “failing health” not finishing him off until eighteen years later, in 1873, at the ripe old age of 75! Back in 1817 at the age of not quite nineteen, he had left Scotland because “a pulmonary ailment made him seek a warmer climate.” Yet when his pulmonary ailment recurred in Connecticut in 1825, the warmer climate he chose to seek at that time was BOSTON! He had ailments, presumably, for 56 years: from the age of not quite 19 to age 75. Such ailments sound suspiciously like robust health.

It is evident, however, that Russell did “establish himself” but it was as a traveling activist, not as a teacher. It is in this frame of reference that Russell’s Scottish connections become of interest. It seems altogether probable that William Russell was sponsored and subsidized financially originally by someone he may have known from Scotland, who had an intense interest in education, and whose views he shared. The money for those three one-way tickets across the Atlantic had to come from somewhere. The biographies on Brougham and Birkbeck raise the possibility that Russell’s sponsor may have been someone like Lord Brougham, or someone associated with Brougham, or associated with George Birkbeck who had taught at the Anderson Institution in Glasgow from which city Russell came. Possibly Russell’s financial sponsor was someone associated with Brougham’s Edinburgh Review or with activists in the University of Glasgow from which Russell had recently graduated. It is of interest that Brougham was elected rector of the University of Glasgow by its students about 1825, even though Brougham had not been in Scotland for many years. Clearly, like minds to Brougham’s in the University of Glasgow student body were involved in Brougham’s election or he never could have been elected. Russell had been a member of that student body only about eight years earlier, just before coming to America in 1817, and secret societies in universities were reportedly a fact of life about that time.

On page 309, Cremin recorded that the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was founded by Henry Brougham and his associates in London in 1826.

That was a critical year, indeed: the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the year that war was declared in America on the age-old “sound” method of teaching beginning reading, by the publication of three widely promoted “meaning” texts. It was the year that Holbrook started his

“institutes” which became the lever to promote government schools. It was noteworthy for something else, as Blumenfeld stated (page 118):

“The year 1826 also saw the creation of the American Journal of Education, the first national journal in the country devoted exclusively to the subject of education. The editor’s prospectus in the first issue left no doubt that the Journal would become a mouthpiece for the cause of public education. Its editor, William Russell, was a Scotsman who had come to Boston in the 1820’s and, as a teacher of elocution, had quickly become part of the Channing circle. The prospectus in the January 1826 issue read in part:

““The conductors of the Journal will make it their constant endeavor to aid in diffusing enlarged and liberal views of education. Nothing, it seems to us, has had more influence in retarding the progress of improvement in the science of instruction, than narrow and partial views of what education should be expected to produce.’

“Russell then wrote:

““There is a deep and strong tide of opinion already undermining all that is useless and cumbrous in instruction. The current of improvement is already flowing; and all that any individual can claim, is the merit of assisting in giving it the most advantageous direction. Our office is not to rouse a dormant attention. Already there is everywhere a stirring of the public mind, and a fervency of public effort, which make it too late for any candidate to hope for the honor of being ranked as a reformer. All that can now be reasonably expected, is the satisfaction of contributing a proportion of service to so good a cause.”“

The statement, “Already there is everywhere a stirring of the public mind, and a fervency of public effort,” was just so much pump-priming propaganda. Sales of printed materials were enormous in America at the time, as shown by the Harper brothers’ success. Yet, only seven years before, in 1819, after only about a year’s life, the previous and sole educational journal ever published in America, The Academician, the effort of Albert Picket, President of the Incorporated Society of Teachers, had gone out of business presumably because of lack of interest! As mentioned, it had carried a series of articles on the Lancastrian and Pestalozzian methods, among other things, before it was abandoned, so presumably there was no ground-swell of interest in the public even for these most current educational enthusiasms of the change-agents.

It was not the public seeking educational change. Those seeking change were a small group of “reformers” in Scotland, England, and America, but they possessed superb abilities for organization and publicity, and they knew how to prime the public pump to produce the current for change that they wanted. Brougham had already begun with his 1825 book on education which went through 20 editions in 12 months, but then, of course, his greatest talent was known to be as a publicist.

Blumenfeld continued:

“In one of the back pages of the first issue there appeared this little notice about New Harmony:

““Mr. Owen, whose plans for the melioration of society, have of late excited considerable interest in this country, has instituted, at his settlement of New-Harmony, (Indiana), a school similar to that which attracted so much attention at his establishment

in New-Lanark (Scotland). An account of this school will be given in an early number of our work.'

"That account was never forthcoming. The June 1826 issue published a short extract from a letter from New Harmony, which told very little, and in the March 1827 issue another extract from a letter was published. Among other things, the letter said: 'The schools here are independent of all Mr. Owen's religious, political or moral opinions - as much so as those in Boston.'

"After that the Journal of Education was conspicuously silent on Owen, Maclure, the school at New Harmony, the lectures of Frances Wright and Robert Dale Owen, the program of the Working Men's Party, or anything else connected with the radicals in New Harmony and New York.

"What did the Journal of Education write about? In that first year, eight of the issues carried major articles on the Infant Schools, which had become very popular in England and were about to be launched in America. And three issues published large extracts from James G. Carter's books on public education.

"In none of the articles was Robert Owen ever to be given credit as the originator of the infant school idea with his school for the formation of character at New Lanark. Owen had particularly focused on the two- to six-year-old group as the crucial period for molding character."

The Journal of Education obviously dropped its reporting on the Owen group because the Owen group was becoming notorious. For instance, Frances Wright eventually advocated "free love," and that would hardly have been acceptable to the conservative America of the day!

Some of Russell's activities in Boston can be determined through the biography of Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, the sister-in-law of Horace Mann and Nathaniel Hawthorne, and a well-meaning but fuzzy-minded teacher/reformer who was famous in Massachusetts for decades.

Elizabeth Palmer Peabody had little, if any, contact with teaching beginning reading in her schools. When she began teaching at sixteen years of age:

"Her formal assignment was the teaching of history, both ancient and American...." (From Letters of Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, Edited by Bruce A. Ronda, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut, 1984, page 49).

Elizabeth Peabody's mother had kept a school in Salem, Massachusetts, from 1809 to 1818, which Elizabeth attended. Ronda said (page 49):

"The curriculum was rigorous. 'The aim was History and Literature.... The qualification for entrance was to 'read English intelligibly;' and her youngest scholars were eight and ten years of age."

Ronda attributed the quotation to the "Letter from Miss E. P. Peabody," American Journal of Education (Barnard) 32 (May 1882): 739.

As late as April, 1833, when writing to Sarah Hale, sister of Edward Everett who gave the two-hour address preceding Lincoln's Gettysburg address, Peabody said (from page 106 of Ronda's text) that she

had given up on her price, and had decided to take children under ten years old for fifteen dollars, but that they must be able to read, and children over ten years old for twenty dollars.

Peabody obviously had never heard of reading at the “second grade level,” the “sixth grade level,” or any “level,” since these levels can apply only to those taught to “read” sight words for “meaning.” With “sound,” there is only ONE level: knowing “how to read,” orally, the Bible or anything else. (Whether it is understood or not depends on the reader’s mental and language levels, and his stock of general information.)

However, the eight-year-old children that Peabody took into her school in 1833 had first begun reading in 1829 or 1830 after change had begun to spread in 1826. That she questioned whether some of these eight-year-olds could read or not suggests that some time before 1833 she had met some eight year olds who could not read, even though such a thing had been almost unheard of before 1826.

Peabody did not teach beginning reading, but she had a great interest in teaching the “meaning” of words. Ever since the late eighteenth century, and through the first half of the nineteenth century, students in Great Britain and America had been given the ridiculous chore of memorizing words and definitions from dictionaries after they had finished the spellers. The practice arose with the advent of English dictionaries, and probably had begun sometime during the seventeenth century. Authors of dictionaries sometimes also wrote spellers. Such authors’ dictionaries were therefore seen as a kind of Book Two to be used after their spellers. This memorization of dictionary meanings is one of the probable roots of the “meaning” nonsense that has plagued English-language education ever since. As late as about 1845, Noah Webster’s son produced a short-form dictionary to reduce the memory load on students. Yet this memory load should never have existed, since language cannot be learned properly from dictionaries when used apart from meaningful contexts.

However, in part, Elizabeth’s concern with “words,” and in a far more elaborate form than the mere memorization of definitions, was probably the result of being exposed very early to all the educational winds blowing across from Scotland, England and Ireland. That exposure came in from the fact that her mother read aloud to her pupils stylish and witty portions from the *Edinburgh Review* as examples, as well as portions from the *Spectator*, the *Quarterly Review* and *Rambler* (Ronda, page 49).

On her first teaching job at age 16 in 1820 (from Ronda, pages 49-50):

“...Peabody suggested to her pupils that they seek to establish connections between words as indications of external reality and of the inner reality they point to.”

Unlike William James who considered language to be incapable of adequately expressing thought, Peabody thought words were signs of great power, capable of expressing the tiniest differences in thoughts and feelings.

Peabody was deeper into this sort of thing by the time she was teaching in Brookline, Massachusetts, in 1825, with her sister Mary (later Horace Mann’s wife). Ronda said (page 50):

“Peabody did not teach, as other teachers did, by requiring memorization of rules, but by identification of the function of words in relation to other words. A skeptical father who witnessed this exercise in her school in Brookline later recalled selecting a passage for the students to analyze.... At the end of the hour, the father was convinced.

The utility of the exercise was exceedingly doubtful, but its purpose was sufficiently fuzzy-minded so that it might satisfy even today’s “experts.”



But Elizabeth Peabody had a close relationship with two men who did teach reading: William Russell and Bronson Alcott. Strangely, both these men also had what was probably a long-standing relationship with each other, and both betrayed her and both behaved contemptibly towards her.

Ronda said that Elizabeth and Mary Peabody left Brookline and opened a school on Beacon Hill in Boston, on Collonade Row, and that the children of prominent Bostonians were enrolled. Then, after two years, the whole Peabody family moved to Colonnade Row, where they had rented a house.

About 1827, Elizabeth Peabody acted as a volunteer secretary for William Ellery Channing, a Boston Unitarian minister connected with the movement for public education (concerning which see Samuel Blumenfeld: *Is Public Education Necessary?*). Channing was obviously in sympathy with other activists for the “brave new world.” Blumenfeld recorded (page 208):

“A wealthy Unitarian of Genesco, New York, James Wadsworth, wrote in his diary on June 24, 1839: ‘This morning Dr. Channing asked me whether I thought something like Owen’s ideas might not be realized on a modified scale, and with a more highly improved population? He could not conceive that the present state of toil and feverish pursuit of wealth, carrying suffering to so large a portion of the people, was to be eternal, and he did not see any obstacle in human nature that was insurmountable to their adopting a co-operative system for supplying their physical wants, and seeking their chief pleasures in moral and intellectual intercourse. I told him that these were precisely my views. I had opposed Owenism on account of the choice of the worst brains to fulfill the highest moral functions.’”

What the drive for government education had in common with Owen’s socialism was the replacing of individual choice by centralized control, but this destruction of individual freedom apparently caused these “intellectuals” no uneasiness.

It is possibly through Channing that Elizabeth Peabody met William Russell, who became a partner in the Collonade Row school in 1827. Peabody described Russell’s work at the school during the year he was there (Ronda, page 80). Russell took charge of reading and composition, and the spelling and defining of words, spending one hour a day with each class on those topics. The “defining words” portion sounds a little strange to our ears today, but the dictionary was actually “studied” by older students after the spelling book, and Abner Kneeland’s 1802 spelling book had brought such definitions down to the lower level of the spelling book. The probability is that the activist Russell would have thought highly of the activist Kneeland’s book, which was reprinted in 1826.

So Russell’s work in Elizabeth Peabody’s school in 1827-1828 specifically concerned the teaching of reading. Since 1826, Russell had also been the editor of the *American Journal of Education* published in Boston, and had endorsed the Franklin Primer and Worcester primer of 1826 in this journal. Their new approach to reading must certainly have been available in Elizabeth Peabody’s school - at least for the year that Russell was there.

Russell had expressed himself clearly on the subject of beginning reading in the *Journal* in October, 1826, when reviewing Cobb’s speller which he considered a good speller. However, Russell’s qualified approval of Cobb’s speller should be remembered when Cobb’s books are discussed, because it suggests that Cobb was receiving the approval of the movers and shakers, while the honorable and once-revered Noah Webster very definitely was not:

“For our own part, however, we confess we have no great partiality to spelling books, and think very favorably of the more recent plan of using only a primer and then an easy reading book

of simple and intelligible character; the little scholar making his own spelling book, by spelling every lesson he reads; and taking his pronouncing lessons from the dictionary. Under the management of a careful teacher, this will be found a much more efficacious course, than endless drilling on the dull, unmeaning columns of a spelling book.”

Ronda said that Peabody had remarked that she felt sympathy for someone she had only identified as Mrs. R, but Ronda then explained in a footnote on page 149:

“‘Mrs. R’ is probably a reference to Mrs. William Russell, wife of the educator who had similarly abandoned his family, departing Boston in 1828 and leaving the Peabody sisters with a considerable number of unpaid bills from their joint private-school venture.”

Elizabeth’s school had finally failed in 1830. The Russell/Peabody incident is also referred to in the book, Nathaniel Hawthorne in His Times, by James R. Mellow, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston: 1980, pages 135-138. (The third Peabody sister, Sophia, had married Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1842, while Mary Peabody married Horace Mann in 1843.) Concerning the school that two of the Peabody sisters opened in Boston in 1828, Mellow commented that they had taken in:

“...as a partner, William Russell, a highly touted educator and teacher of elocution.”

“Lizzie had been deeply disappointed when her school for girls had failed in 1830; Russell, who had a taste for regal living, had mismanaged the finances and then left for a new teaching position in Germantown, a rich suburb of Philadelphia. (No books had been kept, however, and Lizzie had no legal recourse.) Now she was full of enthusiasm and new plans for opening a school for boys....”

Yet, Ronda had said that Russel left Boston in 1828. However, the Dictionary of American Biography said he was accompanied by Amos Bronson Alcott, and the date as 1830, not 1828. Then, after having been cheated by Russell, Elizabeth Peabody later managed to get cheated also by Russell’s friend, Amos Bronson Alcott. Mellow recorded that she dropped her own later plans for a school:

“But in the fall of 1834, Amos Bronson Alcott, the pedlar-turned-educator, began his radical experiment, the Temple School, with classes held in the huge, drafty basement hall of the Masonic Temple on Tremont Street. Lizzie gave up her own risky venture and took a seemingly more secure position as Alcott’s assistant, teaching half a day for whatever Mr. Alcott could afford to pay.... It was in order to promote Alcott’s educational methods that, in 1835, Lizzie published her Record of a School: Exemplifying the General Principles of Spiritual Culture.... it was hardly the financial success she had hoped for. Nor did Alcott manage to pay her her salary. Under the circumstances, it was advisable for her to move in with the Alcotts in exchange for bed and board....

“Lizzie soon found that living with Alcott and his wife, Abigail, was not the congenial experience she had expected. The philosopher-educator turned out to be narrow and intolerant in his views and rigorously critical of anyone who held opinions different from his own...”

Mellow commented that Alcott carried on:

“...tirades against other educators and writers.”

Mellow said that Elizabeth Peabody began to have grave reservations about the plans for publishing Alcott’s conversations with the children in the school, which conversations she had been recording, since

Alcott had begun to discuss the subject of human birth. At that point, she refused to record the material. Furthermore, since living with the Alcotts had become very trying, she had said so in a letter she was writing to her sister Mary. In that letter, she also reported acidly that Alcott was not paying her. The bad situation became considerably worse when Mrs. Alcott had come into Elizabeth's room, found the letter she was writing to her sister, Mary, and showed the letter to Alcott. Alcott then raged at Elizabeth about what she had written to Mary, without actually admitting he had read her letter. As a result of that explosion, Elizabeth wrote a formal letter to Alcott, saying that any arrangements between them were finished.

The following August, Elizabeth wrote Alcott another letter reporting her dissatisfaction with the soon-to-be-published book on which she had worked with Alcott, entitled *Conversations with Children on the Gospels*. Elizabeth wanted the parts she considered to be questionable to be omitted, or, at the very least, in no way associated with her name.

Elizabeth Peabody was quite correct to be alarmed, because, when the work came out in 1836 and 1837 in two volumes, the Boston newspaper, the *Courier*, called it an "indecent and obscene book." Alcott then wrote a complaining letter to his friend, Emerson, saying that as a result of the reaction to the book he had only ten students in the term following its publication.

In addition to Mellow's illuminating remarks about Elizabeth Peabody, Russell, and Alcott, from his biography on Hawthorne, is a comment in Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The American Years*, by Robert Cantwell (Octagon Books, New York, 1971, page 300), concerning Sophia Peabody's rendezvous with Hawthorne in a Boston Gallery, apparently in May, 1839:

"She again braved the morning air and reached the gallery at eight o'clock. The day was cloudy. The gallery was empty, except for William Russell. Russell was a teacher and writer, the founder of the *American Journal of Education*.... He was living with the Alcotts at 6 Beach Street, where Alcott had started another school."

Cantwell gave, as a reference, *Pedlar's Progress, the Life of Bronson Alcott*, by Odell Shepard. Russell was close enough to the Alcotts in 1839 to be living with them. Russell's and Alcott's relationship had lasted from their joint trip to Philadelphia in 1830 until at least May, 1839. They must have had a great deal in common, besides their cheating of Elizabeth Peabody. One of the things was their interest in teaching reading.

Without the knowledge that Russell had endorsed the "meaning" method enthusiastically in the *American Journal of Education* in his reviews of the Franklin and Worcester primers and the Cobb speller, and that Russell himself had written a "meaning" beginning primer, his comments in Barnard's *American Journal* of 1857 might be misinterpreted. Russell was a teacher of elocution, and elocution required that students eventually be drilled in making proper vowel and consonant sounds. That was the upper-grade "phonics" taught after children had learned to read by "meaning" after 1826, and it was that kind of upper-grade phonics that Russell meant in his remarks of 1857 in his article, "Cultivation of the Reflective Faculties," in Barnard's *American Journal*, when he deplored the fact that by 1857 children were learning to read "perhaps without ever acquiring a knowledge of the power, or actual sound, of any one of the whole group" (of letters). Of course, this is positive confirmation, from a contemporary in 1857, that American children were NOT learning to read by phonics at that time! Russell went on:

"But (the child) is not allowed the satisfaction of recognizing the fact, that these troublesome and perplexing marks before his eye, are little graphic characters to suggest, phonetically to eye and ear, the very words which he is constantly uttering...."

By Russell's own testimony, phonics was dead in most American schools by 1857, except for elocution.

Russell's close associate, from at least 1828 until 1830 when he lived with the Alcott family, was his fellow teacher, A. Bronson Alcott. Elizabeth Peabody discussed Alcott's teaching methods in her letter to her sister, Mary, dated Sept. 20 - Oct. 6, 1834 (Ronda's page 134). Elizabeth Peabody said that at the opening of the school day the children arranged their chairs in a large semicircle before Alcott. (That recalls the circling of chairs or sitting on the floor in a circle) that was practiced in the Open Classroom movement of the 1970's.) Mary Peabody said that Alcott then talked and read to the children, and heard them read, and had them spell and define words, until the recess period. After that, Mary Peabody gave the children lessons in Latin, geography and arithmetic. She said that meant that she did not have to be at the school until eleven a. m. That also meant, of course, that most of the time she was not observing Alcott's actual performance!

Elizabeth Peabody in her own way was as up-to-date on the fashionable philosophies as Russell and Alcott. Ronda remarked on page 67 that Elizabeth wrote to Maria Chase on January 23, 1824, saying that she had been reading nothing but the philosopher Brown, gushing over his work. Ronda's footnote on the same page noted that Thomas Brown was a member of the Scottish Commonsense school, and his book, *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, systematically classified the mind's powers. Ronda said that the work was very popular with the Unitarians and those at Harvard at that time.

McGuffey was not the only one reading Brown, a successor to Dugald Stewart and others in the "Commonsense" school. However, Elizabeth later found his "common sense" too restrictive for her as she floated away on increasing waves of Transcendentalism.

As Blumenfeld pointed out, Elizabeth's Boston associates were intimately concerned with the educational movement (page 125):

"In the spring of 1829, Boston formed its Lyceum under the name of the Boston Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Its statement of purpose was signed by William E. Channing and twenty-nine other members of the Boston elite.... The first article in the Society's constitution stated its purpose quite succinctly: 'Its object shall be to promote and direct popular education by lectures and other means.'"

In his book, *The National Experience, 1783-1876*, Lawrence A. Cremin also gave some background on the formation of the American Lyceum (page 312). He identified its founder in 1826 as the prosperous Connecticut farmer/amateur scientist, Josiah Holbrook, a Yale student some years before. Holbrook had run a private school in Derby, and then carried out experiments with schools combining manual training, agricultural training, and formal academics. He had become known by the early 1820's as a proponent of the new sciences and of reform in education. His proposal for the founding of the Lyceums was made in a letter he sent anonymously to the *American Journal of Education*, of which William Russell was editor. Holbrook's anonymous letter was published in 1826 on page 594 of what became ultimately the 1826 volume of the *American Journal of Education*:

"Sir, I take the liberty to submit for your consideration, a few articles as regulations for associations for mutual instruction in the sciences, and in useful knowledge generally.... It seems to me that if associations... could once be started in our villages, and upon a general plan, they would increase with great rapidity, and do more for the general diffusion of knowledge, and for raising the moral and intellectual taste of our countrymen, than any other expedient which can possibly be devised."

Cremin commented that Holbrook outlined in his letter how the associations might best be set up, with a hierarchy of county and state “boards of mutual education” and a “general board” for the whole country. Cremin said that, by 1829, only three years later, lyceums existed in every part of the country. Such a rapid development is, to put it mildly, astonishing. Holbrook’s influence must have been enormous.

Blumenfeld stated (page 137-138):

“In 1834, however, Holbrook decided to leave Boston and move his base of operations to Pennsylvania where the ‘friends of education’ were preparing to push a new public education law through the state legislature. William Russell, former editor of the *American Journal of Education*, was also now living in Philadelphia. Opposition to the new law in Pennsylvania was fierce, and 30,000 signatures were gathered by the opponents to stop it. The opponents were, for the most part, Lutherans who maintained their own private system of parochial schools. Nevertheless, the law was passed, and attempts to repeal it in 1835 failed.

“One of the chief activists for public education in Pennsylvania was a New Englander by the name of Walter R. Johnson. Johnson had been a classmate of James G. Carter at both Groton and Harvard, from which he was graduated in 1819. In 1821, he had moved to Germantown, Pennsylvania, to become principal of an academy. While there he published a series of essays on popular education in the *Journal of the Franklin Institute* and became a founder of the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Public Schools. His interest in the natural sciences led to his appointment in 1826 as director of the Philadelphia High School established under the Franklin Institute. It was at the Franklin Institute, incidentally, that Robert Owen addressed a Philadelphia audience on June 7, 1827. Johnson became active in the Lyceum movement soon after it was started and lectured at the American Institute of Instruction conferences. It is said that the Pennsylvania school law of 1834 was largely due to his efforts. Undoubtedly, he and Holbrook worked hard to overcome the opposition. .... With the new Pennsylvania school law passed in 1834, Holbrook spent the following year organizing the teachers of that state into Lyceums and countering attempts to repeal the law.”

The siamese twin to the move for government schools was the move to replace “sound” spellers with “meaning” primers, and the same people whose names turned up in support of government schools or the organizations working for government schools were also supporting the switch in reading methods.

A primer written in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in 1831 is an example of that siamese-twin effect. The *Monitorial Primer* was written by J. A. Prest, “Late of the City of London, in Great Britain, Principal of the Lancasterian School, Harrisburg,” and was printed in Harrisburg by F. Wyeth, “Printer,” in 1831. Little doubt can exist on Prest’s associations, as the following appears inside the title page of his book: “To the American Institute of Instruction (Established at Boston), This Effort To Be Useful Is Respectfully Inscribed, By One Of Their Members, THE AUTHOR.” Although this appalling primer pretends to teach vowel sounds in a peculiar fashion from whole sight words (presumably meant for drill in elocution), in the teaching of reading it is almost a straight Code I book, geared to “meaning.” Yet it is exactly what might have been expected from a devoted supporter of The American Institute of Instruction in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in March, 1831, which was the date when Prest wrote his “Preface.”

Was Principal Prest’s Lancasterian school in Harrisburg the same one that was founded in 1826 by Keagy? It certainly appears possible.

## Chapter 19

### Contemporary Testimony on the New “Correct” Reading Methods from the “Experts” Themselves

The two Alcott cousins, A. Bronson Alcott and William Andrus Alcott, left written records of their support for the “meaning” method in place of the “sound” method in teaching beginning reading.

The New York Public Library has a volume, \* c.p.v. 1265, *Observations on the Principles and Methods of Infant Instruction*, “by A. B. Alcott, Teacher of an Elementary School, Boston. Boston, published by Carter & Hendee, 1830.” This would have been written just about the time that Bronson Alcott was reported to have left Boston for Pennsylvania with William Russell. Where Alcott accompanied Russell, it presumably was partly to join in the battle for government schools there. The following quotations show that Bronson Alcott was touching most of the bases of the activists in this book published in 1830 (from pages 4 through 25):

“Institutions of Infant Schools, now so generally established among us, are full of much promise and hope. Their present and increasing popularity, the amount of misery and vice which they relieve and prevent; the happiness and virtue which they create and encourage; their reception of children from all classes of society, at an age when every impression so much determines their future habits, motives, principles, and whole character, places them among the highest and happiest agents of christian beneficence.

“...on the influence of sensation upon the mind in early life, Dugald Stewart makes the following remarks. ‘...the attention of young persons may be seduced, by well selected works of fiction, from the present objects of the senses, and the thoughts accustomed to dwell on the past, the distant, and the future;.... (that) which it has contributed to fix...will remain...to the latest hour.’”

Alcott also recommended natural history, pictures, stories, specimens, cubes, slates, and wooden blocks, all of them, of course, very good in themselves, but chosen because of Locke’s materialistic idea that the mind can contain nothing that is not totally derived from sense impressions. Alcott’s wholehearted endorsement of this error belittling the mind is seen in the following. Also evident is his rejection of the fact that the brain usually needs practice to learn (to acquire conditioned reflexes). Note his recommending that “mechanical recitations... are wholly to be avoided”:

“...Mechanical recitations, wordy lessons, dissociated from the intellect, are wholly to be avoided. That only is worthy of the infant mind, which it can understand and feel. Nature has associated interest, pleasure and progress with perception alone; and from mystery and error, the infant mind, of all others, should be kept scrupulously free.

“...Enunciation, spelling the simplest names of familiar objects, actions, and qualities, defining their thoughts, writing the elements of morality, and natural history, may constitute the chief portion of the children’s lessons. During the intervals of more direct influence from the teacher, they may delineate their lessons on the slate and blackboard.”

Note the entrance of William Russell’s “elocution” with “enunciation,” and the exit of Webster’s “phonics.” Children had previously learned Webster’s key and then “enunciated” printed words for themselves. Now Russell and his followers like Alcott would “enunciate” first for the children to imitate,

pronouncing the words in the spelling book for the children so that the words would always after be perceived as meaning-bearing whole words, and the children would have no practice themselves in sounding out unknown words. Teacher “enunciation” of all words for beginning readers was the death-blow to real phonics in reading, in Great Britain as well as America.

Bronson Alcott’s cousin, William Andrus Alcott (1798-1859), eventually became a medical doctor, but he was a teacher until the 1830’s (and an activist). He wrote a kind of autobiography in 1839, *Confessions of a School Master*, published at Andover, Massachusetts, by Gould, Newman and (?Saxton), and also in New York, at the “Corner of Fulton and Nassau Streets.” (Concerning possible associations, Samuel R. Hall had founded his seminary for teachers at Andover in 1830, and William Russell was later connected with the Phillips Academy there, as noted elsewhere. Gould, Newman with offices in Andover and New York in 1839, as noted from Alcott’s book, also published Sanders’ speller in 1838 and Sanders’ vastly used Code 1 readers in 1840).

William Andrus Alcott’s 1839 autobiography showed, unwittingly, the ease with which children had learned to read when William Andrus Alcott was a boy starting school in 1802, and it showed, equally unwittingly, the pompous confusions that had replaced such simple, effective instruction by 1839. It is also a contemporary account of the changes that occurred in the use of various reading and spelling books over the years from about 1802 to about 1832. What is most curious, however, about the 1839 anecdotes of William Andrus Alcott is that no where does he relate them to specific dates. From another source (a New York public library microfilm reel on *Annals of Education*), I know the year of his birth, and can therefore estimate the dates for his entries. Why should he have omitted dates so consistently?

“Preface. The following work is a faithful though painful observation of facts as they occurred during ten or twelve years of the life of a school master.... (page 13) My preparation for schoolkeeping consisted, principally, in attending the district school near my native home from three to four months every winter, from the age of four to thirteen, (Ed.: 1802-1811) and a few months every summer, from that of four to eight (Ed.: 1802-1806). It was indeed customary in my native region for boys to attend school in summer till they were about ten or twelve; but my father becoming dissatisfied with the female teacher to whom I was sent in my eighth year, took me out of school, and finding my assistance on the farm valuable, as he had no other boys, I was not permitted to attend any more in the summer season. Between the ages of 13 and 17 (Ed.: 1811-1815), I was permitted, however, to go to school to the parish minister, who kept a kind of high school every winter, in all about six months. (page 15) Two summers and one winter had made me a “speller,” as it was then called, and a tolerable reader of easy lessons (Ed.: at the age of 5, in 1803).”

The following is from page 22, which concerned William Andrus Alcott’s examination by the Board of School Visitors when he was 18, about 1816, for a teaching job. The Board asked him how many sounds has B and C:

“I could have repeated the ‘Introduction to the Spelling Book,’ as it is called, in which they were then examining me, from beginning to end, without a failure. I could not only spell all the common words of the spelling book.... I do not remember the time when there were more than half a dozen words in common use which I spelt wrong, even in writing.”

The following is from page 25, in which he equated reading with acting ability, and not accuracy in pronouncing the printed page. Yet, by doing so, he unconsciously revealed that he, himself, read accurately and swiftly, and he had learned to read with a speller - probably Webster’s - by the time he was five years old:

“...My deficiency in regard to reading was most obvious. I read too loud, and too fast; as well as in a tone of voice altogether different from that of common conversation. This habit I had acquired, during my first years at school, in reading in books whose language I did not understand; and to the meaning of which none of my teachers ever furnished me with a clue. Besides, I did not articulate well.

“This branch (Ed.: articulation was elocution), however, strange as it may appear to some - the committee did not deem an important part of the examination. They had embraced the opinion - very common in the world - as I have since found - that a teacher who cannot read well himself can teach others to read well. They seemed wholly to overlook the force of example in this matter, and the fact that children learn to read chiefly by imitating others. I do not say that to learn (to) pronounce the words when they see them in a book (Ed.: portion is missing here) in this way; but I do not regard that as worthy of the name of reading.”

Obviously, William Andrus Alcott was denying here that oral accuracy is reading, but stated instead that “reading” is elocution. Yet the Scot William Russell was the only “elocution” teacher in America whose name I have turned up before 1826, although upper-grade American books concerned elocution. I have lost the source, but believe Pierpont’s 1823 book in its preface denied that much time was spent on elocution in America, even though the subject was covered in textbooks. However, in *Letters Addressed to the Parochial Schoolmasters of Scotland...* By A Schoolmaster, Edinburgh: 1829, the Schoolmaster compared a country schoolmaster to those:

“...in great cities, where every branch is taught by a separate master; for though the teacher of elocution, who devotes his whole attention to the modulation of the voice, may produce more elegant readers than the country schoolmaster...”(etc.)

The Schoolmaster said elsewhere that he took great pains in his own small school to train voices in reading. Therefore, obviously, “elocution” was important in Scotland in the 1820’s, in the cities and in the countryside. The reason for the importance of elocution in Scotland was probably the same thing that had produced the great interest in Sheridan’s lectures in Scotland on elocution some sixty years earlier: a heavy Scot accent was a barrier to advancement in the British culture dominated by England. However, the only references I have found in America to actual teaching of elocution before Russell’s arrival is in textbooks for older students, and the reference below by Alcott. Yet, the teaching of elocution became very prominent in Boston schools after 1826. This was obviously an innovation: although upper level text books had stressed elocution since the late eighteenth century, the actual interest in American schools before 1826 was obviously not high enough to make “elocution” a great concern.

Despite W. A. Alcott’s unfortunate biases, it is self-evident that he was a highly literate man. Yet he had spent very few years at school, and he had become so literate through the use of the much maligned spelling book!

“(From page 94:) For some time past, the only books which had been used in the school where I now was (as) reading books, were the New Testament, the Columbian Orator, the English Reader, the reading lessons in Webster’s Spelling Book, and Webster’s Elements of Useful Knowledge. These had been read over and over; and everyone at all acquainted with them knows, that except the Testament and spelling book, they are very poorly calculated to interest children, or instruct them in the arts of reading, (unless) special pains are taken at explanations and illustrations.



“I felt, most sensibly, the want of some new reading book for my school, this winter, especially for the older classes.... I decided on the ‘Introduction to the American Orator’... (Ed.: which he found to be not suitable).

(From page 130, concerning his fifth year teaching, or 1821:) “The reading books in use as we have already seen were the Sequel to the English Reader, the American Preceptor, the Columbian Orator, the New Testament and the spelling book. The Testament was usually read by all the classes, in the morning, each reading, at a time, two verses. In other books, each read either a whole paragraph at a time, or to the first period.” (He said he then carried on discussion about the meaning of what they read. He then read to them for them to imitate: “elocution.”)

(From page 131:) “In spelling, it was my custom to commence at the beginning of the book, with the words of one syllable, and to proceed through the volume, omitting usually none of the tables, from beginning to end. In a few instances, the larger classes went twice through in a season, but generally only once. A certain page, or number of pages or columns, was assigned each class, which they were required to commit entirely to memory. A few were found in the first class, usually to do this, but in general they fell far short of it. All the older classes were required to commit to memory several explanatory pages of the spelling book, embracing an analysis of the sounds of the letters, both vowels and consonants, with much other valuable information and also a table of abbreviations at the end of the volume, and an account of the pauses used in writing....” (He said abbreviations were learned without understanding.)

(From page 135? My notes are not clear on this section:) “Nor did my first class ever obtain many practical valuable ideas in regard to the sounds of the letters. Thus, though they knew that g is said to be always hard before a o and u, it is quite doubtful whether they could have applied the rule to the pronunciation of a word with which they were before unacquainted - this, it is true, was not so much their fault, as mine.”

Alcott gave no suggestion that his pupils could not read fluently, and large numbers of words use “g” before a, o, and u. Many of these words his pupils would never before have heard pronounced aloud, particularly since the materials the children were being given to read had extraordinarily high readability levels. Therefore, Alcott’s “objection” that his pupils probably could not successfully apply the rule to pronounce unfamiliar words is unconvincing.

By the time he was 24, which would be about 1822, he said he had taught school for terms of 3 and 4 months each winter. Alcott said, “Few districts employed male teachers, except in winter.” He then got a position for 11 of 12 months, at 24 years of age, in a district school with 40 to 60 pupils. The practices he described about 1822, therefore, are prior to the critical date of 1826. He wrote:

“Among my pupils were 15 little girls who were ...‘in the alphabet...’ eleven of whom scarcely knew a single letter, and some were but little more than three years of age.”

W. A. Alcott made the following comment concerning his work after almost ten years teaching, so this should have been about 1825:

“An attempt was also made to introduce better school books, especially as reading books. Many of the schools had been confined to the New Testament, the American Preceptor, the English Reader, the Columbian Orator or Webster’s Elements of Useful Knowledge for a long series of years.”

On page 118(?), he discussed introducing as a new book the story of Jack Halyard. That story can be found at the end of John Franklin Jones' Analytical Spelling Book, copyrighted in 1822, an 1824 edition of which was published by E. Bliss and E. White of New York and Albany. Conceivably the Jack Halyard story - or stories - also might have been published separately.

On page 204, he referred to the Journal of Education as having been published for two years, so the following comment must have concerned 1828, and it is notable that spelling was now being taught "meaningfully." He wrote:

"In regard to spelling, I was careful to assign my pupils short lessons, and see that they understood their meaning. This... was quite an innovation.... a few older pupils had a very inferior sort of dictionary."

Alcott referred to learning about new methods from Hall's Lectures on School Keeping. Samuel R. Hall's Lectures on School Keeping was obviously a very important book of that period. It is not surprising that it contained "new methods," and presumably they concerned, among other things, the new methods of teaching spelling and reading. Since Hall endorsed G. and C. Merriam's 1833 The Easy Primer, as shown on a copy, and since that was a Code 1 beginning book, it is easy to see what Hall's preferences were. According to Samuel Blumenfeld in his book, Is Public Education Necessary? on page 133, Hall was a teacher as well as conservative minister, and had worked with Holbrook in the founding of the American School Agents Society, the purpose of which was to organize teachers everywhere in the country through the use of paid agents. In September, 1830, Hall was hired as the director of a new seminary for teachers at Phillips Academy, Andover. William Russell also briefly had a connection with Phillips Academy, as noted elsewhere.

W. A. Alcott said he suffered from poor health for three years and left the school room to do other work. The curious theme of poor health constantly recurs to explain changes in occupation of many of these activists, such as Russell and Gallaudet. However, W. A. Alcott declared, "I was born for the purpose of improving the condition of my fellow men." Such men never ask if their fellow men want to be "improved." On page 214, Alcott made comments about his poor health, and said:

"I was... appointed one of the board of school visitors, whose office, in that State, was not only to visit schools but to examine candidates and grant licenses." (From page 221:) "We were required by the laws of the state ... to visit each school at least twice... one of which visits was to be near to commencement, and the other near to closing."

(On page 224, concerning improving teachers:) "...but I was unable to furnish them with the Journal of Education - the best work of which I then knew, .....nor even with Hall's excellent Lectures on School Keeping. To one or two of them, I loaned Miss Edgeworth's Practical Education; but their minds were as yet too immature...."

(On page 226) "During the first winter after I became a member of the Board of School Supervisors, I made a strong effort to do something to promote the improvement of teachers. They were mostly young men of my acquaintance, and seemed willing to unite in my plan which promised to add to their usefulness."

(From page 237:) "After spending three years in my profession, and recovering my health, I began to think of abandoning it, and returned once more to schoolkeeping."

The dates of the excerpts when compared to the known date of his birth (which is not given in his text but which shows up on the New York Public Library microfilm reel on the Annals of Education) suggest

that Alcott started school at the age of four in 1802, and last attended any kind of school in 1815 at the age of 17 (although since he became a doctor after writing this account, he presumably returned to school in middle-age). From 1816 to 1822, W. A. Alcott taught in a common school but only part of the year. From 1822 to 1825 he taught in an eleven-months' school, and from 1825 to 1828 he was a member of the Board of School Supervisors, probably in Connecticut. From 1828 to 1829, 1830 or 1831, he again taught school. However, it is very strange that in his biographical account in 1839 Alcott should give only obscure references instead of real dates.

Curiously, from a biography he wrote of Gallaudet, W. A. Alcott revealed he became involved with Gallaudet and the move for government schools about 1825, and remained Gallaudet's lifelong friend. Did Alcott get his appointment to the "Board of School Supervisors" through Gallaudet? W. A. Alcott's anecdotes concerning Gallaudet occur in a book presently in the New York Public Library, call # AB 1856, Tall Oaks from Little Acorns, or Sketches of Distinguished Persons of Humble Origin - "By William A. Alcott, M. D., New York - published by Carlton & Phillips, Sunday School Union." (The deterioration in Sunday school texts after 1824 is referred to elsewhere in this history. The publication of Tall Oaks... therefore establishes - although as late as 1856 - a connection between one of the activists, W. A. Alcott, and the "Sunday School Union.") Since Alcott's book was published in 1856, and Alcott said he first met Gallaudet thirty years before, that would place their meeting date in 1825 or 1826 (assuming Alcott may have been writing the 1856 book the year before it was published). On page 257, he began his biography of Thomas H. Gallaudet, which included the following comments:

"Thirty years ago, I called at the American Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb, at Hartford, in Connecticut. The man at the door of the institution directed me to the principal, whose office was only a few rods distant. I rang the bell at his office door, and a small, thin, but active man met me, and in the most kindly manner invited me in, and gave me a seat. On learning my object, he promptly granted me permission to visit the institute, and a letter of introduction to some of the principal teachers.

"This was the beginning of an acquaintance with the Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet, a brief account of whom I am about to give you.... I was familiarly acquainted with him from the date of the foregoing incident to the time of his death. He was, moreover, a much valued friend...." (Alcott stated Gallaudet was born in Philadelphia December 10, 1787:) "His father, Peter W. Gallaudet, was descended from the Huguenots of France... mother, the daughter of Thomas Hopkins of Conn."

It should be noted that the Hopkins school associated with Yale at which Russell briefly taught was presumably named after Gallaudet's mother's family. Alcott said in 1800 Gallaudet's family moved to Hartford where Gallaudet attended Hartford Grammar School and entered as a sophomore at Yale when almost 15, graduating before 18, but with a weak constitution. Soon after leaving college, which would have been about 1805, Gallaudet studied law in the office of the Hon. Chauncey Goodrich of Hartford. At the end of the first year, his health broke and he left. In 1808, he was appointed tutor at Yale, then being 20 years old. In 1810 or 1811, he had:

"...(a) business agency in the Western States particularly Ohio and Kentucky.... On his return, he became a clerk in a counting room in New York, intending to pursue a mercantile life. But he did not continue long in that situation.... In the autumn of 1811... (he) commenced (the study of theology) at Andover, Mass. His progress here was slow, owing to bad health. He was licensed, however, to preach in 1814.... Being at home one day on a visit, a little deaf mute, the daughter of an eminent citizen of Hartford, by the name of Alice Cogswell, was at play with the rest of the children, in her father's garden. Mr. Gallaudet, having succeeded in gaining her attention by signs, proceeded to give her a lesson in written language, by teaching her that the word hat

represented the thing hat, which he held up in his hand. Following up this first step as well as he was able, he succeeded in importing to her a number of many simple words and sentences. His ingenuity was also greatly assisted by a publication of the Abbe Sicard of France, which Mr. Cogswell, the father of the girl, had received from Paris, as well as by the efforts and cooperation of other individuals residing with her in the family, among whom was Lydia Huntley, afterwards Lydia H. Sigourney, the poetess. His success greatly encouraged Dr. Cogswell and the whole family. Until now, they had intended to send little Alice to London or Edinburgh for instruction; but the inquiry began to intrude itself upon their minds, why may we not have a deaf and dumb school in Hartford?

“(Cogswell) had already ascertained that there were in the State of Connecticut no less than 80 deaf mutes, most of whom were young enough to attend school... One of his first steps was to call a meeting, at his own house, of the principal citizens of Hartford and lay open his plan...”

Alcott told of the plan for an American school for the deaf and of Gallaudet's being sent to Europe to learn methods for teaching the deaf. He mentioned that because of a “delay” in London Gallaudet went to France. Yet Alcott made no mention of the diametrically opposed methods of Braidwood in Great Britain and Sicard in France, Braidwood teaching by “sound” so that the deaf could learn to speak, and Sicard by “meaning” with sight-words and sign language. Gallaudet arrived back in August, 1816, and then visited New York, Philadelphia, Albany, Salem, Burlington, and New Haven to raise money for the institute. Alcott wrote:

“After two long years of effort... and in appeals through the public press of the country... (the asylum) opened with a class of seven pupils April 15, 1817.”

Note the reference to “appeals through the public press of the country” before 1817. This may have been one of the routes through which Dr. Keagy learned of deaf-mute methods. Furthermore, demonstrating the widespread publicity on deaf-mute methods, Alcott said that between 1818 and 1831 Gallaudet visited a number of the legislatures of the “several northern and Middle States.” Alcott wrote:

“I remember a meeting of this kind, about the spring of 1826, in the Methodist Church of New-Haven, Conn., to which the legislature was invited.”

In reading the following, it should be remembered that Alcott said that Gallaudet resigned as principal of the deaf-mute asylum in 1830, because of poor health. Alcott wrote:

“Labors in the Cause of Education... (page 276) Between the years 1825 and 1835, he probably did as much as any other individual, both by his writings, and by personal labors and sacrifices, to effect a reform.... When in the year 1830, the American Annals of Education began to be published in Boston, under the editorial care of Rev. William C. Woodbridge, and subsequently of myself, Mr. Gallaudet consented to furnish contributions to those columns from time to time; which engagement was faithfully fulfilled and he continued a regular contributor for eight years... The Connecticut Common School Journal especially... during the years 1838, 1839, and 1840, felt the weight of his influence. Several articles of an editorial kind from his prolific pen found their way into the Mother's Magazine, published in New York, as well as into the columns of other publications. Nor must we forget to mention in this connection, that he prepared and published, or caused to be published, several excellent school books, among which were a spelling book and dictionary. Finally, he edited an American edition of Dunn's Principles of Teaching, a British work, which had done much good in that country, under the name of the Schoolmaster's Manual.

“I ought ere now to have said, that when a ‘Society for the Improvement of Common Schools’ was established in Connecticut in 1827, he became at once an active and efficient member, and his labors in conjunction with the writer of this manual and others, had much influence all over New England.

“The list of his labors in the cause of education might be greatly extended. I might speak of his connection with the American Lyceum, which held some of its meetings in Hartford; and of his labors in behalf of the Goodrich Association, as it was then deemed, and a course of popular lectures which it established. I might tell you of a journey he made to the Western States in 1835 to aid the cause of education. I might speak, finally, of his efforts to sustain Mr. Barnard, of Connecticut, and others, between the years 1838 and 1850 in establishing a normal school, then new, in Britain, near Hartford.” (Alcott said Gallaudet went every day to a mental asylum to visit the inmates at the end of his life, though I believe he had some paid position there.)

Alcott’s anecdotes confirm that in 1827 (and probably from 1825) he was working with Gallaudet on the drive for government schools. Alcott’s endorsing “meaning” in reading and opposing “sound” probably came from his association with Gallaudet, more than from Samuel R. Hall’s book on teaching methods, *Lectures on School Keeping*, to which he had referred to approvingly in two earlier excerpts. It should be noted that Gallaudet’s acquaintance with de l’Epee’s and his disciple Sicard’s deaf-mute method dates back at least to the time Gallaudet read the work Dr. Cogswell got from Paris, probably in 1814 or 1815.

Further information on Gallaudet is given in the *Cyclopedia of Education* (1911-1913), in a short biographical entry by “W. S. M.,” presumably W. S. Monroe:

“During 1832 and 1833 Gallaudet was Professor of the Philosophy of Education in New York University. This was the first professorship of education in the United States. He was also active in the movement which established the first normal schools in America. Beside his writings on the education of the deaf, he published a number of essays on the philosophy of education and several textbooks, including the popular *Mothers’ Primer* and the *Child’s Picture Defining and Reading Book*. His *Plan of a Seminary for the Education of Instructors of Youth* (Boston, 1825) gave rise to the normal school education in America. He died in Hartford the 9th of September, 1851.”

Presumably the *Mothers’ Primer* of 1836 received its name through some association with the *Mothers’ Magazine* in New York to which Gallaudet contributed. As late as 1911, W. S. Monroe, knowledgeable enough to write an article for the *Cyclopedia of Education*, referred to the *Mothers’ Primer* as having been “popular!” Yet, by the time Samuel Blumenfeld dredged up the facts concerning that text in his book, *The New Illiterates*, the *Mothers’ Primer* had dropped into oblivion and had disappeared from almost all libraries. All of this establishes, however, that Gallaudet was a central and dominant figure in the move to government schools including normal schools, and to their siamese twin as well: the use of “meaning” instead of sound in the teaching of beginning reading.

William A. Alcott wrote another book in 1832, which strongly suggests that by then he was again involved in something like professional school visits. He could not have been a teacher at that point as he would not have had the time to make such visits. (It was in 1837-1838 that he was the editor of *American Annals of Education*.)

The book, *Historical Description of the First Public School in Hartford*, by W. A. Alcott, was published in Hartford, Connecticut, on January 24, 1832. It was addressed “To Teachers, School Visitors,

School Committees and Parents.” The “School Visitors” to whom he was referring were state-employed inspectors, which job he had once held.

(Page 2:) “Most of you are supposed to have read with attention the interesting Lectures of Mr. Hall on School Keeping. . .The writer considers it his duty to lay before you an account of the first common or public school in Hartford, Conn., now under the superintendence of Mr. J. Olney, author of a system of Practical Geography....”

Being an activist had a positive side for those involved: they endorsed each other’s books. By the sheerest coincidence, of course, Hall’s Lectures and Olney’s geography were famous books which were used in government schools for years. The books must have produced comforting dollar profits for their authors.

(Alcott mentioned that a school convention) “assembled in this city in November, 1830; Mr. S. R. Hall, author of the Lectures on School Keeping, Mr. Josiah Holbrook... and many other distinguished individuals, whose names might be mentioned, have also honored (the school) with their visits and approved of many of its methods and principles. Mr. Holbrook even pronounced it the best public school which he had seen.”

Alcott said he himself spent days and even weeks visiting it over two years. That suggests, of course, that Alcott had left teaching by 1830.

Alcott gave a description of the school in section II of the book. The school had a “cabinet of minerals,” and, as Blumenfeld pointed out, a preoccupation with geology was characteristic of these activists and of Maclure, Owen’s partner. Geology was very “scientific” and could wrongly be interpreted at that time as anti-Biblical. Interest in geology suggested a possible tie with geology-conscious Maclure.

Section III covered methods of instruction and referred to the early history of the school, starting in 1810. It has used the Lancasterian system for some three or four years before abandoning it. At present, the youngest children were in the Third Department. This was in the basement, in two rooms, one for boys and one for girls, with four teachers and 200 children, a real sardine can.

Alcott would have been describing practices in the school in 1831, in this book published in January, 1832. Only a few of the primary- graders were using Edward (not Jasper) Hazen’s Symbolical Primer (Code I), the rest still using Webster’s (Code 10). But they were also using the New Testament and Leavitt’s Easy Lessons. Alcott said, “In addition to these, it is customary in both rooms to allow the pupils to read in any proper book which the teacher can procure; one pupil reading at a time, and the rest giving their attention....” The emphasis for these beginners was obviously on “reading for meaning” and not “spelling for sound.” Even when Webster’s was being used, Alcott’s comments show that the school’s practice did not match that excellent textbook. No longer were children to work out the sounds of words themselves from the key: the teacher was to read the words to them first. No longer did the children have long lessons on which to practice their phonic skills; the spelling lessons were greatly abbreviated. A spelling method originating with Gallaudet was being used in some classes; it had the interesting addition by this “progressive” school of leaving out syllabication on words. Webster’s key was also being discarded for pupils because they presumably did not understand it; instead the teacher was to give children oral drill on the sounds of the letters (i.e., elocution). In any event, it was recommended that children be given better textbooks, which they could “understand.” It must not have been very long before Edward (not Jasper) Hazen’s unbelievably bad Code I book or one like it pushed Webster’s Code 10 book completely out of the Third Department.

In reading instruction, considered apart from spelling, children had formerly read long, long selections, with the happy product of automaticity from such long practice. Now the lessons were being enormously shortened, so that the students could concentrate instead on “meaning.” A class might spend a whole lesson on only one paragraph, where previously they had read - independently, and by themselves first - whole pages.

Spelling was endorsed as very important, but it should be remembered that learning to spell sight words (see-aye-tee, cat) has nothing whatever to do with learning to decode print by sound. If it did, parents of little children would not resort to using oral spelling with each other as a way to hide what they are saying from their children (such as, “Where is the C-A-N-D-Y?”)

All these changes were touted, of course, as great “improvements” which delighted the children. That same kind of promotion was being used about that time to sell snake oil.

“METHODS OF INSTRUCTION - THE ALPHABET The Alphabet is taught only in the Third Department of this school, and is confined to the two subdivisions of it, which embrace the youngest pupils. It is not very peculiar in the methods adopted. The teachers endeavor to render the exercise as agreeable to the pupils as possible.... A young teacher (is) at the head of forty or fifty, sometimes sixty pupils, most of whom are from 3 to 5 years of age.

“SPELLING The most common method of teaching this branch here, is that which generally prevails in our schools, and which it is unnecessary to describe in this place. A few improvements have been adopted, among which are the following:

“1. Reading aloud the words of the lesson before it is studied, sometimes merely Pronouncing the Word with distinctness and propriety; the others, repeating with the same distinctness every letter and syllable....

“3. Shorter lessons. I have often known classes spell several pages of words at a single lesson.

“4. During the exercises, many of the teachers chose carefully to give explanations and definitions...

“5. In some of the departments of this school, particularly the first, in both of its branches, one spelling lesson a day is selected from a reading book.... (“First” was the oldest grade.)

“6. Great pains are taken to make the pupils acquainted with the powers of the various letters, and with the nature of accent. Many teachers think they have accomplished a great work, when they have succeeded in making their scholars repeat by rote the Introduction of Webster’s American Spelling Book. But a child may recite the whole of it a thousand times, without being any wiser than when he commenced.”

The “powers of the letters” were undoubtedly being practiced in oral drill, to produce pear-shaped tones. This has nothing to do with decoding print.

“The following improved method of teaching spelling has been recently introduced into this school. It serves to interest the pupils, and keep them constantly employed.... The plan is said to have been used by Mr. Gallaudet, in the instruction of the deaf and dumb, and it has also been lately mentioned by a writer in the Annals of Education.

“Suppose the word to be spelled is table. The first pupil says t; the second a; the third pronounces the syllable ta; - the next then says b; the fifth says l; the sixth e; the seventh says ble; the rest then pronounce the whole word table. By close attention on the part of both the teacher and pupils, they are able to spell in this manner with considerable rapidity. For a casual exercise, at least, it is certainly valuable. The plan has been modified in this school in one respect. The pupils go through with all the letters of the word, without stopping to pronounce the separate syllables; and only pronounce the whole word, when they come to the end of it.”

(Books used: Webster’s spelling book, the New Testament, Leavitt’s Easy Lessons) “...and in some of the smaller classes of boys Hazen’s Symbolical Primer. In addition to these, it is customary in both rooms to allow the pupils to read in any proper book which the teacher can procure; one pupil reading at a time, and the rest giving their attention.... Each of these divisions is again sub-divided. The eldest and most advanced pupils, to the extent of rather more than half the whole number, occupies one end of each room, under the care of the most experienced teacher, while the rest, under the care of the younger teacher, occupy the other.” (He said there were four women teachers).

“Order of the Exercises This does not differ materially from that of common schools in general. Among those who are able, reading occupies a considerable part of the first hour and a half of each half day; spelling, defining, exercises on the blackboard, slates & c. is the other. The oldest pupils generally read first, and the youngest last.” (Alcott said they varied the routine.)

“But there are a great many ways of teaching spelling which might be mentioned. All have their.... excellencies, and probably many of them have defects. But a new plan which is defective may be useful, for it has at least the charm of novelty, to recommend it, and no wise teacher will disregard the fondness of children for that which is new but on the contrary will endeavor to make it a means of their improvements. This consideration alone should silence the common objection to new plans in school, viz., that they are experiments, for they produce in general no evil, if they fail, and they interest the pupils while they are going on. Anything is better at sea, than a dead calm.

“In some schools, spelling is neglected for the sake of the higher branches. It is true, teachers often push their pupils forward into those studies which have high-sounding names ... teachers should, however, remember that good spelling is one of the pillars of a correct education; and that without this, the edifice cannot be erected.--- or, if erected, cannot stand firmly. Even if we admit the principle, of late so fashionable, that children ought to spell no words whose meaning they do not fully comprehend, yet this is by no means an encouragement to neglect this branch....

“During almost every exercise, the teachers frequently stop to give or require definitions and explanations. None of them have done more in introducing this practice into the school, than the principal teacher of the girls’ division of the Third Department. This explanatory system, as some writer has denominated it, is destined to accomplish a revolution in our primary schools generally, as it has already done in some parts of that which I am describing....

“READING. Reading is another branch which common schools are apt to neglect. By this is not meant that they do not devote hours enough to this exercise; nor read a sufficient number of pages; nor that the subjects of the lessons are not well chosen. There is time enough spent; and there are pages enough read. But until within a few years, and even now in many places, the popular methods of teaching are calculated to produce almost any other results, than make good readers. The first public school in Hartford has, at every period of its history, fallen more or less into the error. But in order to exhibit clearly, the character and value of the improvements which



have been introduced into it, within a few years, for several improvements have been made - it may be useful to give a few specimens of the former methods of instruction in this branch, as they existed in this vicinity and elsewhere.

“A class in a town adjoining this, consisting of two pupils about five years of age, read one day, in my presence, a lesson containing sixty-six different words, of which more than forty were nouns, pronouns, verbs and adjectives. Now, of these forty words, I suppose these pupils had not the remotest conception of the meaning of more than six or eight. It would be difficult to describe the various positions of the limbs, and contortions of the muscles, especially those of the face, which were observable during the ten minutes in which they were thus obliged to do penance.”

This is very interesting testimony from a contemporary witness who observed this some time before 1832. As only one day's lesson, two five-year-olds had the reading of a list of sixty-six relatively low frequency words (and they must have been low-frequency words since Alcott claimed the children did not know the meaning of most of them). Alcott's comments implied the children were able to pronounce the list, and he also implied that their being able to do so was the norm at that time. Alcott also implied that the day's lesson for the five-year-olds was only one of a sequence of similar lessons meant for them. The children were obviously reading their way successfully through the word lists in a speller like Webster's at the young age of five, as Alcott said elsewhere that he, himself, had done at the age of about five, as already discussed. Compare that independence in pronouncing print to the sight-word beginning vocabulary of William Scott Gray's "Dick and Jane" series. The entire vocabulary of Gray's 1930 material covered in the first six months or so of first grade would equal only one day's lesson for five-year-olds a century earlier. Even so, every one of the "Dick and Jane" basic vocabulary sight-words had to be pronounced by the teacher first because children taught with "Dick and Jane" could not read the words first by themselves!

Alcott continued:

“In an adjoining county, I once heard a little girl only nine years of age, read nearly the whole of two difficult pages in the American Preceptor at a single lesson. She had no class-mate, and was accustomed to read lessons as long, or nearly as long as this....

“A first class in a large school one day read a lesson from Murray's English Reader, containing two thousand and two hundred words; of which more than half were words of importance, such as they ought to have understood, and been able to define. That they did not, was evident from the want of interest which they all manifested while the others were reading; for the subject had interest enough in itself. The teacher was almost constantly calling out, 'Look on your books.' ...On the other hand, I know of one instructor, who used to spend half an hour, with a large class, on eight or ten lines. Yet every pupil was kept constantly employed; and was pleased and profited. Several others do not extend a single reading lesson beyond half a page.....

“...You will ask; 'What shall be done?' I answer; do what the Hartford school has attempted, and not without some success - keep the pupils constantly employed. Do this, but do much more. Like this school, go on from day to day in attempting improvements.

“The first point to be gained is to provide reading books which the pupils can understand. When this cannot be effected, we must try to make them understand easy paragraphs in such books as they already possess; or else invent, or teach them to invent lessons for themselves upon their slates.

“Something has been done in this school in both respects. One or two improved reading books have been introduced. But results more striking have been effected by attempting to interest the pupils, and make them understand what they read.

“For this purpose the lessons are very short. Then instead of reading round the class in the order in which they sit, one reads a paragraph, and another, who thinks he can read it better, raises his hand; he is then allowed to read the same. Sometimes half a dozen pupils read the paragraph; and the teacher among the rest.

“This method has been introduced, to a greater or less extent; into several of the classes, in the various departments. It originated, as I was informed, by the Principal, with Miss Reeve, the principal teacher in the girls’ division of the third... but this plan of teaching reading has been carried farther in the Third Department (Ed.: the youngest group), especially in that division where it originated, than in any other. After one pupil has read a sentence or paragraph, all who can, are permitted to make corrections. As they are fond of the exercise, it serves to keep them constantly employed. Those who wish to make corrections raise a hand. The teacher then addresses one of them and says ‘What error did you observe?’ They then mention errors in regard to pauses, pronunciation, emphasis, cadence, tones, inflections and the addition or omission of words or letters. The one who makes the correction is next required to read the passage, as in the First Department. There is no lost time where this process is fully in operation, and the progress of the pupils is beyond any example which I have witnessed. The plan, already extending, will, it is hoped and believed, soon become common in every class of the institution...

“Throughout the school great pains are taken to have the pupils read in a pitch of voice that is perfectly natural, like the tones of common conversation. In general these efforts have been attended with success. There are at present very few who speak either too loud, or too low. They generally read distinctly and slowly. The great rule, ‘read as you talk,’ seems to be properly appreciated by many of the pupils; though it must be confessed a few of them disregard it, and read in the old fashioned monotonous manner. The teachers should read more with their pupils than some of them do. Example has a powerful effect in this respect, as well as in everything else.

“The explanatory method of teaching reading is not forgotten, even in the Bible lessons. The principal took great pains to explain such words as centurion, leper, &c.; and not only to define them himself, but to ascertain whether the pupils comprehended his meaning, and could define them in their turn.

“But there is another method still, which is practiced in the First Department, and which I believe originated there. A pupil reads till he comes to a pause of some sort, if it be but a comma - then stops, and the next reads; and so on, through the whole lesson. As some will read only a single word at a time, and no one but a few, they are obliged to pay the closest attention to the exercise. So far as this goes, then, the difficulty of keeping scholars constantly employed is overcome.

“The principal teacher of the Second Department has been accustomed to allow his scholars to read for places, as follows. A certain position of honor is appointed - say the teacher’s chair. A paragraph is then selected, and he who can read it best, takes the chair. If any one can read still better, he is allowed to take his place. In this way, they sometimes read a considerable time, on a single paragraph)...”

The children were systematically being denied, at all levels from the Third Department (primary) to the First Department, that practice in spelling and reading on which accuracy and automaticity are built.

“Sound” was being systematically displaced, in multiple ways, by “meaning.” It should be carefully noted that the change-agents’ names showed up in connection with this school which was moving in 1831 from “sound” to “meaning”: Josiah Holbrook, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, William Andrus Alcott, S. R. Hall and others.

The principal of that school, J. Olney, who had written a widely used geography, shortly after wrote what is probably a series of reading books. The only copy I have seen is *The Easy Reader*, or Introduction to the National Preceptor, but the title confirms there was a sequence in these two books. The cover of *The Easy Reader* shows that Olney also wrote the *Child’s Manual*, which may have been meant as the first book.

J. Olney’s views on teaching reading were given at length in the “Preface” to *The Easy Reader*, excerpts of which are quoted below. Olney argued that the formerly long and difficult spelling and reading assignments for children should be replaced with extremely short and very simple reading selections. In effect, he wanted “sound” in beginning reading replaced by “meaning.”

The case Olney presented seems very reasonable. The problem, however, is that his assumptions have little base in reality. Furthermore, in all the ages of Western literacy, from the completion of the sound-based alphabet in Greece about 800 B. C. until the early nineteenth century in America and Great Britain, no one - anywhere - had ever openly taught hearing children to read alphabetic print by consciously concentrating on “meaning” instead of “sound,” in a fuzzy-minded conviction that doing so would improve their understanding. Yet most of Western Civilization’s great geniuses since the days of ancient Greece had lived before 1826 and if they were literate (as most were), they had all learned to read by “sound.”

Yet giving children heavy practice in learning to pronounce words in the spelling book and even teaching children to read connected text like the Psalms was seen by Olney as mindless reading; therefore, such practice had to go, to be replaced with endless discussion and dissection of only a few simple sentences. After 1826, bringing children to the level of automaticity in reading had gone out of style.

Keagy had justified his endorsement of the deaf-mute method to teach beginning reading by citing Stewart. Olney did not actually cite Stewart, but, as can be seen by comparing his comments below to Stewart’s given elsewhere, Olney’s arguments were probably derived from Stewart’s ideas. Olney was in contact with William Andrus Alcott and so many other activists in his school. Olney’s wholehearted endorsement of “meaning” is only one more indication that the activists shared the same aims. Those aims included replacing freedom in education with controlled government schools, and replacing “sound” in reading with “meaning.”

The following excerpts are taken from the “Preface” of *The Easy Reader*, or Introduction to the National Preceptor, Consisting of Familiar and Progressive Lessons Designed to Aid in Thinking, Spelling, Defining and Correct Reading., “By J. Olney, A. M. Author of a Geography and Atlas, National Preceptor, *Child’s Manual*. New-Haven. Durrie & Peck. 1833.”

“As the great end of elementary education is to develop and bring into exercise the various faculties of the youthful mind, it is of the first importance that such methods of instruction should be employed as will most successfully accomplish these desirable objects. It should ever be borne in mind by those who are interested in the education of the young, that childhood is the progressive state of both mind and body, and that if either is neglected at this stage, it will never attain that height in excellence to which it is capable of ascending. ... Much more depends on the early education of children than is generally supposed. The mind at this age is susceptible of any

impression, and can be trained to any habits, and it is at this period that a solid foundation must be laid for all subsequent attainments in the arts and sciences. .... Whatever may be the method of instruction habits will be formed, and these will be good or bad in proportion as the methods employed are judicious or otherwise. How important then, that the education of children should be properly commenced, and conducted, - that the mind at its first setting out in quest of knowledge, should be guided to wisdom's paths which 'lead to the fields of knowledge and the founts of science.'

"It is supposed by many that no study is calculated to exercise the mental faculties of children except arithmetic. But this is a great mistake. No study is better calculated to effect this than reading; and as this is the fundamental branch of instruction in our schools, particular attention should be paid to make this in all cases a mental exercise. When this is done, the pupil will make rapid progress, and in the outset acquire the habits of reading for ideas. The powers of his mind will thus be awakened and brought into exercise, and he will be prepared to engage in other branches of study and pursue them understandingly. But let a pupil, six or seven years of age, be permitted to read two or three years, in a careless, unthinking manner, - hurrying over sentences without understanding them - attaching no meaning to the words that he reads, and he will contract habits of thoughtlessness, indifference, and inattention, that will disqualify him for pursuing any other branch of education either with pleasure or profit. The reason is obvious. Such a course of instruction does not lead him to think. The powers of his mind are not developed and his judgment is in no case exercised. Nothing can be a greater obstacle to the acquisition of vigorous habits of investigation and of sound and useful knowledge than the habit of reading without thinking, and of resting contented with a very confused or superficial notion of what is read.

"That much time is uselessly spent in teaching children to read - and that bad habits, as regards pronunciation, emphasis, tones, attention, &c., are often contracted for want of suitable books there can be little doubt. In most cases those who have prepared reading books for children, have consulted their own taste instead of that of the class for whom they were laboring. Lessons designed for children should be interesting, suited to the capacities, and adapted to the natural progress of their minds. Books prepared in this manner are read with interest, and always effect the object intended.... Impressed with the truth of the above sentiments, the compiler has prepared the following work, with a firm belief that its use will have a direct tendency to obviate the evils complained of.... Great care has been taken to arrange the lessons so as to lead the pupil by regular gradation from easy to difficult reading, and to an acquaintance with a few new words in each succeeding lesson....

"In using the following work, it is intended that the learner should spell, pronounce, and define the principal words of each lesson before he reads it. This will enable him to enter into the sense of what he reads, - will call into exercise the various powers of his mind - and daily advance him in acquiring a knowledge of language. That orthography, pronunciation, definition and reading can be taught more successfully in connection than separately, there can be no doubt. For studied in this manner, each assists in the acquisition of the other...

"In teaching a child to read, the motto of the teacher should be 'a little and well.' In the reading of each sentence his attention must be directed to pronunciation, emphasis, cadence, inflections, tones, and the addition or omission of words or letters. Now it must be evident to any one that the lesson must be short, or many of these subjects must be passed unnoticed. But, one sentence read in which attention is paid to each of these, is more beneficial than pages or even volumes read in a hasty, careless, or unthinking manner. The former method tends to cultivate and discipline the mind, while the latter tends as directly to disqualify or unfit it for all mental

exertion. The grand rule, 'Read as you converse' ought to be deeply impressed on the mind of the learner, and if this rule is observed, his reading will resemble graceful and animated conversation....

J. OLNEY"

"Hartford, July 20th, 1833"

Note Olney's 1833 comment:about "an acquaintance with a few new words in each succeeding lesson...." Nila Banton Smith wrongly claimed that McGuffey was the first to introduce vocabulary control. Yet Olney was one of those before McGuffey who controlled vocabulary.

Olney and William Andrus Alcott obviously shared the same aim in beginning reading instruction. That aim was the substitution of "meaning" for "sound." As Olney put it in the above, "But, one sentence read in which attention is paid to each of these, is more beneficial than pages or even volumes read in a hasty, careless, or unthinking manner."

Olney also said in the above, "Nothing can be a greater obstacle to the acquisition of vigorous habits of investigation and of sound and useful knowledge than the habit of reading without thinking." That was essentially Stewart's thesis. Alcott had specifically referred to one of Stewart's statements when writing of infant schools. Olney was apparently reading Stewart, as well.

## Chapter 20

### On the Influence of the Trans-Atlantic Change-Agents

A book which was apparently published originally in 1836, and which had a second edition in 1837, corroborates the massive influence of trans-Atlantic change-agents in the installation of the beginning-reading “meaning” method in the schools. As the presumably 1836 text clearly demonstrated, where government schools had been slow in taking root, the change-agents had operated through charity or church schools. The book was entitled:

“POPULAR EDUCATION: OR, THE NORMAL SCHOOL MANUAL; CONTAINING PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR DAILY AND SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

In a Series of Letters. By Henry Dunn, Secretary to the British and Foreign Schools Society, Second Edition, London: Published by the Sunday-School Union, 1837.”

Dunn signed the Preface to this second edition, “Borough Road, December, 1837,” and on page 46 spoke of “the Central School in the Borough Road.” That practice school/normal school was apparently the headquarters for the British and Foreign Schools Society, which was the successor to Lancaster’s monitorial school society. Dunn referred to the “rapid sale of the first edition.” His table of contents showed the subjects discussed under each chapter, and the names and the topics he listed, some given below, demonstrate the trans-Atlantic ties:

German and American writers. Mr. Jacob Abbott [Ed.: He wrote a book entitled, *The Teacher*]. Dr. Dwight. Dr. Reid. Fellenberg. Hooker. Joseph Lancaster. Father Girard. Professor Pillans. Mr. Wood. Jacotot. Woodbridge. Parkhurst. Thayer. Plan at the Borough Road School. Pestalozzi. Mr. Hall’s Lectures. Salzman. Professor Jardine. Dugald Stewart. Books on Education.

Dunn’s second edition was published by the Sunday-School Union in Great Britain in 1837. A book referred to earlier was published by “Carlton & Phillips, Sunday School Union” in New York in 1856, containing the short biography on Gallaudet, entitled *Tall Oaks from Little Acorns, or Sketches of Distinguished Persons of Humble Origin* “By William A. Alcott, M. D.” Since both Dunn’s and Alcott’s books were published by Sunday School Unions, that fact shows that the change-agents such as Dunn and Alcott were operating through the private Sunday school groups in both America and Great Britain as well as through groups promoting government schools.

The Sunday school groups gave the activists a wide organizational net through which to exert their baneful influence, which was paid for, of course, by other people who thought they were supporting charitable works, and not change-agent works. As mentioned elsewhere, Sunday school beginning reading texts had been among the very first to show the shift from “sound” to “meaning,” and that was the apparent result of early “expert” influence.

Dunn’s “letters” began:

“Letter I. To a Friend. Object of the work. I. Various motives, my dear friend, have influenced me in determining, without further delay, to attempt the preparation of a small volume for the use of teachers. It is just seven years today [Ed.: Jan. 1, 1836, was the date of the first letter] since I entered upon my present engagements, and became exclusively devoted to the furtherance of popular education in connexion with the British and Foreign Schools Society....”

That places Dunn in operation in London by January 1, 1829, at almost the exact same time that the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster was writing the first of his withering comments on monitorial schools, the same kind of schools that Dunn began officially promoting in 1829.

Dunn wrote (pages 2 to 5):

“That a manual of this description is wanted, I have long been convinced. Gathered, as elementary teachers generally are, from the humbler walks of society... without books, and unable to purchase them; it is not to be expected that they should possess any acquaintance whatever with education as a science, unless the substance of what has been written on the subject by practical men, can be placed before them at a cheap rate, and in a small compass. Of the four hundred and sixty young persons, who, during the period to which I have already referred, have left our own institution to assume the responsible office of instructors, I know very few to whom a volume of this character, however imperfectly executed, would not have been, at their first setting out, a treasure....

“...Under each head will be found, I may venture to say many practical remarks of great value, the suggestions of experienced teachers either in this country, in Germany, or in the United States of America.... One source, however, from which I have drawn unsparingly must be specially mentioned. I refer to the “American Annals of Education and Instruction,” edited by the Rev. W. C. Woodbridge, of Boston, U. S., a journal of which it is impossible for me to speak too highly; I scarcely know the extent of my obligations to this educational treasury....

“...How far the main object of the undertaking, the preparation of a suitable text-book for young teachers, has been attained, remains to be seen....to facilitate examination on its contents, either orally or by means of written compositions, a series of questions adapted to bring out the most important points has been added, and each paragraph numbered....”

Lower-class prospective teachers for whom this “official” book was written would be anxious to get the paying monitorial schools jobs being offered by their “betters” like Dunn. Such poor young teachers would be very careful to answer an official textbook’s questions “correctly.” In his book, Dunn promoted the “meaning” method for beginning reading. Therefore, such prospective teachers being given his book would say that the “meaning-method” was the only “correct” way to teach beginning reading. Dunn’s change-agent control would then have become nicely operative. Note that in the seven years that Dunn’s London normal school had been in existence, it had already prepared 460 such “official” (which means, “incompetent”) teachers!

Dunn said in a footnote on page 30:

“Vide Hall’s Lectures to Schoolmasters, Boston, 1833 [sic]; a work of considerable value, and which has met with a large circulation in the United States. - See also Salzmänn, Abbott, &c.”

Therefore, Dunn knew Hall’s American book had a large circulation. Also, as shown below, Gallaudet in America knew Dunn’s work “had done much good in England,” and so obviously must have had a large circulation in England. Information on the sale of change-agent books on “education” was apparently traveling very freely across the Atlantic Ocean.

W. A. Alcott was a cousin and close friend of Amos Bronson Alcott, who made a kind of triumphal visit as an “educator” to England about 1840, and W. A. Alcott was also a close friend of Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet who edited the *Schoolmaster’s Manual*. W. A. Alcott said of that work:

“(Gallaudet) edited an American edition of Dunn’s *Principles of Teaching*, a British work, which had done much good in that country, under the name of the *Schoolmaster’s Manual*.”

The quotation is from W. A. Alcott’s *Tall Oaks from Little Acorns*, 1856, and it gave no date for Gallaudet’s edition of the British text, which was most probably Dunn’s 1836 *Popular Education*, or *The Normal School Manual* or its possible later revision, and not a book called *Principles of Teaching*, on which I have found no record. Presumably W. A. Alcott’s close friend, Gallaudet, was his source for the comment that Dunn’s book “had done much good in that country,” meaning England. Yet how could Gallaudet have known Dunn’s book “had done much good in that country” unless there were a trans-Atlantic clique of “improvers” who were able to communicate effectively through publications, personal letters, or visits?

Dunn quoted directly from “Pillans’ [sic] *Three Lectures*, 1836”:

“... much intellectual and even moral training is accomplished by means of monitors; and these schools, we may confidently anticipate, will serve as models in the preparation of any great legislative measure for the education of the English people.”

Pillans was plowing the ground to sow government schools. The monitorial schools being pushed by Brougham, et al, were the entering wedge for government control (and through the government, change-agent control) over the education of the public’s children.

After this, Dunn went on at length on the training of pupil monitors. Failure was to be laid at the foot of the teacher who had not properly prepared the monitors! With such numbers of monitors and students, the “planning” and supervision was clearly as impossible as the method itself, but Dunn’s wordy advice sounded so learned. It was the standard education activists’ approach so evident in any education “reform:” in actual practice, abuse the teachers as well as the children.

Gallaudet went to the trouble to publish an edited edition of Dunn’s work in America, and most probably it was this work. Yet no intelligent and right-thinking person could have promoted such worthless material, any more than the *Scottish Schoolmaster* would have done! As Dr. Alcott and other sources made very clear, Gallaudet was a very energetic government-school activist, both during and after he left his work with the deaf. Gallaudet’s promotion of Dunn’s work suggests Gallaudet was no different from the rest of the activists.

In Letter IV, *The Monitorial System*, Dunn said (page 46 and following):

“The most obvious advantage which the monitorial plan possesses over all others, is, without doubt, the greater facility which it affords for the maintenance of order and good government, by securing at all times the regular and constant employment of every pupil. It is equally evident that the amount of knowledge imparted in a school where the pupils are constantly occupied, will be very much greater than it can be in one where every thing having to be managed by the teacher, aided perhaps only by a single individual, a large proportion of the children must, during many hours of the day, be comparatively idle....”

“Constantly occupied” was a theme which was promoted over and over as a presumed virtue of the monitorial schools.



“But this is by no means the extent of benefit which may fairly be claimed on its behalf. Monitors are in some respects better teachers than adults; they sympathise more readily with the difficulties of the pupil; they are more patient in imparting knowledge, and more fertile in expedients for explaining and illustrating it: they communicate with more facility, and, learning while they teach, they willingly undertake an amount of labour, [which] would be to an adult intolerable drudgery. As subordinate instructors they are far superior to adults....”

In a footnote on pages 46 and 47, Dunn said:

“Father Girard, the benevolent founder of the system of mutual instruction in Switzerland, told Mr. Woodbridge, when examining his school, that when he met with difficulty in explaining any word or subject to a child, he had often called in a boy more advanced, to aid him, and had usually found him succeed entirely, even when all his own efforts had failed.”

Dunn then gave a similar anecdote from Wood’s monitorial school in Edinburgh concerning a mathematical example and said Professor Pillans “bears similar testimony.” Dunn finished by saying:

“The experience of the Central School in the Borough Road is precisely of the same character.”

Dunn said on page 58 that his material was not intended:

“...to occupy the place of any existing manual for the regulation of monitorial schools. Otherwise much would have to be added on other subjects, besides the selection and training of monitors.... But for these and various other matters of detail, highly important as they are in themselves, and intimately connected as they must be, with the general efficiency of a school, it is sufficient to refer you to the authorized publications of the two societies.”

The “two societies” were Lancaster’s unsectarian Royal Lancastrian Association of 1810 that had been renamed the British and Foreign Schools Society, and Andrew Bell’s 1811 The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church Throughout England and Wales.

Yet the noisy din in the monitorial schools could not be denied. Dunn turned the noise into a seeming virtue, by indicating that it demonstrated that the children were “constantly occupied.” He said (page 59 and following):

“One objection, however, which is continually made against monitorial schools, deserves a passing notice. It is a matter of frequent complaint, that they are so often scenes of noise and of tumult. That this is a very serious evil cannot be denied, tranquility and quietness would certainly be far preferable, if they could be attained without too great a sacrifice of time and improvement. But the truth is, noise is inseparable from the united employment of numbers, and there is no remedy for it, but dispersion or listless indolence. A quick eye and ear will soon distinguish between the activity of business, and the irregular action of idle conversation....”

Dunn made a bow to Dugald Stewart and his ideas. (As previously shown, Dugald Stewart, along with Brougham, had been cited as a supporter of Wood’s Edinburgh monitorial school.) On pages 61 and 62, Dunn used the phrase, in quotation marks, “to cultivate his original faculties,” and after the quotation put this footnote:

‘The business of education.’ - Dugald Stewart.”

This, of course, can refer to “teaching” comprehension, which is an oxymoron. In a footnote on page 63, Dunn said:

“Probably it is no exaggeration to say that the appetite for knowledge is as great as any bodily appetite. To know is one of the strongest desires of childhood; to obtain a new word is pleasant, and to gain a new idea is pleasanter still; but to be crammed with words without ideas is very painful.”

Without explicitly condemning the old “sound” spellers which contained thousands of words, Dunn had done so in principle, following a vague quotation of Stewart’s about “cultivating” faculties.

Dunn quoted directly from “Mr. Crossley, the able superintendent of the Central School,” whose remarks on training monitors for teaching reading over-emphasized the “meaning” of words in context and their precise definitions.

On page 66 through page 84, Dunn discussed the alphabet, spelling and reading. His comments were a total endorsement of all of the change-agent ideas which had replaced “sound” in learning to read with “meaning.” In the section, he referred approvingly to Wood, Pillans, Jacotot, Parkhurst, Thayer, and to the Manual of the System of Primary Instruction, “pursued in the model-schools of the British and Foreign Schools Society.”

The Schoolmaster in two volumes was published by Knight, Ludgate Hill (England), before 1836, and was mentioned on pages 70 and 71 of Dunn’s book. He said it contained American lectures, one by Thayer at the formation of the American Institute of Instruction in 1830. Dunn said Thayer, like Parkhurst in his book, The Teacher’s Guide, said that words:

“...to be spelled should first be embodied in reading lessons, and afterwards arranged in columns; and both insist that the evidence of their being possessed by the pupil should in all cases be rendered in writing.”

The new “written” spelling like the new teaching of whole words only in story contexts for hearing children did away with the age-old spoken drill on sound and syllables. (That was also the kind of “reading” and “spelling” taught by Gallaudet to deaf-mutes). Dunn quoted Thayer’s promotion of such written spelling, presumably in 1830, at the formation, under Holbrook’s guidance, of the American Institute of Instruction:

“It may be said, the eye remembers. It is more attentive than the ear. Its objects are not confused. It takes in a single and perfect image of what is placed before it, and transfers the picture to the mind.”

All the authorities that Dunn quoted in 1836, like Thayer and Parkhurst, were consistently pro-“meaning,” and anti-“sound” in the teaching of beginning reading.

Dunn said further:

“See also, on this subject, Wood’s Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School. To Mr. Wood the cause of education is deeply indebted. He was certainly the first to call public attention to the importance of giving a more intellectual character to popular education; and by his unwearied exertions in the Sessional school he demonstrated the practicability of it.”

The “intellectual” character in Wood’s school was the harping on word “meanings” to the exclusion of “sound.” No mention was made, of course, of the negative evaluation of Wood’s Sessional School by men like the Scottish Schoolmaster. He had personally visited Wood’s school twice and was supremely qualified to comment on its relative achievement after his own 30 years experience teaching elementary school children.

Dunn described on pages 71, 72 and 73 the content of the Manual of the British and Foreign Schools Society:

“The plan pursued at the model-school in the Borough Road, which plan is fully explained in the Manual of the society, is perhaps the best that can be devised.

“The spelling lessons, which are printed in both roman and italic type, to exercise the children in reading various characters, exhibit a two-fold arrangement. The names of things are arranged under various heads, such as trades, measures, vegetables, quadrupeds, clothing, fruit, medicine, flowers, birds, &c.; and columns of other words are placed alphabetically.”

Note that the “category” arrangement had been followed by the first Franklin primer of 1802, by the Columbian spelling book of 1819, and by the 1826 Franklin primer. Although it had been very rare in beginning reading materials, that same “meaning” method in beginning reading then turned up in the society founded by Lancaster in England as the replacement for Lancaster’s own very different “sound” approach. Lancaster’s “sound” approach may have been dropped not long after Lancaster, himself, was dropped. The use of the category approach had probably been justified as a Pestalozzian concentration on sense objects. Yet Pestalozzi himself had taught the syllable “sound” approach, even using a ridiculous over-emphasis!

Dunn continued:

“The last fifteen lessons of the set consist of a selection of words, approximating in sound, but differing in spelling and signification.”

The first arrangement had emphasized meaning (categories) and the second had emphasized meaning (alphabetical order). So did the last also emphasize “meaning” by its implicit message to DISREGARD sound, since words making a similar sound were spelled in different ways, for which no rationale was apparently given. Dunn continued, concerning the last list:

“They embrace the principal orthographical irregularities of the language.”

Dunn then summarized that spelling book:

“The whole set consists of sixty folio lessons, containing, besides four alphabets, nearly six thousand words, selected primarily for the purpose of communicating a complete knowledge of English orthography, and revised with the design of including a very extensive range of useful knowledge, and inducing habits of observation and inquiry.”

Note the buzz-word, “useful knowledge.” “Six thousand words” suggests the “meaning” speller was probably a little over a hundred pages long, which was more or less the norm for the “sound” spellers that this “meaning” speller was attempting to replace. Dunn continued:

“The plan of teaching is invariable throughout the series; the pupils are expected to spell, read, and explain every word. Suppose, for instance, the word to be “he.” The first boy would say, h,e - he; and the second boy would, without giving a regular definition, express his sense of its meaning. He may be supposed to say, “him,” or “not me;” or, putting it in a sentence, say, “he is here.” Any answer which indicates a knowledge of the word should be accepted, however homely either in language or illustration. The same remark applies to all the definitions they give: if the idea be correctly received, repeated demands for explanation will soon lead to more suitable language and more correct definitions. The two principal points to be attained by the pupil are, the comprehension of the meaning of the term, and the power of expressing that meaning in suitable language.”

Constantly asking a five- or six-year-old child with normal intelligence and hearing to define words like “he” is not only ludicrous. As discussed elsewhere, it might interfere with automaticity in the use of already acquired language.

“The meanings of the words in the alphabetical columns, which are generally derivative, the pupils learn by being exercised in separating the prefixes and affixes, and then tracing the root through other combinations. For instance, the word, ‘retrospective,’ the monitor would say, ‘Separate it;’ and the boys would reply retro, behind, spect, look, and tion, act or action.”

I could not now do this, even as an adult. It is reminiscent of the “vocabulary” work weighing down our “readers” which are turning out illiterates today. Children waste - quite literally - the time which should be engaged in necessary learning (which is - also quite literally - the acquiring of conditioned reflexes). It sounds highfaluting, however, and this fakery was and is used to crowd real learning out of the schools - both then and now. Teaching poverty-stricken children this esoteric material in the Borough School, without teaching them to read independently, was as monstrous then as “whole language” is today. The excerpt continued:

“He would then say, ‘What is the meaning of the word retrospection’ and he would ask for other instances in which the root occurs. In- spect, pro-spect, spect-acle, circum-spect, re-spect, and other words would be given.”

After citing this monstrous excerpt, Dunn continued:

“The advantages of this system of interrogation are numerous and weighty. It teaches even the youngest child to apply every word as it is brought before him, from his earliest acquaintance with a written or printed language. It leads the mind direct from the words to the legitimate use of them, the communication of ideas. By inducing the child to draw on the resources of its own mind, it teaches him to compare, to discriminate, to judge; a process by which he is rendered capable of far greater mental exertion. It necessarily insures a habit of observation and scrutinizing inquiry; it occasions close application; and it constantly calls upon the master rather to restrain than to excite.”

Thus did the propaganda run.

However, the acts of comparing, discriminating, and judging are done in the higher brain mechanism, and the higher brain mechanism cannot be conditioned, or taught. Such interrogations were therefore not “teaching” anything, any more than the endless “reading comprehension” exercises of today teach anything.

It is true that it is probably possible to strengthen the generalized power of the higher brain mechanism through use, just as muscles and other parts of the body are strengthened through use or atrophied through disuse. This appears to be confirmed by recent experiments with rats in enriched environments. Yet such dreary and boring “meaning” exercises would disgust children rather than stimulate them to make prolonged use of the reasoning powers of the higher brain mechanism, as the enriched environments apparently do for the rats.

However, a clear distinction should always be made between that purely physical organ, the brain, and the non-physical mind which operates through that brain. A mountain of nonsense has been written over the past hundred and forty years or so, and is still pouring from the presses from “distinguished” scientists, which tries to equate the mind with the brain. None of the attempts has ever been even remotely successful. The brain is, after all, just another physical organ of the body like the stomach or the spleen, but with a different function.

Dunn’s dismal 1836 book establishes that, some time before it was written, the Lancaster “sound” beginning reading approach had been replaced by the “meaning” beginning reading approach in the schools that Lancaster had founded. Yet even the French monitorial schools when they were founded in 1815 had used a partial adaptation of Lancaster’s “sound” tables: words learned solely by letter length, after a “sound” introduction. Did Lancaster run afoul of the “experts” after about 1815 because he refused to throw out “sound” for “meaning” in beginning reading? Is that really why Lancaster was dumped? Andrew Bell who had founded the National monitorial schools made an almost direct and enigmatic about-face on the teaching of beginning reading, from “sound” toward “meaning,” sometime between 1808 and 1823, and the record shows that Bell was emphatically not dumped. It does make one wonder.

Dunn stated the following on page 75, under paragraph 81, again endorsing “meaning” and openly dumping “sound” for beginners:

“(1.) Take care that the pupil thoroughly understands that which he is directed to read. This is absolutely essential to his success. If he do not fully comprehend the thought, how can he be expected adequately to express the language in which it may be clothed? Attention to this point is just as important in the lowest as in the highest class. Indeed it is there (in the lowest class) that the habit of fully comprehending in the mind that which is presented to the eye, must be formed. The great evil of putting before children unmeaning combinations of letters, such as “bla, ble, bli, blo, blu,” and all the rest of this ridiculous tribe, is that in reading them, a habit is formed of separating the sight and sound of words from sense, a habit which frequently cleaves to the mind long after the days of childhood have passed away. If, therefore, you would have a sentence well read, read so as to be understood and felt by the hearer, take care that the reader himself both understands and feels it. The progress of your pupils, too, will by this means be greatly facilitated. ‘He who is taught the habit of carrying the sense along with the sound, is armed with two forces instead of one, to grapple with the difficulties he encounters; the one, his knowledge of the letters and syllables, and the other, his knowledge of the story.’”

Note that the child had been given a “story” to read, and not what was once read: his prayers and the Bible! Dunn’s footnote showed that the quotation was from Pillans.

On page 77, under 84. (4), Dunn said:

“Do not permit too much to be read at one time. A good teacher can profitably occupy twenty or thirty minutes over a page, without at all wearying his children. He will often have to say, ‘I perceive you do not quite understand that passage; read it again.’ Then he will require definitions of the leading words, their synonyms and their opposites; then perhaps he will have the sentence

analysed or paraphrased; and after this, he will thoroughly explain every incidental allusion, whether geographical, historical, or biographical, which may be involved in the passage. All this, it may be, must be done before that which is read can be thoroughly understood; ...until it is understood it can never be properly read.”

On the fake “meaning” basis again, Dunn was throwing out the lengthy practice that was necessary for children to establish automaticity in their reading skills. The long practice selections used previously were being replaced by endless classroom “meaning” drill on reading selections as short as a page. The enormous shortening of reading practice which Dunn recommended in England in 1836 had also been recommended a few years previously in America, as described elsewhere.

Dunn stated on page 77 and following:

“Intimately connected with the point which I have been urging, is the practice of interrogation; the object of which, when rightly conducted, is two-fold; first, it ascertains satisfactorily that ideas, in distinction from mere words, are received by the pupil; and, secondly, to afford opportunities for the communication of incidental instruction.”

Dunn had referred to “Miss Hamilton’s” telling of a man who, in childhood, mistook patriarchs for partridges “and to the latest day of his life, he could not get rid of the association.” Dunn said:

“Now there are two methods in which this tendency to misconceive the meaning of words may be met; and both must, as far as possible, be brought to bear upon the evil.

“The first is, - VISIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS. Wherever the subject will admit of it, there is nothing equal to this kind of explanation. You will recollect an observation made some paragraphs back, ‘the eye remembers.’ It might also be said (although of course comparatively and subject to exception,) the eye makes no mistakes....

“Among the subjects which admit most easily of being explained by objects of sight, might be mentioned the various branches of natural history, and the physical sciences generally. In some of these the object itself can be called in, and in others detached portions of it. In the absence of the object itself, or any part of it, a model, a graphic representation, an outline, or a diagram, will suffice; but something of the kind must, if possible, be presented. Hence the importance of schools being provided with specimens of as many different things as possible, and of children being taught to cultivate habits of observation and inquiry. It is in many respects of the highest importance to teach children to discern the most minute differences and resemblances in objects which they can examine; the eye, the ear, the touch, the taste, the smell, should all be educated, by exercise on a great variety of objects. If the perceptive faculties be not carefully cultivated, it is impossible that....” [Etc.]

Dunn was promoting not just object lessons but “natural history,” just as had been done by others in America with questionable (probably anti-religious) motives, despite the obvious high value of the content. Yet Dunn presumed to limit sensibly the teaching of “meaning” in science, since he said on page 83:

“...it is a great mistake to involve him in the intricacies of the solar system, to talk to him of orbit and gravity, parallax and disturbing forces, or even of ecliptic, equator, and meridian, at an age when his mind cannot possibly go beyond the figure on the map or board, and when the planetarium itself, if there happen to be one, is to him nothing more than a plaything. To set children a chattering about oxygen, hydrogen, caloric, and all the mysteries (as they must be to

them) of modern chemistry, is education run mad; and, in truth, no less to be deprecated than the opposite extreme of the no-meaning system.”

At this point he showed a footnote, “Letters to Kennedy” which were written by Professor Pillans, presumably because of the phrase, the “no-meaning system.” Dunn went on:

“And even if understood, such knowledge is little worth. The mere accumulation of facts in the memory is of trifling value, if unaccompanied by the development and training of the faculties. A mind filled with the results of other men’s research, and unacquainted with the steps and processes of the proof, may, as Beattie remarks, fitly enough to be compared to a well-filled granary, but bears no resemblance to the fruitful field, which multiplies that which is cast into its lap a thousand fold.”

All of this sounds so well-meaning, and certainly little children should not be burdened with material which they are incapable of understanding. Yet Dunn’s over-all view in the last paragraph above concerning the acquiring of general knowledge is only a paraphrase of Stewart’s earlier appeal for the drowning of the books. An empty head, devoid of any knowledge except that which concerned the learner intimately, was quite literally considered by Stewart to be better than a head filled with massive and intricate knowledge of history, geography, world events, and everything else appropriate for an educated person. When Stewart’s and Dunn’s proposals are stripped of their philosophical packaging, they can be seen for what they are: astonishingly destructive.

Dunn continued on page 84:

“Having thus, briefly laid down the general plan on which you should proceed, in your endeavour to make that which is read fully understood, both by interrogation and illustration, I cannot do better than recommend you to study, as an exemplification of the principles I have endeavoured to enforce, a specimen of this kind of teaching, as it is actually carried on in the Borough Road School. You will find it in the Appendix. It is an extract from the Educational Magazine, and was drawn up for the work by the editor under the title of “A Day at the Borough Road School.” This specimen, relating, as it chiefly does, to the impartation of scriptural instruction, will not be unacceptable to Sunday-school teachers. They will see how diversified instruction may be, without at all losing its religious character; and they will feel, I trust, more than ever, that in order to do children good, it is necessary to interest them.”

Note John Dewey’s “interest” theme in 1836! By the time this was written, by 1836, with a second edition of 1837, the failure of children to be able to read independently in Great Britain, as in America, must have become very apparent from Bell’s work from at least the early 1820’s, from Wood’s work from probably before 1826 and certainly from before 1828, and from Dunn’s imitating Wood probably at least from January, 1829. Yet the glowing claims continued: “meaning” was a more effective approach to teaching beginning reading than “sound.”

Another book corroborating the influence of the trans-Atlantic change-agents was published a year before Dunn’s 1836 English work. It was by the American, Theodore Dwight, Jr, who had been cited in Dunn’s 1836 book as an American “authority.” (Dwight was possibly the son of Reverend Theodore Dwight who had been president of Yale in 1798, and, as such, would have been in an influential position.)

In Dwight’s text on school practices, he promoted the “meaning” approach in beginning reading. Dwight was also a member in good standing of the change-agent “mafia,” as will become apparent. The title of Dwight’s book was *The School-Master’s Friend, With the Committee Man’s Guide*, New York: Roe, Lockwood, 1835. With the reference to the “Committee Man,” Dwight made it evident that he had

aimed his comments at the government school group in America, while Dunn had aimed his at the Sunday schools and the religiously-sponsored schools in Great Britain, which fell increasingly under government control.

Dwight's publisher, Roe, Lockwood, had apparently been a publisher of "meaning" approach materials in reading instruction for some years before 1835. They had a ninth edition in 1831 of Introduction to American Popular Lessons "By the author of American Popular Lessons" which higher book they presumably also published. They also sold The First Book of Primary Lessons by the same author, who is shown elsewhere as Eliza Robbins. From the title of this lowest book of Robbins, her reading series was presumably "meaning" oriented since the title does not suggest it was a speller. With the third title, American Popular Lessons, Eliza Robbins had obviously written a three-level reading series published before 1831 for the same publisher who put out Dwight's work in 1835.

Dwight himself wrote the New Picture Primer and Table Book, or, The Child's First Book in Spelling, Reading and Rules of Arithmetic, For Primary Schools and Families. It was a mere 35 pages long and was probably really meant only as a "toy" book for sale to families. It contained some spelling by analogy, but was far too sparse on "sound." His primer rates only a Code 3. On page 21, Dwight had a child say, "I must know what the words mean. Then I can know how to sound them." That comment plus the over-emphasis on pictures showed Dwight's philosophy. A copy of his primer which was published in 1841 at New London survives at Harvard, but his New Picture Primer was very possibly originally published some years before 1841.

According to Blumenfeld, Dwight had been on the committee for the original American Lyceum organized by the arch-activist, Josiah Holbrook, in May, 1831.

Samuel Seton had been another member of that original activist committee, and had written a guide for infant school teachers in 1830, The Abecedarian, which was unbelievably bad. Seton recommended methods for learning the alphabet which would probably have resulted in some children being permanently unable to distinguish one letter from another. Like Dwight, Seton also endorsed the "meaning" approach, saying, "When learning the letters, the child may be taught to pronounce syllables and words at sight. \* This exercise will be found very useful when connected with pictures of the object named."

\*"Hazen's Symbolical Primer is well adapted to this purpose."

Edward Hazen's primer which had been finished only the year before in 1829 was a straight Code 1 book, and the first purely picture-word primer in America and very possibly the world. Jonathan Lamb's picture primer of 1828, The Child's Primer or First Book for Primary Schools, had been far from that extreme. The sudden emphasis on "pictures" in beginning reading books published by 1828 and 1829 confirms, of course, that an intentional move had been made from "sound" to "meaning" in beginning reading before 1828, at whatever date the writing of such "picture dictionaries" first began to be considered.

In Henry Dunn's book, he had referred to "Dr. Dwight," but whether Dwight eventually became a physician, as Alcott had done, is unknown. Purely academic doctorates were reportedly not granted in America at the time, and ministers with advanced degrees were apparently referred to as "Reverend," not "Doctor." A parallel appears between Dwight and Alcott: both had been schoolmasters, and both apparently later became physicians.

Pertinent sections from Dwight's book, particularly concerning "correct" reading methods, follow:



“Preface ...The schoolmaster also feels many discouragements, arising from the indifference with which education is regarded by the people, the want of respect towards his profession, the inadequate pay generally afforded, the inability of advisers, and the ignorance of those who are to pronounce on his qualifications and success.”

This statement of Dwight’s and other statements he made confirmed there was no swell of public interest for government schools in 1835, outside the change-agents’ clique. When reading his alarmist comments, the demonstrated high literacy in America up until that time should be kept in mind. The American public was already highly literate before the “push” began for public schools in 1826, and they remained generally indifferent to the change-agents’ promotion of government schools to replace existing private schools. Dwight confirmed this indifference further on page 8:

“...so long as our people remain so generally ignorant and indifferent concerning common education, they will offer teachers little encouragement to improve.... Incompetent teachers and an ignorant and indifferent public might go on to any extent degrading each other.

“It has been proposed to form seminaries for the education of teachers for common schools, and a few exist in different parts of the country. But their influence is likely to be feeble for some time to come; and they are not conducted with any uniform views concerning any fixed system of education appropriate to our circumstances. The author, having labored for the establishment of a central seminary for teachers in the City of New-York, and having seen something of the obstacles which may delay the formation of such an institution in this country, even after the necessity of it has been admitted, has determined to present to teachers, and others interested in common education the following little volume. He has endeavored to embrace in it, small as it is, such plans, facts, hints and examples as he deems particularly important to be generally known, with the hope that they may prove useful, by being immediately applied to practice by those who are this year engaged in directing or conducting common schools in the United States.

“Teachers of private schools may also find this work not uninteresting to them.... The author has been a school-master, and felt the need of friendly advice....”

Dwight then made a comment that suggests he had also been in some kind of supervisory position over schools in New York, just as Alcott had been in Connecticut, again suggesting Dwight’s access to influence. Teachers normally have no opportunity to observe other teachers working, because they are all isolated in their own classrooms. Only supervisors normally have the opportunity to observe teachers at work. Dwight said on pages 10 and 11:

“He has often observed young teachers, and seen them assiduously endeavoring to make good schools. He has conversed with them and heard them inquire for better methods than their own. He has heard them lament the apathy of parents, and others around them.....

“The author has also witnessed some of the difficulties which lie in the way of those who have the general oversight of schools, as well as of the friends of knowledge at large, and the great majority of parents....

“The French Minister of Instruction officially stated, in 1832, that ‘very few primary teachers, who came from the new normal schools, had learned the secret of good methods and the principles of a national education;’ and that therefore, ‘most of them need direction in their studies and efforts. Without it, their zeal diminishes, and a sad routine becomes their last resort, and thus ignorance is maintained and propagated by the very persons who are appointed to combat with it.

“Citizens are called to the oversight of schools, who have had no special studies to prepare them for the duty. It is a great sacrifice on their part to take time from their own concerns and business to devote to such an object: it is therefore the duty of the government to furnish them precise instructions, that the oversight of schools may be more easy for them, and of real benefit to education.”

Dwight was unhappy that America did not yet have government normal schools in 1835, where teachers could be taught all the “correct” ways to think about things by change-agents, who themselves, of course, always thought “correctly.” Our first government normal school was founded in 1839, after which such schools rapidly multiplied. Yet England had already progressed to that elevated “normal school” condition since Dunn’s school, although not officially a government school, had turned out almost 500 “correctly” educated teachers by 1836. France, however, except briefly during the Revolution, had stumbled along throughout history pretty much deprived of such “correct” government guidance of primary teachers’ thoughts. This was despite the fact that the Revolution had produced a functioning government normal school during the Revolution, all university degrees were granted under government control, and all primary education had technically been under government control since the Revolution. Now, however, France was finally setting things right, since the government was once again promoting normal schools and finally acknowledging its “duty” to “furnish... precise instructions” to those charged with supervising the primary schools and the primary teachers in them. Yet Prussia had long since acknowledged that “duty” and for a long time had been turning out instructors who thought “correctly” according to the government “experts” definition of correctly, as later comments by Dwight demonstrate. The change in France was undoubtedly at least partly due to the change in power in 1830, after which those who had been active in the French Revolution were once more in good favor.

However, there are other ways to train teachers to think “correctly” than by attendance at normal schools, which is not financially possible for many people. In America, the teacher’s institutes, which were held during released time or during the summer, became the pipeline for transmitting “correct” thinking to teachers. They were often followed by examinations to “certify” teachers to see if the “correct” thinking had sunk in. Teachers’ later employment often depended on passing such tests. France, however, found another way besides its normal schools and its overseers to transmit thinking which was “correct” according to the government and its in-house “experts.” Dwight described it as follows on page 11:

“The king of the French approves the views of the minister, and authorized the publication of a monthly magazine on Primary Education. This work has afforded the author information on many points touched upon in this volume.”

The government newsletter was a fine medium to transmit “correct” thinking. Dwight said he had read the newsletter and other works, and had:

“...consulted various other works, including the most approved school-books of our own and other countries, as well as publications of other kinds, relating to education. He has at the same time resorted to other means, for ascertaining the opinions and practices of individuals engaged in directing and conducting instruction at home and abroad, and endeavored to introduce into this little book what is most likely to prove useful to practical persons.... The author’s intention has been to give the reader an interesting and plain view of common education, in its present state in this country, and the means by which it may be most readily and permanently improved....”

Dwight said on page 13:

“School-masters are highly valued in Prussia, Holland, Switzerland and France, and in other countries of Europe are held in esteem in proportion to the regard in which common education is respected. In Prussia, where late improvements in schools first began, the teachers, sixty years ago, were poor, despised, and half paid. Many of them were men who had failed in other kinds of business, through ignorance or bad conduct, and could not obtain employment in anything else.... Some sensible and benevolent men, seeing the evils of having the young bred up in ignorance, under the influence of vicious examples, took measures to encourage the most intelligent and virtuous to remain in the profession, and to render them still more competent for it. A school was soon established by funds contributed for the purpose, to give them instruction; and although the progress of these improvements was retarded by prolonged and bloody wars, such institutions have been very numerous, and now furnish about three quarters of the teachers who are wanted for vacant schools. The benefits have been far greater than any one probably anticipated. The Prussian schools are so good as to be regarded in a great measure as models for other countries of Europe; in several of which schools for teachers have been in successful operation for some years, with similar success.”

Note the private group activity, not initially official government activity, which was the original cause of the official Prussian government normal schools: “Some sensible and benevolent men... took measures...” Along with the normal school of the French Revolution, these “sensible and benevolent men” were the root of all government normal schools, which are now ubiquitous in the Western World, (Presumably those privately organized men were like the “sensible and benevolent” privately organized men in the Carnegie foundation today who are working so hard, without any mandate whatsoever given to them from the American public, to change American education for what they - but not some others - consider to be the better.)

Dwight said further on page 14:

“The government of France, having seen the importance of elevating school-masters in the respect of the people, and in self-respect, have made them public officers, so far that they cannot be appointed or removed without the approbation and signature of the Minister of Public Instruction. Schools have been established for their education, a monthly magazine and a weekly paper are published for the benefit of them and of local committee-men, arrangements are made for occasional public meetings in small and large districts of the kingdom, money is paid for libraries, essays and books, calculated to promote education.”

All these actions, no matter how good they may have been individually, were also “calculated to promote,” not just “education,” but centralized government control over education. Those men that the government chose to run such “education” programs (or who volunteered to run such programs for the government!) would be in positions to shape much of the nation’s future thinking, and therefore eventually to shape the future nation itself.

On page 16, Dwight continued his sales job for government control of education, but dropped some familiar American names into the discussion, while doing so. The appearance of familiar names resulted from the fact that the influential group which was promoting government education at that time, in America as well as in Europe, was really very small:

“An attempt is made to show briefly the value of good schools to every class of individuals in every society in the country; to persuade persons of every class to do something for this truly common cause.... Books on Education Recommended. The American Annals of Education, a Monthly Magazine Edited by W. C. Woodbridge, Boston; The Journal of Education, do. C. Wines, Princeton, N. J. (Soon to appear); Grimke’s Orations, &c. on the study of the Scriptures;

The District School. By J. O. Taylor, New-York; Hall's Lectures to School-master's. [sic] Do to Female Teachers; The House I Live In." by Dr. [W. A.] Alcott, Boston."

The names of Woodbridge, Hall and W. A. Alcott occur again and again at critical points as being insiders who were associated in various ways with Holbrook and Gallaudet, while Taylor appears to have been well known but less of an insider. (I have no information on Grimke and Wines.)

Yet Dwight showed that the schools before 1835 when government control was minimal or non-existent might seem very pleasant to many today. He told of the routine daily exercise for the whole school - from near beginners to older children - of reading orally from the Bible. In schools today, many would be unable correctly to read orally from the Bible, and in government schools it would be considered illegal to ask them to read the Bible in the first place!

Dwight showed the following on pages 18 and 19:

"In School. Opening School. The teacher gently rings the bell precisely at the hour. - 'You will all please to take your seats,' or, 'School is open....' Reading the Bible. 'Prepare to read the Bible,' or 'Take your Testaments. ...Where is the place? What did we read about last? Repeat one of the verses. Have you thought of that passage since? Have you tried to do any thing it teaches? Begin.' The scholars may read one or more verses each. You may sometimes call on one to read out of order, to keep all attentive. The teacher may read in his turn. 'Put up your books.'"

The previous quotation is from a section which is actually a summary and which directs the reader to specific chapters. On page 20 appeared the summary of the material on reading:

"Reading class. p. 47. Old plan of teaching to read. p. 47. Learning to read without spelling. p. 51 Do second method p. 55."

The actual material on reading was in Chapter IV, which began on page 47, with the following sub-headings:

"Reading - Its importance - Difficulties of teaching it - The old method - Other methods - Learning to read without spelling - 1st French method adapted to our language - 2d. Another method: learning to read at once - Learning to spell alone - Simultaneous reading."

Dwight said in this chapter on reading (pages 47 and following):

"There are various plans, founded on different principles. 1st. The common, or old fashioned way, of showing one letter in the alphabet, making the child pronounce it, then the rest in order [and] going though a class one at a time in this manner. This is founded on some good and some bad principles. We remember what we have heard or seen a great many times over; and after seeing a letter and hearing and calling its name over many times, we connect them in our memory. Thus we by degrees may learn the whole alphabet. But this is very seldom liked by children, and it is generally a slow task. The reason is, that each scholar receives but little instruction. If there are four in a class and an hour is employed in this branch, each is taught but fifteen minutes. In a class of ten, each gets only six minutes in an hour. If they are made to attend the whole time, watching over and correcting each other, each may get an hour's instruction. (And this is a principle that holds ... in all branches, and should never be forgotten... it also helps to keep the children out of mischief.)"

Dwight had made the proper bow to children's being "constantly occupied," the theme which was used to justify the tumultuous monitorial schools.

"Books for reading are formed on different plans and have qualities of different kinds. A well qualified teacher may use any of them with great advantage; and make up for their defects by applying... principles in his own way.

"Reading well is a much more simple thing than many pupils suppose. They should be taught to read very much as they should speak, with a natural manner in all respects. By the natural manner they should be made to understand such variants of tones as are proper in conversing, such force of loudness as is necessary for the audience and no more, sufficient slowness or moderation to render what is read distinct and impressive according to [its] importance. At the same time they should be armed and guarded against the errors in pronunciation, tone, &c., which particularly prevail around them, be taught that there is a common standard, and have a clear conception of what it is."

Dwight carefully avoided the most obvious need the students had. They needed to be taught how to figure out the words by themselves. Yet the fact that most beginning children could no longer read independently by 1835 was hidden because of all the previously stated "important" facets of reading. The instructors by 1835 were reading everything out loud first so that the children would know the right tones, etc. The children were therefore being taught pure "sight words."

Dwight went on confusing simple reading with elocution, just as today simple reading is wrongly equated with "comprehension":

"Now, on all the points just mentioned, there are very erroneous ideas. Children are rarely preserved from them without difficulty. Some of them can speak very well, who drawl, or scream, or fall into an intolerably monotonous style as soon as they begin to read. Indeed a great part of the difficulty [in] making good readers generally is the correction of faults already acquired, or false notions which are usually derived from the example of others...

"The child must be at his ease, in body and mind, or he cannot read with advantage. The exercise is partly intellectual, partly physical and it might be added, partly moral....

"Familiar lessons should first be used in reading and the more familiar the better. Even sentences composed by the scholars themselves, corrected if they need it by the master, may well serve for [early] lessons. Children should first be made to read [what] they understand, and something that relates to their own circumstances, and interests their feelings. They will then have the same advantages in reading which they have in conversation."

Obviously, Dwight was giving the children little independent practice in decoding. The following shows very clearly that the "reading" lessons of which he was speaking were not lessons in decoding print, but in elocution.

"It is a very good practice to introduce exercises in reading, with reading slowly, distinctly, and [all] together a few words or lines.... It may be made a rule for the class always to begin with reading simultaneously the first two lines on the page... or the first two or three of the lessons. The teacher may wish a little more information on this subject. The way of reading in this simultaneous manner is very slow, a pause being made after every word. All speak as nearly together as possible, on one tone.... The teacher may train their organs still more, by requiring them occasionally, by signals to vary their voices, now to the high pitch, now to the low pitch, or

even a whisper. The exercise is not agreeable to the hearer.... It should not be practiced too often or too long, for fear of leading to the habit of too loud or monotonous reading....”

Compare this 1835 advice on teaching reading to Dr. Alcott’s reports of reading lessons he had observed about 1830, described in Chapter 19. Dr. Alcott deplored the fact that little American five-year-olds read many long lists of words independently every day, and that a girl of about nine years was accustomed to read two whole pages or so of difficult material independently and alone each day. He admitted - and deplored - the fact that most children about 1830 covered large amounts of reading material all by themselves, with little or no time spent on elocution or “meaning.” The “new” way was to drill whole classes, over and over, on sections as short as a paragraph or even a sentence to promote elocutionary tones and “meaning.” A la William Scott Gray in the 20th century Scott, Foresman series, the “new” method was to question the children endlessly on these little snippets of reading matter that they repeated over and over and over.

To my knowledge, no public attention has ever been drawn to this enormous fakery in place by 1835 of replacing real reading instruction and practice with wheel-spinning and useless activity. The change from meaningful reading practice (“sound”) to elaborate fakery (“meaning”) was promoted by change-agents on both sides of the Atlantic. The change appears to have started in the early nineteenth century, to have been institutionalized in America in 1826, and to have been in full and rank flower by the 1830’s on both sides of the Atlantic. Along with other “experts” in what appears to have been a consciously cooperating group of change-agents, Dwight and W. A. Alcott (and Alcott’s cousin, Bronson Alcott) in the 1830’s were throwing out the lengthy “sound” reading practice on which automaticity in reading is built. They did it on the fake grounds that they were promoting “meaning.” In its place they recommended what amounted to a lot of gargling exercises to “train” children’s “organs” (“elocution”) and hosts of pointless questions on the “meaning” of simple, self-evident material.

Dwight referred in 1835 to the fact that teaching reading by “meaning” had also been recommended recently in France. He wrote on page 51 and following:

“Learning to read without spelling.

“The University of France and the Deaf and Dumb Institution of Paris have adopted a system for teaching to read without spelling. This has been approved by some very good judges in that country. Teachers and parents in the United States may wish to understand it. I have therefore adapted it to our own language.

“‘Two methods of spelling have been practiced;’ says a French book published in 1834: ‘the old way, in which the common names of the letters are first spoken and then the word pronounced- as es, te i double ef...’”

Dwight was obviously spelling, “stiff,” but at this point his pronunciation of letter names and the words they were supposed to spell became completely garbled. He was trying to spell by letter names the three-syllable word, humorous, but either he or his printer, or the both of them, did not read his page proofs. Dwight then tried to show the “new” French way with the same two English words, stiff and humorous:

“The new way is to give the sounds which form the word as [nearly] as possible; and then pronounce the word... as ste, ef - stiff...”

The method he showed was followed in the Code 3 “phonic” books in English for years: a consonant cluster, followed by a phonogram: phony phonics. Dwight then showed how to spell humorous with his

wildly garbled letters. What came through, however, with his spelling by “sound” was that he was also dropping the spelling of each syllable separately, merely reciting the supposed letter sounds all at once. Note also that in his sound “spelling” of stiff the consonant blend, “st” was given as a unit. The move was clearly away from parts and towards wholes. He continued to quote the French writer:

“‘The latter method,’ says the writer, ‘is undoubtedly preferable, but, being convinced that [in] reading, the true elements of words are syllables, [we] have rejected all sorts of spelling: that is, the division of syllables, as a thing calculated only to fatigue the memory of pupils unnecessarily, and consequently to give them a weariness and [disgust} which greatly retard their progress. The only objection against the omission of spelling is, that [it] prevents children from learning spelling and reading together. In answer to this it is stated, that the most distinguished teachers in Paris agree, that [the] spelling exercises without the sight of the words do no good, but greatly retards [sic] improvement. It is argued also, that ‘orthography is much [better] learnt by the eyes than the ears; and that children better receive the image of a word which they [have] often seen, than the composition of one whose letters they have often named.’”

Dwight was apparently quoting his French source inaccurately, but he was correct in the fact that “spelling” had sometimes been dropped in French methods, as has been discussed in the chapter on French history. His comments are of interest, however, concerning the University of France and the Deaf and Dumb Institution of Paris which “have adopted a system for teaching to read without spelling.” The so-called “University of France” was actually the government’s department of education, and the “meaning” method for deaf-mutes was used in the Paris school. French texts which dropped spelling usually did give drill on the sounds of the letters in the alphabet first and then on whole syllables. Their approach was therefore not truly a “meaning” approach, despite the dropping of spelling, but it was a move in that direction. Therefore, by 1834, “experts” in America, Great Britain, and France were all to some extent at least pushing “meaning” approaches in reading over “sound” approaches.

Dwight then gave his version of the French method, “adapted” to English. He began by teaching an incomplete vowel table, and then a consonant table, to be taught by sounds and not letter names. Next came a mixed-up and incomplete syllabary, not to be spelled but only pronounced. He said on page 55:

“After proceeding thus far, the common spelling-books may be used in further experiments with this plan, but without spelling.”

Obviously, his “adapted” approach was a pronounced move to “meaning.” He then compared the first method to his second method (pages 55 and 56):

“To teach reading without spelling. - 2d Method.

“The recommendations of the French plan above given are, 1st, that it presents no contradiction to the mind of the scholar. When we say ‘a, be-o, bo, el-i-es-aytch - abolish,” we say what a child cannot easily understand. It is a principle of philosophy that the whole is equal to all its parts. But here there is no equality, and no resemblance between the whole and its parts. When however we say “a-bo-lish,” we say what is intelligible, and apparently reasonable and useful. 2d. The method gives frequent repetitions to the eye and the ear, and constant exercise to the mind. But there is an objection to it, in the want of interest. Children cannot find ready use for what they learn in the first lessons.

“The 2d method is to begin with easy sentences, such as are found in most spelling-books, and go over them much as before: for instance - Having this or some other line written or printed:

-

“The dog sees his master.

“Point at the first word and say The - make the pupils repeat it. Then all the other words one at a time. Then say the dog, &c., and make them point at each word as you speak it, correcting each other when mistakes are made, and always making the missing scholar say it right. Then point at the words out of order, and then speak them out [of] order.

“Afterwards, or at a second lesson, write under [this] line another: - The dog sees his food. After succeeding with this in a similar manner, other [lines] may be used, each with a new variation: - as

“The dog sees a man.  
A dog sees the man.  
The man sees his dog.  
The man calls his dog.  
The man sees a wolf and calls his dog.  
The men saw the tracks of the wolf.  
They called Putnam.  
Putnam did not call his dog, but took his gun.”

I have found a curious consistency in many of such tiny primer sight-word “stories” written for impressionable little beginners by such “experts” as Dwight. Although the stupid little selections are so very short, someone is often attempting to kill or to hurt some creature, as “Putnam” who went gunning for the wolf.

“The sooner a story can be begun to be [followed] day after day in such exercises, the better. [It will] interest the children, and they will learn much [faster.]

“The teacher may add writing, and occasionally spelling, to this method of teaching to read.”

What Dwight had outlined with his second method, of course, was Code 1 reading. It should be noted that when Dwight gave his own preference on beginning reading, he opted for his Plan 2, the “meaning” approach.

Like W. A. Alcott, Dwight referred to having learned to read from Webster’s Code 10 speller, and, like Alcott, and Samuel R. Hall who will be quoted later, Dwight found great fault with its use. All three who belittled Webster’s “sound”-method spelling book, W. A. Alcott, Hall, and Dwight, are easily identifiable as major activists who were simultaneously promoting government schools and the “meaning”-method in reading. Webster’s “sound”-method spelling book was also obliquely belittled by Samuel G. Goodrich, without actually naming it, in his child’s “meaning”-method school reader, Parley’s Little Reader of 1836 Goodrich had been the second publisher of the American Journal of Education while William Russell was still its editor, presumably about 1827 or 1828, so, on that ground alone, Goodrich can be identified as an activist in good standing. As quoted elsewhere, in Parley’s Little Reader of 1836, Goodrich clearly belittled Webster’s speller without naming it, with the negative comment about “an old spelling book, on brown paper, with a blue cover and frightful pictures.”

However, Dwight committed an extreme case of over-kill with his fault-finding about Webster’s spelling book, because what he said simply did not square with what his fellow activist, Dr. Alcott, had said about having learned to read from Webster’s speller and about having taught Webster’s speller himself over so many years. In contrast to Alcott’s far more objective (even though negative) comments,



Dwight's comments are clearly identifiable as emotionally loaded propaganda, which raises an interesting question. Why WERE all these promoters of "meaning" in beginning reading from 1818 into the 1830's so deadly afraid of Webster's old Code 10 "sound"-method spelling book of 1783?

Dwight's diatribe against Webster's speller and his childhood teacher who had used it began in the middle of page 177 and continued to the top of page 180:

"I well remember a time, many years past, when I sat on a bench in a woman's school, in the room of a private house, where some hundreds of my towns-people received some of their early impressions against learning; and the thoughts which passed through my mind. I was sitting on a bench with a row of other children, and had Webster's Spelling-book in my hands, open at one of the pages which I think I should know if I should see one of that edition again. Not a spot or dot on that page did I understand. I understood that it had some thing or other to do with reading, but how I could not conjecture. My teacher once or twice a day would say, 'b-a, ba, k-e-r, ker, baker,; c-i, ci, d-e-r, der, cider,' &c. in my hearing, and some of the children would say it again. But of what use that was, or what was to be the end of it, I could not conceive. There was probably something which she knew about it that I did not. O that she would tell me! When might I get out of it? I had been, I know not how long, getting over a leaf or two, and my companions were travelling slowly on the same road - some had got another and another leaf beyond: but those I looked upon as veterans: 'older soldiers abler than myself' - I might perhaps have said what I really thought: 'older soldiers, not better - did I say better?' If I did I cared not, however, except so far as the whole business related to myself.

"I had got into a job which was to have no pleasure, and no end. I turned over my book. The same aspect, leaf after leaf, leaf after leaf, and I must go over it all! I did not believe that I could go on, I saw no object to be gained, I anticipated nothing but trouble and pain. My back ached, my legs ached, I began to stir. 'Sit still!' exclaimed the teacher. Then I found punishment threatened. I felt as a Spanish mountaineer may have done when first clutched by the Inquisition.... There on that bench, I made a solemn resolution for a child of my age: 'If I am ever a school-mistress, or a school-ma'am, I mean school-master, I will be kinder to the children than she is to us!'

"...This resoluton signified much. I determined to rectify an evil if I could, which I felt was not only great and almost intolerable, but extensively prevailing. My school-mates were suffering with me, and we had no advocate as well as no deliverer. I saw that our situation and feelings were not understood. We were thought to be idle when we were disposed to be industrious. I was willing to sit and weave backwards and forwards and mumble over any sounds that might be put into my mouth. We were called naughty and disobedient, sometimes, when we had brought fruit to the mistress, and really wished to love her. We were told we would not learn, when we knew we could not - we did not know how, we knew not what we were expected to do - we had nothing put in our hands as tools or materials that we could find out how to use; and now and then one and another of our sweet little circle was whipped or put to scream in the dark, for doing what we had done, or were disposed to do, or were then innocently meditating; and when filled with terrors unspeakable lest we should be taken next, the teacher would command us all to study, or call us to recite."

Dwight then left the topic of Webster's speller and concentrated on the topic of cruel and insensitive teachers. But his emotional baggage had been neatly inserted: it was Webster's "sound"-method spelling book that was also cruel and insensitive, just like his (probably largely imaginary) teacher. Insincerity sticks out all over Dwight's anecdote.

The renowned Samuel R. Hall also aimed his blows at poor old Noah Webster's "sound"-method spelling book. In his *Lectures on School-Keeping*, 1829, page 20, Hall said:

"Many of the school-books in common use in the country, have been, and still are, entirely unfit for use. To mention one: a Spelling-Book, of very different orthography and pronunciation from the dictionary in common use, is now found in many, and till lately, has been found in almost all the country schools. \* Many of the books are not adapted to the capacity of children, or do not present a satisfactory view of the subjects on which they treat.

"But this difficulty is in a degree obviated, by improvement in the character of some of the books designed for common schools. Could all the best books extant, be introduced extensively, great improvement should ensue. It is a subject of congratulation, that much effort is using for this purpose."

\*"As a substitute for this, *The National Spelling-Book*, by Mr. Emerson recently published at Boston, may be strongly recommended for adoption."

Emerson's spelling book received a full page of endorsements in the advertising section at the back of Hall's book. Hall's book had been published by Richardson, Lord and Holbrook of Boston in 1830 but Hall had completed it in Boston in August of 1829. (The Holbrook in the company name was not Josiah Holbrook.) The dictionary that Hall said was "in common use" in 1829 was Walker's, not Webster's. Yet Noah Webster has been quoted elsewhere in this history to the effect that he found Walker's dictionary to be the very worst English dictionary in existence! Nevertheless, as late as the 1870's, the "experts" in Boston were still rejecting Webster's dictionary spellings!

On page 21, in Hall's "Lecture II," appeared the following footnote:

"Teachers and School Committees would do well to examine the articles of apparatus prepared by Mr. Josiah Holbrook of Boston, and for sale by most of the booksellers in that place. They are ingenious, simple, and not expensive. With the aid of them, every teacher might be qualified to give his pupils interesting lectures, upon the most useful principles in Geometry, Mechanics, Astronomy, &c. They are furnished at so cheap a rate as to be within the means of almost every school district."

Hall was endorsing Holbrook's and Emerson's materials, just as every change-agent seemed to endorse every other change-agents' products. Josiah Holbrook later had an apparatus company which survived for many years.

The publishers of Hall's book, Richardson, Lord & Holbrook of Boston, were selling many other change-agent books besides Hall's. Advertised in the back of Hall's book were other publications of Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, including *Boston Reading Lessons for Primary Schools*, 5th Ed., a terrible "meaning" text which had already been adopted by Vermont, as well as B. D. Emerson's *The National Spelling-Book* with a great number of recommendations. The company also sold Emerson's *An Introduction to the National Spelling-Book*, "Just Published" "calculated for Primary Schools," and Pierpont's *The National Reader*. Also just published was an introduction to Pierpont's *National Reader*. The company also sold Goodrich's *Outlines of Geography* (not Samuel G. Goodrich), Rensselaer Bentley's *American Instructor and Word Book for Use After the Spelling Book* with many New York state recommendations, and Pierpont's *The American First Class Book*. (See Appendix B for entries on Bentley's and Pierpont's books.)

As these final three change-agent texts demonstrate - Dunn's in England and Dwight's and Hall's in America - by the mid-1830's, the "sound" approach in beginning reading had been replaced officially by the "meaning" approach. The "meaning" approach was not to be seriously challenged again until the early twentieth century, despite abortive efforts in both countries to do so in the mid-nineteenth century.

## Chapter 21

### New Textbooks to Match New Methods and Their Results

Textbooks published after 1826 show that the “experts” of that period had increasingly replaced the “sound-bearing” phonic syllable spelling books (what Keagy had called syllabic spelling) as the beginning books with “meaning-bearing” whole-word primers and readers, which became progressively less phonic with each passing year. The beginning books became critically less phonic after Horace Mann enthusiastically promoted the Reverend Gallaudet’s Mother’s Primer, written in 1835.

Gallaudet drew no attention to a fact which is obvious when word counts in his primer are analyzed. That is Gallaudet’s use of a concept which had probably been used by de l’Epee in teaching deaf-mutes, the existence of a “frustration” level for the introduction of new sight words. When the Mother’s Primer is analyzed, it can be seen that most of its selections only used about ten per cent or less of new words, which were embedded in a context of about ninety per cent of previously taught words. Not going below the ninety per cent level of “known” words assures that most readers will not be frustrated in guessing the meaning of “new” words from the meaning of the context as a whole. Example: “Mary had a little lamb, its \_\_\_\_ was white as \_\_\_\_.” This deaf-mute context technique is currently used in our schools with hearing children and is pompously called the “cloze” approach, with no credit given, of course, to the deaf-mute approach.

Reverend Thomas H. Gallaudet wrote his primer for hearing children using his deaf-mute school’s methods. The record suggests he did so to protect “meaning,” possibly being familiar with Dugald Stewart’s ideas as well as de l’Epee’s and Sicard’s. Of course, Gallaudet may at a very early date have read de l’Epee’s book, as well, and de l’Epee himself in his book printed in English in 1801 concluded that the deaf-mute method produced concentration on “meaning.”

Meaning, of course, was Keagy’s primary concern. The reason for Mann’s enthusiasm was the same as for Keagy’s and for today’s “experts”: Mann felt the children would improve what is now called their “reading comprehension” if they learned with this method which concentrated on “meaning” instead of “sound.” What the “meaning” beginning reading method was actually doing was interfering with the formation of proper conditioned reflexes. The activists were forcing children to focus permanent conscious attention on the actual act of reading, which should instead become a totally automatic conditioned reflex. If the act of reading is totally automatic, that automatic act then automatically generates language, the “meaning” of which the conscious mind can either reflect on or ignore.

To confirm the fact that the use of spelling books for beginners was dying out by 1832, Noah Webster himself published in 1832 one of the new primers to precede his own exceedingly widely used spelling book. ( His 1783 original version had been revised in 1829, but both were apparently still in print.) Noah Webster’s primer was entitled, *The Elementary Primer, or First Lessons... Being an Introduction to the Elementary Spelling Book*. If his exceedingly widely used spelling book, which still had vast sales in 1832, was still being bought for beginners as well as for older students, it seems highly unlikely that Webster would have written a primer to displace the sales of his own book.

Gallaudet’s introduction to his 1835 primer also confirmed that spellers were out of use before 1835 for beginning reading, saying:

“The author cannot but hope, that this book will enable many a mother...to go through... the whole art and mystery of carrying a little child from the alphabet, and simple spelling and reading

lessons, to the second book which usually follows the primer. Such a second book, founded on the same principles with this, the author hopes to prepare....”

The spelling, of course, was now of meaning-bearing whole words, not sound-bearing syllables. The children were no longer memorizing sound; they were memorizing meaning. However, if Gallaudet ever produced that second book, no record exists of it (which does not rule out his having done so).

The American Antiquarian Society has an 1832 copy of Webster’s rare *The Elementary Primer*, three years older than the New York Public Library’s 1835 copy. The Webster primer is an appalling little book, and attempts ineptly to teach by sound, trying to mix the new heavy “story” approach with too-abbreviated phonics lessons. As a beginning book, it is a pathetic substitute for Webster’s spellers, either in the 1783 or 1829 version. (It is interesting, however, that for the first time Webster used diacritical marks on his connected texts, which was not true in his spellers where he used coded numbers to indicate vowel sounds.) Webster wrote the primer, obviously, to protect his market position. With the antagonism to spellers as beginning books, and with a publication like the *Boston School Primer* of 1829 as respected competition, Webster went along with the trend and published a reading “primer” by 1832 (and possibly earlier).

By 1847, after his death, Webster’s speller was being published by Geo. F. Cooledge and Brother, New York, who had previously published materials like *The Christmas School Primer Designed for Schools and Families Containing More Than One Hundred Engravings*. The *Christmas School Primer* was a mixed-up picture-book mess. On the scale running from meaning at Code 1 to sound at Code 10, it would rate only perhaps a 3. The Cooledge company also published similar picture-book primers which are discussed elsewhere in this history. That the use of Webster’s speller as a beginning book was stone-dead by 1847 is demonstrated by Cooledge’s advertisements in his 1847 *The Illustrated Primer, or Child’s First Book Designed for the Earliest Instruction in Schools and Families*. It praised the wonders of Webster’s speller and its huge sales (about a million a year at that time, if its current publisher, Cooledge, could be believed) but then also advertised the Cooledge company’s beginning primers to be used FIRST.

By 1847, Geo. F. Cooledge and Brother were also the publishers of John Pierpont’s readers, which had been an extremely wide-used and widely-known series. The first book of Pierpont’s series, *The American First Class Book; or Exercises in Reading and Recitation*, was apparently first published in 1823. (As an interesting kind of footnote, John Pierpont was the grandfather of the famed financier, J. Pierpont Morgan [1837-1913]. Talent obviously ran in that family).

Pierpont’s readers which had been so highly successful, his “American” readers, had been considered to be in opposition to the previously widely-used Murray’s English readers. Yet Murray’s English readers had been preceded by Murray’s speller, a beginning book, and Pierpont’s readers lacked such a beginning book for many years. As discussed elsewhere, Pierpont’s readers were meant originally to be used only after a child had learned to read in a speller.

As “change” affected beginning reading after 1826, it finally began to show up on Pierpont’s readers. In Boston, by 1830, Pierpont had prepared a new and lowest volume, *The Young Reader*, “To go with the spelling book.” More time passed, the “meaning” method for primary reading instruction became even more entrenched, and John Pierpont finally fell completely in line with the “expert” wisdom and finally dispensed with a speller as a beginning book. That Pierpont did so is shown by the fact that in 1839, Pierpont published *The Little Learner, or Rudiments of Reading*, meant to be a beginning book, and it was only a typical sight-word primer. It taught beginning reading by “meaning” instead of by the “sound” approach of the old spelling books.

George F. Cooledge had taken over Webster's speller some time before 1847, probably shortly after Webster's 1843 death, but Cooledge had kicked it up to the upper grades by selling only the various Cooledge picture primers as the first books for children. Then, Cooledge added to his triumph of taking over the Webster speller by taking over, sometime before 1847, the famous (but by now somewhat outdated) Pierpont readers, which had been turned into a straight sight-word series by the addition of that 1839 Pierpont primer.

Obviously, the Cooledge company was of immense importance in the history of American textbooks. Yet the obvious importance of the Cooledge company in the school book market is mentioned nowhere, while we hear ad nauseum about the McGuffey publishers.

In 1839, George F. Cooledge, Publishers, of New York, had put out *The United States School Primer, Designed for Schools and Families*, copyrighted by William W. Allen in 1839. As mentioned elsewhere, that 1839 edition showed that George F. Cooledge was located in the second story of M. Day & Co.'s Book Store, 374 Pearl Street, presumably the same Mahlon Day listed as a distributor of *The Franklin Primer* on an 1840 copy and of Mrs. Barbauld's *Easy Lessons*, published, like *The Franklin Primer*, by A. Phelps of Greenfield, Massachusetts.

However, as mentioned elsewhere, the cover of Day's *Infant School Primer* of 1837 showed that Day sold an exceedingly large variety of school books.

Although many "sound" spellers meant for beginners as well as older students had been published before 1826, almost all spellers published after 1826 were not meant for beginners but only for older students. In addition to the sight-word primers being added to reading series after 1826, many "primers" for beginners appeared on the market after 1826 relied heavily on "meaning" but which were not part of any reading series. These isolated primers were obviously not the catechism/prayer book primers of earlier times that had been used as the second reading book, but used sight-word approaches of varying degrees. Most used pictures heavily for identification of words and were meant to be used as the beginning book for children.

An extraordinary record of spellers in English before 1801 is provided by R. C. Alston's *Spelling Books*, Volume 4 of *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800*. Yet no such list has been available after that date. Heartman's 1935 list of non-New-England primers only accidentally included some spellers which had been misnamed primers.

However, an incomplete (but irreplaceable) list has now turned up in the library of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts. In the introduction to an 1846 speller entitled in one place *The English Spelling Book* and in another place in the same book *The New English Spelling Book*, I found a reference to a "Report on the Subject of Spelling Books" which had been published by the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. It was described as including a list of spellers published in America since 1804. *The English Spelling Book* had been published by the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge in 1847 and by Leavitt & Company, New York, in 1849, who described that speller in 1849 as part of the "American School Series" which included a first, second and third reader. Neither the Library of Congress nor the New York Public Library has any publication from the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge entitled, "Report on the Subject of Spelling Books," but the American Antiquarian Society does have that 32-page pamphlet. It includes that extraordinary list of spellers published in America between 1804 and 1842. The pamphlet with the list had been published in January, 1843, by The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

The name of the society, founded in New York in October, 1836, apparently was just an opportunistic variation on the name of Brougham's famous British group. Its unstated purpose was apparently solely to

push “approved” books into schools which could then produce royalties for the society’s founder and secretary, Rev. Gorham D. Abbot, and his few close associates such as William Cutter, “Esq.,” a clerk in the Bank of Commerce. They had managed to arouse interest by including on their letterhead some well known names as members of their organization, sometimes with and sometimes without the approval of those concerned. That disreputable background is very convincingly given in *The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, an eight-page pamphlet signed “Justice,” which can be dated from its content to the spring or summer of 1844. This pamphlet is also available at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts. However, it is the 1843 32-page pamphlet, *Report of the Committee on Spelling Books*, which is pertinent to this history.

While its purpose was to establish the “need” for “standard” textbooks, obviously in order to promote its projected sales of such textbooks, the report backed its argument with a long list of spellers published in the United States since 1804. Some of the spellers had obviously inaccurate titles, but the report produced the interesting statistic that there were in 1843 one hundred and twenty different spelling books on sale in America, and that the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge had collected three-fourths of them.

They referred to curious documents of 1804 and 1832, titled *Catalogues of American School Books*. That of 1804 was very probably prepared from *The Catalog of All the Books Printed in the United States, With Prices and Places Where Published Annexed*, published by the booksellers of Boston in January, 1804. That catalog is listed at the beginning of the 1928 *United States Catalog*.

Their report included columns for 1804 and 1832 to indicate which of the books they listed were also listed in these earlier catalogues.

The 32-page report stated on page 31:

“One of the greatest evils in our present systems of education, is the multiplicity of School Books.

“In 1804, there was a catalogue published, professing to contain all the School Books, then used in the country. There were above ninety. In 1832, there was another similar catalogue published. There were, then, about four hundred. Now, there are between eight hundred and one thousand, in all the various branches, and the number is daily increasing.

“...This is a subject of almost universal complaint, among parents, teachers, and friends of education.

“...The late Secretary of State, and Superintendent of Common Schools in New York, in his *Annual Report*, 1840, says,

“This is an evil of the greatest magnitude; yet it is feared from past experience, that our fellow citizens would be unwilling to submit to the prescription by law, or under its authority, of any school books to be used by their children.”“

“Past experience” suggests that public outrage had been the result of previous attempts to control children’s textbooks, such as the 1828 Vermont attempt referred to elsewhere.

Both the 1804 list and the 1832 list omit numerous titles which are presently in the Harvard textbook collection and elsewhere which should have been included, and so does the 1842 list. Despite such obvious drawbacks, the report is still an extraordinary document as it is the only such listing, and a

contemporary one at that, available for the period after 1800. However, presumably a more complete list might be compiled for 1800 to 1820, with much effort, by referring to *American Bibliography, A Chronological Dictionary of all Books, Pamphlets and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in 1639 Down to and Including the Year 1820*, by Charles Evans, published by Peter Smith, New York: 1941.

A section of the 1843 report concerned spellers reported to be in use in certain states, and for New York State showed the use over a period of years. The figures on New York State confirm that Webster's speller had been massively used there but that competition sharply increased after 1827. However, Webster's was still in wide use in Michigan. Yet, at that date, it was far less used in Massachusetts. "Change" was therefore obviously spreading out from the Massachusetts intellectual center, reaching New York State first and Michigan later, and more distant states even later.

Textbook data from Virginia and Arkansas for the years 1844 and 1846 is reported by Edgar W. Knight and Clifton L. Hall in *Readings in American Educational History*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York: 1951, Greenwood Press, Publishers, New York, 1970. After 1826, in these two more distant states, records show that the speller had often been pushed up to upper grades, being replaced at the first grade with "meaning" primers. Therefore, reports from any states on the sale of Webster's speller apart from the sales of such primers reveal nothing about first grade methods.

The dominant primers which were reported as being sold in Virginia and Arkansas for the years concerned, 1844 and 1846, were the American and the United States Primer. The American primer referred to most probably was that of George F. Cooledge, New York, (which concern some time before 1847 became George F. Cooledge and Brother.) Cooledge also published the American Pictorial Primer or the First Book for Children, Designed for Home or Parental Instruction in 1843(?), and the United States School Primer in 1839. Chauncey Goodrich (a distant and not too influential relative of the publisher, Samuel "Peter Parley" Goodrich and not the Chauncey Goodrich under whom the young Gallaudet had worked) had published an American Primer in 1829. Of course, neither primer name was very original. Since the Arkansas report specifically identifies the United States Primer as a Cooledge text and since Cooledge was publishing Webster's speller in the 1840's, the probability is that both the texts referred to in the Virginia report were the Cooledge texts. Cooledge's American Pictorial Primer and United States School Primer were both predominantly "meaning" emphasis primers with a huge reliance on pictures.

Another Cooledge primer, *The Illustrated Primer, or Child's First Book*, apparently a revision of the American Pictorial Primer because it carried the heading, "The Pictorial Primer" on each of its inside pages, was specifically advertised by George F. Cooledge and Brother in 1847 as "Designed for the Earliest Instruction in Schools and Families." Advertised in this book also was one of their other primers, *The National Primer, or the Child's First Book*. Obviously, the Cooledge company meant their primers to be the child's "first book."

George F. Cooledge also published *The Christmas School Primer*, another of the many beginning books at that time which made a massive use of pictures. Nila Banton Smith's comments concerning it in her "history" are typically misleading:

"A number of miscellaneous primers appeared under such names as these: *The Child's Guide*, *Union Primer*, *The Child's Instructor*, Gallaudet's *The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book*, *The Child's Instructor and Moral Primer*, and *The Christmas School Primer*. Each of these had some distinctive feature, yet there was a dreary sameness about them all.

"Perhaps the most entertaining of these readers is *The Christmas School Primer*. No author is named on this interesting little book, which was published in 1839."



This is a magnificently misleading section, glossing over sight-word texts such as Oliver Angell's 1830 sight-word Union series which was very long-lived and widely used. As shown by *Early American Textbooks*, U. S. Department of Education (1985), Angell's texts were still being published in a new edition by E. H. Butler & Co. in Philadelphia in 1850. Also glossed over is the startling fact that Gallaudet's 1830 book had originally been specifically written for deaf-mute children past the beginning stage of reading, and Gallaudet then recommended the same book for hearing children who were past the beginning stage of reading. That "distinctive feature" should have erased any "dreary sameness." The phrase, "dreary sameness," was probably deliberately lifted from the earlier reading history prepared by an instructor at Columbia Teacher's college, Rudolph R. Reeder. He wrote *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, 1900, and on page 51 applied the unusual phrase to texts published from 1850 to 1860. Yet the Longley Pitman-print readers were popular in some cities during that period, and they hardly possessed a "dreary sameness."

In the body of her text, Smith did not attempt to name the publisher of *The Christmas School Primer* but only described two of its stories which are also in the American Antiquarian Society's undated copy of *The Christmas School Primer*. That copy clearly indicated it was published by George F. Cooledge at 323 Pearl Street, New York. The two little stories, including the picture that Smith reproduced, are also in Cooledge's earlier *United States School Primer*, which was published in 1839. But, judging from the address on the American Antiquarian Society's copy of *The Christmas School Primer*, that copy had to be 1840 or later, as in 1839, when Cooledge published *The United States School Primer*, his location had been shown as "Second Story of M. Day & Co.'s Book Store, 374 Pearl Street." That was obviously Cooledge's location before he moved to 323 Pearl Street after 1839. (Cooledge showed elsewhere that his later address at 323 Pearl Street was on Franklin Square). On the back cover of Mahlon Day's 1837 *Infant School Primer*, Mahlon Day showed his address as "Mahlon Day, at his long established stand, No. 374 Pearl st., a few doors above Franklin Square." On his checklist of non-New England primers, Heartman showed (page 77) Mahlon Day at 376, not 374, Pearl Street from 1825 to 1832

Pearl Street is also where the successful publisher, Samuel Wood had been located: at 360 Pearl in 1806, at 357 Pearl in 1811, and at 261 Pearl in 1823 and 1829. In 1823 and 1830, G. C. Morgan published editions of the English text, *The Primer* by M. Pelham (pseudonym for Dorothy Kilner) referred to elsewhere, and G. C. Morgan's address was also Pearl Street, which he showed simply as Pearl Street, Franklin Square. Even as late as 1860, Harper & Brothers showed their address on Marcius Willson's *The First Reader of the School and Family Series* as 327 to 331 Pearl Street, New York, and on their 1860 copy of *Reading Without Tears* showed their address simply as Franklin Square. Therefore, Cooledge at 323 Pearl Street and Harper at 327 to 331 were both directly on Franklin Square, and Mahlon Day at 374 Pearl Street, and Samuel Wood in 1806 at 360 Pearl and 1811 at 357 Pearl, were just "a few doors above" Franklin Square. (As shown in Appendix B, an 1816 copy of Oran's *American Primer* was published by George Long who was at a lower numbered Pearl Street address, No. 71 Pearl-Street in 1816, but his 1820 and 1829 editions show his address as 161 Broadway.) The evidence indicates that Pearl Street, and most particularly in the area of Franklin Square, where Cooledge was located, was New York's publishing center in the early nineteenth century.

Yet the fact that Pearl Street (at or near) Franklin Square should have been New York's publishing center as late as 1840 when Cooledge was still located there, and particularly as late as 1860 when Harper was still located there, seems very curious. On page C24 of *The New York Times* for July 12, 1991, appeared a description of a place recommended for week-end visiting, "Archeological Site, Pearl Street and Park Row." The article said that a group of archeologists had been digging at that location, called Five Points, at the edge of Chinatown, for several months. In the nineteenth century (although the article did not specify what years), the area had been one of the most degenerate slums in New York, and it had a very bad reputation. The oldest buildings still remaining today were built in the 1830's. An article a few

weeks earlier in the Times gave a map of the area and more information. Both articles implied that the slum area did date to the early years of the nineteenth century. Those early nineteenth century New York publishers appear to have been located adjacent to, or possibly even inside, a very strange region, indeed!

Smith showed as item 32 in her bibliography, on page 428, "The Christmas School Primer. New York: William W. Allen, 1839." The United States School Primer published in 1839, with so much of the same content, shows that it was copyrighted by William W. Allen but published by Cooledge. One would assume the 1839 copy Nila Banton Smith saw had the same notations. If so, why did she omit the name of the real publisher and imply instead in her bibliography that the primer was published by the man who took out its copyright? After all, William W. Allen may very well have been the author.

On the back cover of The Infant School Primer, which Mahlon Day published in 1837, Mahlon Day listed "School Books" which he sold in twenty-one categories. The first was "SPELLING BOOKS, by Webster, Marshall, Burham, Bentley, Bolles, Cardell, Cobb, Cummings, Emerson, Hazen, Jones, Peter Parley, Picket, Sears, Worcester, Wood." Next came "READING BOOKS - all the varieties..." M. Day could not afford to be less than open minded about all the authors and publishers of the day or he would have interfered with his book store sales. However, as a publisher only, Cooledge did not have that need, and could concentrate on selling only his own books.

In 1840, three years later than the date of Mahlon Day's Infant School Primer, and after Cooledge had moved out of Mahlon Day's building, Cooledge published his own version of The Infant School Primer, "Compiled by the Publisher for Small Children, and Approved by Samuel W. Seton." (Samuel W. Seton, discussed below, was involved in the lyceum movement, and the primer that he originally wrote in 1830 for infant schools, also described below, was a "meaning" monstrosity.) About three years after Cooledge published his own version of The Infant School Primer, Cooledge published his 1843(?) The American Pictorial Primer which carried on its inside pages the same heading as his 1840 book, "Infant School Primer." Therefore, Cooledge's 1843(?) book, The American Pictorial Primer, presumably was only an up-dated version of Cooledge's 1840 book with the title, The Infant School Primer, but it made a heavy use of pictures.

The Cooledge company which Nila Banton Smith never mentioned was an enormously important publisher by the 1840's as it became the publisher of the Webster speller! Noah Webster, who had been born in 1758, died in 1843. As mentioned, his speller had provided income for his family for years. Its copyright was an important financial resource. Cooledge advertised the Webster speller on his 1847 book, The Illustrated Primer, citing sales of over a million copies a year. Sometime before 1847, probably in 1843 after Webster's death, Geo. F. Cooledge & Bro. became the "Proprietors of the Copyright of Webster's Elementary Spelling Book," as shown by the title page and the page opposite it from a Webster speller of 1848. Both of these pages are reproduced on page 117 in Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington: 1985. Wrongly identified as from their item 2592, page 123, it is obvious the reproduced pages are instead from their item 2595, page 123, "New York: G. F. Cooledge & Bro., 1848." It appears probable that the Webster family sold the copyright for the Webster speller to the Cooledge company on Webster's death in 1843, or shortly after.

As the reproduction showed, by 1848 Cooledge claimed that 30,000,000 copies of Webster's speller had been sold, and that 1,000,000 were still being sold annually. (From the Webster figures quoted earlier of 3,000,000 copies sold between 1783 and 1809, that would mean 27,000,000 had been sold between 1809 and 1848.) Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, also shows by its entries on page 123 that D. Appleton & Co. of New York had become the publishers of the Webster speller by 1857. Yet, as confirmed elsewhere in this history, the actual date of the change was 1855, not 1857. Nevertheless, another source referred to later indicates G. and C. Merriam copyrighted a revised Webster speller in

1857, also copyrighted by Webster's children, which is puzzling. American Book Company, formed in 1890 by the merger of Appleton and other companies, became the publishers in 1890. Early American Textbooks shows an incorrect 1880 date for a Webster speller published by American Book Company, yet that company was not even in existence until 1890. At what date Cooledge went out of business or was absorbed by another publisher is not known, but Early American Textbooks of the U. S. Department of Education shows that G. F. Cooledge and Brother published, along with Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co. of Philadelphia, The National Speaker by Henry B. Maglathlin in 1851. Therefore, the Cooledge company may still have been in existence in 1851, if the report is correct, and possibly went out of business in 1855 when Appleton's acquired the Webster speller.

Figures on copies of books sold in any area are meaningless unless annual sales can be compared to the area's population figures. Webster's speller is known to have been enormously popular between 1783 and 1809, a period of 26 years, but annual sales are unknown. Between 1809 and 1848, a period of 39 years, a great increase was shown in gross sales. Yet it is necessary to compare annual sales figures to annual American population figures to get a real picture of Webster's market share. The fact that Webster's maintained sales in excess of 1,000,000 copies a year in the 1880's is less impressive when that fact is compared to the population of 1890, as opposed to the population for 1850, when sales of 1,000,000 were also claimed. For purposes of comparison, these are the American population figures cited in the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), Volume 22, page 814:

1790	3,929,214
1800	5,308,483
1810	7,239,881
1820	9,638,453
1830	12,866,020
1840	17,069,453
1850	23,191,876
1860	31,443,321
1870	39,818,449
1880	50,155,783
1890	62,947,714
1900	75,994,575
1910	91,972,266
1920	105,710,620
1930	122,775,046
1940	131,669,275

These figures should also be kept in mind when comparing the reported figures for the McGuffey Readers to those for Webster's speller. Webster's speller was most influential before 1840; McGuffey's was most influential after 1840. Comparing gross figures for those two periods reveals nothing about their relative percentages of the market during those two vastly different periods. (The ultimate sales of the Webster speller, and of the McGuffey Readers, are discussed at length in later chapters.)

However, the record shows that the Cooledge company, to which Smith made no reference, went from an upstairs and apparently relatively unimportant company in 1839 to a company which was able to buy out the Webster speller copyright some time between 1843 and 1847, when Cooledge is known to have been advertising the Webster speller, as mentioned later. However, Cooledge probably acquired the rights to the Webster speller shortly after 1843 when Webster died. The Cooledge company was able to do so, presumably, because of its success with its largely sight-word pictorial primers for rank beginners. The picture primers were meant to be used before the spelling book which had been the beginning book

until 1826. Such a commercial success as that of the George F. Cooledge company should not continue to remain unnoticed and unexplained.

Nila Banton Smith covered up the huge use of pictures to identify words by implying that pictures were but little used at that time. By lumping textbook names together and claiming that the texts possessed a “dreary sameness,” Smith of Columbia Teachers College in 1932 deflected attention away not only from Gallaudet and the heavy use of pictures to identify words. She also deflected attention away from Angell who had published a sight-word series in 1830, and from the Cooledge company, which was pushing Webster’s speller into the upper grades and away from beginners.

No one should have known better what book was used first for children than the Cooledge company which published Webster’s speller. They advertised on The Illustrated Primer of 1847 that Webster’s speller was:

“The cheapest and most popular Spelling Book published in the United States.... This Spelling Book...is in almost universal use throughout the United States, the sale of it being about One Million Copies per Annum.”

Yet their description of their primers such as The Illustrated Primer made it clear that only their illustrated primers, and NOT Webster’s speller, were meant to be the first book for children.

The Cooledge company, the 1840’s publisher of Webster’s, is tied to the earlier activists through its publication of The American Pictorial Primer (1843?). As mentioned, on the top of that text’s inside pages, it read, Infant School Primer, and Cooledge had published a different version, The Infant School Primer, in 1840. The 1840 copy carried the notation that it was “Approved by Samuel W. Seton,” who was one of the activists of the period. In 1830, Seton had published an appalling and totally misleading book, the Abecedarian, for use in teaching reading in infant schools. Seton had dedicated it to “the Infant School Teachers of New York.” In it, he proposed a harmful way of teaching the alphabet, and endorsed the spelling (naming of letters) in sight-words. Seton had said on page 48 in his 1830 book:

“When learning the letters, the child may be taught to pronounce syllables and words at sight.  
\* This exercise will be found very useful when connected with pictures of the object named.  
\*“Hazen’s Symbolical Primer is well adapted to this purpose.”

Edward Hazen’s Symbolical Primer, copyrighted in the spring of 1829, was straight Code 1, pure “meaning,” with pictures next to each word to provide the word’s “meaning” totally apart from its “sound.” Edward Hazen said in the Preface to his 1829 text:

“In teaching children to read and spell, it will not be necessary to pay much attention to the alphabet or elementary sounds. The better way would be to begin with the words under the cuts and let them learn the letters as they occur in their several combinations. By pursuing this plan, weeks, and sometimes months, may be saved from total waste...”

Edward Hazen’s “plan” would make the learning of the alphabet save “sometimes months.” But, as for reading itself, Hazen said in his later 1845 text, The Grammatic Reader, No. 1:

“Much of the first and second years of the scholastic course is wasted in learning to read and spell.”

Yet this comment had appeared for beginning readers in so many spellers which were teaching by “sound” before 1826:

“In a few weeks you will read well,”

The pre-1826 comment had been replaced in 1845 by the comment by an author of “meaning” texts that it took TWO YEARS! Yet even that was far, far too rosy an estimate. With the “meaning” method, it takes far longer, when it works at all.

By the time E. A. Sheldon wrote his phony-phonics “meaning” readers in 1875, he said children did not really learn to read until fourth grade, though I have lost my reference for his comment. However, the source that Nila Banton Smith quoted from the 1880’s or 1890’s (either Pollard or Ward, which she does not make clear) stated that children at fourth grade could read only with the greatest difficulty and with stumbling over words. E. A. Sheldon was apparently wearing rose-colored glasses by stating children had learned to read (by the “meaning” method) by fourth grade, and Edward Hazen was certainly wearing rose-colored glasses with his two-years estimate.

The full title of Edward Hazen’s book was *The Symbolical Primer, or Class Book No. 1*, with 492 cuts, Part The First, “by E. Hazen, Published by M’Elrath & Bangs, New York, D. F. Robinson & Co., Hartford, Connecticut; Denny & Walker and David Clark, Philadelphia; and Armstrong & Plaskitt and Cushing & Sons, Baltimore.” The second book was *The Symbolical Primer, Part the Second*. The third book was *The Speller and Definer, or Class Book, No. 2*. The following comment was made on back of the cover of Part The First:

“The Symbolical Primer has been published in sheets, to be pasted on cards or boards, for the use of Infant and Monitorial Schools. It is also published on smaller pages, and in less type, for the use of common schools.... The time usually devoted to a Spelling Book will be sufficient to become well acquainted with “THE SYMBOLICAL PRIMER” and “THE SPELLER AND DEFINER,” so that, by using them, the time usually spent in committing to memory a Dictionary or an Expositor, is saved.”

Primer No. 1 had been copyrighted on May 5, 1830, in the Southern District of New York. The Preface dated January, 1829, stated:

“The author of this Primer published two Class Books; the one, entitled “THE SYMBOLICAL PRIMER, OR CLASS BOOK, NO. 1,” the other, “THE SPELLER AND DEFINER, OR CLASS BOOK, NO. 2.” The two together were designed not only to supersede the necessity of using a Spelling Book, but a Dictionary, so far as it is used to be committed to memory. They have been introduced into a great number of schools, and a sufficient trial of them has been made to prove, that they answer the purposes for which they were intended.

“Many persons, however, object to the Primer, on the ground that it contains too many cuts, and no columns for spelling lessons. They take for granted the correctness of the old plan of teaching, and, of course, every other, in their estimation, must be wrong. If, however, they would lay aside their prejudices, so far as to consider the subject, they would see, that the orthography and pronunciation of words, presented in columns without explanations of any kind, cannot be recollected without considerable difficulty, inasmuch as there is nothing with which they can be associated to assist the memory.

“Besides, mere spelling lessons are so uninteresting and absolutely unmeaning, that it is almost impossible to induce a pupil of sense to pay much attention to them.

“An Attempt has been made in ‘THE SYMBOLICAL PRIMER,’ to render the task of learning to spell and read easy and agreeable. To this end, a great number of cuts have been introduced, which explain the meaning of the words, and assist the pupil in pronouncing and recollecting them. While learning to spell and read by the aid of the cuts, he is, by the same means, acquiring at least a partial knowledge of sensible objects.... Although children can learn to spell and read much more rapidly in ‘THE SYMBOLICAL PRIMER’ than in a Spelling Book, yet the Author wishes it to be distinctly understood, that it was principally designed to assist in communicating information adapted to the young mind....

“In teaching children to read and spell, it will not be necessary to pay much attention to the alphabet or elementary sounds. The better way would be, to begin with the words under the cuts, and let them learn the letters as they occur in their several combinations. By pursuing this plan, weeks, and sometimes months, may be saved from total waste...

“‘THE SYMBOLICAL PRIMER’ in large type, as in the following pages, was prepared for infant and monitorial schools, to be used on cards, and to be found in a book for those who might prefer it to the Smaller Primer, which corresponds with it in every thing, except in size and price.”

He gave the alphabet and open syllables (ba, be, bi, bo, bu, etc.) at the beginning, but no closed syllables (ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, etc.) which means none of the short vowels which reportedly occur in some 60 per cent of English syllables. This was followed with pictures with words under them: ant, ape, etc.

After Edward Hazen’s 1829 pictorial book (as well as the two 1828 pictorial texts described elsewhere, Jonathan Lamb’s *The Child’s Primer, or First Book for Primary Schools*, and E. and G. Merriam’s *The American Primer Designed as the First Book for Children*), picture primers multiplied, and many so-called “toy books” imitated the picture primers, though they could not seriously have been meant for instruction as they were so small and incomplete.

One producer of toy books who was apparently very successful was Wm. Raine of Baltimore. On the back cover of *The New Juvenile Primer and Child’s Own Progressive Guide to Learning*, which claimed to be “Carefully arranged, on a new, simple and interesting principle,” the statement was made that he “has entered extensively into the publication of juvenile books. His facilities for manufacturing Works of this class, enable him to furnish them at lower prices than any other establishment in the United States.”

Yet his 1840 “primer” was a picture parody of the old spellers, with pictures on top of most pages and words and stories under pictures. No pretense had been made on a method, despite the claim. New colored books were advertised on the back cover, obviously story books, including the delightful *The Butterfly’s Ball and Grasshopper’s Feast* originally published over thirty years before in England. The quality of much of Wm. Raine’s art work was atrocious, and the proofreading even worse. Despite the surface resemblance to Cooledge’s picture primers, Raine’s primer was only accidentally in the line of development of school texts. Raine and those like him parodied the work of more competent publishers of picture primers. Yet Raine did add to the flood of toy books for children in the 1840’s, many of which were of dreadful quality.

Samuel Seton had approved Cooledge’s primer in 1840. According to Blumenfeld, Seton had been on the committee for the original American Lyceum organized by Josiah Holbrook in May, 1831. Seton wrote the harmful original infant school primer, which is discussed elsewhere. Another member of that original committee was Theodore Dwight, Jr., who published the *New Picture Primer* in 1841 at New London (and possibly earlier), and who wrote the teacher’s manual discussed at length in the previous chapter. Primers obviously interested some of the 1830 founders of the Lyceum. Since Seton was one of the activists, this suggests Cooledge’s enormous and apparently rapid success after 1839 may have

resulted from some outside help from such government school activists as Seton. Cooledge first appeared on the scene on the second floor of Mahlon Day's facility in 1839. Yet, by 1847, eight years later, Cooledge had not only long since moved into new and presumably more spacious quarters but had already taken over the famous Webster speller and the almost equally famous Pierpont readers. Those texts had been in use all over the United States for decades. Furthermore, Cooledge's own picture primers were highly successful and were in use as far away as Arkansas. That was a great deal to achieve in less than eight years.

It appears probable from the following statistics that Cooledge's heavily illustrated American and United States primers were being used in place of spellers as beginning books in at least a part of Virginia and almost all of Arkansas as early as 1844 and 1846. Edgar W. Knight and Clifton L. Hall in *Readings in American Educational History*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., New York: 1951, Greenwood Press, Publishers, New York, 1970, showed the following on page 491:

"Books in Use in the Common Schools of Virginia in 1844"

<u>Primers</u>	<u>No. of Counties</u>
American	20
New York	4
United States	1
Eclectic (sic)	2
Juvenile	1
Child's (A, B, C,)	2
Worcester	1
Cobb's	1
Southern	3
<u>Spelling Books</u>	<u>No. of Counties</u>
Webster's	
[1783 edition?]	63
Comly's	31
Elementary	
[Webster's 1829 edition?]	20
New York	16
Towne's	6
United States	7
Cobb's	1
National	3
Emerson's	5
Murray's	2
American	3
Union	2
Haycor's	1
Eclectic (sic)	2

\*Journal of the House of Delegates, 1845-1846, Doc. 4, pp. 43-44."

Virginia appeared more resistant to change coming in from the activists in 1844 than Arkansas was in 1846, not just at the beginning reading level, but at the advanced level. Not only did spellers such as Webster's remain dominant in many counties at the beginning level, as is probable from the fact that Virginia ordered overwhelmingly more spellers than primers, but another table on reading books showed

that Virginia was still reporting heavy use of the English Reader, presumably Murray's, for upper levels. Furthermore, this other table on reading books showed that 103 counties were still using the Bible and Testament in reading instruction! In all, the table reported twenty-eight different texts in use for reading instruction. Obviously each county might have listed more than one text. McGuffey's was one of the 28 texts, but only one county reported using it in 1844, another indication that McGuffey's which had begun publication in 1836 had not taken over the market for reading books by 1844. Furthermore, these 1844 statistics prove that Virginia was resisting purchasing the Southern Primer, which book was a blatant appeal to sectionalism, and which also had increased "meaning" emphasis, though not so extreme as some.

Knight and Hall reported on page 499 concerning Arkansas in 1846. Unlike the Virginia statistics for 1844, the Arkansas statistics for 1846 demonstrate that the primer had displaced the spelling book at the beginning level. It is also obvious that the Cooledge company was working hard to increase its market share of textbooks by introducing a sequel to the speller. It is also apparent that Samuel "Peter Parley" Goodrich was supplying the market for readers in Arkansas in 1846, while McGuffey's was not even listed.

"Textbooks Purchased for the Schools of Arkansas, 1846. \*

"A statement of the kinds of books purchased by the auditor for the use of common schools, under 'An act to appropriate the whole of the common-school fund to the purchase of books for common schools,' approved January 7, 1845, to which is added a sequel to Webster's Spelling Book, 300 copies of which George T. Cooledge, New York City, furnished without charge; also a statement of the price at which the boards of school commissioners are to dispose of the books as provided by law, being an advance of 10 per cent on the cost and transportation.



<u>“Kinds of books</u>	<u>Selling price (cents)</u>	<u>Number purchased</u>
United States Primer	5	1,575
Webster’s Spelling Book	6 1/4	4,200
Goodrich’s Reader, No. 1	10	1,044
No. 2	15	1,044
No. 3	25	1,044
Willard’s History of the United States	30	600
Morse’s Geography	50	450
Davies’s Arithmetic, No. 1	15	750
No. 2	25	750
Gallaudet’s Dictionary	30	525
Slates, 7 by 11 inches	15	750
Slate Pencils, each	..	3,000
Slate pencils, per dozen	6	...
Bullion’s English Grammar	15	325
Root’s copy books, for series of 4	30	384
Sequel to Webster’s Spelling Book	25	...

\*“Auditor’s Report, 1846. Given in Stephen B. Weeks, History of Public School Education in Arkansas, p. 35.”

Note the curious effect of centralized, “thorough and efficient” standardization in Arkansas in contrast to decentralized Virginia. In Arkansas the sight-word primer had become standard, but the Bible and Testament had disappeared!

One of the reasons for the continued popularity of Webster’s speller was that it was cheap. Also, in contrast to some other picture primers of the period, Cooledge’s primers were obviously flimsier, though no where nearly so much so as Raine’s, and probably also cheaper. Both Cooledge’s Webster spellers and Cooledge’s primers were therefore probably cheaper than such series as Sanders’, Cobb’s and Angell’s. Undoubtedly, Cooledge’s materials were so widespread partly because of their prices.

A similar remarkable publishing success to that of Cooledge’s was associated with the Merriam company and the Webster dictionary. In 1828, E. and G. Merriam of Brookfield published The American Primer, Designed as the First Book for Children. They also published The American Reader, with material by Mrs. Hemans, Lydia Sigourney and others. In The American Primer, they advertised The American Reader by saying:

“This highly popular little work has gone through three editions within fourteen months from its publication.”

Despite the inference that The American Reader was fairly recent, the New York Public Library catalog shows its publishing date as 1821, and referred to Merriam’s American Readers series. Therefore the Merriam company had been in business probably since at least 1821, and had a reading series by 1828.

The American Primer was a Code 3 book, with words identified by pictures, and whole sentences next to them, before the complete syllabary was given. It then had little phonics, only by analogy, and

most too late to do much good. As might have been expected from probable activists of the period, just enough religion had been inserted to deflect criticism, but even that was unsuitable at the beginning.

G. and C. Merriam of Springfield, Massachusetts, the presumed successors to E. and G. Merriam of Brookfield, copyrighted in 1830 and published in 1833 *The Child's Guide*, which was not a beginning book. Yet it carried in its preface the comment that too great pains cannot be taken to prevent the formation of a "habit of reading without thinking," quoting "Babington" as the authority for this Stewartian conclusion. On this 1833 copy, G. and C. Merriam advertised their text, *The Easy Primer Containing Children's First Lessons in Reading and Spelling*. An 1836 copy of that book, with a copyright date of 1833, rates only a Code I. The 1836 copy carried an advertisement for *The American Reader* which had been published by E. and G. Merriam, which would seem to confirm that G. and C. Merriam were their successor company. The back of *The Easy Primer* copy of 1836 contained an endorsement from S. R. Hall, who wrote *Lectures on School-Keeping*, a highly popular book with the change-agents. *The Easy Primer* was an arrogant book, not even referring to its dismissal of all sound or even discussing how to teach its sight-word content. Yet the Merriam company obviously prospered by dumping "sound" in favor of "meaning" for beginners, because they became the publishers of Webster's dictionary, with later revisions carrying that familiar title, the Merriam-Webster dictionary.

According to the card catalog in the New York Public Library, Charles Merriam was born in 1806 and died in 1887. George Merriam was born in 1803 and died in 1880. "E. Merriam," one of the first partners, was not shown, but undoubtedly was a relative. The card catalog showed:

"The Village Readers designed for the use of schools, by the compilers of the *Easy Primer*, Merriam, George and C. Merriam, Springfield"

I believe these were shown under the date 1841. Also shown was:

"The *American Reader* containing Extracts suited to Exciting a love of science and literature, to refine the taste and to improve the moral character. Designed for the use of schools. Second edition. Brookfield, Mass. E. and G. Merriam, 1829"

Besides these entries, the card showed:

"Merriam's *American Readers*. Also *The Child's Guide* comprising familiar lessons designed to aid in correct reading, spelling, defining, thinking and acting. G. and C. Merriam, Springfield, 1843."

E. and G. Merriam at Brookfield therefore published *The American Primer* (1828), and *The American Reader* (in 1821). G. and C. Merriam of Springfield, the successors to E. and G. Merriam, continued to publish *The American Reader* and probably *The American Primer* and any other books which may have been in the series, Merriam's *American Readers*. They also published *The Child's Guide* (1830) and *The Easy Primer* (1833), heavily slanted towards the "meaning" approach. By 1841 they were publishing *The Village Readers*, about which no information is available but on the title page of which they were still advertising *The Easy Primer* of 1833, to judge from the New York Library card catalog. Also, they were apparently still publishing *The Child's Guide* in 1843 and presumably were still publishing some of the others. Certainly they must have become a highly successful firm, or they would never have become the publisher of Webster's dictionary. They were a firm, however, which had joined the "meaning" group in reading by 1828 or earlier. It seems strangely unsuitable that a company which had rejected Webster's synthetic phonics for beginning reading should have become the company publishing Webster's dictionary which was the culmination of his life's work.

The historical evidence clearly establishes that sight-word “meaning” primers like Cooledge’s, Merriam’s, Sanders, Gallaudet’s and so many others which were in almost universal use for beginning reading in America by the 1840’s not only had NOT been the beginning reading books in America before 1826, but SUCH PRIMERS DID NOT EVEN EXIST BEFORE 1826! Until 1826, spelling books - predominantly Webster’s - had been the standard beginning books. They had been overwhelmingly syllabic and phonic and had taught children to read by “sound,” not “meaning.”

Concerning the many new American reading series for older students which began to be published after the early 1820’s, the first important addition to the early reading series of Webster, Bingham, Murray and Wood was made by John Pierpont (1785-1866). (Merriam’s American Readers, including the American Reader of 1821, the American Primer of 1828, and probably others, although they were obviously successful, may not have been too widespread as so little information is available on them.) Pierpont wrote the first of his highly successful readers in 1823, and took many years to complete his reading series. But, unlike those earlier series which had been completed before 1826, the Pierpont series straddled the 1826 change-agent date. By 1830, therefore, Pierpont added a book to go “with” the speller, obviously reflecting the change in school practice that had started before 1830. By 1839, it is apparent that most schools had abandoned the spelling book as the first book for beginners. As previously mentioned, it was in 1839 that Pierpont finally wrote a straight sight-word primer, to go BEFORE a speller. It was sometime before 1847 that the Cooledge company became the publishers of the famous Pierpont series.

Jessey Torrey, Jun., had published a Code 8 “sound” spelling book in Philadelphia in 1824, Familiar Spelling Book. He also came out with the first of his readers in 1824, but its advertising material showed a clear tie to change-agents pushing “meaning”. His book, A Pleasing Companion, referred to the fact that The Committee of the Philadelphia Academy of Teachers endorsed his book on November 6, 1824, “to improve understanding.” By 1836, Torrey had added Torrey’s Primer, or First Book for Children, which seemed to indicate that by 1836 Torrey endorsed replacing the “sound” speller for beginners with a “meaning” primer. Yet, as mentioned elsewhere, his publishers, Grigg and Elliot of Philadelphia, produced a new series in 1844 which endorsed the use of the speller before the first reader, so the effect he may have intended was apparently not endorsed by his publishers.

Pierpont - and Torrey - were reacting to change that had started in 1826, with the publication of the first readers of the Franklin series and the Worcester series, both of which threw out the speller for beginners. Pierpont and Torrey were also responding to the flood of independent sight-word “primers” which had reached the market after 1826, meant as beginning books for children.

Three other series in the post-1826 period endorsed “meaning” but did not originally include primers. Merriam’s American Readers, presumably a series of more than the two books on which information is available, have already been mentioned. Samuel Putnam’s series began to come out in 1825 and apparently never had a primer. B. D. Emerson’s is of uncertain date but probably began about 1830. By 1835, however, B. D. Emerson, “late Principal of the Adams Grammar School Boston,” had published his Progressive Primer, a Code 1 sight-word book meant to precede his speller. The Merriams, Putnam and Emerson were among the change-agents or had clear ties to the change-agents who were pushing “meaning” to replace “sound” in beginning reading.

In the “Preface” to Samuel Putnam’s 1825 Lessons in Simultaneous Reading, Spelling and Defining, published by T. H. Miller, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Putnam said, “The monotonous sing-song mode of reading too often noticed in common schools... is acquired through reading what they do not understand.” In the 1826 copyrighted copy (published in 1827) of Samuel Putnam’s Analytical Reader Containing Lessons in Simultaneous Reading & Defining, With Spelling From The Same, published by Samuel C. Stevens at Dover, New Hampshire, the cover spoke of Putnam’s aim, “to lead children to

search for the meaning of what they read... not words only.... Upon this plan, I am satisfied the pupils must think as well as read.” The cover of Putnam’s 1826 book also carried this comment, “I had rather speak five words with my understanding that I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue,” a variation of the motto on the cover of the 1827 Franklin Sequel by A Friend of Youth. These people were apparently all change agents, but Putnam was curiously right with his numbers: Children in 1826 were trading in their ability to read ten thousand words by sound for the ability to read only five words by meaning.

Emerson’s widely used Code 8 speller appeared in 1828 but was obviously not a beginning book. Neither did Emerson’s readers originally have a beginning book, but the publishers of his speller, Jenks & Palmer of Boston, were simultaneously publishing the sight-word Worcester series. Emerson therefore had a tie to the change-agents through his publisher. However, by 1835, his publisher was Carter, Hendee & Co., of Boston.

After the critical Franklin and Worcester series, which were sight-word “meaning” series from their inception, the two most important new series which also included books which served as sight-word primers were Oliver Angell’s pure sight-word series of 1830 and Lyman Cobb’s sight-word series of 1830. (I have not seen Cobb’s 1830 material, but only his 1840’s revision.)

### Oliver Angell’s 1830 Series

Oliver Angell’s important series of sight-word readers appeared in 1830. Angell was from Providence, Rhode Island where eleven years before, in 1819, the Columbian Spelling Book and Children’s Friend, by A Friend to Youth, had been published by Miller and Hutchins, which text for beginners rated only a Code 5. That was only the third “meaning”-oriented text which I found to have been published before 1822.

Angell’s Union Series of Common School Classics began with The Union No. 1, or Child’s First Book, dispensing totally with a speller for beginners although spellers had been in universal use for beginners until 1826, only four years earlier. Marshall, Clark & Co., School Book Publishers (Pennsylvania School Book Depository, No. 4, North Fifth Street, Philadelphia), produced a brochure for the Angell readers in 1833, with attached letters of recommendation, a copy of which is in the Harvard library. The action and support of school activists is marked on the letters of recommendation.

Angell’s “Preliminary Remarks” on his 1830 edition (curiously not repeated on later editions) are illuminating. Note also that in 1830 it was common knowledge that American shops were full of “books for children.” Children’s books were obviously selling very well in America in 1830. American children in 1830 must have been able to read very well and so had no need either for the government schools that the activists were pushing for frantically in 1830 (as Blumenfeld recounted) or for the “meaning” method which Angell was promoting for beginning reading in his 1830 series. Angell wrote in his 1830 “Preliminary Remarks”:

“‘What, another new school book! - A catch-penny I dare say. Pray, what need have we of more books for children, when the shops are already full of them? - And what have we here? a long preface or oration or some fine story about such a little book as this! Surely the man who made it must be deranged!’

“‘But have patience a moment, friend, and if you are not too much engaged, have the goodness just to run over my oration or preface or whatever you please to call it...

“Twenty years ago we had excellent machinery in our factories, but you find very little machinery now like that in use twenty years ago; and the consequence is, that a great deal more yarn is now spun with the same labor, and much better cloth is made of it...

“The author of this little book and the volumes which follow it, has for more than twenty years, been engaged in instructing youth, and has had an opportunity of testing most of the popular school books now in use. He has not yet met with any connected, system, calculated to lead the young mind by regular and progressive steps through the various stages of common school education....

“...The plan of the work he claims as original with him, although a similar plan may have been pursued by others which has not fallen under his notice. It is proper, however, to state, that after the present work was commenced, and a considerable portion of each number was prepared, a little book entitled “The Franklin Primer,” \* was handed the author by one of the teachers of the public schools, while he was exhibiting to him the manuscripts. This was the first notice he had of the existence of that excellent little book. The arrangement of the spelling lessons is similar to that which had already been adopted and pursued in this work. There are, however, some points in which the two books materially differ. This statement is made, to show that there has been no designed encroachment on the invention or labors of others.

“The notion, too long prevalent, that a child must spend two, three or four years in learning to spell, before he can be permitted to put his words together or to commence reading is certainly unnatural if not absurd. It will be seen that in this book, the child, instead of being dragged through a long course of spelling lessons, commences reading at once, or as soon as he has obtained some idea of the shape and sound of the letters. It is an obvious fact, that children will much sooner become familiar with their letters by being taught their use, than by the mere abstract exercise of conning over their alphabet; especially if they are required to select certain letters from every line, column, or lesson. - In this way a child or class may be kept constantly occupied, by the aid only, of a little monitor already acquainted with the letters: and instead of spending nine tenths of their time as children in the alphabet usually do at school, in idleness and mischief, they may be kept pleasingly and usefully engaged....

“The particulars in which these books differ from others which have as yet come to the notice of the author, are the following:

“1st. The spelling lessons are all selected from the reading lessons to which they belong....

“4th. Every lesson, except a few in this first book, is accompanied by a set of questions to ascertain whether the pupil understands what he has read, or by some useful table to be committed to memory; frequently both. The utility of this will be acknowledged by all who are sensible that children cannot read well, what they do not understand....

“5th. The reading lessons are intended to be adapted to the capacity of the reader; but little therefore which is above the understanding of children has been admitted....

“7th. It may be mentioned as another peculiarity of these books, that the reading lessons, in general, are such as will seize and interest the minds of youth; and simple, interesting stories, anecdotes, &c. are made the means of conveying to their minds the purest moral principles.....

“Published in Greenfield, Mass.”

It stretches credibility that “the plan of the work” was conceived of independently from the author of The Franklin Primer by Angell sometime between 1826 and 1830. It is shown elsewhere that the phrase, “The plan of this primer” appeared in 1844 under peculiar circumstances on William Russell’s primer,

which book also followed the 1826 Franklin Primer “plan.” The purpose of that “plan” so obviously was to stop teaching beginners to read by the “sounds” of syllables and instead to teach them to read only by the “meanings” of memorized whole words.

As discussed in Part 3, the “meaning” method for reading alphabetic print which the activists were promoting in America after 1826 as a “plan” had originated in France in the eighteenth century. The activist use of that word, “plan,” which has the same meaning in French, had also occurred heavily in France in the eighteenth century, but in a different connection than with beginning reading. “Plan” had been a constantly recurring buzz word, in combination with “national”, in the activist period in France from 1762 until some years after the French Revolution in 1789, during which period government (“national”) schools were being promoted so as to wipe out church and home education.

Nor had children EVER spent “several years” in the spelling book before beginning to read, as the previously quoted comments of Lindley Murray, William Andrus Alcott, the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster and others of the period prove. Furthermore, the spelling books, themselves, carried numerous “reading” selections, increasing in size and number as children worked their way through the books. Many pre-1826 spelling books actually carried the statement near their beginnings that in a few weeks the child would read well. William Andrus Alcott, who is quoted elsewhere, and who was himself a pro-”meaning” activist, nevertheless admitted he was reading by the time he was five years old, after having used a speller, and seemed to consider that anything but unusual. The speller that Alcott had used as a child was almost certainly Webster’s phonic Code 10 speller, and Webster began to introduce practice reading selections not too far into his book, as did Murray and other spelling book authors. The reading selections became increasingly longer and more complicated later in the book. They were certainly not “spelling books” in the sense that the term is used today.

The meant-to-be-negative comments of the activist, William Russell, in his (and John Goldsburys’) 1845 book, *American Common-School Reader and Speaker*, about Memorums Wordswell, the little reading machine, are cited by Nila Banton Smith and are reproduced in Part 7 of this history. Yet Russell implicitly admitted in 1845 that the classmates of the (possibly imaginary) defective five-year-old child’s classmates had already gone all through Webster’s demanding spelling book, which included many, many, reading selections, when they were only seven years old!

### Lyman Cobb’s Spelling Books and Reading Books

Lyman Cobb’s readers first appeared in 1830, the same year that the Angell reading series appeared. Cobb’s 1825 spelling book (a revision of his 1821 spelling book) had openly attacked Noah Webster’s spelling book, and the pronunciation key it used. Yet Webster’s speller was brilliant, in many ways that are not immediately apparent. Webster not only gave a “key” listing all the vowel sounds in English, but gave all the ways to spell every vowel sound in English! Children memorized Webster’s key, and, by doing so, had the ability to decode anything in English independently.

An 1807 copy of Webster’s *the American Spelling Book* had on page 13 “An Easy Standard of Pronunciation. Key to the following Work.” At the bottom of the key and extending to the next page was “Explanation of the Key.” Children in those early days learned this entire section of Webster’s speller and eventually could recite it by heart. The emphasis in Webster’s key was on the spelling of sounds, not words, since in his “Explanation of the Key” Webster used some different words to illustrate sounds than the words he had used to illustrate those same sounds in the key directly above that section (“father” instead of “part,” “hall” instead of “tall” and “bald,” and so on). His key also clearly showed his Down-East accent: “bush” and “root” were marked to rhyme; and “Short aw” included “what” and “not.” It seems strange today that Webster did not show short “o” at all in his scheme. This is because Webster obviously rhymed short “o” words like “not” with “naught,” as well as with his Down-East pronunciation

for “what,” and called them all “short aw.” However, what Webster was showing was manifestly NOT whole words, but only the variant spellings for the sounds in English as he had learned them as a boy in Connecticut in the eighteenth century.

Webster broke his vowel key down into 12 vowel categories, and under these categories showed 17 different vowel sounds in English. What is most critical concerning teaching children how to decode English spellings is that Webster listed FORTY DIFFERENT WAYS USED IN ENGLISH TO SPELL THESE SEVENTEEN DIFFERENT VOWEL SOUNDS! It is no wonder that children learning to read with the Webster speller learned to read so quickly and so independently with these forty different keys, as well as the keys he gave them to consonant sounds! They were learning to read with a kind of pronouncing print!

Yet it was Walker’s, not Webster’s, dictionary which was cited the change-agents as the “standard” dictionary. It is therefore shocking, indeed, to find how inadequate Walker’s dictionary pronunciation key was as a tool for beginners to use to unlock the sound of print. Walker’s also showed seventeen different vowel sounds, but, instead of showing forty different ways to spell them, showed ONLY SEVENTEEN! With spelling books like Lyman Cobb’s which used Walker’s pronunciation key, students had to refer to one of the seventeen whole words carrying the same number as that at the top of the column they were pronouncing. Then, with two-step analytic phonics, they had to transport that sound into the word in front of them which often was using a different spelling for that sound, for which different spelling no explanation was given to the student.

Webster’s speller also showed such “key” notations over columns of words: all words marked “1” were long, “2” were short, and so on. But he also showed notations such as “9,” which was also a long sound, the long “a” spelled by “e” as in “there” and “vein.” (Any vowel not marked by Webster was to be considered silent, as the “i” in vein.)

Walker’s pronouncing dictionary was usually cited by the authors of pronouncing spelling books in competition with Webster after about 1818, like Lyman Cobb, and they modeled their pronunciation keys largely on Walker’s dictionary. Elihu Marshall’s 1819 speller used Walker’s key, for instance, and the McGuffey speller of 1838 used it with only one change. Because of the inadequate key in his dictionary, Walker could not mark words phonetically exactly as they were spelled in order to make them pronounceable but instead had to be respell them to match his abbreviated key. The result of the spelling book keys modeled on Walker’s was the replacing of one-step synthetic phonics, or the blending together of sequential letter sounds, with two-step analytic phonics, in which one whole word has to be compared to another whole word in order to figure out its sound. We have two-step analytic phonics today in our dictionary keys and are acutely aware that such decoding keys can only be used haltingly.

The key in Cobb’s 1825 speller was modeled on Walker’s and could, of course, be used for “elocution,” or the production of pear-shaped sounds. Elocution was to masquerade as “phonics” in reading for the next fifty years. Many different spellings for the same sound in those spellers using the “elocution” approach were lumped together in one keyed column. No hint was given to the learner that the different spellings for the same sound were anything but irrational and random. The learner was therefore forced to learn these words only as “wholes,” by two-step analytic phony phonics, comparing an unknown whole word to a whole word in the key. (By contrast, the original Webster spellers had children memorize the various ways to spell all the sounds in English words, and, with this information memorized, the children used synthetic one-step phonics to work out unknown words.) The same faulty key modeled on Walker’s inadequate approach and the lumping together of words of different spellings appeared in the McGuffey speller of 1838. Whether Lyman Cobb used a faulty key in his first speller of 1821 is unknown, but other spellers from about 1821, if they used pronouncing keys, usually did not use complete ones. (The Columbian Spelling book and Children’s Friend, by “A Friend to Youth,”

Providence, April 19, 1819, which has been discussed elsewhere, used no key at all, nor did that appalling book even use much analytic phonics like Dilworth's, which is the grouping together of words of similar spellings. However, it did have a syllabary.) As will be shown, Lyman Cobb actually made a public attack by 1825 against Webster's key which had made true synthetic phonics possible in the beginning reading of many seemingly irrationally-spelled English words.

As mentioned earlier, Lyman Cobb's speller of 1825 had received a qualified endorsement from William Russell in his journal, which suggests Cobb had the support of the movers and shakers, even though his speller, despite its faulty key, was heavily phonic over-all, rating perhaps a Code 7. Yet Lyman Cobb's reading series written later, the first book of which was published in 1830, was in practice a sight-word series, perhaps Code 3, though at first glance its 1842 revision appears phonic. (I have not seen any of the 1830 texts, but only the 1842 revision.) The books in 1842 had totally controlled vocabulary of high-frequency words, and the "phonics" consisted of dictionary-type respellings of these words, to be learned as "wholes." This approach does not develop readers who can handle new material, but only readers who have a memorized stock of "whole words." Cobbs' 1830 books, which I have not seen, were also controlled by syllable-length, so they appear to have been sight-word books, but, in 1830, he apparently expected his Code 7 phonic speller to precede the use of his readers.

Lyman Cobb (1800-1864) was from Massachusetts, but according to John A. Nietz in *Old Textbooks*, page 23, "most of his educational career was spent in New York State." One wonders if he was one of those involved in the New York state activist organization around 1829 referred to by Orestes Brownson, mentioned elsewhere. Nietz said Cobb had written a poor speller in 1821. Yet by 1825, Cobb had written a Spelling Book which rates perhaps a Code 7. Cobb had also meddled with Webster's word tables, producing instead his own revised tables which emphasized high-frequency use. Nietz commented that Cobb had few reading selections included in his spelling book and that Cobb said, "The Author is highly pleased that our schools are furnished with reading books adapted to the capacities of scholars of every age."

In 1842, when Cobb revised his first reading textbook series, it is interesting that Nietz commented concerning *New Juvenile Reader*, No. II (page 69), "...the reading content was greatly reduced, but each reading lesson was preceded with a list of its key words together with their meaning and pronunciation." The reduction in content was an implicit admission that throwing out "sound" for "meaning" had resulted in reading problems by 1842. Cobb's 1842 (and presumably his 1830) books had totally controlled vocabulary, which was a supposed "improvement" over some other readers, but it was in reality another clear admission that his children could not read independently.

In his preface signed, New York, April, 1842, to *New Juvenile Reader* No. II, Cobb said:

"In these Reading-Books, all the new words contained in each Reading Lesson, are placed at the head of the Lesson, divided, pronounced, accented, and defined, with the part of speech designated. Thus, all the words in Reading Lesson I, are formed into a Spelling Lesson, and placed at the head of the Lesson. Then, all the words in Reading Lesson II, not in Reading Lesson I, are formed into a Spelling Lesson, and placed at the head of Reading Lesson II, and so throughout the five reading books.... The scholar will thus have an opportunity to become acquainted with the spelling, pronunciation, and definition of all the words in each Reading Lesson before he reads them, or, if already acquainted with their orthography and pronunciation, he can go over these as a kind of review, while learning the definitions of the words."

Webster, Bingham, Murray, and Pierpont before 1826 had no need for such lists of "new" words in their readers, even though their readers contained real literature and, except for Murray's lower materials, uncontrolled vocabulary. (Murray had a controlled vocabulary for new words at the beginning level,



introducing words only if all their phonic elements had already been taught.) Yet, by 1842, Cobb needed to list all the “new” words in his “controlled vocabulary” readers, indicating a drop in reading ability and a dependence on memorized sight-words. Cobb’s readers were massively used in New York State, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere for many years.

Lyman Cobb’s definition of the purpose of a spelling book seemed traditional enough in his preface to Cobb’s New Spelling Book, in Six Parts in 1842:

“The great and prominent object of a spelling book should be to aid the pupil in learning to spell, pronounce and read with ease, accuracy and precision...”

Cobb said on page 16, in his note “To Teachers,” that children should not be asked to read before learning spelling and the spelling book. However, by 1842, children were being taught “spelling” (see-aye-tee, CAT) in the sight word primers before they ever saw the phonic spelling books. Cobb may have been endorsing that harmful practice which turned children into sight-word readers for life since by 1842 Cobb had produced a primer himself to precede his speller, but whether it emphasized “sound” or “meaning” is unknown. However, Cobb said that his speller was meant to precede his readers (but obviously not his primer) initially, and only afterwards were his Juvenile Readers 1, 2, and 3 to accompany the spelling book. Therefore, when he first wrote his 1830 readers, before he had a primer, he apparently endorsed the use of the spelling book as the first step, although by 1842 he no longer did so.

In Cobb’s defense, it is only fair to mention what is discussed elsewhere: even Noah Webster wrote a primer to precede his speller by 1832, in response to market forces, but Webster’s primer was, of course, heavily phonic. Webster’s primer was also apparently almost totally unsuccessful. The only place I have ever seen it is in the New York Public Library and the American Antiquarian Society who each have a copy of this rare book. Yet I have never seen any reference to Webster’s primer in print, other than in the catalogs of these two libraries. Webster dropped the number codes for vowels in his 1832 primer, and instead used vowel symbols very much like those in use today.

Cobb’s primer, meant to precede his Juvenile Readers, appeared apparently in 1842. In 1830, Juvenile Reader No. 1 had been the first book in his series, but in the new series it was the second, being preceded by Cobb’s New First Book. I have not seen a copy of this book, Cobb’s New First Book. The publishers advertised it as the “Introduction to the Spelling Book” on the back cover of Cobb’s New Juvenile Reader No. 2 of 1842, published in 1845 by Caleb Bartlett of New York. Therefore, by 1842, the speller was no longer the foundation book in Cobb’s series, which included New Juvenile Readers Nos. 1, 2, and 3, and Sequel, or New North American Reader, to form the five-book 1842 Cobb series. As discussed elsewhere, by 1842 the speller was no longer the beginning book almost anywhere in America.

The New York Public Library Rare Books Room has an interesting old publication by Lyman Cobb. It is a collection of letters he wrote to the newspaper, the Albany Argus, in 1827 and 1828, and includes a response from Noah Webster, whose speller Cobb was attacking in the columns of the newspaper, claiming that his own was far superior. Cobb specifically found fault with Webster’s phonic key. Cobb was horrified that Webster should equate “e” with “a” with sample spellings like “there” and “vein” and “purified” his own key by omitting them.

The replacing in spellers of Webster’s synthetic phonics key (“sound”) with keys modeled on Walker’s two-step whole-word analytic phonics (“meaning”) was a very important and critically damaging step in the teaching of beginning reading. Cobb later followed through with it in his reading series, crippling children’s decoding ability. It is small wonder that Cobb met the approval of Russell and that he prospered in the highly activist-organized schools of New York State.

Cobb obviously preferred the dictionary-respelling approach because all new words in his 1842 readers had dictionary-type phonetic respellings. Yet, even in his 1828 dictionary, Webster used no such phonetic respellings. Instead, Webster's markings which were also used in his speller were, in effect, a kind of pronouncing print. His unsung "pronouncing print" is perhaps the most striking of Webster's brilliant achievements. Cobb's use of respellings for all new words was a lethal defect since it killed many children's ability to decode unfamiliar words independently. Yet Cobb, who gave definitions for all words in his readers, most naturally, received the support of the movers-and- shakers, as he was shifting toward "meaning" in beginning reading with his "improvements."

Many of Cobb's comments in his articles finding fault with Webster's speller also appeared in the preface to Cobb's 1825 speller dated July, 1825. Cobb had obviously been warring with Webster for three years by 1828, but it was a very successful war. In July, 1842, when he wrote his *New Spelling Book in Six Parts*, he said that in the previous twenty years seven million copies of his spelling book had been sold!

In Cobb's articles, he referred to "several of the spelling books now most generally in use." Of these spelling books mentioned by Cobb and of which he approved in the following extract, I have photocopies on portions of all but Hawes'. About Hawes, I have no information. All the others rate a Code 7 or above, but all except Perry's appear to have been chipping away at the Webster model of what an ideal speller should be. Perry's, first published in Scotland in 1776, was republished in America by Isaiah Thomas in 1785 and later. It was, however, heavily phonic, as was Webster's. Yet, it was the Webster 1783 speller of which America had approved so resoundingly for so many years.

The first dates of publication of those spellers on which I have some photocopies are:

Perry - 1776

Marshall - 1819

Cummings - 1819

Cobb - a defective edition in 1821 per Nietz, but revised in 1825 on which later edition I have some photocopies.

Sears - 1826

Bolles - 1825

Hall J. Kelley - 1827 revised seventh edition

According to Superintendent Philbrick's "Report" in the Annual School Report for Boston of 1874, pages 374-375, Kelley's spelling book was used in the Boston primary schools when they were opened in 1818. An 1827 copy of Kelley's speller was weaker on "sound" than Webster's speller, but an earlier edition of Kelley's, which may or may not have been as weak, dates from at least 1818 according to Philbrick.

The fact that Webster's speller was NOT used in the Boston primary schools in 1818 when they opened should be noted. It shows that opposition to Webster's speller as early as 1818 was present in the area of the Webster speller's greatest use, New England, and that the opposition was coming from the change-agents who were promoting the Boston primary schools. (Samuel Blumenfeld's statistical analysis of historical sources in his book, *Is Public Education Necessary?* shows that the Boston public primary schools were totally unnecessary, not only because of existing private educational facilities but because literacy was virtually universal in the Boston area for native-born Americans in those days when Webster's easily used Code 10 "sound" speller had been the norm in Boston.)

Note also that all of the spellers listed by Cobb except for Perry's apparently date from 1818 or after, the date when "change" first surfaced. Perry's was the excellent Code 10 1776 Scottish speller, which was

apparently inspired by Thomas Sheridan's lectures on elocution in Scotland. Perry's speller was written before Webster's 1783 American speller but it had been published in America ever since 1785 by the famous publisher Isaiah Thomas of Worcester, Massachusetts. Although Webster had campaigned for copyright laws for decades because of the many spellers which had pirated and imitated his speller, Cobb listed none of those earlier Webster challengers except for Perry's famous Scottish speller.

The American publisher of Perry's Scottish speller, which was not protected by copyright in America and which was not very successful in Great Britain, was Isaiah Thomas (1749-1831). Thomas was rich and powerful so perhaps it was not expedient for Cobb to incur Thomas's displeasure by failing to approve of the Perry speller published by the extremely successful and obviously powerful Isaiah Thomas company.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, (1963), Thomas had been born in Boston and was apprenticed to the printer, Zachariah Fowle, at the age of six. By modern standards, that was an appalling thing to do, to put a six-year-old to work for a printer, even if it did involve the child's learning a trade! It could not have been too happy an association, either, because at the age of sixteen Thomas ran away to Nova Scotia and worked as a printer in Nova Scotia and New Hampshire.

Yet Thomas and Fowle eventually were reconciled, because Fowle consented to Isaiah Thomas's next move to Charleston, South Carolina. Then, in 1770, when Thomas would have been twenty or twenty-one, he and Fowle published the Massachusetts Spy as partners. The periodical became a weekly owned solely by Thomas and it backed the Revolutionary cause. Thomas took part in the Battle of Concord on April 16, 1775, but three days earlier he had moved his printing operation out of Boston to Worcester. As an indication of Thomas's stature, after having very successfully gone into the printing business for himself by 1775, he eventually had book stores and printing plants all around the country.

Isaiah Thomas founded the enormously important American Antiquarian Society in 1812 with its historical library in his own town of Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1810, he had written History of Printing in America, and according to the Encyclopedia Britannica account had given over the Worcester business to his son in 1802. Whether Thomas relinquished his other business is unknown.

Cobb most probably did not wish to battle with Thomas over the moderately successful Perry speller. However, as Cobb's remarks show, it was Cobb's obvious intent to battle in the public press with Webster over the far more successful Webster speller, and Webster's answers to Cobb's charges are quoted in that publication.

While Cobb admitted that Webster's 1783 speller was a great improvement on Dilworth's 1740 text, he gave no hint that Webster's was different in kind from Dilworth's. Yet nothing in Dilworth's is remotely comparable to Webster's essay on phonic pronunciation, which older American children until about 1820 often committed to memory. Webster's essay was a variation on Thomas Sheridan's essays and speeches on phonics dating from the late 1750's, and Sheridan's work did not appear until almost twenty years after Dilworth's speller was first published in 1740. Sheridan's writings were enlargements of the brilliant and highly original (but almost totally ignored) work of the anonymous author of the 1740 Irish Spelling Book, who may very possibly have been Sheridan's schoolmaster father. It is evident the author of the Irish Spelling Book was a schoolmaster. As discussed elsewhere, it is possible to trace the phonic ideas in the Irish Spelling Book of 1740 back to their probable source, Blaise Pascal in France in 1655.

The following are excerpts from Cobb's articles in 1827 and 1828 opposing Webster's speller, portions of which articles had appeared previously in the preface to Cobb's 1825 speller:

“Critical Review of Noah Webster’s Spelling Book, First Published in a Series of Numbers in the Albany Argus in 1827 and 1828. By Examiner. Printed in 1828. (Written by Lyman Cobb according to the New York Public Library)

“Advertisement - This critical review of Mr. Webster’s Spelling-Book is submitted to the candid perusal... with a request that you will compare it carefully with the other Spelling-Books now in use among us, with Perry’s, Marshall’s, Sears’, Hawes’, Kelly’s, (sic) Cumming’s, Bolles’, &c but more particularly with Cobb’s in which, it is believed, the defects contained in Mr. Webster’s Spelling-Book are remedied...

“... the subject of rudimental or common school Education has recently excited much attention....”

At this point, Cobb indulged in much flowery rhetoric on government schools as necessary for America’s salvation, even though the United States had existed for over fifty successful years with very few government schools. Government schools in New York and Massachusetts began to increase after about 1818. (Northern New York had been heavily settled by Massachusetts people who went west, and they had carried the common school idea with them, although the concept was gradually dying out by 1818 except with activists.) Cobb said suggestions for improvement in education concerned instructors and:

“... it is necessary to examine elementary books. Among the suggestions which have been recently made for the improvement of our common school system, the importance is urged of making some public provision for the qualifying of competent instructors. Towards the accomplishment of this object it will be found essential, that correct systems of instruction be adopted. Hence the importance of considering, with closer scrutiny than hitherto, the character of elementary books; and of introducing none but such as are plain and judicious in their plans, and correct in their principle and execution. These works form the basis of the teacher’s knowledge, and prescribe the means and method by which he imparts instruction to his pupils; or should he be competent to detect the errors of a system, it would be impossible for him to counteract its mischievous effects, since the book itself must form the scholar’s standard, or all confidence will be destroyed in the utility of their studies.

“In this view of the subject, the simple manual, the SPELLING-BOOK, is not the least in importance. It is the first elementary work placed in the hands of the scholar. From this he derives his earliest impressions of the nature and utility of the language in which he is to speak and write. From this book he acquires his habits of thought and expression; the tone and modulation of voice which distinguish him generally through life; from this he is to acquire the practice of spelling and pronouncing correctly, qualifications which give great force and effect to what is spoken or written. With respect to the character, and the proper study of this elementary book, there has hitherto been a great neglect. Its importance does not seem to be appreciated; and hence the great variety of works of this class, differing widely in their principles and practices, which have appeared, and made their way into the schools, without due scrutiny on the part of those who should guard our sanctuaries of knowledge against the entrance of imperfection and error. From this great and apparent evils have resulted. There is a general ignorance of the elementary principles of our language, and no system of orthography seems to be known and followed.... in orthoepy.... we are equally defective and devoid of system. The variableness and consequent want of correctness in the pronunciation of many of our most eminent scholars and public speakers, are apparent and painful to ... observers....

“As an evidence that this long neglected branch of instruction is beginning to be properly appreciated, and that correct elementary books may hereafter be deemed a desideratum, a premium was for some months offered, through the medium of your paper, for the best Essay, or Criticism, upon the various spelling-books in use in this country. It is indeed to be regretted, that no one has embraced the opportunity to render an important service to the publick. The task, truly, was not an easy one of accomplishment and perhaps few persons have devoted sufficient time to the investigation of the subject, to render them competent for... the comparative examination and description, of so numerous a class of books of such various instruction and character....”

Cobb had established that no member of the public had produced an essay, which indicated the subject of the relative value of different spelling books was of no interest to almost anyone in the Albany area except that editor and Cobb about the end of 1826, when the editor apparently announced his contest. The editor’s motives in making the offer can only be surmised. Perhaps he was aware of the chipping away at the Webster perfections in the new flood of spellers and was horrified. Perhaps it was the opposite, and he was one of the change-agents himself, interested in displacing Webster’s “sound” speller with “meaning” primers. In the early 1820’s, the Webster speller had a hold on ordinary Americans second only to the Bible. To destroy Webster’s high reputation with such a public could only be done indirectly and one step at a time, and certainly could not be done by a frontal attack on Webster’s speller or the results would boomerang.

Cobb went on, in his lofty and superior tone, to state what was necessary in a spelling book. He said that only common words should be used, the book should be simple, “the classification of words should be judicious and distinct and the system adopted be strictly and correctly adhered to,” and “in orthography and orthoepy it should correspond with the standard dictionary of the country.” The “standard dictionary” he presumed was not Webster’s early dictionaries, but Walker’s.

Cobb admitted Webster’s historical success and called Webster’s speller the oldest, “Mr. Dilworth having become almost obsolete....” Cobb said, on page 5:

“Webster’s Spelling Book was founded upon and succeeded Dilworth. It was so superior to its predecessor in many respects, as to acquire an immediate and unparalleled popularity, which it has sustained with little interruption for more than forty years. So magical indeed has been the charm of popularity woven around it, that all desire for, or efforts to improvement, seem to have been paralyzed; and it is not until within a few years, that any successful attempts have been made to improve upon this popular system. The merits of Mr. Webster’s books have been duly considered by me....”

Cobb said Webster had 6,950 words to spell and said (I believe) 220 were repeated. A twentieth-century response to this kind of fault-finding is, “So what?” (Webster had good reasons for the inclusion of words in his tables. Cobb quoted Webster as having said, “My tables are so constructed, and so nearly complete, that they cannot be improved.”) Cobb also found fault with the omission of very long multisyllable words accented on the final syllable. Yet how many of such words could meet Cobb’s criterion that spelling words should be common?

Most significantly, Cobb found fault with Webster’s use of a phonically marked “e” which beginners could use by themselves to work out the pronunciation of words with irregular “e” spellings for the long “a” sound like “their.” Here, of course, is the heart of the matter: Webster provided beginners with a “key” which mimicked actual English spellings so that children could use it later themselves to pronounce anything in English. In Cobb’s readers, he was taking away the beginners’ ability to pronounce unknown words for themselves by denying them the key to the actual letters in front of their eyes as those letters

appeared in unknown words. Instead, children had only the dictionary's respelled key to guide them to the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. (It should be remembered that Webster's 1828 dictionary, like his speller, did not need to alter almost any spellings to make them pronounceable as Walker's did. Webster only marked the words so that they could be pronounced exactly as they were written. This was Webster's most astonishing - and ignored - achievement.)

Cobb referred to Webster's appeal "To the Public" published in New Haven in March, 1826, and said on page 30:

"Having pointed out... what I considered defective and contradictory in Mr. Webster's spelling book, I shall now conclude my remarks... by taking notice of some declarations made by Mr. Webster relative to his spelling book, in his appeal 'To the Public' published at New Haven, March, 1826... From a review of his appeal... I was fully convinced that Mr. Webster was not aware of the defects and contradictions contained in his spelling book and school dictionaries and I have therefore been more particular in giving proof of what I have said.... Again, he says, in speaking of the attempts to rival his book: 'In order to accomplish their object, it has been expedient to depreciate my work and to charge me with innovation and with introducing a system of orthography and pronunciation in many respects vague and pedantic ... Surely if this is true, if my book is really a bad one, I have been very much deceived; and I have done not only an injury but great and extensive injury to my country.'"

Some people WERE in the very act of doing "great and extensive injury" to Webster's country and to ours in 1826, but it was certainly NOT Noah Webster!

Cobb said:

"...to my remarks on his spelling book, Mr. Webster attempted an answer in your paper of the 12th December...."

In Webster's answer, he said he had supported his family on the small profits from his spelling book. (If ever a laborer was worthy of his hire, it certainly was old Noah Webster!) Concerning the argument on "correct" spelling and "correct" pronunciation, Webster said when he completed his book in 1782, there were no authorities on spelling or pronunciation. Of those who had written dictionaries up to that time, he said something good could be said of almost all of them - except for Walker, whom he considered the most incorrect, but it was Walker's "authority" which Webster's opponents were citing as "correct." Webster's letter to the Albany Argus was signed, "New Haven, December, 1827."

So the opposition to Webster, including Cobb with all his arguments, fitted very nicely into the movers'-and-shakers' apparent timetable for educational change, which included government schools, teacher "training," and textbook control. Webster had felt it necessary by March, 1826, to write an appeal "To the Public" in defense of his spelling book against attacks. By December, 1827, he publicly answered Cobb's attacks against his speller.

Cobb was apparently a very handy "public relations" tool for the activists who were opposed to Webster's phonic speller. "Public relations" is usually considered to be a twentieth-century activity. Yet the history makes it clear that the movers-and-shakers after 1818 had already worked out public relations as a science. The kind of public relations in which they dealt, however, sounds a good deal like conspiracy.

It was in 1843 that William D. Swan, Principal of the Mayhew Grammar School in Boston, came out with a book for teaching "reading" in primary schools. All that Swan was attempting to do was to teach

children the proper pronunciation of their sight words, though his book would look “phonic” to the unwary. Swan clearly stated its purpose, though. It was not to teach children to hear the printed page, but to make the right sounds with their mouths: “The subject of articulation must be taught in our Primary Schools, as it forms the basis of good reading.” Of course, by teaching beginners how to make pear-shaped sounds when pronouncing their sight-words out loud, the schools were accidentally teaching children something about how to decode unknown words, but that was not the intent. In fact, by 1843, the idea of teaching children to sound out words for themselves apparently never occurred to teachers. By that time, “new vocabulary” was supposed to be taught the way Cobb did it, with the words respelled in parentheses for the teacher to read aloud to the children, so that the children would not stumble over the new words when reading their sight-word texts. It was no accident that Joseph Rice got the remark from a New York City primary school principal which he did about 1892 which went about like this: “How can children know what a word is if they never saw it before?”

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### Reading Series After 1830

After Angell’s and Cobb’s highly successful series which started in 1830, joining the highly successful but pivotal Franklin and Worcester series of 1826 and later which have been discussed, reading series came out in great numbers. Almost all, commonly in newer editions, continued to be published simultaneously over decades, generating textbook wars. These textbook wars are described by Vail in his history of the McGuffey readers, and are humorously discussed in the excerpt from *The School Bulletin* in Appendix A. Also, these series were commonly rewritten in later years by a collaborator and the original author. The original author’s name, it is suspected, may have appeared largely for its advertising value. In addition, before 1870, publishing houses which had handled a once-popular series often completely replaced it with a new series by new authors, who tended to have impressive “literary” credentials, such as George Hillard. Hillard’s publishers obviously used Hillard’s new series to replace the Worcester series they had previously been publishing.

Merriam’s American Readers have been discussed earlier, including in 1821 *The American Reader, Containing Extracts Suited to Exciting a Love of Science and Literature, to Refine the Taste and to Improve the Moral Character. Designed for the Use of Schools.* In 1828, the Merriam company published *The American Primer*. That American Primer was obviously added by 1828 to Merriam’s American Readers series, which presumably had other books in the series besides the 1821 reader. Their *Easy Primer* came out in 1833, and the New York Public Library card catalog shows that in 1841 the Merriam company published *The Village Readers, Designed for the Use of Schools, by the Compilers of the Easy Primer*. An 1846 and an 1849 copy of *The Village Reader* is listed in *Early American Textbooks*, but no other information is available on the Village series, or other books in that series, published by the company that became the publishers of Webster’s monumental dictionary.

Jesse Torrey’s series of readers have been discussed, as have those of Olney, and both Torrey’s and Olney’s reading series may have been completed by the early 1830’s. Torrey’s had been started with the 1824 publication of the reader that became the third book in his series. Torrey’s books were published as late as 1836 by Grigg and Elliot of Philadelphia, but in 1844 Grigg and Elliot produced its *New Series of Common School Readers* of three books. Curiously, its “No. 1” reader stated, “This little volume is intended to be used as a First Reading Book after the Spelling Book.” This was a strange holdover from pre-1826 practices, and perhaps had also applied to Torrey’s materials. The Grigg and Elliot 1844 materials were still in print when the 1876 *American Catalogue* was published, but were out of print by the time the 1912 *United States Catalog* was published.

James Kay, Jr. & Brother, 122 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, and C. H. Kay & Co., Pittsburgh, published in 1840 Kay's Infant and Primary School Reader & Speller, No. 1, in Words of Two and Three Letters, which had been copyrighted by the Philadelphia company in 1839. No author's name appeared, but, in its "Preface," the words appeared, "...the author speaks from experience..." concerning the quieting effect on a class when children were permitted to draw on their slates. Presumably, therefore, its author was a teacher. The author said he based his book on "Mr. Ballantine's Infant School Reader, which consisted of Reading, Spelling and Defining lessons, all confined to Monosyllables..." which book was apparently originally published in Great Britain some time (perhaps considerably) before 1832.

Yet the author of the 1839 work completely changed the original material. First, he had made a list of all the words he could find in English composed of only two or three letters, which he said numbered 500, and used all these words in book No. 1, all but 24 introduced in the first half, all in whole sentences. The author also recommended that the alphabet be learned only through exposure to these whole words. The author said that throughout the book, "New words are gradually and systematically introduced," and he used a controlled high-frequency vocabulary of 200 two- and three-letter words before he began to introduce capitals. He said he also often used pictures for word identification.

All but 24 of the list of 500 words were introduced before the "Second Part" that "consists of Spelling Lessons." In the "Second Part," "all the words in the reading lessons are arranged in classes according to their similarity of sound." Since the children had already learned 476 of the 500 words as meaning-bearing wholes, this sound analysis became two-step phony phonics.

The book was a straight Code 1 book until the spelling section, when it changed to Code 3. The cover of the book which I saw was badly blurred, and held two drawn portraits which were indistinguishable. Under them, however, could be seen a quotation for each man. For the second, the words could be made out, "but let it be useful knowledge. William..." "Useful knowledge" was, of course, a buzz-word of the activists, of which "William..." was possibly one, and this book certainly had activist earmarks. Its back cover advertised the whole series:

"Kay's Infant and Primary School Series in Three Volumes:

"Infant and Primary School Reader and Speller, No. 1, in words of Two and Three Letters.

"Infant and Primary School Reader and Definer, No. 2, in Words of One Syllable.

"Infant and Primary School Reader and Definer, No. 3. In Words of One and Two Syllables."

No other reference to this Pennsylvania series of 1839 which was so in line with activist thinking has turned up in any other material which I have seen, although it was still in print when the 1876 American Catalogue was published. It was most decidedly "au courant." It might be described as ammunition that was being set off considerably after the 1826 "sound" vs. "meaning" war was over, except for the fact that the use of the speller as the first book was lingering in the Philadelphia area, such as in Grigg and Elliot's materials. The Kay materials were a direct challenge to those materials.

Another set of books produced in Philadelphia began with one published in 1830, The Clinton Primer for Common Schools, by Montgomery Robert Bartlett, "Author of the Common School Manual," which was the second book in his series, published by Carey and Lea of Philadelphia. The Library of Congress has an 1830 copy, which rates Code 4. It describes itself as a "series of first lessons with cuts for little children designed to prepare them for entering upon the study of the first part of the Common School Manual. It will also be found well adapted to the purposes of instruction in infant schools and private families." An 1832 copy held by the New York Public Library shows that Bartlett changed the name of



his upper level material from the Common School Manual to the National School Manual, stating, “This work of which the Clinton Primer is the incipient branch will include nearly 1400 pages and embrace a comprehensive and practical system of English education, the cost of which will be about three dollars. The parts of the work will be retailed at the following prices: primer, 48 pages, 6 1/4 cents; 1st part, 108 pages, 18 3/4 cents; 2nd part, 302 pages, 62 1/2 cents; 3d part, 380 pages, 75 cents; 4th part, 550 pages, \$1.00; Atlas, 75 cents. Primer with the first, second and third parts are completed and now(?) offered for sale by ALL booksellers.” Bartlett’s materials certainly sound like a reading series, or like a series meant to replace existing reading series, but no other information has surfaced concerning any part of it except The Clinton Primer. The 1832 copy was published by Carey & Lea at Chestnut Street, Philadelphia and stereotyped by James Connor.

Roe, Lockwood Company of New York, New York, mentioned earlier as the publishers of Dwight’s Schoolmaster’s Friend and Committee Man’s Guide in 1836, had published a series of readers apparently some time before 1831. On the 9th edition of Introduction to American Popular Lessons carrying the date of 1831, the Roe, Lockwood Company advertised the book preceding it, The First Book or Primary Lessons, which they said was “By the Author of American Popular Lessons,” who obviously had written a three-book series probably before 1831: The First Book..., the Introduction..., and American Popular Lessons. Eliza Robbins, a teacher, was credited as having been the author of the American Popular Lessons on an 1838 book, The School Friend, published by “Robinson and Franklin, Successors to Leavitt, Lord & Company” of New York. The School Friend was not a beginning book, but apparently was Eliza Robbins’ latest enthusiasm, since it was modeled after the 128th edition of a German book from Saxe-Weimar. It was a terrible book in which she quoted Cousin, so Eliza Robbins and her reading books were, apparently, very much in agreement with the “best” thinking of the time.

Edward Hazen’s first material, discussed previously, had appeared in 1829, but he had written an additional reading series by 1845. Harvard Library has a copy of Hazen’s 1845 The Grammatic Reader, No. I, published by J. S. Redfield, New York. It is a Code 3 book which flatly admitted in its Preface that teaching to read had become difficult: “Much of the first and second years of the scholastic course is wasted in learning to read and spell...” The back cover of this 1845 book advertised Grammatic Readers Nos. I, II, III published by J. S. Redfield, N. Y., so Hazen’s Code 3 Grammatic Readers were in print by 1845.

On page 101, Early American Textbooks indicates another reading series was published in 1849 on which I have no other information: The Second Reader (252 pages), Oliver Beale Peirce, Published by Gates, Stedman & Co., New York. Early American Textbooks also shows on page 54 that Peirce wrote The Grammar of The English Language, Impr. ed., Watertown, N. Y.: Knowlton & Rice, 1843, 192 pages. No further information is available on Peirce’s books or on the apparent reading series published by Gates, Stedman & Co. of New York before or in 1849.

The 1876 American Catalogue lists reading books published around the 1850’s by “Claxton,” apparently Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger of Philadelphia, and additional previously unknown texts by J. B. Lippincott of Philadelphia. These titles, known only from the 1876 American Catalogue, are listed in the appendix, but no further information is available on them.

A great many series came out between 1830 and 1860, in addition to those series already mentioned, and are described more fully in Appendix B. The series of A. Picket came out in the 1830’s, as did that of S. G. (Peter Parley) Goodrich (1793-1860). Gallaudet produced his deaf-mute-method The Mother’s Primer in 1835, possibly named after the Mother’s Magazine to which he contributed. Gallaudet indicated that he meant to follow his primer with a higher level book (which he apparently never wrote). J. E. Lovell’s first series began in 1836, copies of which I have not seen. Lovell’s second series, which surprisingly was truly phonic and rated a Code 7, began in 1855.

Horace Mann's second publisher, William Bentley Fowle, wrote a reading series starting in 1837 when he copyrighted *The Primary Reader*. (Fowle wrote many other books, besides the spellers discussed elsewhere in this history, including *The Teacher's Institute*, mentioned as late as 1878 in the *October Primary Teacher*, page 57.) Josiah Freeman Bumstead's (b. 1797) series was started by 1838. An 1851 copy of Bumstead's *My First School Book* showed it was adopted by the Boston Primary Schools on June 5, 1839. Bumstead's terrible sight-word series is discussed in Appendix B. Rensselaer Bentley's series was started in 1839. (Note the possibly meaningful same family name as William Bentley Fowle.) The series of Charles W. Sanders (1805-1889) began with his *Primer* in 1840, although his speller came out in 1838.

The elocutionary series of David B. Tower, Principal of the Eliot Grammar School, Boston, was started in 1841. The elocutionary series of William D. Swan, Principal of the Mayhew Grammar School, Boston, was started by 1843. The series by the elocutionist/activist/editor, William Russell and the series by the author Lydia Sigourney (a toy book approach) were started by 1844.

Also started in 1844 was the series by Salem Town (1779-1864). Town had written *Town's Speller and Definer* in 1836 which had a one hundredth edition by 1843, in which year it was revised and enlarged. An 1838 copy carried the notation, "Designed to impart distinct ideas while learning every new word," and showed that it was published in a long list of New York state locations, plus in Boston and Philadelphia. As mentioned elsewhere, Noah Webster considered Town's one-word definitions to be objectionable because they were often wrong. Later, Salem Town wrote *The Progressive Series* with Nelson M. Holbrook which was being published by 1855.

Joshua Leavitt's *Leavitt's Reading Series* came out in 1847. As previously mentioned, Leavitt & Company, New York, published a speller in 1849 which they said was part of their "American School Series" which included a first, second and third reader which have not turned up, and which were apparently unconnected with Joshua Leavitt's *Reading Series*. Henry Mandeville's series came out in 1849, and J. S. Denman's *The Student's Series* by 1850 (discussed later) based on 1846 articles in *The Student*, a monthly. Elias Longley's Pitman-print series came out by 1850. Farmer, Brace & Company's *Young American's Series*, Lucius Osgood's *Progressive Series*, and the first book of the first series of G. S. Hillard (1808-1879) came out starting in 1855. (Hillard wrote two later series with Loomis J. Campbell in 1864 and 1871-1873.) The first series of Epes Sargent (1813-1880) came out by 1854 and an available copy of his *Standard School Primer* is dated 1856. (He also published *The New American Series* with Amasa May in 1871.)

J. Russell Webb's first series of books, the *Normal readers*, came out between 1846 and 1855. Webb also published *The Analytical Series* of readers with Richard Edwards between 1866 and 1871. According to the 1876 *American Catalogue*, he also published the *Model Readers* between 1873 and 1876. The 1885-1890 *American Catalogue* showed that "Webb" with no initials wrote the *New Model First Reader* in 1888. The 1876 *American Catalogue* had also shown that a W. H. Webb, who was possibly a relative, wrote the *Word Method Primer*, a surviving copy of which is dated 1857 but which carried no author's name.

The *National School Series* of Richard G. Parker (1798-1869) and J. Madison Watson (1827-1900) came out between 1857 and 1866 (and Parker had written a famous book on composition much earlier). Marcius Willson's series came out by 1860.

This does not pretend to be a complete list of all the American series, or revisions of American series, between 1830 and 1860, and, in addition, there were many, many, reading materials published which

were more transient than the complete series of books. Amidst all of this material, McGuffey's which came out starting in 1836 was only one of many.

The dates that were given in the above for authors' births and deaths were taken from Nietz' text, except Bumstead's birth year, from the New York Public Library index card for their 1857 copy of Bumstead's Spelling and Thinking Combined, or The Spelling Book Made a Medium of Thought, in the Gansevoort-Lansing Collection. However, for most authors, no such dates are known.

I have not seen a copy of Eliza Robbins' The First Book or Primary Lessons, but presume, from its title, it was a "meaning" approach, particularly since its author was "au courant." The probability is that the Leavitt and Company series was also a "meaning" approach. If so, then every single one of the reading materials listed previously which were published between about 1830 and 1860, except Elias Longley's, Grigg & Elliot's, and Lovell's 1855 series (but probably not his earlier series), taught children to read primarily by sight-words. The emphasis was primarily on "meaning" and not "sound," even in the elocutionary series of Tower's and Swan's. (The beginning books of Town and Holbrook's Progressive Series were written by Tower but were not phonic.)

Mentioned as exceptions were the materials published by Grigg & Elliot. They had published Torrey's series and in 1844 the Grigg & Elliot New Series of Common School Readers. Common School Reader No. 1 stated, "This little volume is intended to be used as a First Reading Book after the Spelling Book." Grigg & Elliott were located in Philadelphia where a weakened revision of Comly's speller was published in 1842, and both Comly's speller and Grigg & Elliot's readers were still in print when Leypoldt's 1876 American Catalogue was published.

Therefore, the use of a speller as a beginning reading book appears to have lingered in Pennsylvania and also for a while in very poor rural areas where books and the money to buy them were scarce. Yet even Grigg & Elliot of Philadelphia were agents in 1843 for Salem Town's ridiculous Town's Speller and Definer, so they were fairly up to date. (Town's first version for which Grigg & Elliot were agents rated a Code 7, but Town's revision that same year, 1843, being published by Sanborn and Carter of Portland in 1848, rated only a Code 4.)

Despite the pattern of the Grigg & Elliott series in Pennsylvania which began with a speller, it is evident from the remark by James Pyle Wickersham, Principal of the normal school at Millersville, Pennsylvania, in his 1865 book, Methods of Instruction, that spellers had generally died out by 1865 as the beginning step even in Pennsylvania. In his book, Wickersham was reviewing various methods to teach beginning reading. When he discussed "The Phonic Method," he said on page 183:

"The word-tables composed of such monosyllables as ba, ma, le, he, si, no, tu,... ble, bad, mad, &c., as found in our old-fashioned spelling-books, could be made very useful as exercises in phonic synthesis."

Wickersham obviously did not consider it customary in Pennsylvania by 1865 to have such spelling books as the very beginning step. The 1839 Kay Code 1 - Code 3 series published in Philadelphia which has already been described remained in print until at least 1876, according to the American Catalogue. It was in obvious competition with Grigg & Elliot's materials which began with a speller. The existence of the Kay series in Philadelphia over all those years until at least 1876 is further confirmation that the "meaning" approach was strong in the Pennsylvania area after 1839, despite the apparently popular Grigg & Elliott series which began with a speller and which also remained in print, along with Comly's speller until at least 1876.

A series of readers meant for children past the beginning level was published by 1839 by John Hall, "Late Principal of the Ellington School," Connecticut. It consisted of "The Reader's Guide, which was published two or three years since... designed for scholars of an advanced standing... The Reader's Manual, (the present work,)... designed for scholars less advanced... (and) The Primary Reader... intended for a still younger class of learners, who are already able to read sentences with some degree of readiness..." (from page x of The Reader's Manual, dated May, 1839). On page 13 of The Reader's Manual, "Designed for the Use of Common Schools in the United States," Hall confirmed that reading disabilities existed by 1839. No such comments had appeared on pre-1826 texts:

"REQUISITES FOR READING WELL.

"The very first thing to be acquired in reading is to be able to call every word right, just as soon as it meets the eye. A mere glance of the eye at any word should be sufficient to enable the reader to tell what it is, without stopping to spell it out. Nothing appears so bad, so awkward, and so vulgar, in a scholar who is old enough to read with fluency, as to be continually boggling on words of more than one syllable, and hesitating what to call them, or calling them wrong. The first rule, therefore, should be this:

CALL EVERY WORD RIGHT; AND CALL IT RIGHT AS SOON AS YOU SEE IT,  
WITHOUT STOPPING TO SPELL IT.

"Many readers make nonsense by leaving out words which are in the book, or by inserting words which are not found in it. This fault is a very great one, though it is very common.... The second rule then is:

"NEVER LEAVE OUT ANY WORDS WHEN YOU READ, AND NEVER INSERT ANY  
WHICH THE BOOK DOES NOT CONTAIN."

The "late principal of the Ellington School" in Connecticut in 1839 therefore added his testimony to that quoted by Horace Mann in 1839, referred to later, confirming that the schools by then were turning out some very poor readers. They were obviously very inferior to the vast majority of seven-year-olds that the Scottish Schoolmaster had described in 1828 who could read anything fluently by the time they were seven years old.

Besides the "meaning" materials being printed for school use, ample "meaning" materials were being published for home use, and by respected publishers such as the Ticknor company of Boston. Harvard library has an 1852 copy of Indestructible Reading Book Chiefly in Words of One Syllable (in coated cloth) published by Ticknor, Reed and Fields, Boston. That company published the Indestructible Alphabet, the Indestructible Primer, the Indestructible Spelling Book, and the Indestructible Reading Book. They were combined in the Indestructible Lesson Book: The Four Parts Bound in One Volume. The Indestructible Reading Book carried this note:

"To the teacher: In describing the pictures, many words are used that are too difficult for young beginners. The teacher, in such cases, is requested to help the child by pointing to the object named, or by repeating the word two or three times."

That is obviously a pure "meaning" approach. The material was evidently English, with references to May Day, to a cottage with an "old dame," to a "barrow" and "water pot." It also used the term, "hay cock" instead of hay stack. Ticknor, Reed and Fields were apparently printing for home use in 1852 an English Code I series, also intended for home use. Pity the poor children who were "taught" with it!

The McGuffey readers, which are discussed at length later, also first appeared in the 1830-1860 period. Dugald Stewart's ideas on reading may have influenced McGuffey before he wrote his readers since McGuffey had been a professor of philosophy. In *A History of the McGuffey Readers*, The Burrows Brothers Co.: Cleveland, 1911, Henry H. Vail referred to McGuffey's work as a professor at Miami University, Ohio.

“In 1832, he was transferred to the chair of Mental Philosophy.... He had become well read in philosophy, especially of the Scottish school, Brown being his favorite author.”

If McGuffey knew about Brown “of the Scottish school” of Mental Philosophy in 1832, it appears probable he also knew about Dugald Stewart of that school, and this bears directly on McGuffey's possible philosophy concerning the teaching of beginning reading when he first compiled his readers. Perhaps McGuffey's clear evasion of any method of teaching children to read at that time, beyond repeating “whole words,” in his 1830's readers came from such a contact, since Stewart, as quoted by Keagy, disapproved of reading without “meaning.”

McGuffey's 1836-1838 sight-word readers prospered in America's spreading government schools because they fitted the prevailing educational theory. That theory was that children should learn to read by “meaning.” However, William H. McGuffey (or possibly his publisher) must very soon have had a change in attitude concerning beginning reading, because McGuffey's brother, Alexander H. McGuffey, almost immediately afterwards, in 1838, wrote the spelling book of the series, which clearly recommended in a lesson near the end of the speller that children should learn to spell BEFORE beginning the First Reader. (Presumably, he meant their thin 1836 Eclectic Primer teaching the alphabet was to be used jointly with the beginning pages of their speller.) This was a clear endorsement of sound, and not meaning, for beginners.

If the speller had been used first as recommended, it turned the whole McGuffey series into a “sound” approach to reading, the content of which is superior even today. However, and unfortunately, Alexander H. McGuffey followed the lead of those spellers competing with Webster's after about 1815, and used an analytic phonics key at the top of each page derived from Walker's approach for children to use in sounding out words. This awkward key required two comparison steps for its use. By contrast, Webster's original synthetic phonics key, the spellings of which children memorized, required no comparison. It was the spelling of the word itself which provided its sound, and no comparison to other words was necessary. As a result of this defective key, and because of some other weaknesses, Alexander McGuffey's speller rates only a Code 7, and not a Code 10. (The entire original McGuffey 1836-1838 series can be obtained from Mott Media, Milford, Michigan, in a very high-quality reproduction. However, the reproduction dropped the hyphen to show words broken up into syllables that had been present in parts of the lower level selections.)

By 1840, the normal schools and education meetings were recommending the use of “meaning” and the dropping of spellers at the beginning level. Spelling books as a beginning step had passed out of general use before 1836, so it is unlikely that much use was made of the 1838 McGuffey speller as the introduction to reading. Like the Sanders spellers and all the rest, the McGuffey speller would have been used at upper grade levels.

#### The 1826 Switch From “Sound” to “Meaning” Was Essentially Completed Before 1840

The publishing record demonstrates that the cut-off date for the switch from “sound” to “meaning” had, indeed, been 1826. Except for Elias Longley's Pitman print, Grigg & Elliot's Pennsylvania materials, the apparently largely unknown Lovell 1855 material, and the lingering use of the spelling book for

beginners in isolated areas, the use of “meaning” to teach beginning reading in America remained almost completely unchallenged until after 1860. The same change from “sound” to “meaning” had occurred about the same time in Great Britain. Therefore, it is obvious from looking at beginning reading materials after 1826 that “sound” for beginning readers in the English language was almost dead not long after 1830.

Furthermore, the record shows clearly that the demise of “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading was the result of hard work by activists. Change-agents had produced large numbers of “meaning”-approach textbooks for beginners starting in 1826, but first those new textbooks had to be helped in finding their way into the schools and had to be helped in driving out materials like Webster’s “sound” speller from the beginning reading level. Cited earlier was the “approved” list of textbooks in Arkansas in 1846, which is one indication of such “help.” The approved list included large copies of the United States Primer. That was almost certainly Cooledege’s sight-word material, discussed earlier. Cooledege intended the United States Primer to be used by beginners as the first book, and Cooledege was publishing that sight-word book for beginners at the same time that Cooledege was the official publisher of the Webster speller!

The activist drive to install government education and to switch from “sound” to “meaning” in reading had begun with the founding of the American Journal of Education in 1826 in Boston. As early as 1828, only two years later, a pamphlet published in Vermont demonstrated the massive influence of change-agents on the choice of new textbooks for schools. A copy of that pamphlet is now in the U. S. Department of Education Library in Washington, D. C. The pamphlet demonstrated that Webster’s formerly best-selling “sound-method” speller for beginners was being massively replaced at that early date by the “meaning-method” Franklin Primer only two years after the Franklin Primer had been published, by the “meaning-method” Worcester Primer less than two years after it had been published, and by the “meaning-method” The Child’s Primer or First Book for Primary Schools by Jonathan Lamb, called the Lamb Primer in the pamphlet. Lamb’s book had just been published at the time the pamphlet was printed on October 28, 1828 and Lamb’s primer was being added to the list of textbooks that had been approved for the state of Vermont the previous June. (The Lamb text actually carries a copyright date of November 4, 1828, so the copyrights at that time apparently followed publication.) The Vermont pamphlet demonstrated that even at upper grades Webster’s speller was being forced out because other spellers were named on the approved list but Webster’s enormously famous speller was omitted.

The pamphlet also showed that new change-agent “meaning-method” reading materials for very young children just past the beginning stage were being installed in the schools in 1828. Previously, children had moved from the reading selections in Webster’s widely used “sound-method” speller right into parts of the Bible. Now the book to be used immediately after the new “meaning-method” primers” was to be something like Leavitt’s Easy Lessons written by Joshua Leavitt in 1823, or the Boston Reading Lessons, copyrighted on March 22, 1828. Boston Reading Lessons had been copyrighted only a few months before the Vermont meeting in June which selected the approved textbooks, including the latter two books. Boston Reading Lessons for Primary Schools, the full title, consisted of stories with morals, and some sections were horrid and upsetting. This has often been true of change-agent materials for little children. Yet an 1830 edition published by Richardson and Lord of Boston, who also were publishing Pierpont’s widely used readers, said that before that date the Boston Reading Lessons had been adopted by the Boston Primary School Committee and “many other schools in various parts of the country.” Therefore, Vermont was obviously not alone in adopting the objectionable text almost immediately after its publication in 1828, which certainly suggests a widespread net of change-agent influence.

The Vermont pamphlet proves that the state-wide promotion of change-agent textbooks was made legally possible (and was undoubtedly financed) by the same Vermont legislation that formally

established Vermont's "government schools." As elsewhere, the "meaning-method" to teach beginning reading had arrived in Vermont piggy-back on the brand-new "government schools."

The pamphlet is entitled Vermont Board of School Commissioners Report - 1828, - L 208.B5 1828. On the inside title page appears Report of the Board of Commissioners for Common Schools, Submitted to the Legislature of the State of Vermont, "October 28, Woodstock. Printed by Rufus Colton, Ordered to be Printed and Circulated to Each School District in the State." It reads in part:

"In obedience to the regulations of the act, entitled, 'An Act, to Provide for the Support of Common Schools,' passed November 9, 1827, the Commissioners of Common Schools respectively report, that a meeting of the board was holden at Montpelier, in June last, to take into consideration the several subjects which came within its scope, and powers and duties. At that time, the Commissioners, after as full an examination as circumstances would allow, of a considerable number of books received from different parts of the country, were induced to propose to the superintending committees in the several towns, and other people generally, the following list of books as suitable and proper, in their opinion, to be used in the common schools in this state - to wit: For Young Pupils - Franklin Primer, Worcester's Primer: - Spelling Books - Marshall's Spelling Book, Hazen's do. Emerson's National do: - Reading Books - Leavitt's Easy Lessons, Boston Reading Lessons, Pierpont's National Reader, Murray's English Reader, New Testament, without note or comment: Geography - Goodrich's Outlines of Modern Geography, Woodbridge's Geography: - English Grammar - Murray's Grammar, Nutmeg's Grammar, Greenleaf's Grammar Simplified: History - Goodrich's History of the United States, Hale's do., Whelpy's Compend, Tyler's Elements of History, Worcester's do. - Arithmetic - Smith's Practical and Mental Arithmetic, Adams' New Arithmetic, Thompson's New Arithmetic.

"The above list was published in all, or most, of the newspapers in the state. The Commissioners have since deemed it proper to add to the same (For Young Pupils) Lamb's Primer which is now published.

"The duty of the commissioners in this respect is merely advisory. They are directed 'to propose a list of school books from which they shall advise the superintending committees to select the books to be used in the common schools of their respective towns.' In making the selection above stated, they were governed principally by two considerations - that most of the said books [were] already in extensive use, and might be easily obtained in the different sections of the state, and that they were well adapted, in design and execution, to the purposes of common school education.... It is scarcely necessary to remark, that many of the school-books which are more or less used, but which are not included in the above list, possess no inconsiderable degree of merit. But it was necessary to make selection, and, moreover, the superintending committees are at full liberty to exercise their own judgement in recommending books to their progressive towns.... "

It went on to say that the commissioners advised the reprinting of the fourth section of the school act which authorized superintending committees in each town to choose the books for the schools. This local "authorization" which was firmly based on state power also was monumental, since obviously no such "official" state power had existed previously. The first reference I have ever seen to any such "official" textbook lists in America had been, not surprisingly, in connection with the establishment of the city of Boston's "government" primary schools in 1818, ten years previously. The city of Boston's "government" primary schools, which Blumenfeld's work demonstrated were totally unnecessary because of pre-existing private facilities, were the fruit of change-agent activity.

The pamphlet confirmed widespread opposition to such state control, saying on page 6:

“But so generally diffused through the great mass of the community is the sense of personal, as well as political, independence, and so [great] is the jealousy of arbitrary power, which is almost instinctive in the popular mind, that the attempt, however well intended, to dictate and prescribe the books to be used in our common schools, is regarded by many as an invasion of the right of private judgment, and, consequently, as incompatible with the genius of our free institutions.... the school act, passed at the last session, was, in its most important provisions, an experiment....”

The Vermont pamphlet also showed that, even as early as 1828, the change-agents were controlling the use of geography texts, as well as of reading texts, and probably of books in other subjects. Other geographies than those authorized in the pamphlet had been available before that date and had been in use over a wide area. Yet by that date, as the above entries suggest, the earlier works had been replaced. The geography by “Woodbridge” above is apparently by the same William Channing Woodbridge whose geographies are listed in *Early American Textbooks*. William Channing Woodbridge was an ex-associate of Gallaudet in his school for the deaf and was one of the editors of the *American Journal of Education*, called *American Annals of Education* under his editorship. The geography by Goodrich listed in this Vermont publication was not written by the publisher, Samuel Goodrich, but by Rev. C. A. Goodrich. Although not on this list, an 1828 geography was written by Jessie Olney, who is discussed elsewhere and who is shown elsewhere as associated in some degree with that most active of change agents, Holbrook. Olney’s geography was in wide use for many years, so it also most probably was included on the next “official” Vermont list.

Therefore, in this brief 1828 widely influential document, appear references to the following established “meaning-reading-method” texts or change-agent personalities: the Franklin Primer, the Worcester Primer, Lamb’s primer, Leavitt’s *Easy Lessons*, the Boston Reading Lessons, and the ex-teacher of the deaf in Gallaudet’s school, former college classmate of Holbrook, and later editor of the change-agent *American Annals of Instruction* (formerly the *American Journal of Education*), William Channing Woodbridge. Yet, notably absent from the list was the “sound-reading-method” and once-ubiquitous Webster’s speller! The change-agents were obviously in control at high levels in the state of Vermont. They were also obviously among the enemies of Webster’s “sound-method” speller, such as Lyman Cobb in New York whose public attacks on the Webster speller have been discussed previously. Yet the Vermont change-agents were wary of potential public resentment concerning their attempts at controlling textbooks and their dumping of Webster’s once unchallenged and enormously respected speller. This is the apparent reason the change-agents pretended an open-mindedness and reasonableness that the evidence suggests was just so much fakery.

Gallaudet’s *Mother’s Primer* of 1835 was apparently in relatively wide use almost immediately after its publication, since it had a seventh edition by 1840, as shown by a copy held by the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts. Even as late as the 1911-1913 *Cyclopedia of Education* in his article on Gallaudet, W. S. Monroe referred to the *Mother’s Primer* as having been “popular.”

As Samuel Blumenfeld pointed out in *The New Illiterates*, William Scott Gray apparently had Gallaudet’s deaf-mute method on which to draw to use as a model for Gray’s 1930 “Dick and Jane” readers, and so must Arthur I. Gates have had Gallaudet’s method to use as a model for his 1930 silent reading workbooks. Yet, largely because of the McGuffey Myth, it is still generally unknown today that American reading instruction history has been influenced profoundly ever since Gallaudet’s time by the deaf-mute method of mental comparison of previously memorized sight words to new words, in order to record the new words to memory. From about 1830 until the early twentieth century, and then again after 1930, most American beginning books for hearing children taught whole sight words. They then often



compared new words to previously learned words with similar spellings, which usually but not necessarily also had a similar sound.

In 1966, Mitford Mathews resurrected the fact that there had been a reading instruction “war” in Boston by the late 1830’s over the use of sight-words. Dr. Mathews’ 1966 book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, University of Chicago Press, made it evident that the reading “history” as normally given is very awry, because until he wrote that book almost no one living knew anything about the real facts on American reading instruction history. Mathews has some very illuminating comments in his remarkable book concerning some real opposition that the change-agents received in the Boston area because of their use of pure sight words. Yet Mathews discounted Gallaudet’s influence, since he mistakenly believed that, because Gallaudet eventually taught children the alphabet, his method could not be a true sight-word method, which it very definitely was.

However, Samuel Blumenfeld was the first to identify the reading method of Gallaudet as a pure deaf-mute method, and the true source of our current reading problems, which Blumenfeld discussed at length in his book, *The New Illiterates* (1973, 1988: The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho). Blumenfeld’s critically important research on Gallaudet and his period is also briefly covered in Appendix E of *Teaching Reading* by Charles C. Walcutt, Joan Lamport, and Glenn McCracken (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York: 1974). Blumenfeld also found and reproduced in his book an illuminating 1844 essay, “Modes of Teaching Children to Read,” by Samuel Stillman Greene (1810-1883), Principal of the Phillips Grammar School in Boston. It is a priceless addition to the history of the sight-word controversy in Boston.

Mathews was a firm supporter of “sound” in beginning reading instruction, and had what he called “sidewalk seminars,” which were informal talks with Dr. William Scott Gray while they were standing on the sidewalks at the University of Chicago where they both taught. However, Mathews simply did not have the resources available to sort out the whole ugly story, but he knew there was, indeed, “something rotten” in academia’s “Denmark” concerning the history of reading instruction. Mathews should receive the credit as the first “revisionist historian” of reading instruction. It was he who focused attention on the fact that there had been a major conflict in Boston concerning teaching by sight-words and “meaning,” although he did not realize that what was being promoted was simply an inferior method for teaching deaf-mutes.

Mathews wrote, on pages 67-68:

“Of much more influence, probably, [than Worcester and Gallaudet’s primers] were the lectures on reading delivered by locally prominent people before groups of teachers and school administrators. One of these, worthy of much more space than we can afford it here, was the so-called Prize Essay delivered by Thomas H. Palmer before the American Institute of Instruction in August, 1837. The title of this lecture was “On the Evils of the Present System of Primary Education.”

“Palmer was apparently not a teacher, but he had served on a committee that examined teachers in his home town of Pittsford, Vermont. In the discharge of his duties he had visited many district schools and had been impressed by the inferior quality of the reading.” [Ed.: It was only what Palmer claimed was inferior!]

““In the course of these visits I was much struck with the heavy, dull, vacant countenances of the pupils, the cause of which quickly appeared. For, when the reading classes took their places, it was easy to perceive, that the mind was no farther engaged in the exercise than attention to the pronunciation of the words required. As to comprehension of the meaning, the language might

almost as well have been Greek, Arabic, or Chinese, as English. An inveterate habit of mechanical reading is formed, (if reading, indeed, that can be called, which is nothing but a mere utterance of sounds) which not one in fifty can ever overcome. Here lies the grand impediment to the attainment of knowledge, the impassable barrier to self-education....

“The pupils commenced with the spelling-book, from which they learned the alphabet. Next came their a, b, ab, e, b, eb, & c. followed by spelling lessons of words of one syllable, in columns, without any connexion. Spelling words of two syllables came next in order. All this, you will perceive, is a mere affair of memory, in which the reason and judgment of the child are never called into action. For months, nay, in many instances, for years, he is occupied by barren sounds alone. He is taught to connect them, it is true with certain characters; but of their use, viz, to convey the ideas of others to his mind, he as yet knows nothing....”

Note that Palmer had just implicitly confirmed that the great majority of children beginning with the old-fashioned spelling books had been able to pass from such pure “sound” instruction to reading independently only a few months after beginning school, which is just about what the Scottish Schoolmaster implied. Therefore, Palmer in 1837 had also confirmed the truth of that sentence quoted previously that had been contained in many beginning readers such as Lindlay Murray’s before 1826: within months, not years, after beginning instruction, children being taught to read by “sound” were expected to be able to read well.

The probability is, however, that Palmer’s 1837 prize essay was only used as a mopping-up operation by the change-agents who had been promoting the switch to “meaning” in beginning reading for at least eleven years. Palmer certainly was not saying anything new or startling! Long before 1837, the change-agents had been saying the same things in so many publications, and long before 1837 the change-agents had succeeded in promoting that switch from “sound” to “meaning” in many, and perhaps most, schools. It seems probable that the “experts” in the American Institute of Instruction who awarded the “prize” to Palmer were such change-agents, particularly considering the fact that the American Institute of Instruction was founded by Josiah Holbrook only seven years earlier. It seems obvious that by awarding their “prize” to Palmer’s essay, Holbrook’s American Institute of Instruction was only confirming that the speech’s content was American Institute of Instruction official policy.

Blumenfeld referred (page 125) to the founding of the American Institute of Instruction:

“Holbrook had also called a teachers’ convention in conjunction with the Lyceum meeting [in 1830 in Boston]. Nearly three hundred teachers and other friends of popular education converged on Boston. At that convention a vote was passed ‘recommending that a general association of persons, engaged and interested in the business of instruction, be formed.’ The result was the American Institute of Instruction, the first academic organization of its kind in America.... The American Institute of Instruction was also the first organized manifestation of a national academic establishment, and of course it was dominated by the Harvard-Unitarian proponents of public education.”

Holbrook’s American Institute of Instruction was therefore promoting the establishment of government schools, so it might have been anticipated that it would also promote the siamese twin of the government schools’ movement: the switch from “sound” to “meaning” in beginning reading instruction. That the Institute awarded their official “prize” to Palmer for his essay is hardly remarkable.

To continue with Mathew’s excerpts (pages 68-73) from Palmer’s essay (but omitting many portions quoted by Mathews):

“What was called reading was now introduced, which is in no respect different from what preceded, save that there was some attempt at meaning in the arrangement of the words, but as the chief object of the compiler seemed to be the collection of words easy to be pronounced, with reference to the capacity of the pupil, his efforts were as mechanical as ever. Indeed, the manner of reciting these lessons would have rendered nugatory all attempts of the compiler to carry sense as well as sound to the mind of the child.... Truly, a dependence on the spelling-book or dictionary, “is trusting to a broken reed, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce him.” (Kings 18:21).

“The chief distinctions between the old mode of teaching reading and the one I recommend, consist, 1st, in commencing with words and phrases, instead of the names of syllables....”

“Another lecture that must have had considerable influence was that of the Reverend Cyrus Peirce given on April 15, 1843, before the same organization [American Institute of Instruction]. He had been the Principal of the Normal School at Lexington and had taught advanced grades. He was asked to address the gathering without having had time to prepare a paper, so he spoke at considerable length.

“Peirce had apparently never had any experience teaching first graders, for what he said has the tone of one who ‘would do’ thus and so.....”

“In teaching the child to read, he advised that the beginning be made with words, not letters, printed on the blackboard. These should be such as, combined, would form an easy sentence. He singled out for special praise the book prepared by Miss Peabody, in which ‘you will find full illustration of the whole method with words and sentences.’...”

“Peirce was in error in claiming Mr. Wood of the Sessional School in Edinburgh as a practitioner of the word method, although the work of John Wood was certainly well known among schoolmen at that time. Wood himself had in 1828 written a book on what he was doing then. This book was favorably reviewed in Blackwood’s Magazine early in 1829, (footnote: Blackwood’s Magazine XXV (January-June, 1829, 106-34), and re-issued in Boston in 1830, where more favorable reviews of it appeared. It had been advertised among the books teachers should by all means have in the Connecticut Common School Journal (footnote: See Connecticut Common School Journal II (1839-40) 251-53. for an excellent review. In the Journal (III, 48), there is an advertisement of the book.)”

Mathews quoted from Wood’s chapter on the alphabet in Wood’s 1828 book, in which Wood said he taught children the alphabet first. However, Mathews, like so many others, had lost the real significance of what Wood was doing. Although Wood still taught the alphabet, as had been done for millenia with the syllable “sound” method, Wood’s emphasis was totally on word “meaning” and not on syllable “sound.” Mathews had never taught primary reading and so obviously did not understand that Wood’s method had introduced a catastrophic shift, moving totally from “sound” to “meaning.” Therefore, Mathews gave his apparent blessing to any subsequent “word” methods like Wood’s which taught the alphabet, and only rejected pure “word” methods, of which there were very few. Incredibly, Mathews even thought Gallaudet’s materials were all right, since Gallaudet eventually taught the alphabet, after beginning with whole sight-words.

The footnote Mathews gave for Wood’s book was Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School (5th Edinburgh ed., 1840) p. 181. Mathews also referred to Peirce’s mention of the Borough School in London, and gave this interesting information in a footnote on page 73:

“For information about the Borough School, see Paul Monroe, *Cyclopedia of Education* (New York, 1911-13), I, 416. Alexander D. Bache visited the school; see his Report, pp. 174-75. References to the school are in the *Connecticut Common School Journal*, I, 100 ff, 268 ff. It was the model school and training establishment of the British and Foreign School Society.”

Mathews’ book, despite its omissions and unconscious blind spots, remains an invaluable historical source.

### The Price that Was Paid for the 1826 Switch to “Meaning”

It is almost unknown today that an enormous degree of reading failure as a result of Gallaudet’s non-phonetic approach existed through much of the nineteenth century. One proof of the rampant disabilities is the appalling spelling of school board officials of the period. Virtually all would have attended common schools, and spelling failure is the best indicator of reading failure.

The handwritten board of education minutes which were written by different men for Lyndhurst, New Jersey, from 1873 until before 1905 are one such source. (Its name was then Union Township.) The minutes contain such misspellings as “puting, oweing, preasant, wheather, exceding, proagrames, pianno, enroled, their (for there), voteing, exausted” and “comeing.” My favorite is an entry by Mr. X whose reputation for competence in areas other than spelling was high. I know that Mr. X was a very respected man because, much later on in the 1930’s, my father was a member of the board and always spoke very well of Mr. X, who was a very old man by that time. There is actually a kind of splendor to intelligent Mr. X’s 1893 misspellings (although I omit his name out of consideration to his possible descendants!):

“Thair being know outhur business Meeting Adjorned.”

This particular book of board minutes had never been filled up before another one was started. A thrifty principal in Lincoln School therefore had her “bad boys,” who did such things as playing marbles in school or getting on the trolley car at recess, write letters of apology to her on its empty pages. She obviously did not prompt them on spellings, as of the six boys who wrote letters of apology on November 2, 1905, for having played truant the day before, five spelled truant “creatively.” Yet, taken as a whole, the “bad boys” writing the letters of apology in her book, most of whom would have been eight to fourteen, spelled considerably more accurately than the school board clerks for the previous thirty years. Furthermore, many of them were from families in which Italian, not English, was spoken at home. An emphasis on phonetic spelling had returned to the schools after the late 1880’s, and the children’s entries showed that effect.

Another good source for letters of school board officials of that period which show spectacularly bad spelling is *The School Bulletin*, published in Syracuse, New York from 1874 until December, 1920. The *School Bulletin* was a particularly fine publication which received a prize at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair and should not to be confused with the activists’ *The School Journal*. Its publisher, C. W. Bardeen, prepared bound copies for libraries, so it is disturbing that no complete set is still in existence. Bardeen published in Syracuse from 1874 to 1920. Yet the Syracuse Public Library has no copies of *The School Bulletin* at all. Syracuse University was given unbound copies that were found in the cellar of Bardeen’s former building in Syracuse only about thirty years ago. The university therefore now has a large proportion of the issues, but what is the story concerning the issues that the university and the Syracuse city library might be expected to have had since 1920? Bardeen said in his last issue of December, 1920:

“To the historian, (*The School Bulletin*’s) greatest service will seem its minute recording of educational happenings in this great state for nearly half a century. They have been careful,

detailed, comprehensive.... Libraries that wish to have this history complete may still obtain complete files for the entire forty-six years or for any period.”

It would be surprising, indeed, if Bardeen had not offered complete sets to the library and university in his own city in 1920! Yet neither had copies when the unbound ones turned up in Bardeen’s old cellar some forty years later. Did the city library and the university once have copies, and were they discarded? If so, why were such unique, historical materials discarded when so much else was kept? The fate of *The School Bulletin* in all our libraries in the United States, NONE of which have complete sets, is one more indication that “education history” is really just a black hole.

As can be seen from the copies of *The School Bulletin* which survived, letters from school board administrators before 1900 contained appalling spelling. The cause for the bad spelling of the school board administrators appearing in *The School Bulletin* was the dropping of “sound” from reading instruction beginning in 1826. By 1840, true phonics had disappeared from primers. Primers had become simple sight-word books, on which the children were to recite the letters of the new sight words as they were recording them to memory (see, aye, tee, CAT). Obviously, the mere naming of the letters gives no clue to the sound of the word.

This oral exercise of pronouncing the letters in front of the students’ eyes was called “spelling on the book.” Beginners were not usually required to memorize these spellings, but only the sight words. However, when beginners were occasionally required to memorize certain spellings in their reading books, it was called “spelling off the book.” This meant they were to recite the letters in a given word orally, not to write them. We are still familiar today with such oral spelling from “spelling bees.” However, written spelling tests, as we know them, were not the usual practice. The “see-aye-tee - CAT” method was called the ABC method instead of the former ABC syllable method. Phonics by 1840 was almost dead in the primary grades. After 1870, even the reciting of letter names in sight words was dropped. The method was then simply called the “word” method, which is, of course, what it had really been ever since 1826.

By 1839, the damage which had started in 1826 had become evident. Children had ceased learning the sounds of syllables by “spelling” syllables, and were instead learning the meaning of whole words, not their sounds, by “spelling” whole words. According to the *Britannica Dictionary*, a human generation is usually considered to be 30 years, so a half-generation would be 15 years. The following comments from 1839 refer to school children from a half-generation before, or from about 1825, which was just before the 1826 switch. It is meaningful that the comments came from Horace Mann, himself, in his *Second Annual Report of the Board of Education*. The following quotation is from the last page of *The Common School Journal*, Boston, Vol. 1, No. 20, 1839:

“...with scarcely a single exception in the whole State, the scholars are kept in spelling classes, or they spell daily from their reading lessons, from the time of their earliest combination of letters, up to the time of leaving school; and yet, if testimony, derived from a thousand sources, and absolutely uniform, can be relied on, there is a Babel-like diversity in the spelling of our language.

“It is impossible to ascertain with any considerable degree of precision the per centage of words in ordinary use, which the children are unable to spell; but it seems to be the general opinion of the most competent observers, that the schools have retrograded within the last generation or half generation, in regard to orthography. Nor is the condition of the schools better in regard to reading, as will be hereafter shown.”

A half generation before 1839 (15 years) would bring the beginning of the decline in spelling and reading to 1825, only a year before the definitive change in methods in 1826. However, as has been discussed, the “meaning” philosophy in opposition to “sound” had been brewing and gathering support since about 1817, showing up in some spellers and some reading books not meant for beginners.

In the next issue of November 1, 1839, No. 21, Mann’s report was continued from the last number. He said:

“In this State, where the schools are open to all, an inability to spell the commonly used words in our language, justly stamps the deficient mind with the stigma of illiteracy. Notwithstanding the intrinsic difficulty of mastering our orthography, there must be some defect in the manner of teaching it; - otherwise, this daily attention of the children to the subject, from the commencement to the end of their school-going life, would make them adepts in the mystery of spelling, except in cases of mental incapacity.”

Mann recognized a severe spelling problem by 1839. It had developed because children had been taught to spell meaning-bearing sight-words instead of sound-bearing syllables. To this day, to witness the difference in spelling achievement of phonically-trained spellers compared to sight-word trained spellers is an astonishing experience. The highly reliable Ayres’ spelling scale of 1915 obtained on a phonically-trained school population compared to the highly reliable Iowa spelling scales of the 1950’s obtained on a sight-word-trained school population demonstrates statistically the absolutely ENORMOUS difference in achievement between the two groups. (To repeat, the deaf-mute-method readers did not arrive until 1930.)

As will be shown, Mann curiously kept hammering on the evils of the “syllable” method for beginning readers. Yet the syllable method had been almost banished by 1839 by pushing the spelling book with its syllabary into the upper grades. If a syllabary were present at all in the primers which had replaced the spelling book for beginners, it was usually so mangled as to be almost meaningless.

Mann’s later publisher of *The Common School Journal*, William B. Fowle, made the following comment in the May, 1842, Boston “Preface” to his book, *The Common School Speller*, meant for upper graders. In it, he said that the spelling book by 1842 should no longer be used to teach reading, but only spelling. However, also notice his phrase, “...as society advances.” These Pied Pipers leading civilization over the brink refer to their march as “society advancing,” which, in a wry way, is technically true:

“...the almost infinite variety of reading books adapted to the capacities of children, and more appropriate than the lessons of any spelling book can pretend to be, authorizes us, as society advances, to separate these branches of study. Elocution is more intimately connected with reading than reading is with orthography; but the advanced state of instruction in this community has already said that reading books must not be encumbered with rhetorical rules. The author is aware that there may be a difference of opinion in regard to the omission of judicious reading lessons, (if there be any of this description,) in spelling books for the use of children just beginning to read; but he thinks there can be no doubt as to the propriety of omitting them in spelling books designed for classes which have already learned to read, and nine tenths of the classes that use spelling books in our common schools are of this description.”

Fowle implied that children were not learning to read in spellers but in readers by 1842. He confirmed that the vast sales of spelling books like Webster’s which was then reportedly selling about a million copies a year were meant overwhelmingly for upper graders, since he said “...nine tenths of the classes that use spelling books in our common schools are of this description.”

Fowle was an expert in good standing: “Late Principal of the Female Monitorial School in Boston, and Author of the Common School Grammar, Primary Reader, Bible Reader, and Other School Books, in French and English.” Before he was a principal of a monitorial school, Fowle had been an instructor in a monitorial school. Monitorial schools largely dispensed with the need for teachers. The instructor would give a lesson to a group of children, who in turn gave the same lesson to other children, who themselves could instruct further children. Theoretically, vast numbers of children could be educated at little cost. Both Joseph Lancaster and Andrew Bell of England are credited with inventing the monitorial school idea, but it actually dates back at least as far as the eighteenth century, and by its very nature must have been used since ancient times. How efficient Fowle’s school was is not known, but the method asks too much of little children, so his comments on what reading methods worked in his school cannot have much value. Fowle said in his preface:

“...any system for noting the pronunciation of words in a spelling book, if made in the expectation of its being used by children, is made in vain, and the capacity of the child is over-rated....An intimate acquaintance with the schools of Boston, from the primary to the highest, as a pupil, teacher, and overseer; the opinion of every disinterested instructor with whom he is acquainted; a careful study of every spelling book, from that of Dr. Watts to those of our times; and the actual use of the most popular in his own school, where the alphabet, as well as the higher branches, was always taught; - these circumstances have satisfied him that no very young children, and very few children of any age, can understand or make use of any system for marking the pronunciation.”

This is blustering nonsense. The kind of synthetic phonic pronunciation markings Webster used so successfully was “reinvented” in different forms by Dr. Edwin Leigh in 1864 and Rebecca Pollard about 1887. Both of these programs then were spectacularly successful in teaching thousands upon thousands of little first graders how to read new words independently by noting pronunciation markings. (Yet both the Leigh and Pollard “sound” programs were hounded out of the government schools by “experts” pushing “meaning,” as will be discussed.) What is amusing about Fowle’s 1842 comments are that they contradicted his very own 1824 comments! Fowle had said, in the preface to his 1824 book, *The Rational Guide to Reading and Orthography*, in which he taught sounds by analogy, which is a system for “noting the pronunciation of words” (from an 1828 edition):

“Some easier reading lessons have been added, at the request of the Committee of Primary Schools. In dividing the words into syllables the author endeavoured to make such a division as would lead children, (who usually study the spelling lessons before they have heard the words pronounced,) to a right pronunciation....”

That was a clear admission that in 1824 primary grade children in Boston were expected to and did sound out printed words for themselves before they heard them pronounced, by using phonics and syllabication. In Fowle’s 1824 book, after the complete open-and-closed-syllable syllabary, and after demonstrating all the vowel sounds by samples, Fowle said:

“As these sounds are the key of our language, they cannot be too thoroughly known; and, in the following lessons, if the child is at a loss, he must be referred back to these. Great care should be taken not to help the child until he has tried to help himself.”

It was a small step from teaching vowel sounds by analogy to teaching them by markings. Fowle conveniently forgot the fact that children in 1824 could sound out words by themselves, if they truly had been taught how to do so, and that he, himself, had acknowledged that fact in print! However, the 1842 spelling book that he wrote downgrading “sound” for beginning readers, saying in effect that little children were incapable of sounding out words, was, not surprisingly, approved by Horace Mann.

Mann continued his remarks on page 20 of the Common School Journal:

“...But what is there in the alphabet or in monosyllables, to stimulate this curiosity or to gratify it? The senseless combinations of letters into ba, be, bi, bo, bu, deaden this curiosity. And after it has been pretty effectually extinguished, so that, by the further aid of the spelling book, the child can perform the feat of speaking without thinking - as circus horses are taught to trot without advancing, - then let him be carried into reading lessons, where there are but few words he has ever seen or heard before, and where the subject is wholly beyond the reach of his previous attainments, and if by this process, the very faculty of thought be not subjugated, it must be because the child is incorrigibly strong-minded. These are the most efficient means of stultification, and if they do not succeed, the experiment must be given up....

“First and chiefest, in reading, let the lesson be understood; its words, its phrases, its connections; its object, if it have any object; if not, it is not proper for a reading lesson. Every word and sentence to which no meaning is attached is an enemy, lying in ambush.”

Mann was anything but logical. While promoting “reading for meaning,” he nevertheless, on pages 26 and 27, praised and quoted from an 1839 book which contradicted his position. The book was written by the Rev. Emerson Davis, of Westfield, Massachusetts, entitled, *The Teacher Taught, or The Principles and Modes of Teaching*.

“The time has been, when very particular attention was paid to the sounds of the vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants. I have heard scholars twelve years old analyze words of two or more syllables selected promiscuously from a reading lesson, giving to each letter its sound according to the common pronunciation and correctly fixing the accent...

“More attention should be given to orthography, to the simple and combined sounds of letters. In very many schools, and I fear in most of them, this subject is entirely neglected. I have made inquiries of many young people in regard to this matter, and have not been so fortunate as to find one who ever received any such instruction....

“Our spelling books ought to give more prominence to this subject; they ought to arrange the sounds of the vowels and consonants in tables printed in as large type as the spelling lessons, and illustrated by plain examples. There are some spelling books in which the different sounds of the letters are not even mentioned; in some the information is huddled into the preface, that part of the book which is seldom read, either by teachers or scholars. I know of no book, in which it holds that prominent place that it must before it will receive the attention that its importance demands.

“Some may be ready to say that this subject is too refined and intricate to be taught in common schools with any success. It will be of no use to dispute with an objector. The question can be brought to the test of experiment. I was taught the sounds of letters in the common school and understood them. I have taught the same to many children in the common school, and I believe they understood them, and were interested in the study.”

Recognition of the drop in spelling caused by abandoning the syllable “sound” method spellers appeared in an 1863 speller with a “meaning” emphasis. Published over thirty years after the switch in methods, it nevertheless acknowledged that there had, indeed, been a change (which acknowledgment was very, very unusual at that time). The comments appeared in the preface to Willson’s *Primary Speller*,



a sight-word “meaning” speller by Marcius Willson, published by Harper & Brother in New York in 1863:

“...There is no doubt that pupils, by a great amount of drill exercise in oral spelling, may learn to spell, by mere repetition, almost any quantity of words of whose meaning they are totally ignorant. This was the old system of teaching spelling; and, with the prominence given to it in the exercises of the schoolroom, it did make good spellers; and, where it has been wholly abandoned - where spelling has been taught only in connection with reading, or definitions, or dictation exercises - good spelling in our schools has diminished in an alarming degree. It has been our aim, in the present work, not only to retain the advantages of the old system, but also to remedy, as far as possible, its great defect, as exhibited in what have been very appropriately called the “nonsense columns” of the old books. To this end we have adopted, in a majority of the spelling lessons, such a natural grouping of the words in columns as shall express their meaning by their appropriate use; and we think this end has been attained as effectually as though the words had been selected from regular reading lessons.... Children very rapidly learn the meaning of words by their use - and this is Nature’s method; but the mind requires a considerable degree of maturity, and the knowledge of a large store of words, before definitions can be of much utility.... There are the same objections to words grouped as synonymous; for although a pupil may be told that three words have nearly the same meaning, yet, if he is ignorant of the meaning or use of all three, what does it profit him?”

However, throughout much of the nineteenth century in America, heavy phonetic elocutionary drill in reading started at fourth grade, and phonetic drill in spelling started in the fourth year from the 1830’s until the 1870’s. Therefore, failures in primary grades because of the sight-word methods were alleviated to some extent for many of the children who remained in school for four or more years. Nineteenth century children who remained in school long enough to get some real phonics are paralleled by those few children today, taught by the sight-word approach, who are lucky enough finally to be taught true phonics.

In summary, the record indicates that “sound” was replaced by “meaning” in beginning reading materials and in teaching methods in schools starting in 1826. The switch was completed in most places not long after 1830, and by 1840 even the fact that there had been such a change was almost forgotten. The record demonstrates that the move from “sound” to “meaning” for beginning readers resulted in a sharp drop in spelling (and therefore reading) ability at upper grades. The move from “sound” to “meaning” had been the result of hard work by the same group of activists on both sides of the ocean who were promoting government schools.



## **PART 5**

**The Opposition to a Return to “Sound” in the 1860’s.**

**The Resultant “Meaning” Materials.**

**Pollard Failed in the 1880’s to Promote Synthetic Phonics,**

**But Spelling Promoted “Sound” by 1890.**

**The Massive Use of “Supplemental Phonics” After 1900 and  
the “Meaning” Opposition.**



## **Chapter 22**

### **The Educational Setting by the 1860's and the Surprising Entry of Alexander Graham Bell on the Scene**

True spellers did remain in use at upper grades after 1826 and still began with the syllabary, (ab, eb, ib, ob,, etc.), but they were no longer meant for beginners. However, even in the upper grades, meaningful practice with the printed syllabary and syllabic oral spelling itself were dropped.

The syllable pages with the “abs” in such spelling books after 1826 were seldom used, even at the fourth grade when such spellers were usually introduced. The fact that such syllable pages were not used is shown by their excellent condition in surviving spellers printed after 1826. Yet, in spelling books surviving from before 1826, the syllable pages are often tattered or missing. Before 1826, the syllable pages became tattered or worn out because little beginners were using them very heavily in learning to read by “sound.”

The dropping of “sound” spellers for beginners, and their replacement by “meaning” primers, had become institutionalized in America by a quarter century or so after 1826. That fact can be demonstrated by the records from four cities: Syracuse, New York City, Boston, and Cambridge, each of which will be considered in turn.

The ABC-syllable method which had previously been used to teach beginning reading from the spellers had been sound-bearing, but the ABC word method which was now being used to teach beginning reading from such readers as Sanders' was meaning-bearing. Therefore, government schools, such as those in Syracuse, New York, Boston, and Cambridge which used readers like Sanders', were producing the same kinds of reading disabilities in children as we see today. The extraordinarily high literacy level of Americans had disappeared after 1826 because the spreading government schools promoted such material as Sanders' which taught beginning reading by “meaning” instead of “sound.”

Sanders books were very widely used. An 1844 edition of Sanders' The School Reader, First Book, copyrighted in 1840 and published by Sage & Brother, Rochester, claimed that more than 2,000,000 of his textbooks had been sold. His series contained five school readers, a spelling book, a book for academies, and two music texts. Since most children never went far in school in those days, most of the 2,000,000 were obviously the lower level books, including the sight-word primer, and many children may never have reached the fourth-grade “speller” level.

The Syracuse, New York, curriculum in 1852, as recorded in their records for that year, specified that Sanders speller, which began like Webster's with the “abs,” and was a great deal like it in every respect, was not to be used till fourth grade. To teach reading in grades one, two, and three, Syracuse was using Sanders' Primary School Primer and Sanders' The School Reader, First Book, which were straight sight-word books.

An entry in an 1872 yearbook indicates that New York City, like Syracuse, had also been using sight-word readers for many years, the Harper “meaning” materials. However, textbook adoptions as in New York were not normally exclusive, since books from many different publishers were often adopted “officially” in various cities. The Year Book for 1872, (I am uncertain of the exact name, possibly Harper's, Barnes' or Publishers and Stationers Weekly Trade Circular) page 45, stated:

“The standard school books published by [Harpers] which for 30 years past were used in the New York public schools were excluded last year by the Tammany ring on account of the persistent attacks upon that corrupt body by the Harpers’ Weekly. Now that the ring is defeated.... these same school commissioners... have restored the books they excluded by a unanimous vote.”

That does not, of course, mean that Harper’s materials were necessarily used exclusively, and it obviously refers to other schoolbooks published by Harper as well as to reading texts. Yet “for 30 years past” would have placed Harper’s books, presumably including some kind of reading books, in the New York City schools from 1842.

What the Harper reading texts may have been which were used for thirty years previously by New York City can only be surmised, but they were almost certainly “meaning” materials, since I have found no reading texts published by Harper which were not “meaning” materials.

After 1860, the reading texts would almost certainly have been Marcius Willson’s widely used Code 1 to Code 3 School and Family Series, published by Harper.

Since Harvard library has an 1860 Harper reprint of an English beginning reading text, it is very possible that Harper had been reprinting that text from England before publishing Willson’s Code 1 to Code 3 materials in 1860. That English Code 3 to Code 5 text was Reading Without Tears, or a Pleasant Mode of Learning to Read, by Mrs. Favel Lee Bevan Mortimer. Harper was still selling Reading Without Tears in 1876, according to the American Catalogue. Therefore, if New York City had been using Harper reading books from long before 1860, the readers may have been earlier reprintings of Reading Without Tears or some similar English “meaning” reprints.

However, if Reading Without Tears and the Willson readers were the kind of actively harmful materials that the New York City schools had been buying for 30 years to teach beginning reading, it is no wonder so many New York City children could not read in the early 1870’s. Contemporary testimony to that fact is referred to later.

The practice of using sight words in the teaching of beginning reading in Syracuse and New York City matched that in Boston. Boston Schools Superintendent John Dudley Philbrick recorded what he found to be the practice in his first inspection of the Boston Primary Schools in 1857. His comments appear in the Boston Annual School Report for 1874, pages 283-285:

“In respect to the initiating of children into the art and mystery of reading, - the teaching of them the elements of the art, the enabling of them to pronounce at sight the words of easy prose or verse, - I found the Primary Schools on my first inspection of them in 1857, in a deplorable condition. The old-fashioned method, by ABC syllables and spelling, had been nominally abolished by the abolition of the usual appliances for teaching it, and it had been so much ridiculed that the teachers were very shy in using it in the presence of visitors. The reading books and charts in the schools were designed for the ‘word-method,’ a method of very limited capabilities.... In recalling the slow and tedious processes by which they brought their pupils up into only semi-fluent reading, I am reminded of what Milton says of an arduous path, -

‘Long is the way,  
And hard, that out of hell leads up to light.’

“All that has been changed, but long and hard has been the road by which the change has been reached: A publishing interest joined hands with old-fogyism in interposing obstacles in the way of progress. But, at length, books and appliances for teaching reading phonically were

introduced, and the teachers were gradually initiated into the phonic method. Then came Dr. Leigh with his ‘pronouncing type,’ the result of years of study and labor, a new and valuable instrumentality for facilitating the teaching of the phonic method. The use of this is now nearly universal in our schools. The phonic method may be taught with ease and success by an expert, without the aid of Leigh’s type, but with it the average teacher will teach the first steps of reading with much greater ease and success.”

Probably the first book that could be used to teach phonics in the Boston schools after the change-over to “meaning” after 1826 was David B. Tower’s *The Gradual Primer or Primary School Enunciator*, first published in 1845 and revised in 1853. It was adopted for the Boston schools on September 2, 1856, and so was supposed to be introduced just about the time Philbrick took over as superintendent by 1857. The intent of the book, however, was to teach elocution to little beginners, not decoding skills, although it would accidentally achieve that end. The Harvard library has two copies with 1853 copyright dates carrying the sub-title, “Boston School Edition” and the pencilled-in dates of 1857 and 1859 for their actual date when printed. The Harvard library also has an edition of 1853 without the sub-title, “Boston School Edition.”

The same year, 1845, that Tower wrote the first version of *The Gradual Primer*, he also first published his *Gradual Speller*. An edition of that spelling book in 1857, published by Sanborn, Bazin and Ellsworth in Boston, contained a “Preface” written in 1845, in which Tower confirmed that the use of the spelling book for beginners was a thing of the past. Therefore, it also confirmed that it took the “experts” less than twenty years, from 1826 to considerably before 1845, totally to change the Massachusetts practices of two hundred years! Tower said in the “Preface” (page 7):

“The Spelling Book was formerly the only text-book used in teaching a child to read. Its place in that respect, is now supplied by Primers and Reading Books expressly adapted to that end, and better suited to the purpose. The Spelling Book now falls into its appropriate sphere of giving the learner the orthography and orthoepy of the language; and it should be confined to these specific objects. Nor is it by any means to be neglected in its proper place; it should go with the pupil through his schooldays, and be the last book to leave his hands.

“December 1, 1845.”

This attitude helps to account for the massive sales of about a million copies a year of Webster’s inexpensive speller in those years, if the publisher’s claims of such sales can be believed.

Tower’s reading books had obviously been popular elsewhere than Boston for some time before 1859. The city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, *Regulations of the Public Schools Adopted by the School Committee June 19, 1851*, read on page 13:

“2. Studies and Books in Alphabet Schools. In the Alphabet Schools, the pupils shall be taught the Alphabet, Reading and Spelling. The books used shall be Tower’s *Gradual Primer*, Tower’s *Introduction to the Gradual Reader*, and Fowle’s *Common School Speller*. No child, under the age of five years, shall be received into the Alphabet Schools.

“3. Studies and Books in Primary Schools. In the Primary Schools the pupils shall be taught Reading, Spelling, Mental Arithmetic, and the first principles of Geography by oral instruction. The books used shall be Fowle’s *Common School Speller*, Greenleaf’s *Mental Arithmetic*, Tower’s *Intermediate Reader*, and Tower’s *Gradual Reader*. Drawing may be introduced at the discretion of the teachers. No pupil shall be admitted to the Primary Schools, unless five years of age, and able to read and spell the Alphabet lessons.”

Yet Tower's texts had represented a major change in Cambridge schools from Worcester's sight word texts used only two years previously for beginners in reading. In the 1849 report, only two years before the 1851 report, the following had appeared on page 23:

"2. Studies and Books in Alphabet Schools. In the Alphabet Schools, the pupils shall be taught the Alphabet, Reading and Spelling. The books used shall be Worcester's Primer, Worcester's Second Reading Book, and Fowle's Common School Speller. No child, under the age of five years, shall be received into the Alphabet Schools.

"3. Studies and Books in Primary Schools. In the Primary Schools the pupils shall be taught Reading, Spelling, Mental Arithmetic, and the first principles of Geography by oral instruction. The books used shall be Worcester's Second Reading Book (continued); Swan's primary School Reader, Part Second; Bumstead's Second Book; Fowle's Common School Speller, and Greenleaf's Mental Arithmetic. Drawing may be introduced at the discretion of the teachers. No pupil shall be admitted to the primary Schools, unless five years of age, and able to read and spell the Alphabet lessons."

Note that the Cambridge children had to read Worcester's sight-word materials before they could begin Swan's book, "Part Second." Swan's was an elocutionary series like Tower's which also could accidentally function as a phonics series. Yet in 1849 the little Cambridge children were not to use Swan's until they had become firm sight-word readers through Worcester's dreadful Code I books (on which, of course, they orally "spelled" the meaning-bearing sight-words). Cambridge was also using Fowle's speller, which has been described earlier. However, it was never intended for teaching beginning reading, even though in Cambridge, unlike Syracuse and elsewhere, it was in use in the primary grades. Note that the Cambridge primary schools were also using Bumstead's Code I sight-word book.

Yet, by 1851, Cambridge had introduced Tower's material, undoubtedly to benefit "elocution." By doing so, they were accidentally introducing phonics for beginning reading.

All three Harvard copies of the Tower's books mentioned earlier were titled, Tower's First Reader. The Gradual Primer or Primary School Enunciator. The original edition had been copyrighted in 1845, and the "New Edition" in 1853. The "Preface" read as follows:

"Since the publication of the 'Gradual Reader,' or 'Exercises in Articulation,' the author has been repeatedly urged to prepare a set of Primary Readers on the same principle, using only such of the 'Exercises' as are especially adapted to beginners. To supply the demand for such a series, the want of which has been so often seen or so extensively felt by others, this little book has been prepared.... public opinion now requires that they should be understood and taught, as the 'first step' in reading. Their utility has been so clearly demonstrated, that teachers now ask for them to be used at the very outset; that the 'first step' may be taken in the right place. Hence, easy examples have been culled from those 'exercises,' and the Primer is now offered with the hope that it will prove as useful in its place.... The author claims an improvement on his original 'Exercises,' in giving full and explicit directions for the utterance of these elementary sounds... Amid the conflicting opinions on the best method of teaching a child to read, - whether letters or words shall take precedence, - the author hopes that his new plan, while it escapes the objections advanced against either, will be found to embody the advantages of both.... The new feature in this little book consists in giving the child only a few letters before he is called upon to read words composed of those few letters. Thus the child is taught words long before he has learned the whole alphabet; and yet no words are given him, of which he has not previously learned the letters...."



The “phonic” appearance of Tower’s books should not lead anyone to forget that after about 1830 teachers pronounced all words in the readers first for the children to imitate. In no sense were children being taught to sound out words for themselves.

The Boston School editions, marked 1857 and 1859 by the Harvard library, were like the above, a “New Edition.” Yet they began with sight word teaching! A picture of a girl appeared first, and the words, “the good girl, a small bird, the great girl, a girl and a bird.” Five more pages continued like this, with many words and sentences, finally followed by the complete alphabet on page 6. The alphabet was not at the beginning of the plain 1853 edition. Yet the rest of the books were the same as the 1853 edition. The beginning pages of the 1853 edition (and from page 7 of the 1857 and 1859 editions) were concerned only with visual analysis of letters, not sound, and after that moved into letter sounds.

Elocution was clearly Tower’s purpose in writing *The Gradual Primer, or Primary School Enunciator*, so that he could give “full and explicit directions for the utterance of these elementary sounds.” Tower did not use phonics so that children could learn to read independently. The very name of his text confirms that enunciation was his purpose. The preface and content of the book make it crystal clear his phonics was meant for elocution. The book could, however, very easily be used to teach real phonics which Philbrick would have understood. Nevertheless, the kind of attitudes Philbrick encountered is obvious from the Boston Schools’ copies of Towers’ primer, because the first five pages before Tower’s material consists of sight-word sentences and pictures, which section is clearly titled, “Word Teaching.” As an explanation for this bizarre beginning, the “Preface” remarks:

“To meet the views of all, several pages have been introduced for the convenience of those teachers who prefer to teach words before letters.”

Some one in Boston insisted on the insertion of five pages of sight-word material at the beginning of the 1857 and 1859 editions for the Boston schools, but it obviously would not have been Philbrick.

Teaching children phonics on syllables had been abolished after 1826, but, with a few works like Towers, phonics began to come back in the 1850’s, but now it was teaching letter sounds in whole words instead of letter sounds in syllables. Nevertheless, this whole-word phonics could repair much of the damage that had resulted from moving from the sound-bearing ABC syllable method to the meaning-bearing ABC word method. The phonic word method was, of course, a sharp improvement over the ABC word method, but the loss of emphasis on the syllable remained as a great defect, and still does so today in almost all phonic methods.

Historical records establish, therefore, beyond any doubt, that Cambridge in 1849, Syracuse in 1852, and Boston in 1857, and probably New York City since about 1842, were teaching beginners to read with the sight-word approach. Philbrick’s allusion: “long and hard has been the road by which the change has been reached,” referred to the fact that it was only that year, 1874, that Leigh’s phonics had finally won out in Boston after years of gradually spreading voluntary use. Poor Philbrick did not know then that both Leigh’s phonics which he had introduced - and Philbrick, himself - would be thrown out of the Boston schools only four years later, in 1878.

In the 1850’s, a flurry of interest had appeared in Longley’s primers which used Pitman’s phonetic alphabet. Pitman’s phonetic alphabet had been invented in England, where they were having the same problem with “reading” as in America, as will be shown. (Possibly Lovell’s phonics readers of the 1850’s were inspired by Pitman print. So far as is known, however, the Lovell readers were never in wide use.) The Longley primers were used briefly in Syracuse, but the interest flagged.

As reported by James Pyle Wickersham, Principal of the Pennsylvania State Normal School, Millersville, in his book, *Methods of Instruction*, J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia: 1865, some few teachers attempted to teach true phonics, but it was considered very technical and difficult. The norm, as Wickersham pointed out, was sight-words.

In 1864, Edwin Leigh's phonic pronouncing print appeared. Although it used the regular alphabet, the letters had special marks if needed to distinguish silent letters, variant vowel sounds, and so on. (William L. Robinson's similar method had appeared shortly before in England. It will be discussed in the chapters on Great Britain. Robinson had invented his special marks for letters of the alphabet having variant sounds after having previously used Pitman's extended alphabet, in which new letters had been invented for every variant sound.)

With letters already marked to show their variant sounds and all the vowel sounds, the Leigh method sidestepped the problems caused by not teaching children how to syllabicate words. That is because pronouncing vowels correctly automatically results in correctly dividing syllables.

Teaching phonics, which had been abolished in America after 1826, was coming back in force in America in the late 1860's by the use of Leigh's method. Yet it was coming back in a changed form: as the teaching of phonics on words instead of on syllables. By 1870, Leigh's method was enormously successful all over the United States, particularly in Boston which had generally used the word method.

Ferdinand Buisson of France visited the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876 as an education representative of the French government, and while in America visited schools as well as the Exposition. In 1878, he wrote his *Rapport Sur L'Instruction Primaire a L'Exposition Universelle de Philadelphie en 1876*. In a footnote on page 232, in his chapter on reading instruction, he said:

“Mr. Philbrick, after five years' experience in the schools of Boston, wrote, in view of its (Leigh's) striking results, ‘The word method must fall before the phonetic.’”

The “sound” challenge to the dominant whole-word “meaning” approach was most pronounced in the Boston of Superintendent John Dudley Philbrick. It was there that the meaning vs. sound war broke out again, and it lasted from 1870 to about 1880. But, to understand the roots of this second war, it is necessary to look first at Cambridge, Harvard's home town, across the Charles River from Boston, in the year 1862.

It was in Cambridge in the year 1862 that the first challenge to the “meaning” approach in reading started, and it concerned the teaching of language (both spoken and written) to the deaf. Alexander Graham Bell told of the challenge's beginning, in his October 10, 1917, address on the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Clarke School for the deaf at Northampton, Massachusetts. However, to understand better the situation on the teaching of the deaf with which the opponents to the “meaning” approach had to deal in 1862, the following summary, largely from the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), may be of help.

What the report given below will also make clear is that schools for the deaf, intended originally to be supported by private subscriptions and churches, rapidly became after 1818 the recipients (for the times) of relatively huge government grants. This was the same period in which government-supported primary schools and infant schools were widely promoted but also widely opposed. However, the very successful establishment of government-supported schools for the deaf produced a major change in the perceptions of the public. Unlike the proposed government primary and infant schools, the proposed government schools for the deaf met no apparent opposition. Education of every type had once been seen as a necessary but private activity. Yet the massive government sponsorship of education of the deaf had

capitalized on natural public compassion for the deaf. Such government-subsidized education was obviously widely supported by public opinion and was firmly in place before 1830. By the success of the movement to establish government schools for the deaf, the public had been conditioned to consider the promotion of education in general to be a legitimate government activity.

Yet, in American schools for the deaf, because of Gallaudet's influence, the "meaning" method was the only one in use by 1862. Gallaudet is known for three major campaigns, all of them fundamentally bad: the promotion of the teaching of deaf and hearing children to read by "meaning" instead of by "sound," which campaign was highly successful; the promotion of government schools for hearing children which was also highly successful; and the promotion of government teacher-training schools, which was, again, highly successful. All three campaigns can be seen as facets of the same bad two-pronged campaign that was instituted by change agents after about 1818: the promotion of government control of education, in tandem with the promotion of the "meaning" method to teach beginning reading.

Background is given in the article, "Deaf and Hard of Hearing," in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), Volume 7, page 120 and following concerning the founding of schools for the deaf. The reader will notice small inconsistencies with some of the reference materials quoted elsewhere in this text.. That is understandable, considering the widespread lack of general information available today on the subject of education of the deaf.

The article states that the first known effort to teach a deaf mute in this country was made in 1679 by Philip Nelson in Rowley, Massachusetts, and the next by Francis Green of Boston who sent his deaf son to Thomas Braidwood's school in Edinburgh. The article reported that Green tried a census of the Massachusetts deaf in 1803, and found 75, from which it was estimated that there must have been about 500 in the whole United States. An 1812 estimate raised the figure to 2,000. Green unsuccessfully proposed that a deaf-mute school be founded. However, Rev. John Stafford tried to teach several deaf children that he found in the New York City almshouses in 1810. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* article said that Stafford's work eventually produced in 1818 the New York Institution for the Deaf. However, it is instead more likely that the 1818 foundation was sparked to a considerable degree by Gallaudet's apparently highly publicized Hartford school which opened in 1817.

The article reported the fact that in 1815 a Hartford society to educate the deaf was started, and that it raised money to send young Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet to study in Europe, which he did in Abbe Sicard's school. The result was that the silent sign-language methods of Sicard's school were used for the deaf in America for years afterwards. The article reported that Gallaudet opened his Hartford school on April 15, 1817, with some \$12,000 in donations from other cities, and \$5,000 from Connecticut. Then, the federal government allotted 23,000 acres of public lands to the school, and the proceeds eventually produced a fund of \$339,000. In 1819, the New York state legislature granted \$10,000 to the New York school, and partially state-supported schools spread, in Pennsylvania about 1821, in Maryland in 1827, in Delaware in 1835, and in many other states later. Further large grants of government land were made for these schools, as had been done for Gallaudet's school. The first wholly state-supported school was in Kentucky in 1823. However, until the foundation of the Clarke School in Massachusetts, and in a New York City school by 1867, only the sign-language approach was used in teaching the deaf. No mention was made in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article about Boston Schools Superintendent Philbrick's founding of the first public day-school for the deaf in 1869, which highly-successful public school taught lip-reading and phonics to deaf children.

Bell's general remarks in 1917 on deaf education were considerably better than the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963) article discussed above. Bell had expanded his original remarks, given at the fiftieth

anniversary of the founding of the Clarke School, into a 33-page paper with an annotated bibliography, *The Growth of the Oral Method in America*. Following are excerpts from Bell's paper:

"In 1862 a little child of four and a half years of age completely lost her hearing from an attack of scarlet fever. She was the daughter of the Hon. Gardiner Greene Hubbard of Cambridge, Mass.

"It was well known at this time that the loss of hearing at such an early age was usually followed by loss of speech. It was therefore with the greatest anxiety that the parents of little Mabel Hubbard watched the speech of their child gradually begin to fade away...

"Mr. Hubbard found that there was no school in America which would receive deaf children at an early age, and that all the schools of the country were employing a foreign language as the basis of instruction - the French Sign-language of De L'Epee and Sicard - and that little or no attention was paid to articulation. He was assured by experts that if his child did not receive special instruction in the use of her vocal organs she would become a deaf-mute-in-fact long before she would be old enough to attend any of the existing schools.

"Mr. Hubbard found that conditions were very different abroad. He was assured that the deaf children of Germany were taught to speak and read the lips....

"Encouraged by this news Mrs. Hubbard determined to attempt the instruction of her own child. By persistently talking to her as though she could hear and directing her attention to the movements of the mouth the little girl began to read the lips.... Mother-love soon devised means of stimulating the recollection of words that were half-forgotten, and of teaching her the pronunciation of new words hitherto unknown....

"I take a deep, personal interest in this phase of the child's education; for, as you all know, little Mabel Hubbard is my wife, and I have daily and hourly reasons for blessing the memory of that dear mother....

"The results... convinced Mr. Hubbard of the very great importance of articulation teaching for the Deaf; and he determined that since there was no oral school in America one should be established, and right in his own state, too. In 1864, therefore, he applied to the legislature of Massachusetts for a charter and an appropriation for a new institution for the education of those deaf children who were too young to be received at Hartford.... The method of articulation was to be employed in the proposed Institution...

"This application was opposed by... the Hartford School on the ground that "The instruction of the Deaf by articulation was a theory of visionary enthusiasts...."

"The hearing before the legislative committee received considerable public attention, but the experts were against Mr. Hubbard, and the proposed bill was defeated.

"But Mr. Hubbard was not a man to be discouraged, and he entered into a vigorous public campaign of education. He saw the futility of attempting to argue with the experts and thought that the best way of attaining his object would be to have a small private oral school established and then bring the deaf children before the members of the legislature. The voice of a little deaf child might, he thought, prove a more convincing argument than the opinions of the learned professors of the Hartford School. His opportunity soon came.

“The attention of Mrs. Cushing of Boston, who had a deaf daughter, was attracted by the discussion in the Massachusetts legislature; and after careful consideration she determined that her child should be taught articulation.... Mrs. Cushing applied to Miss Harriet B. Rogers, then known as a skilful [sic] teacher of hearing children, who with some hesitation undertook the task.

“Her experience with Fanny Cushing convinced Miss Rogers of the great possibilities of oral instruction; and she expressed the desire to devote her whole life to this work, if only a suitable number of pupils could be secured and the means to support a school provided. This was Mr. Hubbard’s opportunity to carry out his plan....

“Mr. Hubbard and a few of his friends subscribed a sum sufficient to defray the expenses of the undertaking; and in November, 1865, published an advertisement of the proposed school....

“As a result of these efforts Miss Rogers was enabled to open her school at Chelmsford, in June, 1866, with five pupils, and within a few months had the full (seven) enrolled.

“In 1867 the time seemed ripe for another application to the legislature of Massachusetts. Miss Rogers, the pioneer of oral teaching, was beginning to attract attention by the success of her little Chelmsford school....

“In 1867, Mr. Hubbard, feeling that the time had come when another application to the Massachusetts legislature might meet with a more favorable reception than his application of 1864, called upon Governor Bullock with the object of requesting him to make some reference to the subject in his forthcoming message, and recommend legislation to establish a school for the Deaf in Massachusetts.

“To his surprise Governor Bullock informed him that he had that very day received a communication from Mr. Clarke of Northampton offering to give fifty thousand dollars towards the founding of a Massachusetts School for the Deaf, if it should be established in Northampton.

“Governor Bullock communicated this information to the legislature of Massachusetts, and in his (1867) message recommended (such) legislation....

“The legislature referred this part of the Governor’s message to a joint special committee... and hearings were opened.

“Dr. Howe, Mr. Sanborn, Hon. Thomas Talbot, Mr. Hubbard, and a large number of Deaf-mutes from Boston and the vicinity favored the Governor’s recommendation.

“They were opposed, on behalf of the Hartford School in Connecticut by Rev. Collins Stone, W. W. Turner, Hon. Calvin Daye, and Hon. H. A. Stevens of Boston....

“...the two bills were passed and the Clarke Institution incorporated.

“At the time of organization the incorporates were not pledged to any particular method of instruction, and the majority of them had no decided opinions on the matter, but Mr. Hubbard was among them, and was elected President of the Board. The school committee appointed by the Board then rendered a report recommending among other things:

“‘That an articulating school under the charge of Miss Rogers be established at Northampton.’

“The report was adopted; and the Chelmsford School was removed to Northampton, and became the Clarke Institution with Miss Harriet B. Rogers as principal. ...

“On the first of October 1867 the Clarke School at Northampton was opened with Miss Harriet B. Rogers as principal, and the Hon. Gardiner Greene Hubbard as president of the Board of Corporators....

“The successful establishment in 1867 of oral schools, not employing the sign-language, both in Northampton and New York City made a profound impression upon the older schools of the Country....”

So, from the years 1864 to 1867, the residents of Cambridge, and Boston across the Charles River from Cambridge, were witnesses to an unusual public discussion: the arguments for and against methods for teaching deaf children. Just as the young medical student Keagy must have been aware of the public discussion in Baltimore and Virginia between 1812 and 1818, so must another young medical student in Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1864 and later have been aware of the public discussion and the newspaper articles it must have generated concerning the problems in teaching the deaf. That young medical student at Harvard was William James (1842-1910).

Nor did the discussion in the Cambridge and Boston area on the teaching of the deaf end in 1867 with the establishment of the Clarke School. In 1869, forward-looking Superintendent Philbrick founded in Boston the first city-supported school for deaf children in the United States, and it is highly likely he was inspired to do so at least in part by contact with Alexander Melville Bell, who wrote a highly successful “sound” based program for teaching the deaf.

The previous year, 1868, the elocutionist and speech teacher, Alexander Melville Bell, Alexander Graham Bell’s father, had visited the Boston schools. In his address to the National Association of Elocutionists in 1895, the elder Bell recalled:

“When I first visited the City of Boston in 1868, we met our distinguished professional brother, the late Lewis B. Monroe, who was the superintendent of elocution in the city schools. I was taken by Professor Monroe on one of his rounds of visits to the schools and witnessed with delight the affectionate greeting of the various classes to their beloved instructor.... I had been particularly struck with the way in which his pupils spoke out. I could not get my young lady classes in Edinburgh or London to deliver the voice with anything like the same energy and clearness....”

That elocution teacher, Monroe, wrote a reading series for beginning readers in 1871-1873. New words were shown on top of the pages, easy ones on the left to be read “By Sound” and those on the right “By Sight.” This arrangement was a common practice after the 1870’s. It had originated in the teaching of “elocution” but was also obviously in response to the agitation for some kind of phonics on whole words that had started in the 1850’s. This inadequate late-nineteenth-century whole-word phonics paralleled our “phony phonics” of today, which began as a response to Dr. Rudolf Flesch’s 1955 bestseller, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*. Therefore, despite his concern for elocution, in no sense was Monroe teaching reading by real phonics. Furthermore, elocution in the last century had nothing to do with teaching reading. To illustrate what elocution meant in those days, Monroe’s text, *Vocal Gymnastics*, is advertised and described in the front of an 1873 edition of his *First Reader*:

“A New Work on Physical and Vocal Training.... No Teacher, Pupil, Clergyman, Public Speaker or Reader can afford to be without this little Manual. It contains a complete system of

instruction for the proper training of all the Physical and Vocal Organs concerned in the production of the Tone.”

“Elocution,” therefore, by the 1870’s, had become a form of vocal gymnastics. Philbrick made this clear in his 1871 report, when he said:

“I am sorry to say that the requirements of the programme in respect to physical training are not generally carried out. Thirty minutes each are to be given to vocal and physical exercises. These exercises should be short, but frequent, especially in the lowest classes. All the teachers have been furnished with copies of Monroe’s Manual, and they should regularly exercise their pupils in accordance with the system which it illustrates.”

However, unlike the elocutionist Monroe, the elocutionist Alexander Melville Bell did concern himself with true phonics in reading. He reminisced in his 1895 talk:

“My own studies were for many years of the elements. The tables of vowels, of consonants, and of tones which I published in 1849 represented a long antecedent of study and experiment. My days being filled up with practical work in teaching, the nights - strictly limited to the hours from 10 p. m. till 2 a. m. - were devoted to theoretical work in investigating the mechanism of sounds and in tabulating all appreciable varieties.... In the organs of speech...I discovered that my schemes of studies were susceptible of a self-explanatory symbolism by which writing became a real Visible Speech.... I may add that the system has been used hitherto chiefly in teaching the deaf to speak....”

That the elder Bell meant his Visible Speech also to be used to teach reading to people with normal hearing there can be no doubt. He said, in an 1868 paper, “English Visible Speech for the Million,”

“Any person who can merely pronounce the NUMBERS 1 to 8 in the ordinary way and name the objects represented in the Alphabet Table... may be immediately taught to READ or may easily TEACH HIMSELF.”

Unlike Monroe, Bell had invented a purely phonic “sound” system, divorced from “meaning,” for teaching reading - and for teaching the deaf to speak. It was also famous in its time. Anyone who has seen Rex Harrison as Henry Higgins in *My Fair Lady*, based on George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*, will recall the phonic charts on which Higgins unmercifully drilled Eliza: Higgins called them Bell’s charts.

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1963, Vol. 3, p. 439, it was in 1867 that Alexander Melville Bell (1819 - 1905) first published *Visible Speech: The Science of Universal Alphabets*. That was only the year before the visit of Alexander Melville Bell to the Boston schools. Surely, his book must have been at least a topic of conversation with the school personnel like Superintendent Philbrick when Bell visited in 1868, the year before Philbrick instituted a Boston city school for the deaf.

Apparently, from its beginning, the Boston school for the deaf taught “articulation,” the teaching of deaf children to speak. Despite the elder Bell’s visit, however, the school may not have begun to use his Visible Speech until a year and three months after the school was founded, at which time Alexander Graham Bell gave its teachers lessons on his father’s program.

Philbrick said in his 1874 report (page 371)

“...the establishment of this (Deaf-Mute School) which was opened November 10, 1869, must be reckoned one of the most interesting and important. It is believed to be the first in the country

for day-pupils, that is, for pupils boarding at home and attending the daily sessions of a school like speaking children, and also the first established by a municipality for the benefit of its inhabitants.... The method of instruction employed is that of articulation, the pupils being taught to speak and to read the speech of others from their lips, the sign language not being taught and the manual alphabet only for temporary purposes.”

In Philbrick’s 1871 report, covering the school year 1870-1871, he said:

“The steady progress which has been made by (the Deaf-Mute School) from its commencement in 1869 and more particularly during the past year, is most gratifying to the committee as well as to many others who were at first inclined to regard its establishment as a doubtful experiment. The pupils have made excellent progress in their studies and exhibit great enthusiasm and pride in their daily achievements. Parents and friends express their surprise and pleasure that the pupils accomplish so much. Letters of commendation are constantly received from prominent educators who have visited the school and examined the plan pursued. Much interest is also manifested in various parts of the State as well as beyond its limits in regard to the school....

“Perhaps nothing has contributed so much during the year to the value of the instruction in this school as the introduction of Prof. Alex. Melville Bell’s system of ‘visible speech,’ which was done by his son, Mr. A. G. Bell, in a course of lessons to the teachers and pupils in March and April (1871). By means of this system, deaf mutes can be readily taught to articulate correctly, and with proper inflections, even the most difficult sounds and words....”

Philbrick had said further in his later 1872 report (page 213):

“The use of Prof. Bell’s system of visible speech as a means of instruction, during the past year, has justified the opinion of its utility as an instrumentality in the instruction of deaf-mutes, which was expressed by me in a former report. I am highly gratified to learn that Prof. A. Graham Bell, a gentleman of the highest respectability, and of the rarest ability as a teacher, has opened a Normal Training School in this city, for the purpose of qualifying teachers for the application of visible speech to deaf-mute instruction. It would be a decided advantage to all teachers of speaking children to possess some acquaintance with the new science - the true science of vocal utterance.”

The Encyclopedia Britannica, 1963, Volume 3, page 439, in its article on Alexander Graham Bell (1847 - 1922), who was born in Scotland, recorded that he moved to Canada from Great Britain in 1870, and opened his Boston school to train teachers of the deaf in 1872. In 1873, Bell joined Boston University as a professor of vocal physiology. The American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf was founded by Alexander Graham Bell.

So, the year that William James received his doctorate from Harvard, 1869, was the same year that the first day-school for the deaf in America was opened in November across the river from Harvard, in Boston, most probably with much publicity. It used phonics to teach the deaf to speak orally instead of teaching them to communicate by sign language. This was an innovation in America, just as having a day-school for the deaf was an innovation in America. By 1871, “prominent educators” were visiting that school and interest was being exhibited in the school from outside the state. By March, 1871, only a year and three months later, Alexander Graham Bell was teaching his father’s phonic system to the pupils in that Boston public school for the deaf. By 1872, the same year James started teaching at Harvard, Alexander Graham Bell had opened a “Normal Training School” in Boston to train teachers for the deaf. Furthermore, as mentioned also in Lawrence A. Cremin’s American Education - The National



Experience: 1783-1876, (Harper & Row, New York: 1980) page 333, Alexander Graham Bell had an exhibit at the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, at which he personally demonstrated his new electric telephone. The Centennial planners, therefore, probably knew of Bell before 1876 or his exhibit probably would not have been arranged.

According to the March calendar in the 1998 Monthly Monitor, a personal calendar pad published by Baldwin Cooke Company of Northbrook, Illinois and Scarborough, Ontario, Bell reportedly received patent #174465 for his telephone, an “improvement in telegraphy” on March 7, 1876. Bell and his public activities including the education of the deaf must have been well known in the 1870’s.

In summary, starting with the public activity of Bell’s future father-in-law in Cambridge to obtain legislation for deaf children in 1864, Boston and Cambridge probably had more direct publicity on the teaching of the deaf in the years 1864-1872 than any area has ever had anywhere on earth, including the Paris of the Abbe de l’Epee in the 18th century. It is only reasonable to assume that James must have acquired an unusual amount of knowledge concerning the problems of the deaf just from living in Cambridge during these years.

William James had been, briefly, a student of Hermann Von Helmholtz in Germany in 1868. Surely he would have been interested in Alexander Graham Bell’s paper, “Vowel Theories,” concerning one of Helmholtz’s ideas, read before the National Academy of Arts and Science, April 15, 1879. Bell said that Helmholtz had claimed that:

“...a vowel is a musical compound consisting of a mixture of musical tones of different pitches...”

Bell wrote:

“...the hypothesis that the ear perceives them only and that it is unable to appreciate the quality of the vowel directly should be received with caution...”

Bell said at the end of his highly technical paper:

“...a point of maximum resonance should be perceived having the absolute pitch characteristic of the vowel uttered.”

The paper, of course, concerned phonetics and the psychology and physics of phonetics, and implicitly even philosophy: the topic of whether the mind can or cannot know objective data instead of just subjective impressions. Such a paper should have been of interest to William James, the psychologist/philosopher, then writing a book on psychology in which, on page 340, he specifically referred to Helmholtz’s ideas on mixtures of tones.

It is unlikely that William James in Cambridge in the early 1870’s could have been unaware of the activities of Alexander Graham Bell across the river in Boston, since Bell’s work with the deaf, and particularly his astonishing research, must have been receiving publicity at that time. James would almost certainly have disagreed with Alexander Graham Bell about teaching the deaf by “sound,” but it is a fact that James could show a lively interest in such well-known personalities with whom he disagreed.

For instance, James certainly would have disagreed with G. K. Chesterton’s world views. The famous author, Chesterton, said things like:

“Hamlet failed to act because he had been taught to think at a German university.”

Chesterton's remark was quoted in Peter Kreeft's article, "G. K. Chesterton, A Radiant Thunder," in the National Catholic Register, reproduced in Ignatius Press's *The Serious Reader's Guide to Good Catholic Literature*, Summer, 1990, Harrison, New York. In contrast to Chesterton, James was intrigued with the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. However, according to Leon Edel's *Henry James - The Master: 1901-1916*, pages 366-367, when William was visiting his novelist brother Henry in England in 1908, William was so curious about Chesterton that he borrowed the gardener's ladder to peep over the wall to see Chesterton in his own back yard next door. That anecdote came from H. G. Wells, the famous science fiction author, who said when he called that day for William and his wife and daughter to take them on a visit to his own home, Henry told him with disapproval of the ladder incident. Yet William was amused. When leaving by car with Wells that same day, they passed Chesterton who invited William to visit him. Edel said William James recorded in his diary that he had gone at nine in the evening to Chesterton's house with his brother, Henry. Hilaire Belloc was there also. Belloc was a renowned author and friend of Chesterton's, and Belloc's philosophical views were diametrically opposed to William James' views. Yet William James and his brother, Henry, had stayed at the Chesterton home drinking port with Chesterton and Belloc until midnight.

Residents of the Boston area from the 1860's to the 1880's were exposed to more than the conflict of phonics vs. no-phonics only for the deaf. It was in Boston during those same years that a large, spontaneous and successful opposition arose to the entrenched sight-word reading method for hearing children. The most visible (but not the only) opposition came from those who endorsed Leigh phonic print, copyrighted in 1864 and widely used in reading books all over the country in the following decade. Leigh's print used ordinary letters but, by special markings, demonstrated silent letters, vowel sounds and alternate consonant sounds. Leigh had astonishing success all over the country until the mid 1870's. It is not unlikely that William James may have been familiar with that resurgence of "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading in Boston.

## Chapter 23

### How Phonics in Beginning Reading Re-entered in the 1860's, Followed by a New Generation of "Meaning" Activists

The advent of Leigh's print in Boston in 1866 had been preceded by texts published in Boston by the Reverend J. C. Zachos in 1864 and 1865. Zachos had developed a purely phonic method (actually re-invented Noah Webster's approach), and these 1864 and 1865 texts contained his method, which he presumably used when he taught Black illiterates at Paris Island, South Carolina, in 1863. However, since the 1876 American Catalogue, under "Primers," listed an 1859 Analytic and Phonic Word Book by Rev. J. C. Zachos, as published by "Wilstach," Zachos must have compiled his material for teaching reading to beginners before the Civil War.

The copy in the Harvard library of Zachos' 1865 work, *Phonic Primer and Primary Reader*, Published by a Committee under the Auspices of The American Phonic Association for the Advancement of Reading Among the Unlettered Classes, has a beautifully inscribed note in a Harvard bookplate inside its cover, "The Gift of the Author, Rev. John C. Zachos, of Newton, 2 Nov., 1865." It is the note written in ordinary handwriting above the formal bookplate that is of interest: "Reading Room for the present."

The implied interest at Harvard in his book is understandable: a great need existed in the fall of 1865, about a half-year after the end of the cruel Civil War, to remove illiteracy among the newly-freed Blacks. Zachos' text, outlining his phonic method, was therefore available in Harvard's Reading Room after November 2, 1865.

In Leon Edel's *Henry James, The Untried Years: 1843-1870* (Avon Books: 1978, page 241-242), Edel said:

"William James returned from Brazil in March 1866 and resumed his medical studies.... William spent this summer as an interne in the Massachusetts General Hospital and in the autumn the brothers were reunited, under the family roof which was moved (to) 20 Quincy Street... facing the Harvard Yard.... In the spring of 1867 (William) interrupted his medical studies and left for Germany..."

Therefore, in March, 1866, William James returned from his close association with Agassiz of Harvard as a member of Agassiz' Amazon expedition and would have been one of the students using the Harvard Reading Room less than six months after Zachos' phonic text was placed there. Presumably, he would have periodically used the Reading Room until the spring of 1867.

James is famous for his "stream of consciousness" ideas, or, as described in a chapter in his text, *The Principles of Psychology*, 1890, "The Stream of Thought." James wrote, on page 165:

"What must be admitted is that the definite images of traditional psychology form but the very smallest part of our minds as they actually live. The traditional psychology talks like one who should say a river consists of nothing but pailfuls, spoonfuls, quart-potfuls, barrellfuls, and other moulded forms of water. Even were the pails and the pots all actually standing in the stream, still between them the free water would continue to flow. It is just this free water of consciousness that psychologists resolutely overlook. Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it."

James was discussing what he perceived as the failure of psychologists to understand the nature of “the stream of thought.” In Zachos’ 1865 book on phonics which was in the Harvard Reading Room from November, 1865, very possibly into the spring of 1867, here is what Zachos said about what he perceived as the failure of teachers to understand “the stream of sound”:

“But the teacher is guarded, and so must be the pupil, against the impression that these spaces indicate any hiatus or stoppage of the voice between elements in spelling by sound. There is no such hiatus even between the syllables of words, nor even between words of the same grammatic phrase, such as, to the man, in the house, &c. No; the stream of sound, like a stream of water, flows freely through the vowels, and with more or less obstruction through the consonants, but never actually stops, except at the natural pauses of the voice in speaking. This has not been generally observed by teachers.”

The resemblances in vocabulary and parallel structures are striking. James said:

“It is just this free water of consciousness that psychologists resolutely overlook. Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it.”

Zachos said:

“...the stream of sound, like a stream of water, flows freely through the vowels, with more or less obstruction through the consonants.... This has not been generally observed by teachers.”

It seems exceedingly probable that James read Zachos’ work, and, probably unconsciously, produced parallel prose. There is, of course, nothing wrong with that as we probably all do so continually, as unaware of the source for many of the phrases we use in thinking as we are of how we learned our language in the first place. The point is that these are exceedingly RARE phrasings. It seems probable Zachos’ work was the source for James’ famous phrases. It is known that Zachos’ work was probably available for young James to read immediately after his return from the Amazon. During this trip, James had an intimate association with Agassiz who is on record (as will be shown) as despising empty sound (in grammar) divorced from objective meaning (observation of real objects in the real world). Zachos’ paper, concerned solely with the sound of language and not its meaning, would therefore have contrasted diametrically to Agassiz’ views, to which James had been intimately exposed for months, and would probably have seemed extreme to young James.

James’ paraphrasing of Zachos’ phrases is, of course, of no direct importance to the history of reading. What is of importance is that the existence of these parallel phrases powerfully suggests that young James was becoming intimately acquainted with the subject of beginning reading instruction since James was apparently reading and absorbing Zachos’ arguments concerning the teaching of phonics in 1866 or 1867. Zachos’ views must have made a strong impression on James or James would not have retained the shell of Zachos’ arguments in his memory: Zachos’ peculiar analogy to a stream of water which flowed freely, which free-flowing stream was not understood by his peers.

Zachos’ work never reached the Boston schools, as far as any records I have seen would indicate. But the Leigh print did. In Philbrick’s report for 1870, covering the 1869-1870 year, he said:

“Several years ago, an order was passed by the board, authorizing the district committees to introduce into the schools of their respective districts, Leigh’s phonic system of teaching the first steps of reading, making use of the phonic charts and Hillard’s first and second readers, printed in the pronouncing type. In the Lincoln district the experiment was immediately commenced. In the course of six months or a year, several other districts followed the example of the Lincoln....

“One year ago I referred with commendation in my report to the extraordinary success of a teacher at East Boston, in teaching the first steps in reading, by the phonic method, but without using Dr. Leigh’s pronouncing type. The success in that case was clearly the best I had then seen. But I have now to report that it has been surpassed by Miss Catherine A. Dwyer, of the Lawrence District, who has made use of Dr. Leigh’s system. I examined her class, in company with the master of the district, near the close of the month of February. It consisted of about fifty boys, between five and six years of age, from homes little calculated to develop their intelligence. During the six months, these pupils had read the first reader, and eighty five pages of the second, an amount of reading exceeding what the programme requires during a year and a half.... Each individual pupil was examined on a piece taken at random in the second reader, and they read with but little hesitation. Five or six of the best boys...were then tried on a NEW PIECE in the same book, printed in the common type, which they read with considerable fluency. Such results in teaching the first steps in reading I had never before witnessed in any school whatever....”

In Philbrick’s 1872 report, on page 159, he quoted Dr. Leigh, concerning the successful results of the Leigh phonic print:

“...these are the results of several years’ experience, in various parts of the country, with all sorts of teachers, in several thousands of schools, and... as yet I know of not one real exception.”

The 1871 Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston, published in 1872, read on pages 7 to 9:

“A teacher who has had the advantage of observing (Leigh’s) method at the Training School, and has learned the art of oral instruction, and of using the blackboard for illustrations, who has the vital qualities that engage the attention of children, and the sweet, firm temper that retains hold upon them, will be able, with Leigh’s phonic exercises, to conduct a whole class over the irregular field without a stumble - “forty reading as one.”... We beg leave to say that six years of careful experiment in several schools in this city have shown the best results from this system. Pupils learn the sounds belonging to phonic type very readily; and, as those sounds are unchanging, the labor is much less than in gaining the mastery of a less number of letters, most of which are liable to arbitrary variations. But whether this reason is satisfactory to doubters or not, the fact leaves no room for dispute. Within six months ordinary pupils under this system get nearly through the second reader; - a point which pupils by the old method are always eighteen months, and often two years in reaching. This is a constant, unvarying result....

“But this is not all. The way is not only shortened, but the lessons are made attractive... There is no listlessness, no writhing upon hard benches, no longing for release. The system, further, cultivates both perception and reason. Words are never parroted either in reading or spelling; no word is used that is not understood.... Intelligence advances with every progressive step. By instructing the pupils together, not only is time saved, but discipline is maintained without effort.... Phonic characters are used only until pupils have become familiar with the ordinary monosyllables and most common words. These are acquired with a facility that is astonishing. Taking each sound in order, the sharp perception runs through and aggregates them into a word, as a needle takes up beads on a string. When this point is reached the difficulty is over; the leading strings are no longer needed. The pupil takes up the next book in order, in common type, and with scarcely a blunder reads off fluently. At an exhibition of a primary class in the Lincoln District, several pupils, who had been less than eighteen months under instruction, read at sight from books they had never seen. Other pupils, who had never used any but phonic type, were put to the severe test of reading from common type for the first time in the presence of an audience;

and they not only read well, but uttered their words with a distinctness and purity of tone that ordinary pupils never attain.

“...we therefore suggest that the results of the new system should be carefully considered by a special committee, and if they are found as here stated, that it be introduced as speedily as is practical into all Primary Schools....”

In Philbrick’s 1870 report, from page 151 to 153, he said:

“The spelling book is the symbol of popular education, and justly so, for it is the first word-book and words are the medium of all teaching. [Ed.: Stickney named her 1889 speller the “word-book” and said it was to be started in second grade. Philbrick was not saying that word-books were first grade books.] Normal schools would do a good thing if they would teach their pupils how to use the spelling-book in the school room. The greatest blessings are liable to the greatest abuses. No school-book in these latter days has fared so hard as the dear old spelling-book. In the first place, the book-makers have metamorphosed it into an ugly shape. Most modern spelling-books that I have seen ought to be entitled “spelling made repulsive.” But the great antagonist of the speller has been the modern educational maxim, “Ideas before words,” a maxim which is good within certain limits, but which is bad outside those limits.

“But the spelling-book is probably destined to a great longevity. The witty description of it, as a collection of nonsense columns, did much to cause its neglect for a time. But that bon mot has lost its power, and the spelling-book is regaining favor. [Yet] .....formal writing and formal spelling should occupy very little time in the graduating class. How preposterous to drill our pupils, at the age of fourteen or fifteen, on spelling, until they can get ninety-nine per cent on hard words, while they know little or nothing of the elements of science....”

On page 151, Philbrick gave the 1844 course of study for the first class of Grammar schools in Boston, which is historically very interesting. (The Boston Grammar schools followed the Boston Primary schools.) Philbrick listed Emerson’s National Spelling Book, Gould Brown’s First Lines of English Grammar, Olmsted’s Rudiments of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy, or Parker’s Compendium of Natural and Experimental Philosophy, Woodbridge’s Geography and Atlas, Pierpont’s American First Class Book, Worcester’s Elements of General History, exercises in composition and declamation, writing, penmaking, North American Arithmetic, Part Third, and Robinson’s Bookkeeping. Philbrick gave the following quotation from 1844:

“Members of the first class who shall have nearly completed the course of exercises in Arithmetic may be instructed in Algebra and Geometry. The following studies and books may be introduced at the discretion of the master: -Smellie’s Philosophy of Natural History, Gould Brown’s Institutes of English Grammar, Whately’s Rhetoric, and Parker’s Exercises in English Composition.”

Parker’s Exercises in English Composition were widely used in the Boston area in the 1840’s. The Harvard library has many early copies.

With the advent of Leigh print, phonics had returned in America. Tower had been teaching elocution in his primer in 1864, with the happy side effect of giving practice in sounding out new words, but the market obviously had not been demanding phonics for beginning reading at that time. Yet an awareness of the benefits of phonics for teaching beginning reading had been slowly growing, but the awareness was vague. This can be seen by Charles Sanders’ revision of his 1840 Code I sight-word primer. His 1866 revision was only a Code I book, too. Sanders had given his whole new series the name, “Union,” when it

was published in 1861, obviously choosing the title because of the Civil War. Sanders did not, however, revise the pictorial primer of his first series until 1866. It was then entitled *The Union Pictorial Primer*, Ivison, Phinney, Blakeman & Co., New York. "Introductory to the Union Readers," by Charles W. Sanders, A. M., copyrighted in 1866 (and the following is from a copy published in 1867):

"Preface. The Union Pictorial Primer is designed as an introduction to SANDERS' UNION SERIES OF READERS AND SPELLERS. The plan of the book is similar to that of Sanders' Pictorial Primer, - a work which has been more extensively used in the schools of this country than any other of the kind ever published.

"This unparalleled success, doubtless, lies in the peculiar fitness of that work for the juvenile mind.

"The book is so arranged as to be adapted to the word method, the phonetic method, or to the ordinary method, - that of teaching the names of the letters first, - just as the teacher may prefer.

"The engravings, which have been designed and executed by one of the most skillful artists expressly for this book are all entirely new. These are highly attractive, and will aid the learner in understanding the lessons which they illustrate, and, at the same time, afford numerous subjects for OBJECT-TEACHING.

"NEW YORK, 1866."

Yet *The Union Pictorial Primer* was a straight Code 1 sight-word primer, despite its claim that it could be adapted to the "phonetic method." The "phonetic method" had been growing in popularity since the 1850's, which part of the market the publisher was obviously trying to capture. However, it would be impossible for a child to learn to read phonically with Sanders' 1866 primer. But 1866 was the year that Leigh's phonetic pronouncing print, copyrighted in 1864, finally began to spread.

Concerning the prevalence of disinformation on reading instruction today, it should be noted that it is nothing new, as Sanders' primer demonstrates. Another source of confusion is a 1900 "reading instruction history." In 1900, Rudolph R. Reeder, then at Columbia Teachers College, wrote *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading* (The Macmillan Co., New York). As will be mentioned, Reeder totally omitted mentioning the widespread and popular series, the Appleton readers, which are unheard of today even though "everyone knows" McGuffey's was used "almost everywhere" (even though it was not). The McGuffey fiction seems first to have appeared in Reeder's book, and in my opinion was put in to deflect attention from Appleton's and the Franklin series of the 1870's for reasons unknown (neither series being mentioned by Reeder who omitted naming any series after 1860 but the Heart of Oak). Yet, on pages 81 and 82, Reeder at least discussed at length the widespread use of Leigh's print some years before. Reeder's peculiar material at least recorded Leigh firmly into reading history so that anyone following Reeder should have had that information.

When Nila Banton Smith wrote *American Reading Instruction* as her dissertation at Columbia Teachers College in 1932, published later by Silver, Burdett and Company in 1934 and 1962, and in a revised edition by the International Reading Association in 1965, she should certainly have had access to Reeder's book in the Columbia library since he, himself, had written it while at Columbia Teachers College only thirty-two years before. Yet, important as Leigh was in American reading instruction history, Leigh's name (and the Heart of Oak books) were omitted in Nila Banton Smith's index in her revised 1965 edition (and presumably her earlier ones). On page 394 in her 1965 edition, in discussing modern-day ITA (Initial Teaching Alphabet) phonetic print, Smith did mention that between 1870 and 1920 several phonetic alphabets had been used, and said:

“The Leigh, Shearer, Funk and Wagnell, and Ward systems all made use of augmented alphabets...”

In the paragraph before this, she said that St. Louis schools had used a phonetic alphabet from 1866 to 1886 and saved from one to two-and-a-half years in teaching reading, but she never mentioned that it was Leigh’s material that was being used! Yet these remarks on page 394 are obviously only in the 1965 edition, as they occur in her discussion of present-day ITA phonetic print, which was not available in 1932. With the fervor for ITA print that was prevalent in 1965, and with John Downing, the well-known English advocate of ITA print, certain to read her book, her 1965 remarks are not surprising, since she gave, as a footnote reference for the remark about St. Louis, an article by John A. Downing of England.

However, in the section of her book dealing roughly with 1880 to 1910, on pages 127-129, which would presumably have been in the original 1932 material, she said that a development of that period (roughly 1880 to 1910) was special alphabets, and she discussed at length an obscure phonetic alphabet published in 1902 called the Scientific Alphabet, and another obscure one called The Shearer System written in St. Louis in 1894. After discussing these two obscure materials, she then totally omitted the famous and enormously successful Leigh print of 1864. The effect of the dates she gave for actual phonetic alphabets (1894 and 1902) moved the use of phonetic print away from their real years of popularity: 1866-1880, and buried the Leigh history.

Smith also made no mention of the enormously successful Appleton series of 1878. Yet Vail, the 1911 historian of the McGuffey series, reported that Appleton’s fought McGuffey’s to a draw in the McGuffey home territory in the early 1880’s. Nor did she mention the Heart of Oak series which had been described by Reeder at length. Her mention of Hillard’s “Franklin” primer is totally misleading, moving its publishing date back from 1873 to 1831, as has been discussed elsewhere in this history. Nila Banton Smith’s “history” is full of such “discrepancies.” They are all equally difficult to refute because of the amount of print it takes to do so. As a result, Smith’s classic disinformation continues to be used as a reference source for reading history. One of the effects of Smith’s book has been the burying of the history of the once enormously successful Leigh print.

By 1872, Leigh print was successfully spreading in the Boston schools, all of which had adopted it voluntarily. Philbrick said:

“A year ago, it was used in eleven districts and about thirty schools; it is now found in twenty-three districts and upwards of sixty schools.”

In Philbrick’s 1874 report, he said that the Leigh print had spread to 31 of 37 districts in Boston, and he said that the Board:

“...should adopt the system and make it obligatory in all the Primary Schools.”

Philbrick said on page 191 of his 1874 report:

“The method of teaching the first steps of reading by means of the pronouncing type, invented by Dr. Leigh, has been used in some of our schools for eight or nine years. After an experiment with it in three or four schools for a year or two, an order was adopted by the Board, permitting its introduction where the district committees should choose to do so. Since that provision of the Board was adopted some six or seven years ago, no further action in regard to the matter has been taken. In the meantime, the system, without any compulsion, or pushing by outside agencies, has quietly made its way into nearly all districts. In my circular recently



addressed to the masters, requesting information in relation to the progress of this method, I requested them to give their opinions as to the results of its use.

“The analysis of the replies shows, that of the masters of the six districts in which it has not been introduced, five expressed no opinion, and one thinks the advantages are counterbalanced by the disadvantages. Of the thirty-one masters of the districts where the system has been tried, two are undecided (one of them having had but a brief period of observation), and one is decidedly opposed to it; one would not go back to the old method, but thinks it not favorable to spelling, two who have not had time to test it fully approve as far as they have observed; four are rather doubtful as to its advantages; three express unqualified satisfaction with its results, and eighteen endorse it in emphatic terms.”

Philbrick was no “mover or shaker” trying to control society through half-truths, so he reproduced only the bald, undoctored results of his survey. They speak for themselves. Of the 31 Boston districts using Leigh phonics in 1874, 28 had used it long enough to form an opinion. Of these, the method was decidedly opposed by only one master, but emphatically approved by at least 21 masters, or seventy-five per cent of the total.

Philbrick reproduced comments from the masters, such as:

“The children learn to read in half the time it formerly took, and do not contract that old habit, so hard to eradicate, of reading one word at a time, as though they were pronouncing a column of words from the speller.”

“Pupils do four times as much reading; they read more intelligently; the vocalization has been greatly improved. Dr. Leigh’s method had revolutionized the reading in every school under my charge where it has been well taught.”

Philbrick concluded:

“From the examination of the replies of the masters, it is evident that the positive testimony in its favor is overwhelming.”

### A New Generation of Activists Enters the Scene

Yet the fantastically successful Leigh phonics ran into trouble with “experts,” one of whom was Colonel Francis W. Parker of the Quincy, Boston and Chicago schools. Parker had arrived in Quincy, Massachusetts, in April, 1875, as the new broom of John Quincy Adams and Charles Francis Adams, Jr., and later received a great deal of (probably programmed) newspaper coverage.

The year 1870 appeared to be the starting point for the Louis Agassiz type of “reformers,” to which group the Adams brothers, the grandsons of President John Quincy Adams, very probably belonged. James Johonnot, who wrote *Principles and Practice of Teaching* in 1878, published by D. Appleton and Company, included a chapter on Louis Agassiz (1807 - 1873) in which Johonnot described the Agassiz movement:

“(Agassiz) saw that, in the prevailing education, language largely took the place of thought; that more attention was given to the symbols of knowledge than to the knowledge itself....

“Those errors, he saw, could be corrected only by a radical and fundamental change in the whole system of education, in which the scientific spirit and methods should play a prominent

part. He commenced the work of reform with his characteristic caution and energy, calling attention to some of the prominent defects of education in his public lectures....”

The most noticeable Boston/Cambridge/Quincy movement to replace “language” (“sound”) with “thought” (“meaning”) began about 1870. However, reasons exist for thinking the Agassiz-inspired reforms pre-date 1870, and that the Agassiz clique may even have influenced the choice of a president for Harvard, and, through him, its actual curriculum.

Charles Francis Adams wrote Theodore Lyman (1833-1897) and Robert Charles Winthrop, Jr. (1834-1905) Two Memoirs for The Massachusetts Historical Society in 1906. It is interesting that the material was published by John Wilson and Son, University Press, Cambridge, in 1906 and that Adams was using that press. That arouses thoughts of the Franklin Primer of the 1870’s, to be discussed elsewhere in this history.

It is evident that Adams knew Lyman personally. That is very interesting because Lyman had been a student of Agassiz and worked with Agassiz for some years, and obviously idolized him. Did Adams, who “reformed” the Quincy schools, with his brother John, also know the school-reformer, Agassiz? Lyman was also a cousin of Charles William Eliot, who became Harvard’s reforming president, and worked to have Eliot appointed president of Harvard. Eliot had also been a co-worker with Agassiz at Harvard while Eliot was an instructor there. Was the choice of Eliot part of the school improvement program being fostered by Agassiz?

Adams wrote (page 153-155):

“Already, even before graduation, Lyman had come under the influence of Professor Louis Agassiz. Intellectually and morally, even more perhaps than scientifically, he became one of that teacher’s disciples. As is well known, Agassiz was endowed with remarkable personal magnetism; he was, furthermore, always instinctively on the lookout for young men to attach, not to himself personally, but to his pursuits....

“For three years after graduation the acolyte worked under the eye of the master and in personal touch with him; and the impression Agassiz then made on him he recorded in a published paper nearly twenty years later, shortly after Agassiz had died (1873). [footnote: Atlantic Monthly, vol. xxxiii, pp. 221-220] He took his degree of S.B. in 1958....”

Adams wrote on page 165-166:

“By virtue of an act passed in 1865, the members of the Board of Overseers of the [Harvard] college were thenceforth elected by the alumni; and, in 1868, Lyman was chosen. His cousin and intimate personal friend from childhood, Charles W. Eliot, was chosen at the same time; but the name of the latter was shortly after submitted to the Board by the Corporation for confirmation as president of the University. Lyman contributed efficiently towards securing favorable action on the nomination. His assistance, too, was needed; for, strange as it now seems in view of what has since occurred, the choice of President Eliot was at the time by no means unopposed. [footnote: The final vote in the Board of Overseers was sixteen ayes and eight noes] It constituted in fact a new departure [Ed. Note “new departure” is the same phrase Adams used to describe his program in Quincy] for the University, entered upon with hesitation and, at the time, viewed in many and influential quarters with grave distrust.

“The nomination was ventured upon by the Corporation only as a last resort, and in a spirit close approaching desperation, - the result of an instinctive conviction, slowly and reluctantly

reached, that the old order of things was gone, - a radical organic change had come about in the community and body politic. To it the University must respond. Yet before Mr. Eliot was named, the position had been offered to at least one eminent gentleman more clearly in the line of established and therefore safe precedent; and declined most wisely. Thus no nomination at all similar had ever been sent down by the Corporation to startle the Overseers except that of Josiah Quincy, made close upon forty years before and with five administrations intervening....

“A young scientific instructor, of more than questionable theological orthodoxy, a professed believer in Darwinism, suspected of agnosticism even, was to be formally approved of as president of the typical Congregational University. The nomination was referred to a committee of the Board of Overseers; the report of that committee, when made, was not acted upon immediately, much eloquence was expended; many doubts expressed. Colonel Lyman was then thirty-six, and only recently chosen a member of the Board.... Colonel Lyman, however, not only took a broader view, but he knew his kinsman well. He was so placed also as to be able to render efficient aid. Thirty-seven years after the event, the outcome of the experiment does not need to be dwelt upon. The cousin’s faith has been justified.”

As Colonel Parker was later the “new broom” in the Quincy government schools, so was Eliot the “new broom” at Harvard. Eliot’s appointment must have pleased Agassiz and his supporters enormously. The appointment was probably made possible only by the 1865 change in selecting Harvard’s Board of Overseers which must have made quite a difference in its make-up by 1868. The change had apparently resulted in 36-year-old Lyman’s and presumably others’ appointments, to provide the sixteen “yes” votes out of the twenty-four finally cast. Who initially promoted that 1865 act which changed the method of appointing the Board of Overseers? Was it the Agassiz circle at Harvard?

There is a striking similarity between President Eliot’s move to drop required courses at Harvard some time after he arrived in 1869, and the move in Quincy in 1875 to drop the speller and grammar. Both Colonel Parker in the elementary schools in Quincy and President Eliot at Harvard proclaimed that learning could only be achieved by personal involvement and personal interest in subject matter that was meaningful from the student’s point of view. In a very real sense, however, such views were only an extension of Dugald Stewart’s views. In effect, Stewart had said that learning for its own sake, without personal involvement and personal use, was a bad thing. Obviously, all such views can be clearly identified as a “drowning of the books.”

According to the 1963 Encyclopedia Britannica, volume 8, page 282, Charles William Eliot (1834-1926) was an 1853 Harvard graduate who taught mathematics and science there from 1854 to 1863, after which he studied in Europe for two years and then went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he was a professor of analytical chemistry. This scientist, who must have worked earlier with Agassiz in the teaching of science at Harvard, became president of Harvard in 1869.

Concerning the teaching of reading, the former president of Harvard, Thomas Hill, LL.D, had been quoted in 1866 as praising both the Leigh print and the Zachos phonic system (thereby in effect endorsing “sound” and not “meaning” in teaching beginning reading).

In 1866, *First Lessons in Reading: A New Method of Teaching the Reading of English* was published in Boston by Lee & Shepard, written by Richard Soule, Associate Editor of Worcester’s Quarto Dictionary, and William A. Wheeler, Associate Editor of Webster’s Dictionaries. The Preface said:

“This book has been prepared by the subscribers substantially on the plan proposed by the Rev. John C. Zachos, and with his concurrence. Its aim is to teach the art of reading by enabling the pupil, in the first place, to analyze spoken words into their elementary sounds, and, in the second place, to recognize the signs used for these sounds in the ordinary printed text.”

Zachos had developed the system, as mentioned elsewhere, after working with freed slaves in the south in 1863. In the advertisement for the book on the back cover, appeared this statement:

“The Rev. Dr. HILL, President of Harvard University, says of it, ‘I consider your “First Lessons” a very superior work, and destined to very great usefulness.’”

Among the testimonials on the back of Leigh’s Pronouncing Edition of Hillard’s Primer, Brewer and Tileston, Boston: 1866, appeared the following:

“From Thomas Hill, LL. D., President of Harvard College.

“To teach an adult to read English from ordinary type is a matter of the very gravest difficulty; ranking, for ordinary men, very near to impossibility. With the aid of a phonetic dress, like Dr. Leigh’s beautiful and ingenious type, it becomes a matter of comparative ease.”

Mitford Mathews in his 1966 book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, wrote of the use of the Pitman phonetic print in the Boston area:

“From 1852 to 1860, an experiment involving eight hundred pupils was made with the new method in the schools of Waltham, Massachusetts. The chairman of the Waltham Committee responsible for the test was Thomas Hill, later President of Harvard University.”

Mathews added in a footnote:

“These experiments, especially the ones at Waltham, have often been described.”

Mathews cited Abraham Tauber’s *Spelling Reform in the United States*, Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, 1958; John Downing, *Experiments with An Augmented Alphabet*, London, 1962; Francis A. March, *Spelling Reform*, Washington, 1893, and Maurice Harrison, *Story of the Initial Teaching Alphabet*, New York, Toronto, London, 1963. Mathews said of the last book:

“This book is of unusual interest and value.”

That was obviously because of its historical content. However, Mathews said that the Waltham experiments had also been discussed by Thomas Hill in Hill’s book published in New York in 1882, *True Order of Studies*.

Therefore, in addition to having endorsed the Pitman phonetic print in the 1850’s, Hill had also given endorsements to the Leigh phonetic print and to the Zachos phonetic method by 1866, which latter two endorsements appear on 1866 textbooks published on those materials.

Background on that interesting one-time president of Harvard, Thomas Hill, who had endorsed THREE phonic or “sound” beginning reading programs, which means he implicitly rejected “meaning” beginning reading programs, is given in the *Biographical Dictionary of American Educators*, Volumes 1,2 and 3, Greenwood Press, edited by John F. Ohles, copyright 1978 by John F. Ohles, reproduction with permission of Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., Westport, Connecticut. Thomas Hill (1818-1891) graduated from Harvard in 1843 and from Harvard Divinity School in 1845. Hill was obviously a very clever man, since his biography stated:

“While at Harvard he invented the occulator for calculating eclipses and was awarded the Scott Medal by the Franklin Institute.”

After some years as a pastor in Massachusetts, Hill:

“...succeeded Horace Mann as president of Antioch College at Yellow Springs, Ohio (1859-62) and was president of Harvard University (1862-68). At Harvard, he initiated the academic council and introduced elective courses for students. He finished his active career as pastor of the First Church in Portland, Maine (1873-77)... Hill was a member of the Massachusetts legislature from Waltham (1871) and accompanied Louis Agassiz on an expedition to South America....”

That Agassiz expedition had ended in 1866, the same year that Hill had enthusiastically endorsed on the covers of two textbooks the use of “sound” in teaching beginning reading. One textbook used Zachos’ phonics, and the other, a Hillard text, used Leigh’s phonic print. Hill’s presidency at Harvard ended not long after, in 1868, for some unexplained reason.

William James had also been on that small Agassiz expedition to South America, so both James and Leigh had been intimate associates of Agassiz for a considerable period of time. The biography showed that Hill’s academic career, which had been on the fast track for years, had suddenly ended in 1868 when Hill was only 49 or 50 years old. Why did that happen? Did Hill perhaps see differently from those with “influence” such as Agassiz? Might such persons have been pleased to see Reverend Hill removed from the presidency of Harvard?

Hill certainly thought differently about the value of Leigh print than the “philosophers” to whom Philbrick referred, who are mentioned elsewhere and of whom James may have been one. Perhaps Reverend Hill thought differently from such people on other matters, as well. Judging from the titles of two of Hill’s books, *Geometry and Faith* (1849) and *Jesus, the Interpreter of Nature and Other Sermons* (1859), Reverend Hill was possibly a conservative Christian. Yet, as mentioned elsewhere, others at Harvard in that general time-frame such as Agassiz were being chastized for their enthusiastic attempts to commune with disembodied spirits (spiritualism). Perhaps clever but possibly conservative Hill just did not fit into the Agassiz post-Christian clique which apparently had the most influence.

The background on Leigh, the inventor of Leigh phonetic print, whose work Hill had endorsed, and whose work Philbrick promoted, is also included in the *Biographical Dictionary of American Educators*, edited by John F. Ohles, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1978. Edwin Leigh (1815-1890) was born in Maine and died in Kerr County, Texas. He graduated from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, and then from Andover Theological Seminary in Massachusetts. Leigh was ordained as a Congregational minister in 1839, so, like Hill, Leigh was a clergyman, but he also became a medical doctor. Leigh received the M. D. degree at Harvard in 1850, just as William James later did in 1869.

However, it is surprising to learn that Leigh worked at Harvard as an assistant to Louis Agassiz for two years. Therefore, Leigh must have known Agassiz intimately and very well indeed from about the time Agassiz first arrived at Harvard in 1848. Agassiz had been lecturing in this country since 1846. Like William Russell, who left Boston in 1828, abandoning both his wife and his bills, I have read somewhere that Agassiz in leaving Europe in 1846 abandoned his wife, and it is apparently true that Agassiz never returned to Europe before her death in 1850. His first wife was Cecile Braun, the sister of a botanist, and she died in 1850, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), Volume 1, page 320. It says nothing about where she died. Agassiz later married Elizabeth Cary Cabot of Boston.

Leigh’s work with Agassiz was apparently before Leigh’s graduation or almost immediately afterwards, as his biography said Leigh practiced medicine from 1851 to 1854. It stated:

“Leigh served churches at Kennebunk, Maine, Winchendon, Massachusetts, and Woonsocket, Rhode Island, and he taught school in Bristol, Rhode Island. He practiced medicine in Townsend, Massachusetts (1851-54) and then spent several years in commercial pursuits in St. Louis, Missouri. Leigh taught in the high school and at St. Louis City University for seven years. He designed a transitional phonetic system, described in his book, *Pronouncing Orthography* (1864). The system was designed to improve primary instruction in reading and assist in teaching English to foreigners. The system was introduced in the Clay School in St. Louis in 1866 by the principal, William Torrey Harris. Leigh’s program was later adopted in all St. Louis schools. He also wrote *Bird’s-Eye Views of Slavery in Missouri* (1862) and *New Guide to Modern Conversation* (1872). He edited many school readers in pronouncing orthography, including those of William H. McGuffey, G. S. Hillard, Epes Sargent, J. M. Watson, and Charles W. Sanders. An essay he wrote in 1849, ‘The Philosophy of Medical Science,’ was awarded the Boylston Prize for essays.”

Despite the above statement, the record is not clear on whether or not William Torrey Harris (1835-1909) was the person who initially promoted Dr. Leigh’s Code 10 phonetic print in St. Louis. (Harris ultimately became U. S. Commissioner of Education. According to the *Encyclopedia of Education*, Macmillan, 1971, he eventually published 500 books and articles.) Although it is probable Harris endorsed “sound” for teaching beginning reading by September, 1866, Harris’s school at that date may merely have been the one chosen for the trial on Leigh print, after that trial had already been approved by the school board. Harris may not have been the one who had asked for that board approval, which request obviously had to have been made some time, and probably some considerable time, before September, 1866, when the actual trial began. There was a two-year interval between the time Leigh’s book was published (1864) and the trial of his material in Harris’s St. Louis school (September, 1866). That was a considerable promotional period, but no record exists on who was carrying on that promotion. It may not have been Harris and Leigh in tandem, even though both were located in St. Louis in those years.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that Harris made the first St. Louis trial on Leigh print in his own St. Louis school. Yet something made Harris change his mind considerably less than twelve years later, when the Appleton readers were published in 1878, on which Harris had been the principal author. The Appleton 1878 readers were the first new American series to appear in many years WITHOUT an edition in Leigh print (Code 10), which means Harris had deliberately ignored Leigh when publishing his Appleton readers, even though Harris had been the first administrator in St. Louis to use Leigh’s print! At the very least, Harris must have had an unusually close personal relationship with Leigh as a result of that 1866 trial. Nevertheless, Harris snubbed Leigh when publishing his own readers. That snub was made even worse by the fact that Leigh-print editions on major reading series had become the norm by 1878! Harris’s Appleton material used phony phonics and heavy teaching to read by “meaning” (Code 3).

Harris had therefore made an extraordinary about-face, from 1866 when he used Leigh’s Code 10 “sound” materials, to some considerable time before 1878, when he first began to prepare the Appleton readers in which he used a Code 3 “meaning” approach. That must have been around 1875, the same year that Colonel Parker arrived in Quincy and began his own massive promotion of the “meaning” method to teach beginning reading. Parker’s interest in the “meaning” method was something that had never been noticeable in Parker’s own background, either. Parker’s career, before and after his service in the Civil War, had been as a school teacher and school administrator, and then as a middle-aged graduate student absorbing Hegelian and other ideas in Germany. (Harris was also a dedicated Hegelian!) Parker had returned from his graduate study in Germany immediately before being employed at Quincy by the Adams brothers.

Both Parker and Harris must have been drinking from the same philosophical fountain to come up with the same ideas about teaching beginning reading by “meaning” instead of by “sound.” That idea did not come from fuzzy old Hegel, even though Parker was an acknowledged Hegelian, and Harris had been promoting Hegelian philosophy for some years and had a network of “philosophers” in the country. By 1880, Harris had even founded a philosophical center in Massachusetts, right after he left... was fired in?... St. Louis, which kept right on using Leigh print which apparently means they could not have been using Harris’s new Appleton readers. Where, then, did the “meaning” ideas for teaching beginning reading come from? The answer appears obvious: it must have been from some one known to the Adams brothers and known to all these “philosophers” before 1875, and it must have been someone who had been vociferously promoting “meaning” in teaching. It is obvious that only one man fitted that description: Agassiz, himself.

Using Agassiz as a key name makes a lot of other associated names tumble out of the file drawers. Leigh, himself, had worked with Agassiz for two years before 1851. Agassiz almost certainly would have known of Leigh’s later invention of a phonetic print for beginning readers. Thomas Hill, President of Harvard, had enthusiastically endorsed Leigh print on the back cover of an 1866 Leigh edition of Hillard’s Primer, and Hill had also endorsed Zachos’ phonic system in the preface to Soule and Wheeler’s 1866 primer based on Zachos work. Considerably before he became Harvard’s president, Hill had been Chairman of the 1852 Waltham Committee (board of education) that had introduced Pitman phonetic print into Waltham’s schools. Yet Hill ceased being president of Harvard in 1868, only two years after Hill had returned from Agassiz’s South American expedition, where he would have been very intimately associated with Agassiz. Hill was replaced as Harvard president by Eliot, who had previously taught science courses at Harvard, where he would have had to have been an associate of Agassiz. In contrast to Hill, Eliot had never endorsed “sound” in beginning reading but instead was famous for promoting “real literature” (“meaning”) in children’s readers.

William James had also been on that South American expedition with Agassiz and Hill from 1865 to 1866. William James’ “sentence” ideas are the probable source for the sentence method of teaching beginning reading by “meaning” that was in common use by 1875. Yet the sentence method had never been heard of before 1870, when Farnham first introduced it on “psychological” grounds in Binghamton, New York. The fact that the sentence method was famous by 1875, only five years later, certainly suggests it was promoted by people with “influence.” It is a fact that E. A. Sheldon referred to the sentence method as one of the established methods, when Sheldon wrote his own 1875 reading series. The sentence method was used by Parker in Quincy in 1875 and by Harris in his Appleton readers in 1878.

The most notable tie of all to Agassiz is in poor old Superintendent Philbrick’s career. It was Philbrick who introduced Leigh print in Boston, and then later gave glowing reports on its success. It was Philbrick who told of hearing an Agassiz lecture in 1870 or 1871 which railed against the teaching of grammar. Agassiz opposed the study of formal grammar because he thought it was a waste of time. It was Philbrick who told of the adamant opposition of “philosophers” by 1871 to Leigh print, as will be shown. Philbrick was fired as Boston superintendent in 1878, and Leigh print was effectively outlawed by the new curriculum only a few months later.

Then the Leigh-print editions of the Hillard/Campbell primer appear to have been immediately replaced in 1878 in the Boston schools by an edition of the “Franklin” Hillard/Campbell primer in ordinary print. That edition had apparently been printed in 1877 (or possibly 1876) by University Press in Cambridge instead of by the usual press. University Press, although privately owned, was also Harvard’s official press. Some knowledgeable and foresighted person or persons (at Harvard?) had the non-Leigh-print edition printed by University Press apparently the year before, in 1877, (or possibly 1876) at a time when there was apparently no market in that area for such an ordinary print edition!

The fact that there was no market in the Boston area before 1878 for non-Leigh-print editions of the Hillard/Campbell texts certainly seems to be confirmed by the surviving Hillard/Campbell beginning readers I found in the Harvard library. The pre-Franklin Hillard/Campbell beginning readers which I found on the shelves from some time after 1866 up to 1877 were all in Leigh print. Yet all the Hillard/Campbell materials in the Harvard library which are NOT in Leigh print, including their Franklin materials, apparently date only from 1877 (or 1876).

Agassiz died in 1873, but these developments can be tied to his influence through the work of his devotees. Johonnot's further comments, quoted previously, make it clear that the Agassiz devotees amounted to an actual cult. If a flow chart with the known names of educators and activists were constructed so as to show the vectors of influence among those names from the mid-1860's, it would be astonishing how many vectors would point OUTWARD from Agassiz. Agassiz was a likely 1860's source for the promotion of the "meaning" method for teaching beginning reading in the 1870's, since Agassiz is a known source for the movement to drop the teaching of real grammar because it was supposed to be a waste of time to concentrate on mere empty "language." With that kind of reasoning, the teaching of reading by "sound" instead of by "meaning" would also qualify as concentrating on mere empty language. Philbrick reported Agassiz' comments after Philbrick heard Agassiz' 1871 lecture, in which Agassiz denounced the study of grammar as a waste of time. Philbrick's report is quoted elsewhere in this history.

Charles Francis Adams wrote in a Quincy school report about his own distaste for the teaching of grammar because it was supposed to be a waste of time. That Quincy annual report is presently in the Harvard library and is referred to elsewhere in this history, Adams may well have acquired his distaste for the study of formal grammar from Agassiz. It seems clear that Agassiz was the real inspiration for the so-called Quincy movement begun by the Adams brothers when they employed Colonel Parker in 1875.

The initial contact between Charles Francis Adams and Francis Wayland Parker (1837-1902) is supposed to have been serendipitous. When serving as school-committee members (i. e., board-of-education members), they are on record for publicly (and violently) opposing old school practices at the Quincy "graduation" in the spring of 1873, as discussed shortly. Yet the Quincy schools did not employ Parker until two years later, in the spring of 1875, when the Quincy schools were supposed to have been delighted to find such a man available. It seems unlikely that those two Adams brothers, as committee members, would have waited two long years to make the changes they wanted, and then only stumbled across Parker when they finally began to look for applicants for the new job of superintendent.

According to Webster's American Biographies, G. & C. Merriam Company, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1974, on which Charles Van Doren was the editor, Parker was born on October 9, 1837, in Bedford, New Hampshire. He was orphaned in his early childhood. A farmer raised him and allowed him to go to school for only about eight weeks each winter. At the age of thirteen, Parker left his guardian and went to school in Mount Vernon, New Hampshire. He was reportedly an excellent student, after which he began to teach school himself at the age of sixteen. At the age of 21, he became the principal of a school in Dayton, Ohio. Parker was reportedly greatly interested in the use of Object Lessons by E. A. Sheldon and used them in his school. Parker had therefore established, apparently before his service in the Union Army during the Civil War (which resulted in his title, Colonel), that he was greatly interested in such "improved" methods of teaching. (The shortcomings of Sheldon's well-meant improvements are discussed elsewhere in this history.)

The Van Doren biographical article stated further that, after the Civil War:

"[Parker] traveled to Germany in 1872 to observe the teaching methods and liberal school environment pioneered by Friedrich Froebel... Pestalozzi and others, and, much impressed,



returned to the United States in 1875 to become, at the [invitation] of Charles Francis Adams, Jr., superintendent of schools in Quincy, Massachusetts.... from 1880 to 1883 in Boston, he inaugurated his program of progressive [study] sometimes called the “Quincy Movement.” Called to Chicago as principal of the Cook County Normal School in 1883, he revamped the entire course....”

The tie with Charles Francis Adams, Jr. (1835-1915) therefore presumably dated only from 1875. In the same Van Doren biographies, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., was described as an “Historian and civic leader” who was born in Boston on May 27, 1835, the grandson of John Quincy Adams, son of Charles Francis Adams, and the brother of John, Henry and Brooks Adams. He graduated from Harvard in 1856 and joined the Bar in 1858. During the Civil war, he spent three and a half years in the Union Army, advancing from the rank of first lieutenant to the rank of colonel. In June, 1865, he left as a brigadier general, after which, for reasons of health, he spent a year touring in Europe. The biography stated that Adams:

“...turned to the study of railroad corruption.... His *New Departure in the Common Schools of Quincy*, 1879, went through six editions.... He served on the Harvard Board of overseers for 24 years....”

References also show that in 1903, the brother of Charles Francis Adams, Jr., Brooks Adams, wrote *The Theory of Social Revolutions*. Yet two of the Adams’ brothers, John and Charles, were definitely concerned with one kind of “social revolution” thirty years earlier, an educational one, in Quincy. C. F. Adams, Jr., had been a colonel and finally a brigadier general in the Union Army by June, 1865. It is therefore entirely possible that he knew another colonel in that army, Colonel Parker, by 1865, long before the presumed accidental meeting of the two men about January, 1875. If so, Adams would have known by 1865 of Parker’s untraditional views about education, such as his adoption of Sheldon’s version of object lessons. If C. F. Adams, Jr., had toured Europe for his health for a year in 1866 or so, he very likely would have heard of other burgeoning educational developments there, of which the English version of object lessons used by Sheldon was just one. It is therefore possible that C. F. Adams, Jr., had some influence on Parker’s European study tour only about six years later, immediately after which “New Broom” Parker was hired by Adams at Quincy, largely because of his “impressive” European background. Did C. F. Adams, Jr., arrange in 1872 to groom Parker for the Quincy job?

Presumably Parker received an unexpected legacy at that time, which he immediately spent on his European study tour. Yet that story does not ring true. Parker had been an impoverished orphan, but his middle-aged study tour was supposed to have been financed because of a legacy he had suddenly received from an aunt who had obviously not been impoverished. Yet, why didn’t that aunt take Parker in when he was an impoverished orphaned child, instead of letting him be raised by some man who was not even a relative? How many aunts would turn away their brother’s or sister’s impoverished orphaned child from their homes and send that child to live with an outsider? No matter how limited that aunt’s means may have been when Parker was a little boy, it would have been only natural for her (or the relatives with whom she may have been living) to find a place in the home for his bed and a place for him at the table at meals. Therefore, it seems very possible Parker’s “legacy” in 1872 may have come, not from a strange aunt, but from a benefactor who wished to remain anonymous.

Parker’s “Quincy Movement” eventually became such powerful “change-agent” material that it has had few peers until the advent of “whole language” (although that fact has now dropped into education history’s black hole). Yet “foundations” did not exist about 1870, as they do today, to provide ample funds to finance such change-agent projects. Therefore, funds to finance change-agent projects had to come from within the ranks of the change-agents themselves. The record shows two other cases in that time frame, besides Parker’s possible case, in which financial support seemed to have such connections.

The first case concerns G. Stanley Hall's study tour about the same time as Parker's. His tour was unexpectedly financed through an acquaintance by a loan from a man previously unknown to him, as discussed by Anthony Sutton in America's Secret Establishment, which anecdote was based on Hall's own testimony.

A second example in that time frame of unexpected largesse from a total stranger concerned Louis Agassiz. Harvard Library has a reprint of an article by Burt G. Wilder, "Agassiz at Penikese," which does not show either its date or publication, but Harvard stamped it "October 20, 1900." Comments in the article also date it to about that time. The author referred to his previous article in the Nation for September 11, 1873, and David S. Jordan's article, "Agassiz at Penikese" in the Popular Science Monthly, April, 1892. Both Jordan and Wilder had been students at Agassiz' famous and exceedingly influential summer school in natural history on Penikese Island in 1873. On December 14, 1872, Agassiz had announced that he would have a summer program in natural history for teachers at Nantucket. What is of interest in Wilder's circa 1900 article, however, is the following comment:

"In the following spring the munificent offer by an utter stranger, Mr. John Anderson, of New York, of the island of Penikese in Buzzard's Bay, together with a dwelling-house and barn and an endowment of fifty thousand dollars, not only led to the change of location, but enabled Agassiz to carry out certain parts of his plan more fully."

Was Parker's "legacy" real, or did Parker also have his tour financed by some one else, just as Hall's unexpected loan financed his trip, and Agassiz' unexpected gift financed the famous and enormously influential Penikese Island school? All three men, Agassiz, Hall, and Parker, eventually made an enormous impact on American culture, which means all three men were ballyhooed in the media of the time. That suggests busy public relations activities on someone's or some group's part. If all three cases represented a conscious "cultural" investment, then it must be admitted that all three "cultural" investments later paid off handsomely.

Agassiz appears to be the root cause of Colonel Parker's much-publicized work in Quincy, Massachusetts, in which Parker endorsed "thought" ("meaning") instead of mere "language" ("sound") in the teaching of reading, spelling, and grammar. (In practice, of course, that meant dumping the real teaching of reading, spelling, and grammar!)

Certainly Agassiz was the real inspiration for the teaching of hands-on "natural history" in Quincy. Yet I have never seen any reference whatsoever that would suggest the Agassiz clique approached nature with a loving compassion instead of mechanically and coldly. Some years later, Thorndike, who had been William James' student, wrote an essay criticizing what he considered sentimentality in science teaching, but which I would consider normal, healthy human compassion. The record seems consistently to suggest that the movers-and-shakers, such as Agassiz, James, Thorndike and Cattell, were a remarkably repellent group of people.

Excerpted comments from the letters of William James, now in a summary volume in the Houghton James Collection at Harvard, suggest that even William James did not find Agassiz an attractive personality. In his letter home of May 3, 1865, while on the Agassiz Amazon expedition, James reported that Agassiz' aims were simultaneously both charlatan-like and worthwhile, and that Agassiz gave the impression that he wanted to be all-knowing. Yet James found Agassiz personally fascinating and admitted that he organized the Amazon project beautifully. Of those on the trip, which included 11 other assistants, James considered that the only worthwhile man was Agassiz. Nevertheless, James' desire to be with Agassiz was lessening, despite Agassiz' mental gifts, and James considered Agassiz to be selfish and inconsiderate to others.

Yet William James' opinion of Agassiz had sharply worsened by the time of William James' February 3, 1868[?] letter to his brother Henry. William James commented that he found Jean Renan's "Questions Contemporaines" to have many worthwhile comments and points of view, and then added the astonishing remark that he considered Agassiz, whom he actually called a scoundrel, to be not worthy to wipe the shoes of Renan!

The Harvard editor of these notes had added the initial, (A), before Agassiz' name, to indicate that James' comment concerned Agassiz' son, Alexander. Yet Agassiz' son had graduated from Harvard several years earlier, and, at that time and for some time after, was employed in the Midwest. Therefore, Agassiz' son could only rarely have visited Cambridge in those years, if at all, and probably almost never visited Harvard where the younger William James was then a student. No indication has been given anywhere in any reference work that I ever saw that James had even met Agassiz' son, and Agassiz' son had certainly never been located geographically in William James' everyday Harvard world so that they could have bumped into one another. Yet, it IS a known fact that James spent MONTHS in the intimate company of the senior Agassiz while on the Amazon expedition. It seems certain that William James meant the senior Agassiz in his blistering remarks in his 1868(?) letter to his brother Henry, particularly in view of James' negative earlier remarks in his letter home in 1865.

Therefore, the above comments demonstrate that William James' private opinion of Agassiz was totally disapproving by 1868 after James had been in close association with Agassiz for months on the Amazon expedition. However, it differed greatly from James' public opinion of Agassiz, demonstrated by the paper given by William James after Agassiz' death, which is quoted elsewhere in this history. The fact that William James published that paper confirms that he was supportive of the general work of Agassiz, despite his obvious personal dislike of the man. The result, however, of such intellectual dishonesty as he and probably others demonstrated was the unofficial canonization of Agassiz, which was apparently anything but deserved.

Why Hill left the presidency of Harvard, apparently in 1868, is unknown. He remained active, however, for many years, as noted previously. In contrast to Hill, the next president of Harvard, Eliot, actively campaigned in the 1890's for grammar school readers which contained real literature ("meaning"), instead of what he considered disjointed scraps. Eliot was clearly concerning himself with "meaning" but ignoring "sound." Eliot was also repeating the theme of Professor Pillans and the Scottish activists in 1827 who belittled just such collections of excerpts, as discussed on pages 8 and 9 of Letters Addressed to the Parochial Schoolmasters of Scotland... By A Schoolmaster, Edinburgh: 1829, referred to previously. To discount such objections, the "Schoolmaster" had quoted the poet Robert Burns, from Currie's Life of Burns:

"The earliest composition that I recollect taking pleasure in... was the Visions of Mirza, and a hymn of Addison's, beginning,

"How are thy servants blest, O Lord!"

"I particularly remember one half stanza, which was music to my boyish ear:

"For though in dreadful whirls we hung,  
High on the broken wave - "

"I met with those pieces in Mason's English Collection, one of MY SCHOOL BOOKS."

What was good enough for the national poet of Scotland was not, however, good enough for Charles William Eliot, the new president of Harvard.

One of Eliot's published works listed by the Encyclopedia Britannica in their brief biography is *Educational Reform, Essays and Addresses - 1869-1897* (published in 1898). Eliot therefore started writing on educational reform by 1869. By 1869, winds for educational change were clearly blowing strongly in Cambridge.

One of Agassiz' public lectures in the 1870-1871 school year referred to elsewhere concerned the contempt he felt for the study of language. It was in that same school year of 1870-1871 that John Quincy Adams first appeared on the Quincy school committee. By 1873, John Quincy Adams occupied the apparently new post of chairman, to judge from the covers of the Quincy schools annual reports, and his brother, Charles Frances Adams, Jr., had joined him on the committee.

It is easy to find the connecting thread from the Adams brothers to Agassiz through Agassiz' contempt for study of grammar. In the 1872-1873 Quincy school report, on pages 14 and 15, a section appears headed "Grammar." On Harvard's copy of this report, someone has marked this section, in an old-style penmanship, "C. F. Adams, Jr." He was on the committee at that time. The section reads:

"Under the division of duties during the past year, the examination of all the schools in grammar was assigned to me. As a general conclusion from my observations during that time, I am compelled to say that, although there is abundant evidence of much honest labor and drilling on the part both of instructors and scholars, yet, as now taught in our schools, English grammar is a singularly unprofitable branch of instruction. The children are indeed taught the names of the parts of speech, and are drilled to parse the words of an ordinary sentence, - in the better schools they may even attain to some slight knowledge of analysis. I am, however, wholly unable to see that this labor at present results in any thing more than a dry, useless, and unattractive mental discipline.... As now conducted... I greatly doubt whether one child in one hundred derives any practical benefit from it...."

For sheer meanness, it would be difficult to surpass the performance of the Adams brothers in the schools of Quincy at the 1873 year-end program which served as a graduation. To compound the offensive performance, it was actually boasted about in the activists' publication, *The School Journal*, (not Bardeen's superior *The School Bulletin*) for March 24, 1900, on page 316. At that 1873 spring ceremony, the article stated that the eighth-grade class was gathered, all dressed up in the presence of the parents and important town officials, for the ritual "examination" given by the teacher at the end of their schooling. Obviously, answers and material had been carefully selected for what was actually a public show. Instead of choosing some quiet and less humiliating time to begin to arrange educational changes if he felt they were necessary, this is what the article said John Quincy Adams did:

"The first class of children, well-dressed, nervous, and eager, were awaiting the routine questions, ready with their well-drilled answers. Proud parents and dignified representative citizens sat around the walls to see the great American common school justify the pride of the nation. The teacher, a man of most approved traditions, who had passed triumphantly thru many similar ordeals, was about to begin his questioning, when Mr. John Quincy Adams, president of the school board [sic: committee chairman] and descendant of the famous house of Quincy Adams, stepped to the front and said, 'The committee will take charge of this examination, Mr. Teacher.' 'But, sir,' stammered the appalled teacher, 'I have prepared - in short - I think no one but himself can know so well - ' 'The committee will conduct this examination,' continued Mr. Adams calmly, and the discomfited teacher sat down. The examination accordingly proceeded and the school went to pieces."

Instead of being ashamed of such a vile performance, they actually boasted of it. The School Journal further recorded:

“They felt the need of the educational expert.... But they found the man made to their hand in the person of Colonel Parker, newly returned to his native land, shining in coat of German mail, seeking some evil to overcome, some beneficent imprisoned power to set free. Then things began to happen. The set program was first dropped, then the speller, the reader, the grammar, and the copy book. The alphabet, too, was treated with slight deference; it was not introduced to the children by name, but they were set at once to work making words and sentences.... The plan succeeded beyond the fondest hopes of its promoters. The quiet Massachusetts town became the goal for inquiring teachers from all over the country.”

As is obvious from the above quotation, Parker was also a sight-word man. Parker’s dropping of phonics (“sound”) and endorsing the reading of whole sentences (“meaning”) was certainly in agreement with Agassiz’ views. Agassiz rejected so-called “empty” language and promoted “understanding” of concrete facts, with emphasis on the facts of natural history.

It should also be noted that grammar which was being dropped at Quincy was a particular target for Agassiz. The source of the entire famed Quincy Movement which made a point of dropping grammar study and which elevated the study of natural history was most probably a group of “movers and shakers” at the naturalist Agassiz’ Harvard.

Colonel Parker instituted in the Quincy schools what today would be called progressive education or open classroom methods (the last of which, if properly followed, are indeed worthwhile). The word, “progressive,” should be carefully noted for its Hegelian content. Educational “movers and shakers” of that period were almost uniformly Hegelian in their philosophy, despite the silliness of that philosophy. In the Hegelian view of reality, a thesis is supposed to grapple with its antithesis, until both finally blend into a synthesis. After this “progress,” the synthesis then becomes a new thesis, which must in turn grapple with its own new antithesis, until both “progress” to their next level by forming a new synthesis, and so on eternally. Hegel is the apparent source for the “progress” fallacy with which we have been saddled. Those who believe in the certainty of cultural “progress” and who believe in the absolute necessity for cultural change are Hegelian fellow-travelers, as Karl Marx was, himself. (There is manifestly such a thing as material technical progress, where one material level is obviously the source of improved technology at the next material level, but “culture” is not material.) However, Hegelianism was too outlandish for William James, who rejected it but who found other dismal intellectual corridors down which to wander.

William James’ personal friend and student for an 1878 doctorate, G. Stanley Hall, later was Cattell’s, Dewey’s and Jastrow’s professor at Johns Hopkins. (All were psychologists.) A record exists of at least one visit by Hall to the Quincy schools, sometime between 1875 and 1880. Colonel Parker mentioned this visit in an anecdote in Parker’s silver jubilee article in *The School Journal*, April 28, 1900, page 451.

“A naturalist took the principalship of the Willard school. He brought specimens of stuffed birds. One day Charles Francis Adams and G. Stanley Hall were visiting the school. On request, the principal brought in a stuffed duck which the students had never seen. I asked the children (it was the third grade) to write about the duck. They went at it with a will, and their slates were soon filled with good writing, correct spelling, and withal excellent thought. The visitors watched the work with interest. Mr. Adams turned to me and said, “You are teaching natural history.” “No,” I replied, “this is language.” So it was, with a bit of thought behind it....”

The psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, was a close associate and graduate student of the psychologist, William James. Hall was also well enough acquainted with Charles Frances Adams so that he visited the Quincy schools in his company some time between 1875 and 1880, in which year Parker left. It is not unreasonable to assume that William James might also have visited the Quincy schools in that period of time and to assume that James was therefore personally familiar with Quincy methods.

The April 7, 1900, issue of *The School Journal*, page 363, published a testimonial letter on Parker by G. Stanley Hall, which said,

“The Quincy movement began just at the time when the Boston educators under the influence of Superintendent Philbrick had reached... a sense of finality which seemed to make further progress impossible....”

Note the “further progress.” Hall had absorbed Hegelian nonsense while studying in Germany. G. Stanley Hall was an instructor in English at Harvard the first year Parker was at Quincy (1875-1876) and “often took walks” with William James, according to Gay Wilson Allen in *William James, a Biography*, Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1967, page 211. Both could talk about their trips to Germany, and Hall returned to Germany at the end of that year to study with the psychologist Wilhelm Wundt in Leipzig, with whom James had briefly studied in 1868, as mentioned elsewhere in this history. After this, Hall returned to Harvard to take his Ph. D. from James in 1878. It is very likely that both James and Hall knew of the Quincy work as early as the first year, 1875-1876. Hall had a book published in 1874 with the title, *How to Teach Reading and What to Read in Schools*. That 1874 date is cited, presumably correctly, in Edmund Burke Huey’s *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, 1908, although other references show a date of 1886 and Hall’s publisher as Heath of Boston. If Huey’s date of 1874 for the publication of Hall’s book on the teaching of reading is correct, and there is no reason to think it is not, then the subject of Parker’s ideas on how to teach beginning reading in Quincy may very well have been discussed on these walks by Hall and James. James may have become involved with Hall because of Hall’s 1874 book about reading, and James may later have become involved with Cattell because of Cattell’s 1880’s experiments on reading. Cattell began his experiments under Hall, who was Cattell’s professor at Johns Hopkins in 1883, five years after Hall took his Ph. D. at Harvard where William James had been Hall’s professor.

It had been Superintendent Philbrick who had moved the Leigh phonic method into Boston, with startling success, but Philbrick was fired as of March 1, 1878, after having been superintendent of schools, as shown by the annual reports, since December 22, 1856, with a brief period off because of health problems from September 1, 1874 to February 18, 1876. Only a few months after his having been fired, in the late spring of 1878, the sight-word method was approved for the Boston schools, aping the Quincy curriculum that had been installed in 1875 under the Adams brothers. However, since Colonel Parker, the Superintendent of Schools in Quincy, did not leave Quincy to become a Boston official until 1880, Parker could not have had any real part in writing the 1878 Boston curriculum which endorsed teaching beginners to read whole sentences for meaning and which had rules which made it impossible any longer to use Leigh phonics charts at beginning first grade to teach letter sounds.

It is astonishing that no mention of Leigh or of phonics appeared at all in that Boston 1878 curriculum guide, a few months after Philbrick was fired. “Movers and shakers” are usually sneaky: they do not permit an open, free forum on any area they are trying to control, which free forum would give their opposition a fair chance. The “movers and shakers” had the appalling gall in 1878 to dismiss the Leigh phonics from Boston without even mentioning it by name, even though it had been voluntarily adopted for first grades at that time by almost every primary school in Boston! It is evident unnamed persons who opposed the Leigh method had seized control of the Boston School Committee in 1878.

Who were they? Presumably, it would be easy enough to get the names of the actual Committee members but such names might be relatively meaningless today. However, it would be very difficult to get the names of those people who promoted the election of the new Committee members and through them obtained influence on the schools. The names of those promoters might not be meaningless today.

An apparent associate of the “movers and shakers,” whoever they were, was young Henry Cabot Lodge (1850-1924) who would have been about 28 in the spring of 1878. In Boston in 1879, Lodge published *Six Popular Tales, Selected and Arranged by Henry Cabot Lodge*. At the top of the title page appeared the words, “Authorized for Use in the Boston Public Schools,” so Lodge definitely had some association with the Boston schools after the spring of 1878. The tales included *Jack the Giant-Killer*, *Jack and the Bean-Stalk*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Puss in Boots*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella*, all obviously suited to the primary grades. In his “Preface,” Lodge said:

“The chief object of the editor was to obtain for this little collection the oldest English texts. These were found in the great Boswell collection of chapbooks and penny pamphlets of the last century owned by Harvard College. From these, and from the versions in Halliwell’s collection of English tales, the texts here given have been taken with but two exceptions. For *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Cinderella*, the editor has, in the main, followed the texts of Mrs. Craik’s “*Fairy Book*,” the best of modern English collections, but he has thought it desirable to make many alterations in these versions. Changes in the old texts have been made very sparingly.... Aug. 11, 1879.”

It is interesting that Lodge used Harvard’s resources to improve the curriculum in Boston schools, after Philbrick’s dismissal, suggesting another possible tie to someone in Agassiz’ group at Harvard. James was teaching at Harvard in that year, 1879, and Agassiz’s influence was undoubtedly still strong there, six years after his death. What moved Lodge to collect and publish these stories and to have them approved for use in the Boston schools in 1879, only a year after Philbrick was fired? Why would a 28- or 29-year-old-man of the privileged class in Boston in 1879 suddenly become interested in digging into the Harvard collections to compile and publish fairy tales for the Boston public primary schools?

An answer is suggested by School Document No. 16, Superintendent’s Report, September 2, 1878, part of School Document No. 25, Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston, 1878. The new Superintendent, Samuel Eliot, who had recently replaced Philbrick said on page 13:

“It will be easier to carry out the revised course of study if that part of it depending upon text-books can have some better books to depend on. Indeed, one might say that it would be more successful in some respects without any books, or any of a technical character. Spelling-books, for instance, block the way they profess to open. Children should learn to spell partly from their reading-books, partly from the other books they use, and partly from oral and written exercises.... The work is to a large extent unconsciously done, and there is no better way of doing such work as spelling, at least after its first stages are passed.

“On the other hand, while dispensing with some books, we should introduce others, particularly books to be read. We not only want more reading-books, but different ones; not Readers, not fragments of writings, but writings, however brief, - a story or a history, a book of travels or a poem, - associated as vividly as possible with the author who wrote them, not a mere book-maker who has patched together pieces of them. With such reading books, intelligently used, the inability of our children to read at sight and with expression would become less common and less painful. As for grammar, it would almost develop itself from such reading as this.... As they grow older they will be helped by a general, yet perfectly trustworthy, treatise on grammar, provided they are kept from committing any of it to memory.”

The above comments by Boston Superintendent of Schools Samuel Eliot in September, 1878, suggest that Lodge was merely filling a kind of Boston-schools' work-order with his 1879 collection of old stories for which Lodge used the Harvard library. However, the similarity in Samuel Eliot's ideas on "readers" and the ideas of Harvard's President Eliot, and the similarity in Samuel Eliot's opinion on grammar, and the opinion of Harvard's Agassiz, should be noted. The influence of members of the Harvard faculty on the Boston schools by 1878 appears obvious and enormous. Samuel Eliot appears to have been the "new broom" for the Agassiz clique in Boston in 1878, as Colonel Parker had been the Adams brothers' "new broom" in Quincy in 1875. It should be duly noted that William James was on the staff of Harvard in September, 1878, when Superintendent Samuel Eliot made these comments. Furthermore, James had lived across the street from President Eliot of Harvard until James' marriage the previous July, and had accompanied Agassiz some twelve years before on Agassiz's expedition to the Amazon. In addition, the two Adams' brothers involved in the ruination of the Quincy schools had a third brother, Henry Adams, who was not concerned with the Quincy schools but who was on the faculty of Harvard and who was a close friend of William James' brother, Henry James.

Henry Cabot Lodge, who had filled the Boston schools' "need" for a "meaningful" reading book in 1879, was certainly an associate of the Adams brothers. Leon Edel mentioned a letter that Henry Adams wrote (which Edel partially quoted in *Henry James - The Conquest of London: 1870-1881*.) That letter certainly suggests that the Adamses, the Jameses, and the Lodges were close associates. Edel commented on page 377 that Henry James, William James' brother, had seen a great deal of Henry Adams and his wife, Clover Adams, while they were in London. Edel said further that Henry Adams had written from London to Henry Cabot Lodge in America on the Sunday afternoon of February 22, 1880. Adams had said in that letter to Lodge that Henry James was standing on the rug in front of the Adams' fireplace in London, with his hands beneath his coat-tails, chatting with Adams' wife, Clover, and Adams remarked to Lodge that it was just as if they were all back home in Marlborough Street in Boston.

Henry Adams was never concerned with the Quincy schools as his brothers were, but the above letter does show a close and apparently long-standing association between members of the Lodge and the Adams families and strongly suggests that Henry Cabot Lodge was also acquainted with Henry James, William James' brother.

In 1893, Lodge was elected to the U. S. Senate where he served for 31 years until 1924. His highly successful career paralleled the spectacularly successful career of Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., a close friend since at least 1865 of William James and Henry James (*Henry James - The Untried Years: 1843-1870*, by Leon Edel, Avon Books, New York: 1953, 1978, pages 229-231). One of the young men in 28-year-old William James' metaphysical club in 1870 (mentioned by Edel) possibly was Holmes. However, William James' opinion of his close friend, Holmes was apparently tempered with reservations. According to a volume which summarizes much of the James family correspondence, which volume is in the Houghton Library at Harvard, William James said in one of his early letters that the sizable gifts of O. W. Holmes, Jr. were spoiled by Holmes' egotism.

According to Edel, Henry James did not meet Henry Adams until about 1870 (*Henry James - The Conquest of London: 1870-1881*, page 20). However, that means that after 1870 there was a tie between the Adams brothers and the James brothers, between the school-improving Adams brothers and Henry James whose brother, the young psychologist, William James, still lived with him in the family home. The change-agents in the Boston schools in 1878 were certainly in some way tied to the Adams brothers of the Quincy schools, and included young Lodge, at least to the extent of Lodge's writing a school text for the Boston School Committee in 1879. The Boston change-agents therefore may also have included William James.



Apart from the Boston School Committee's unfair and irrational opposition to Leigh phonics, Philbrick's dismissal as the Boston Superintendent of Schools was grossly unfair, since Philbrick was an extraordinarily competent man.

One confirmation of his competence, for instance, is the following, reported in the Annual School Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston - 1876 (pages 243-244). At the Vienna Exhibition in 1873, Boston had been one of only four cities which received the Grand Diploma of Honor for their exhibits (Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and Boston). Dr. John W. Hoyt of Wisconsin was quoted as saying:

“(The Boston exhibit) reflected much honor upon the efficient superintendent and honorary commissioner, Dr. J. D. Philbrick, who was at once the moving spirit and executing hand in the whole matter, and fairly entitled the City of Boston to the very handsome recognition, in the form of the Grand Diploma of Honor, which it received on the UNANIMOUS recommendation of the International Jury.”

Since Parker was receiving highly favorable (and probably programmed) publicity before 1881, this should be kept in mind when reading the following comments on January 8, 1881, in *The Standard*, a morning paper in Syracuse:

“Superintendent Philbrick has written an ugly letter in criticism of the public schools of Quincy, Massachusetts. These schools owe their present fame to the successful efforts of Superintendent Parker, who was... supported by John Quincy Adams, Jr., and by other intelligent and influential gentlemen. The marked success at Quincy did much to throw a shadow over the Boston schools which were then under the supervision of Mr. Philbrick. In the subsequent efforts made to advance the schools of Boston, a number of changes were made, in the midst of which Mr. Philbrick lost his place....”

Poor Philbrick and his phonics lacked the public relations resources of the experts of the day, so phonics (and the children) lost out again.

However, after the public relations releases from 1875 to 1883 had faded away, little attention appears to have been given to actual achievement in Quincy. Parker's ultimate successor by 1901 in the position of Superintendent of Schools in Quincy was Frank Edgar Parlin, and Parlin had apparently held the post for some years before that date. Parker had thrown out spelling, and so apparently did the superintendent or superintendents who immediately followed Parker in Quincy, but Parlin not only put spelling back into the schools but wrote his own speller, *The Quincy Word List, Over Six Thousand of the Commonest English Words Carefully Graded for Elementary Schools*, published by The Morse Company, New York and Boston. It is interesting to hear what Parlin had to say of the famed “success” in Quincy of teaching children to read without either real phonics or ABC word-spelling. Parlin began his “Preface”:

“Some years ago the author of this Word List, being convinced that spelling learned incidentally, by absorption, was a failure, prepared a list of words for use in the schools under his supervision without any intention of making a ‘spelling book,’ but repeated calls for the list have induced him to make it available by publishing it.”

The 1901 Quincy superintendent was not the only one writing a speller who testified to spelling failure from the “new” Quincy methods. In 1889, J. H. Stickney published her primary speller for second grade and higher, *Word by Word*. Stickney said in her “Preface:”

“The action of the mind in learning to read and spell has been of late years a favorite study of educators. Theories have been advanced and experiments made which, though disastrous in certain lines, have been on the whole of great value.

“Reading has undoubtedly gained both fluency and expression; loss falling, if anywhere, on the strength of impression - a fault not wholly chargeable to the school. But in many quarters a generation of bad spellers are testifying to failure somewhere, and the most zealous advocates of incidental spelling recognize the need of specializing the work at that stage in a child’s life when forms and images are most readily fixed...

“Since the agitation of the subject came through educators from whom have been derived some of the best fruits of educational progress, it will be useful to look closely into the grounds upon which the work of the spelling-book was first banished and is now being restored to the schools.”

Stickney made the same admission that Horace Mann had implicitly made some fifty years before: activists had ruined spelling. American spelling had actually been pretty bad ever since 1826 when the ABC syllable “sound” method was dropped at first grade and replaced by the ABC word “meaning” method, but it became, as Stickney said, “disastrous” after the Quincy methods threw out spellers at all grades after 1875.

It should be noted here, however, that most (but NOT all) children taught to read by TRULY phonic methods in the first six months of first grade may not need spellers after first grade. Some truly phonic programs are Sue Dickson’s Sing, Spell, Read and Write, Samuel Blumenfeld’s materials, Sister Monica Folzer’s materials, Char Lockhart’s materials, Mona McNee’s materials from England, and the Open Court series (but certainly NOT the Scribner’s series). The reason that formal spelling books may not be needed for most children using these programs is that the great majority of children taught to read phonically can file correct spellings in their visual memories with astonishing ease, just from frequent exposure to them in reading. Yet most children taught by the sight-word method or by phony phonics have only fuzzy visual memories of most word forms.

I know this to be so from my twenty-three years of teaching experience, since I have corrected so many thousands of primary-grades “essays” from children who had been taught with or without real phonics in first grade. It is my conjecture that children taught by Code 10 programs in first grade file their word memories through the left angular gyrus, which would operate sequentially, since it is on the left, “sequential” side of the brain. The sequential “sound” structure of words would be instantly apparent to such children. I further conjecture that children taught by Code 1 or other low programs file their memories through the right angular gyrus. The right side of the brain operates globally, or “all at once.” That works against the child’s remembering words by their sound structure.

The kinds of misspellings I found children making in the primary grades (massive for sight-word “meaning”-trained children, minimal for phonic “sound”-trained children) support my conjectures.

As early as 1878, the Syracuse, New York, schools had already succumbed to the publicity on Quincy. In Edward Smith’s *A History of the Schools of Syracuse*, 1893, he reported the following concerning Syracuse activities in 1878:

“At a meeting of the Board April 4, 1878...considerable (attention) having been attached to the schools of Quincy under the supervision of Colonel F. W. Parker, a committee consisting of J. W. Durston and the superintendent was appointed to visit those schools to observe the work done by the pupils, the methods employed, etc., and to report to this Board. The committee returned

from the visit impressed with the personality and energy of Colonel Parker and with the results he had accomplished in the schools under his charge. He was filled with enthusiasm and energy and believed in breaking away from routine practices, in discarding everything which was merely formal in school methods and in so conducting all school work as to stimulate observation and awaken thought. His most efficient work at that time had been directed toward better methods teaching reading, spelling and arithmetic and in doing this work to throw the burden of it upon the pupil. Composition and sight reading were included in language and common business transactions in arithmetic. The course of [Syracuse] study was revised and some of the principles advocated by the superintendent and teachers of the Quincy schools incorporated. Miss Belle Thomas, a Quincy teacher, was made principal of the primary department in Madison School [Syracuse].”

The phrase, “...to stimulate observation and awaken thought” was, of course, pure Agassiz doctrine.

It is significant that the Franklin Primer, not in Leigh print. was in use in the Syracuse schools as late as 1888, as shown by a Syracuse library copy of the Webster-Franklin Primer (the same book with Webster’s spellings), which had apparently originally belonged to a teacher. That Syracuse copy had written inside on the fly leaf in an adult’s flowing hand, “Josephine E. Lane, Syracuse, N. Y., Porter School, 10th Ward, Feb. 14th, 1888.” The copy did not use Leigh print. Belle Thomas arrived to teach in Syracuse following the Syracuse school authorities’ visit to Quincy about April, 1878. Some time after her arrival, Belle Thomas may well have been responsible for bringing into the Syracuse schools the non-Leigh-print “meaning” edition of the Franklin Primer that arrived in the Boston schools in September, 1878. That non-Leigh-print edition (but eventually with Webster’s spellings) remained in use in Syracuse for about ten years or more.

So Colonel Parker’s “New Education,” a probable tribute to Agassiz’s influence, was firmly in place in 1878 in the city of Syracuse, New York, only three years after Parker’s arrival in the small town of Quincy, Massachusetts. One does have to admire the public relations job that was done.

## Chapter 24

### Was the Deliberate Promotion of a Deaf-Mute Method for Hearing Children in the 1870's Originally William James' Misguided Idea?

James McKeen Cattell's 1880's experiments on sight-words are discussed in William James' 1890 psychology book. It is evident from the oldest surviving letter from James to Cattell which is presently in the Cattell manuscript files at the Library of Congress that they were close friends by the date of that December 30, 1893, letter, and that earlier correspondence must have been missing. They would, of course, have known each other professionally from the fact that the American Psychological Association had been formed on July 8, 1892 in G. Stanley Hall's study at Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts<sup>22</sup>, but one does not address a mere casual professional associate in the tone of that letter of December 30, 1893.

The letter had a teasing, mocking, tone which could only be used between close friends who had known each other for some time. In it, James archly complimented Cattell for showing tact, flexibility and amiability at a recent meeting. James' exclamations marks in the margin opposite those compliments were meant, obviously, to be humorous.

James' comments demonstrated that he knew Cattell well. Cattell was known for his battles with people, and later had rows in public with Nicholas Murray Butler, Columbia's president, while Cattell was a professor there, as reported in *An Education in Psychology*, James McKeen Cattell's *Journal and Letters from Germany and England, 1880-1888*, edited by Michael M. Sokal, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981, page 332. Sokal also said on page 332:

"Such was Cattell's reputation that in 1913 a book about Columbia bragged that his presence showed how committed the institution was to academic freedom."

Though some eighteen years younger than James, Cattell had obviously been James' close friend for some time before 1893. William James had been G. Stanley Hall's professor at Harvard, who in turn had been Cattell's professor at Johns Hopkins. At what point after Cattell came to Johns Hopkins in 1883 that he met James is unknown.

A bias against spoken language ("sound") and in favor of "meaning" is clear in William James' renowned book on psychology which he began in 1878 and which was published in 1890. He quoted examples of empty speech (footnotes on pages 170-171 and elsewhere), demonstrating it was possible to use perfect word order in sentences and yet arouse no awareness of meaning. James quoted the psychologist, M. G. Tarde of France:

"Thus we have the extraordinary fact that the words called each other up, without calling up their sense.... on the whole, nothing is commoner than trains of words not understood."

Then, most meaningfully, James quoted at length (pages 172, 173, 174) the memories of a deaf-mute man, Mr. Ballard, a deaf-mute instructor at the National Council of Washington, who was not introduced to written language until the age of eleven and only later to oral language. Yet Mr. Ballard remembered wondering about the origin of the universe at the age of eight. That proved the child COULD think

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<sup>22</sup> This was reported in "The Founding of the APA," *American Psychologist*, 7, 1952, 95-97, according to the reprint entitled "Edward Wheeler Scripture, 1864-1945," from the section, "Notes and Discussions" of *The American Journal of Psychology*, June, 1965, Volume 78, No. 2, p. 314-317.

without words, and they were very deep thoughts, indeed. James gave as a footnote, “Is Thought Possible Without Language?” in the Princeton Review, 57th Year, and G. J. Romanes, *Mental Evolution in Man*, pp. 81-83.

James was refining his “stream of consciousness” ideas at the time he was compiling his *Principles of Psychology*. For the most part, that book is an anthology of work done by others before the book’s publication date: 1890. James read very widely in his field but did little experimental work of his own. James’ mentor at Harvard, Louis Agassiz, had heaped scorn on purely speculative theorizing, and had patience only with conclusions based on concrete evidence. Therefore, it is extraordinary that James’ famed “stream of consciousness” theory is pure speculation.

James distinguished between verbal and non-verbal thought, as with the childhood memories of the deaf-mute to whom he referred. Nevertheless, he equated his “stream of consciousness” to the grammatical item, the sentence.

James does not appear to have been a very original thinker. The source for his ideas concerning the sentence may very well have been German. A book available in New York and Massachusetts after its publication date of 1853 was *The Sentential Reader*, “By a Literary Association,” and copyrighted by John L. Chapman and James Scott “For a Literary Association.” The book was published in Boston by Frederick Parks and in New York by Alexander Montgomery, and a copy is presently in the Harvard library. The probable intent of the book was to teach a child to read, but it was unspeakably obscure. It consisted of an exhausting, word-wadded account of an imaginary conversation between a child with a mental age of about eighty or ninety years and his exceedingly boring father. In the course of these conversations, a German named Becker was referred to and partially quoted to the effect that a sentence is:

“...a thought made known in words’.”

James’ “stream of consciousness” is thought, and the German, Becker, (whoever he was) before *The Sentential Reader*’s publication date of 1853 had already equated “thought” with “a sentence.” That the 1853 book is presently in the Harvard library suggests it may well have been available to James. Furthermore, its publication date of 1853 in New York as well as Boston raises the possibility that the book might have had some connection with James’ “literary” father, since the James family was living in New York at that time, with “literary” visitors to their home such as Ralph Waldo Emerson. William was eleven at the time, and Henry was ten years old. According to Henry James’ biographer, Leon Edel, in *Henry James, The Untried Years, 1843-1870*, (page 90), the guest room in their New York home was referred to by the five James children as “Mr. Emerson’s room.”

In his chapter entitled, “Stream of Thought,” on page 181-182 of his psychology book, James said:

“An analysis of what passes through the mind as we utter the phrase the pack of cards is on the table... may condense into a concrete example a good deal of what has gone before.... Now I believe that in all cases where the words are understood, the total idea may be and usually is present not only before and after the phrase has been spoken, but also whilst each separate word is uttered. It is the overtone, halo, or fringe of the word as spoken in that sentence. It is never absent; no word in an understood sentence comes to consciousness as a mere noise. We feel its meaning as it passes, and although our object differs from one moment to another as to its verbal kernel or nucleus, yet it is similar throughout the entire segment of the stream.... The consciousness of the ‘idea’ and that of the words are thus consubstantial. They are made of the same ‘mind-stuff,’ and form an unbroken stream.”

On page 181, he showed his speculative diagram of “the stream of consciousness” with his sentence under it, “the pack of cards is on the table.” Therefore, the unit in William James’ famed “stream of consciousness” WAS equivalent to “the sentence.” Yet Charles H. Judd could state the following, in a paper written for the February, 1926, issue of Teachers College Record in honor of his ex-classmate Thorndike, but for some reason not printed until three months later in the May, 1926, Teachers College Record (page 777):

“I sometimes tell my students that the reason why Thorndike does not include in his psychologies a chapter on language is that William James because of some curious blindness of human nature was never interested in the psychology of language.”

Judd’s statement sounds like disinformation, considering William James’ enormous interest in his 1890 Principles of Psychology in “the sentence” and in the capacity of deaf-mutes to think and reason before they have learned language. That it was disinformation is suggested additionally because of Thorndike’s famed three articles in 1917 on reasoning in reading concerning sentences and words, as well as Thorndike’s ten-year long study between about 1911 and 1921 to identify the 10,000 commonest words in English. Judd had personally studied the James text with his fellow-student Thorndike at Wesleyan University many years before, as Judd admitted in this same paper.

James had briefly studied with the psychologist, Wilhelm Wundt, in Germany in 1868, while Wundt was still Hermann Helmholtz’s assistant (as will be referred to again). James’ student, G. Stanley Hall, also studied with Wundt in 1877. James recorded on page 365 of his Principles of Psychology that G. Stanley Hall had been one of Wundt’s subjects in Wundt’s experiments on reaction time, when a spoken word was answered by a spoken response of some associated word. Hall went on, after returning from Germany and taking his doctorate from James at Harvard in 1878, to become James McKeen Cattell’s and John Dewey’s professor at Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, in 1883.

William James, himself, had lectured at Johns Hopkins, as reported by Gay Wilson Allen in William James, a Biography, Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1967, page 219:

“Dr. D. C. Gilman, president of the newly founded Johns Hopkins University, modeled after German universities, was interested in obtaining James for his Psychology Department and invited him to give ten lectures in February 1878 in Psychology. James accepted and chose for his subject ‘The Brain and the Mind.’“

Allen’s term, “Psychology Department,” is obviously in error. Johns Hopkins had no specific “Psychology Department” in 1878, and neither did any other college or university in America, because there were no “psychologists” in the modern sense anywhere in America in 1878 except for William James. Concerning the earliest American psychologists who appeared immediately after James, G. Stanley Hall did not receive his doctorate under William James at Harvard until 1878 after his return from studying with Wundt in Germany. Harvard had no “psychology department.” As discussed later, the entry of George Trumbull Ladd into psychology began with his employment at Bowdoin in their philosophy department in 1879 before he went to teach at Yale. Although Ladd had already translated the German Lotze’s work in 1877, Ladd was still a preacher in 1877. As will be discussed, Josiah Royce was James’ friend from the time of James’ lectures in 1878 at Johns Hopkins where Royce was a graduate student. Royce, who later taught at Harvard, had studied with Lotze and Wundt in Germany, but was himself primarily a philosopher, not a psychologist.

Five years later, at Johns Hopkins University in 1883 under Hall, Cattell obviously adapted the work Wundt had done with Hall as a subject. Cattell originally must have learned of the work from Hall and then changed the spoken word stimulus to a printed word or letter stimulus. On page 365-366 of his 1890

psychology text, James quoted Cattell on Cattell's work. (However, for emphasis, the order of the sentences given below differs from the order in James' book.)

"I pasted letters on a revolving drum, and determined at what rate they could be read aloud as they passed by a slit in a screen.... in the case of words and letters, the association between the idea and name has taken place so often that the process has become automatic...I find it takes about twice as long to read (aloud, as fast as possible) words which have no connection as words which make sentences...."

That is hardly surprising. Words have meaning only in relation to syntax, which is demonstrated by the multiple meanings given for words in dictionaries (bear, bear, etc.). It is unnatural to pronounce words out of syntax. It would have been interesting if Cattell had also compared the relative speed of pronouncing meaningless syllables, which are the building blocks of syntax, with the speed in pronouncing disjointed words, which are the end product of syntax. Such experiments could show whether meaningless syllables could be pronounced more rapidly than disjointed words, which, on the face of it, appears likely.

James quoted Cattell again on page 343:

"Prof. Cattell calls attention to the fact that the time for distinguishing a word is often but little more than that for distinguishing a letter:

"We do not, therefore, distinguish separately the letters of which a word is composed, but the word as a whole. The application of this in teaching children to read is evident."

Cattell's experiment timed the subject's speed in pronunciation. Since letter "names" are actually only words themselves, Cattell should have anticipated the result he got, that it took about the same time to pronounce a "word" as a "letter," and should not have thought he had discovered something. His mistake can be seen when the "word" "eight" is placed next to the "numeral" "8," because numerals are analogous to letters. Should there be any appreciable difference in the speed in pronouncing either?

It should be noted that William James, in his psychology text, was in debt in various ways to Dugald Stewart, whose ideas on reading were discussed earlier in Chapter 17. Stewart's critic, Rev. J. Wills, by 1844 said we read, "By means of habit, groups of signs..." and not by individual letters. James and Cattell were therefore plowing an already plowed field, but gave no indication that they were aware of Stewart's ideas on reading, or the ideas of Stewart's critic, Rev. J. Wills.

There was, of course, some truth behind Cattell's and James' reasoning, but they were wrong in applying their reasoning to this particular faulty experiment. Certainly, we do not read a letter at a time, but either a syllable (objective reading) or a word (subjective reading) at a time, but that was not proved until 1903 with the work of the German, Oskar Messmer.

However, James also quoted Cattell's worthwhile work to the effect that grouped objects could be perceived or recognized better than objects randomly placed. This is, of course, true, as with five dots arranged on the faces of dice compared to five scattered dots, which I think Cattell cited as an example in his report. That worthwhile work of Cattell's proving that patterned groups can be perceived more readily than unpatterned groups might be considered to anticipate Messmer's 1903 work, that letters are "read" normally either in patterned syllable groups ("objective" reading) or patterned word groups ("subjective" reading).

On page 263, James quoted another statement of Cattell's concerning Cattell's rapid-exposure experiments with letters, words and sentences:

“The sentence was then apprehended as a whole. If not apprehended thus, almost nothing is apprehended of the several words, but if the sentence as a whole is apprehended, then the words appear very distinct.”

Therefore, Cattell had apparently produced “laboratory proof” for James’ “sentence” ideas. (The foregoing statements hardly support the usual view that James had no deep interest in the subject of reading theory, or that Cattell’s interest was probably only casual and fleeting.)

What James did NOT choose to mention with that quotation was one of Cattell’s comments concerning Cattell’s experimental results on the reading of sentences, which was later quoted by E. B. Huey on page 73 of Huey’s book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* (1908):

“...the observer constructs an imaginary sentence from the traces he has taken up.”

In other words, Cattell admitted the reader was simply guessing, not reading.

Nor was Cattell the only psychologist producing what James must have considered soothing data. In James’ section on page 538 and 539, “Perception-Time,” James quoted George John Romanes of England, from page 136 of Romanes’ book, *Mental Evolution in Animals* (1884). Romanes said he had found:

“...an astonishing difference between different individuals with respect to the rate at which they are able to read.... My experiments consisted in marking a brief printed paragraph in a book which had never been read... which contained simple statements of simple facts.... Having pointed out to the reader upon (a) sheet of paper what part of the underlying page the marked paragraph occupied, I suddenly removed the sheet of paper with one hand, while I started a chronograph with the other. Twenty seconds being allowed for reading the paragraph.... Now the results... show... astonishing differences in the ... rate of reading which is possible to different individuals, all of whom have been accustomed to extensive reading. That is to say... one individual may be able to read four times as much as another. Moreover, it appeared that there was no relationship between slowness of reading and power of assimilation; on the contrary... the rapid readers... usually give a better account of the portions of the paragraph which have been compassed by the slow readers than the latter are able to give.... I have tried the experiment with several highly distinguished men in science and literature, most of whom I found to be slow readers.”

It is that evident Romanes uncovered massive reading disabilities in England among highly educated people when he did his experiments some time before 1884. This fact should be contrasted to what the Scottish Schoolmaster had said in 1829 of the oral reading of little children, after he had spent 30 years teaching such little children by the syllable “sound” method:

“Between the age of five and eight, a child may be taught to read, with fluency, any of our best authors in prose or in verse....”

The disabilities that Romanes uncovered should also be contrasted to the remarks quoted previously by the ancient Greek Dionysius of Halicarnassus about 20 B.C., given by Mitford Mathews on pages 6 and 7 of *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1966. Mathews took the quotation from W. Rhys Roberts’ book, *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, London, 1910, page 269:



“When we are taught to read, first we learn off the names of the letters, then their forms and their values, then in due course syllables and their modifications, and finally words and their properties, viz. lengthenings and shortenings, accents, and the like. After acquiring the knowledge of these things, we begin to write and read, syllable by syllable and slowly at first. And when the lapse of a considerable time has implanted the forms of words firmly in our minds, then we deal with them without the least difficulty, and whenever any book is placed in our hands we go through it without stumbling and with incredible facility and speed.”

Dionysius and the Scottish Schoolmaster were talking of those who had learned to read by syllables and “sound,” but Romanes was testing nineteenth century Englishmen who had learned to read by “meaning.” The “meaning” method had produced massive disabilities in England by the 1880’s, just as it does all over the English-speaking world today. Many of the men Romanes tested before 1884 who were intellectually superior could not read with the fluency of the Schoolmaster’s 1829 Scottish eight year olds. They certainly could not read with the fluency (“incredible facility and speed”), of Dionysius’s day about 20 B. C. when words were not even separated in texts and when everyone read everything out loud. Learners in the ancient world are reported to have been taught how to separate such connected texts into syllables, but no mention is made of teaching learners to separate texts into words. Yet the disabilities of these adult British men were only to be expected. Most schools in Great Britain had switched shortly after 1826 from the “sound” syllable method to the “meaning” whole-word (but not the deaf-mute whole-word) method as the result of their activists like John Wood of the Edinburgh school and others in the 1820’s.

English beginning reading books which were being reprinted in America for home sale in the mid-nineteenth century are very illuminating on the attitudes towards teaching beginning reading in England in the mid-nineteenth century. No copyright laws were in existence then between Great Britain and the United States, and the pirating of literary works was enormous on both sides of the ocean. One such English beginning reading book reprinted in America was Aunt Mary’s Primer, Adorned with A Hundred and Twenty Pretty Pictures, which was published in Providence by Mather & Burr in 1851. It is very obvious that it was a reprint of an English book. For instance, in describing the months, it said, “November, when London is covered with fog.” On other pages were pictures of “The Lord Mayor’s Coach,” of “A Man Ploughing” (the English spelling) and “A Man thrashing Corn” which was obviously not American corn, but wheat. Not the least of the proofs of English origin was a nice collection of English birds on the “small birds” pages which included the English sparrow, it had only been introduced into America in 1851, and so was still a rare bird to Americans.

Since there was obviously no attempt anywhere in the book to adapt the content to American users, it is reasonable to assume it reflected the English approach to beginning reading about 1851. The alphabet was shown at the beginning of the book in large and small letters and then mixed, out of order. Immediately afterward came a page of whole words and some few disconnected syllables. Some of the words were in similar columns: at, cat, rat, grate, but there was nothing consistent in the arrangement of the 70 shown. On the next page came pictures and sentences: “Here is a Cat, and here is a Rat.” On the following page came a collection of words, some of which had analogous parts, but without enough examples to make most children absorb the sound patterns. That was followed by another page of complete sentences with pictures, a half-page of two-syllable words, and the “reading instruction” was over. The rest of the book was connected text, reading with pictures. No child could learn to read by “sound” with such a book.

What is of particular interest, however, concerning ideas about teaching reading, is the page at the beginning, signed only J. C., and titled “A Few Words to the Teacher.” That the omission of phonic teaching was deliberate is shown by the instructions on that introductory page:

“When Little Mary (or any other little girl or boy) knows all the letters perfectly, let the teacher turn over a page and pronounce one of the monosyllables. Do not say, a, m, am - but say am at once, and point to the word. When the child knows that word, then point to the next, and say as, and be sure to follow the same plan throughout the book. Spelling lessons may be taught at a more advanced age; but it will be found that a young child will learn to read much more quickly if they be dispensed with in the Primer. In words of more than one syllable, it is best to pronounce each syllable separately, car, pet, - po, ker, - and so on. In the lesson on “Things in the Room,” point out each thing as the child reads the word, and indeed, wherever you can, try to associate the word with its actual meaning. Show a child the word coach as a coach goes past, and she will recollect that word again for ever.....Never weary a child with long lessons....”

The approach was clearly “meaning” and not “sound.” Yet such a picture book would have been relatively costly and out of the reach of the working classes in England, and was obviously not for school use. What happened over the years to beginning reading instruction in standard school books in England is covered in PART 6.

With William James’ mind-set on “sentences,” Romanes’ reading experiment in England would have appeared to James to justify teaching reading by whole sentences instead of by isolated words. That was because Cattell’s experiments had actually “proven” that whole sentences could sometimes be read, when isolated words sometimes could NOT be read in the same elapsed time. The psychologists’ explanation would have been, therefore, that Romanes’ good readers were able to read whole sentences, faster, for meaning, while Romanes’ poor readers could only slowly read isolated words for sound, missing some of the meaning.

They were right, concerning “subjective” readers, some of whom would have read their whole “words” more slowly than others. As discussed elsewhere, Messmer’s German research early in the next century turned up two types of readers: objective and subjective. The objective read by syllables; the subjective read by whole words and guessing. Virtually all of Romanes’ readers who had learned by sight words should have been subjective readers, some more crippled than others. The best of the crippled English readers had managed to memorize a sizable store of sight words and could sample the page quickly, “psycholinguistically,” picking up key sight words and guessing those ignored. The worst of the crippled English readers did not know automatically, at sight, enough sight words to breeze their guessing way through the text and so laboriously tried to work words out by memory and context, which slowed them down enormously.

Cattell and James probably wedded their psychological defense for teaching reading by “meaning” instead of by “sound” to work done by Hermann Ebbinghaus in Germany in 1885 (*Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology*, pertinent portions of which are quoted in *History of Psychology*, by William S. Sahakian, pages 107-115, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., Itasca, Illinois, 1968, 1981).

Ebbinghaus, James, and Cattell, with their experimental psychology, were a different kind of psychologist from those who preceded them. Psychology in general dates back to before Aristotle, though the term, “psychologia” dates only from 1590. An excellent general history of psychology is given in the article, “Psychology,” in Volume XII of *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913. A superb source for critically important writings on psychology (and probably the only such source of collected writings) is *History of Psychology*, by William S. Sahakian, Revised Edition, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., Itasca, Illinois, 1981. Sahakian’s book starts with “Ancient Greek and Latin Psychology,” beginning with mentioning Anaxagoras (500-428 B. C.), and it ends with a selection by Jean-Paul Sartre.

Sahakian's section at the end of his book, "Landmarks in the History of Psychology," pages 445-483, is arranged in historical order and is actually a mini-course in the history of psychology. In that section, Sahakian listed some material on psychology in the broader sense that had been written in America for some time before William James' day.

Concerning such material on the earlier kind of psychology, the Leypoldt American Catalogue of books in print in America in 1876 showed 28 such books, including *Mental Science* by the Scot, Alexander Bain, published by Appleton, *Elements of Psychology* by V. Cousin of France, published in 1856 by Ivison, and *Elements of Psychology* by H. N. Day, published in 1876 by Putnam. The next issue of the American Catalog for 1876-1884 showed an enlarged edition in 1877 by Putnam of J. Bascom's *Principles of Psychology*, first published in 1869 and 1876, and a few others. However, all these books most probably were the speculative kind of psychology of Stewart which was wedded to philosophy and which had been around ever since the ancient Greeks, not the experimental psychology of which we know today.

A brief biography of Alexander Bain (1818-1903) is given in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), Volume 2. The encyclopedia said he was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, and for a period worked in his father's trade, as a weaver. After graduating from Marischal College in Aberdeen in 1840, he went to London where he worked in education and the civil service, and where he became very friendly with John Stuart Mill and Mill's associates. Bain returned to Aberdeen and became a professor of logic and English, at which time he began to work for reform in Scottish teaching methods. He wrote books on English grammar, rhetoric, and logic, but also on psychological theory, and, in 1861, he published *On the Study of Character*, in 1868 *Mental and Moral Science: a Compendium of Psychology and Ethics*, and in 1873, *Mind and Body, the Theory of Their Relation*. Bain was the founder of the important periodical, *Mind*, in 1876. His work in association psychology is considered to have been important, although it was largely in the tradition of the earlier speculative psychology instead of the newer experimental psychology. Yet, Bain did urge a strictly scientific approach in solving psychological problems, based on the brain and nervous system, instead of using the former purely speculative approach.

However, as the above makes very clear, Bain did not publish a book on psychology, in the modern, experimental sense, until 1873, and that was considerably after Wundt and James had become interested in experimental psychology. It was not until George John Romanes' very casual reading experiments, published in Romanes' *Mental Evolution in Animals* (1884), described previously, that any British psychologist appears to have concerned himself with reading experiments.

In confirmation of the fact that psychology in the experimental, modern sense was unknown in America before James' day, James himself claimed to have founded the first psychology laboratory in America in 1874, according to Sahakian's text on the history of psychology. For 1874, Sahakian listed this significant item on page 456 as a landmark:

"William James' (1842-1910) contention of having opened the first psychological laboratory in America (at Harvard University)."

Sahakian listed under 1873-1874:

"Publication of the first textbook in physiological psychology - Wilhelm Wundt's (1832-1920) *Principles of Physiological Psychology*"

Furthermore, it was not until 1875 that Wilhelm Wundt of Germany (1832-1920) established what is generally acknowledged as the world's first experimental-psychology laboratory to measure the responses to stimuli of individuals, from which concept Cattell's "reading experiments" were ultimately derived..

(The 1875 date is given in the book, *America's Secret Establishment*, by Anthony C. Sutton, Liberty House Press, Billings, Montana, 1986, page 86. A date for the opening of the formal laboratory is given in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article on Wundt as 1879, but since Wundt went to Leipzig in 1875, 1875 seems appropriate.)

When William James studied briefly with Hermann Von Helmholtz at Heidelberg, Germany, in 1868, the psychologist Wilhelm Wundt had still been Helmholtz's assistant, which position Wundt had held since 1858. Wundt, while Helmholtz's assistant, had offered a new course on psychology from the viewpoints of natural sciences in 1862 and published his lectures the next year. Since James commented (as mentioned elsewhere in this history) that he particularly wanted to contact Wundt in 1868, he presumably had read Wundt's 1863 book or a review of it. Wundt later went to Leipzig. (The preceding facts on Wundt are according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1963). Wundt's great, worldwide influence as an experimental psychologist appears to date from after his arrival in Leipzig in 1875.

The reprint entitled "Edward Wheeler Scripture, 1864-1945," from the section, "Notes and Discussions" of *The American Journal of Psychology*, June, 1965, Volume 78, No. 2, p. 314-317, stated that Scripture had been:

"...One of the younger pioneers of the "new psychology" in America and in fact the man who brought the phrase new psychology into use as indicating the non-philosophical experimental psychology that Fechner, Helmholtz, and Wundt introduced about 1860...."

Therefore, William James' kind of psychology was, indeed, new, as Scripture's phrase proves.

The earliest of the three innovators who were credited in the journal article quoted above with originating experimental psychology was Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801-1887) who was a German pantheist, and a sort of intellectual jack-of-all-trades in service to his pantheism. The son of a minister, Fechner was a Leipzig graduate in 1822, with a degree in biological science, and he became a professor of physics in Leipzig in 1834. He was then ill, and even partially blind, for a long time, and he then began to study philosophy and aesthetics in 1843.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), Volume 9, page 132, said that Fechner became famous largely because of the experimental work which he summarized in his 1860 book, *Elemente der Psychophysic*, but that Fechner only undertook that work to prove his thesis that, although the mind and body appear to be separate, they are in fact only the two sides of one reality. Subjectively, reality appears as the mind, but objectively, it appears as the body.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* article commented:

"Fechner's originality lies in his development of psychophysical methods by which experienced sensation could be measured in relation to the physical magnitude of the stimulus.

".... Through his influence on Wilhelm Wundt, Fechner's psychophysical methods and formulation became one of the cornerstones of early psychology..."

It is wryly amusing to learn that Wundt's experimental materialistic psychology actually originated in the attempts of that dedicated pantheist, Fechner, to prove the "truths" of Fechner's version of pantheism!

Fechner was very much admired by William James. That is obvious from reading William James' 1904 "Introduction" to Mary C. Wadsworth's translation from the German of an 1835 work by Fechner that had been only slightly revised in Fechner's later editions. Its title was *The Little Book of Life After*

Death. It was published in 1904 by Little, Brown, and Company in Boston. The printing was done, interestingly enough, by The University Press, Cambridge, U. S. A., the same press that had figured in the critically important non-Leigh editions of the Franklin Primer in 1877 and later, discussed elsewhere in this history. The Little, Brown edition was reproduced in 1977 by Arno Press, Inc., a New York Times Company, as part of its series, *The Literature of Death and Dying*.

After Fechner, Herman Ludwig Ferdinand Von Helmholtz (1821-1894) and Wilhelm Max Wundt (1832-1920) were mentioned in the 1965 article as founders of work in experimental psychology about 1860. That was the year Fechner's book was published, which is the obvious reason for the choice of that date, the earliest meaningful date for "experimental psychology." Helmholtz's famous work was overwhelmingly on physics and physiology, not psychology, whatever contribution he may have made in that area, so the article's citing Helmholtz may not be very meaningful. Wundt had still been Helmholtz's assistant in Heidelberg at the time William James sought Wundt out in 1868, as described elsewhere in this history. As mentioned, in 1862-1863 Wundt had given a psychology course at Heidelberg and in 1863 published his lectures which had been based on a natural sciences viewpoint.

Therefore, the year 1862 was obviously the meaningful date for the beginning of Wundt's work on psychology. Yet Wundt did not open what is generally credited to be the world's first psychological laboratory until 1875, after Wundt had moved to Leipzig.

Nevertheless, William James claimed to have had the first such experimental psychological laboratory in America at Harvard in 1874, which would make James' experimental psychological laboratory the first in the world! However, James' warm endorsement of Fechner's *The Little Book of Life After Death* certainly suggests that James may have shared some of Fechner's pantheistic motivations in setting up his own laboratory.

The experimental work that Ebbinghaus did which might have seemed to confirm James' and Cattell's ideas on reading instruction was not really pertinent to reading instruction. Ebbinghaus had done research on memorization of meaningless syllables and the memorization of meaningful material and found meaningful material could be memorized more quickly. In their faulty frame of reference, however, James and Cattell might have been convinced that this supported their "sentence" ideas.

Dr. Hilde L. Mosse in *The Complete Handbook of Children's Reading Disorders*, Human Sciences Press, New York, 1982, quoted Dr. Wilder Penfield, the famous neurologist/surgeon and made comments herself concerning conditioning, or learning. The thrust of Dr. Mosse's and Dr. Penfield's remarks is that we can learn, or remember, only those things on which we focus conscious attention at the time we are learning them. Yet, once learned, or "conditioned," many actions then can be carried out without focusing conscious attention on them. Therefore, all that Ebbinghaus's work showed, in relation to memorization, is that it is easier to focus conscious attention on meaningful material and to organize it into meaningful, related categories to aid memorization than to do the same on unmeaningful material. Unmeaningful material can have no such organization on which to focus attention and with which to support memorization by its relationships. That Ebbinghaus's unmeaningful material took longer to learn is exactly what might have been anticipated. Ebbinghaus's research has no real pertinence to learning reading skills, despite the fact that it contrasted "syllables" to "meaningful" material.

Although William James had made the grammatical item, the sentence, the unit in his famed "stream of consciousness" ideas which appeared in his 1890 *Principles of Psychology*, he must have had the basic ideas a very long time before 1890 and before the seemingly agreeable test data arrived from Romanes by 1884, from Ebbinghaus by 1885, and from Cattell probably at least by 1886 (but very possibly as early as 1883 since Cattell's professor at Johns Hopkins, G. Stanley Hall, had been James' graduate student only five years before). By a curious "coincidence," the sentence as a basis for a new reading method had

appeared in Binghamton, New York, in 1870, where a man named George L. Farnham used whole sentences instead of whole words to teach beginning reading. (He had only arrived in Binghamton as superintendent the year before.)

In a letter Colonel Parker wrote the School Journal on August 12, 1899 (page 118), he said, concerning practices twenty-five years before (which would be in 1874):

“Psychology in education, especially in New England, was tabooed. It was called ‘splitting hairs.’”

That was a curious comment. Parker very probably was using the term, “psychology,” in the modern Wundtian sense, which is very much like the general meaning we give to the term today. It is probable that the only psychologist in that narrow, modern sense in New England, or in the entire United States, for that matter in 1874 was William James. James’ work in his psychological laboratory at Harvard, whatever that work was, would almost certainly have been viewed by the general public in 1874 as “splitting hairs.”

Yet, Farnham, a superintendent of schools in Syracuse, New York, until 1863 after having been a teacher, who then sold insurance in Syracuse until January, 1869 (as shown by clippings and other material in the Syracuse Public Library), stated he carried out psychology experiments in 1870 which would have been the first in the United States, and, except for Fechner, Wundt and Helmholtz, in the world. That was four years before James said he opened his experimental psychology laboratory at Harvard and five years before Wundt opened his experimental psychology laboratory in Germany, and four years before the date when the word, “psychology” in education was still “tabooed” in New England!

G. L. Farnham discussed his work in his 1881 book, *Sentence Method of Teaching Reading*, published by C. W. Bardeen of Syracuse, New York, the publisher of the *School Bulletin*. In his 1881 book, Farnham said:

“These (teaching of reading) experiments and their results led to further investigation, especially in the line of psychology. From a close observation of the action of the mind, and of the relations of language to thought, it was seen that the unit of thinking is a thought, and therefore that the unit of expression is a sentence. The obvious deduction was, that the sentence ought to be made the basis of reading exercises.

“In 1870 a series of experiments was instituted in the schools of Binghamton, N. Y., to subject this theory to a practical test....

“This little manual is substantially a record of the plans adopted, and of the principles involved in these experiments in Binghamton....”

Parker had said, to mention psychology in education was “tabooed” in 1874. Yet Farnham had confidently moved from selling insurance in Syracuse, New York, to instituting the first large scale psychology experiment in education - correction: the first psychology experiment of ANY size - that was ever done in America, and, except for Fechner and probably Wundt and Helmholtz, in the world! Further, Farnham actually obliquely admitted it was NOT all his own idea:

“The author would hereby express his obligations to his friend James Johonnot for valuable assistance in the final preparation of this work. The large experience of this gentleman as an educator, and his sound judgment in all matters of education, were constantly laid under contribution when this problem was worked out. Council Bluffs, Iowa, January 1, 1881.”

As will be shown, a possible tie to James can be made through Johonnot, who is documented as being associated in 1873 with Agassiz, and may have been associated with Agassiz earlier.

In five short years, by 1875, (the year Wundt's laboratory opened!) Farnham's sentence method was widespread and well known, so Farnham must have had some access to influence-peddlers.

The first report of Farnham's work I have found in print is Farnham's paper in the 1873 Report for the National Education Association, in which it came immediately before a paper by Dr. Leigh (both papers already having been given in person by both men at the NEA meeting). Leigh by 1873 was famous, but Farnham was a relative unknown and was writing in total contradiction to Leigh, so it is apparent Farnham had to have influential associates to have been given the opportunity to make such an address. The placement of those two addresses in the widely read NEA Journal, one after the other, was obviously deliberate. That placement must have been engineered by Farnham's influential contacts, who were obviously also Leigh's opponents, since Farnham's "psychological" report, the first paper given, implicitly condemned Leigh phonics without mentioning it by name. Yet Farnham's specious "psychological" reasoning was obviously convincing to far too many school superintendents, since it was almost immediately after Farnham's paper appeared that Leigh print went almost totally out of use. It was Farnham's carefully placed 1873 paper in the widely read and widely respected NEA Journal that constituted the explosion that blew Leigh print off the American education map.

By 1881, Farnham's book on the sentence method was published. What makes both his 1873 paper and his 1881 his book so remarkable is that portions of both certainly sound as if they were written by a psychologist.

According to *The First 120 Years*, by George W. Fowler, the 1968 history of the Syracuse, New York schools, Farnham had been born in Richfield, Otsego County, New York, in 1824, attended Black River Academy in Watertown, New York, in 1840, and, after a period teaching, graduated from Albany State Normal School in 1847. He was superintendent at Syracuse from 1855 to 1863, and was an insurance salesman in Syracuse after that until he became superintendent at Binghamton in 1869. There is nothing in such a background that would suggest that such a man could invent a teaching method with a psychological justification in 1870. This was before there was a single psychologist in the modern sense in this country except William James.

Farnham's 1870 work raises the possibility that he had some kind of professional input. The rapid and widespread success of Farnham's 1870 method, and Farnham's breaking into print in the NEA paper only three short years after he first started using the method suggests that he had powerful friends.

In Farnham's 1881 book, he referred, without actually naming either Syracuse or the Longley (Pitman) print, to his having tried phonetic print and next the word method. Farnham was replaced as Syracuse superintendent in 1863, and Syracuse records show they were still using the Longley print at that time. Farnham said he had tried the word method after the phonetic method, which would have had to be on his arrival as Binghamton superintendent in January, 1869. These were the "experiments and their results" which he had in mind with his comment, quoted earlier:

"These experiments and their results led to further investigation, especially in the line of psychology...."

This comment makes it clear, therefore, that his "experiments" in "psychology" began only AFTER he had tried the word method in Binghamton in 1869, which would bring his "psychology" up to 1870.

Farnham left Binghamton in 1875, which raises questions about the purported great “success” of the sentence method, but Farnham made it clear in his book written in Iowa in 1881 that Johonnot had been at least a partial source for his ideas.

James Johonnot, born in Bethjel, Vermont, on March 3, 1823, had completed his education in 1848 at the State Normal School, Albany, where Farnham had graduated the year before. Farnham and Johonnot might have met at Albany State Normal School. Johonnot began to teach in 1850. The Board minutes for Syracuse, New York, for June 2, 1859, written in Farnham’s own handwriting as superintendent/clerk, (and notable elsewhere for Farnham’s misspellings) stated:

“Resolved, that the thanks of this board be tendered to... Mr. James Johonnot for his recent lecture on the European War and for the preparation of the map exhibit on that connection. Adopted.”

Farnham, therefore, knew Johonnot at least from 1859, and possibly much earlier at the normal school.

From 1861 till 1866, Johonnot from New York State was in charge of the Joliet, Illinois, schools, and then was President of the State Normal School, Warrensburg, Missouri, in 1872-1875 which suggests a tie in 1872 to the associates of William Torrey Harris, Superintendent of Schools in St. Louis, Missouri. What is of great interest is that the Appleton’s Cyclopaedia of American Biography, 1888, stated that Johonnot “was a member of the institute faculty of New York state for many years preceding” his taking the position in Missouri in 1872, or presumably at least from 1866 to 1872. Members of the institute faculty went from town to town to lecture during very widely-held teachers’ institutes for teacher training, which took place during released school time or in summers.

Wilson, Hinkle & Co. of Cincinnati, the publishers of the McGuffey Readers, published a book in 1870 by William H. Cole entitled *The Institute Reader and Normal Class Book, “For the Use of Teachers’ Institutes and Normal Schools, and for Self-Training in the Art of Reading.”* Its “Preface” read, “TEACHER’S INSTITUTES are now held periodically in nearly every county of the states in which Free Schools have been established; and Normal Schools are annually increasing in number and influence....”

Cole therefore implicitly stated that teacher’s institutes were not only a kind of teacher training school but that they had almost blanketed most of the country before 1870.

In speaking of practices twenty-five years before, Colonel Francis W. Parker said in the August 12, 1899, issue of *The School Journal* (page 118):

“Many teachers institutes were supplementary to regular school work, and were held for the purpose of aiding candidates for teaching to pass their examinations..”

That remark made the real purpose of institutes clear. They were meant to standardize “correct” teaching methods by control from the top.

### The Meaning of “Institutes” in the Nineteenth Century

The term, “institute faculty,” is almost meaningless in the frame of reference provided today concerning the history of American education. To give that term concrete meaning and to show how institute lecturers influenced the teaching of beginning reading, it is pertinent at this point to give concrete information on institutes and their lecturers and on institute programs as they related to reading instruction.



Teachers' institutes were apparently first held in 1837, but in a form different from that which dated from 1843, according to The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York, June (?), 1876, page 177:

“The First Teachers’ Institute.

“We have received the following letter from James B. Thomson, LL.D., author of Thomson’s Arithmetics:

““Will you allow me to correct a slight mistake into which the BULLETIN of May seems to have fallen, as to the time and place of holding the second and third Teachers’ Institutes in the State of New York. I have before me a printed account of these Institutes, the date of each of which is anterior to that held in Wyoming, as stated in the May number of the BULLETIN.

““According to the documents referred to, the first Teachers’ Institute held in the Empire State was organized at Ithaca, April 4th, 1843, by J. S. Denman, Esq., the honored superintendent of Tompkins Co. The second was organized at Auburn, Oct. 3d, 1843, by E. G. Starke, Esq., the indefatigable Supt. of Cayuga Co. The number in attendance was over two hundred. The third was held at Ithaca, commencing Oct. 10th, 1843, under the direction of Mr. Denman.

““The fourth was opened at Wethersfield Springs, Wyoming Co., Oct. 18th, 1843, under the charge of A. S. Stevens, Esq., the popular Supt. of the Co. of Wyoming, as stated in the May No. of the Bulletin.

““This correction, though apparently trifling, may be important to the future writer of an authentic history of Teachers’ Institutes.

““In conclusion, permit me to add, that I had the privilege of taking part in the instruction of the one in Auburn and one of those in Ithaca, and can vouch for the correctness of these dates.

““Respectfully, your obdt. servt., J. B. THOMSON  
Brooklyn, N. Y., June 21, 1876’

““[This matter was somewhat fully discussed in the BULLETIN for April, 1875 (Vol. I, p. 67)...”

The School Bulletin then quoted a conflicting report on the first institute, which had appeared in a footnote on page 80 of the District School Journal for June, 1844:

““Mr. Sprague established and conducted in Fulton county the first Teachers Institute opened in this state.’

““In the same volume (p. 14) we find

““Fulton county established the first of these Institutes through its efficient county superintendent, F. B. Sprague, and although this was but two years since,’ etc.

““In the Superintendent’s report for 1844, we find the report of Mr. Sprague, dated Jan. 1, 1844:

““The first normal school in this county, and I believe the first of the kind in the State, was established at Kingsboro one year ago last September, and continued eight weeks. \* \* \* We held another term of eight weeks last spring. \* \* and another of eight weeks the past fall, etc.’

“We have not been able to find in the (District School) Journal for 1844 the references quoted by M. M. B. to Institutes in 1837. They may occur in the number of February, 1845, which is missing from our volume. We feel positive that the diversity of statement arises from the fact that teachers’ institutes were first called temporary normal schools, and were of a somewhat different character from that held at Ithaca, which seemed to set a pattern for all that followed. For instance, in the report of the Superintendent of common schools for 1849, the communication from S. Town, Esq., on the subject of Teachers’ Institutes, contains this passage, italicized as here printed:

““The first Teachers’ Institute held in the State of New York, and probably the first in the world, according to the present mode of organizing them and conducting their exercises in detail, was in Tompkins county, in April, 1843.’”

The School Bulletin, therefore, gave credence to the claim that a kind of temporary normal school was in existence by 1837 (and probably pre-dated 1837), but it held that teachers institutes, in the form in which they ultimately were conducted, dated from the institute held in Ithaca in April, 1843, organized by J. S. Denman, the superintendent of Tompkins County.

It is fitting that J. S. Denman should get the credit for organizing the first teachers’ institute. J. S. Denman was the author of The Student’s Series of readers, the first of which was apparently published in 1850. The series consisted of The Primer, The Student’s First through Fourth Reading Books, The Student’s Speaker, and The Student’s Spelling Book. An eleventh edition of the speller appeared in 1853 and Harvard has a copy of the primer and first book published in 1852 so the series obviously achieved some popularity. However, The Student’s Primer of 1850 was based on articles published starting in 1846 in a monthly journal, The Student. A note on the inside cover of The Student’s Primer, copyrighted in 1850, said it was:

“...designed as an aid to those... teaching children the first principles of written language.... The late David P. Page, then Principal of the Normal School at Albany, N. Y., said... ‘It is the best system I ever saw for teaching the first principles of reading.’”

Denman made his opinions clear in the “Preface” to his First Reading Book, copyrighted in 1851 and published in 1852:

“Those who are engaged in instructing the young, should bear in mind that the practice of reading without comprehending what is read (a habit frequently acquired in school) is highly injurious to the learner, and should never be allowed in the smallest child.”

Denman obviously disagreed with the twentieth century Russian Soviet psychologist, Elkonin, whose paper on reading was included in Brian and Joan Simon’s Educational Psychology in the USSR, 1963. Elkonin said (page 165):

“In the present paper we start from the proposition that reading is a reconstitution of the sound forms of a word on the basis of its graphic representation. Understanding, which is often considered as the basic content of the process of reading arises as a result of correct recreation of the sound forms of words. He who, independently of the level of understanding of words, can correctly recreate their sound forms is able to read.”

In sharp contrast to Elkonin, Denman was endorsing “meaning” over “sound” and his Code 3 book showed it.

Denman has dropped from history, not appearing in Nila Banton Smith’s nor Reeder’s history, nor in Mathew’s, Nietz’s or Johnson’s, although his Second and Fourth Reading Books are listed on page 81 of Early American Textbooks and copies of at least some of his books are in the Harvard library. Yet Denman’s long-range influence through his promotion of “institutes” was apparently enormous and hurtful. Denman’s materials were published by Pratt, Woodford & Company of New York, and were out of print when the 1876 American Catalogue was published. They certainly deserved to be out of print, not solely because they were Code 3 “meaning” materials. Some of the “stories” meant for little children were exceedingly ugly in content. The First Reading Book of 1850 also fitted the texts Brownson described which de-emphasized religion. The First Reading Book had only one religious entry, a poem on pages 107-108, which was extraordinary in the highly religious America of the period.

What Denman’s primer establishes, however, is that any teachers attending his institutes would be told that “meaning,” not “sound,” was the correct way to teach beginning reading.

Institutes spread in America after the first ones appeared with the new pattern in 1843. They were very widespread by the late 1860’s, with New York State, and probably other states, having state-appointed institute instructors. As was made clear in an 1843 advertisement for a teachers’ institute which had been reproduced in the May, 1876, The School Bulletin, and which is included in Appendix A, the training at institute programs as early as 1843 was supposed to help teachers pass “tests” which entitled them to employment. Therefore, their primary purpose was just as Parker had defined it in his 1899 remarks: to assure that teachers thought “correctly” according to the “experts.”

Yet, as the comments from William Andrus Alcott quoted earlier establish, young candidates for town schools had always been examined by school committee or school board members, to establish their suitability, though they did not get “certificates” as became the case much later when the state governments became involved. When William Andrus Alcott had been a young man applying for his first teaching job, one of the qualifications had been to know the make-up of Webster’s “sound” speller. Yet, by the time institutes like Denman’s took place in 1843, the town superintendents and trustees charged with examining young candidates at that time would have been “taught” to expect candidates to parrot opinions like Denman’s, rejecting “sound” and endorsing “meaning” for beginning readers.

Change-agents were using, way back then, two of the Three T’s to control the education of the public’s children and to shape education to their liking: “Teachers” and “Tests.” The third “T” is “Textbooks,” such as the Scott, Foresman 1930 readers with their teacher’s manuals, which have damaged our country so cruelly. However, the emphasis of the change-agents today who are attempting to shape the education of America’s children to their liking is on only one of the Three T’s, “Tests,” which tests are meant for both teachers and students. Shadowy figures authorized to write nation-wide tests (and tests are the most virulent of the Three T’s) will have the power to control the content of the curriculum and to shape the minds of America’s future citizens. What ever happened to the Bill of Rights and to the free speech it guaranteed, in education as well as everywhere else?

Reports on institutes dating from 1880 appear in Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education, No. 2, 1885, Teachers’ Institutes, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. Some excerpts from this circular follow, to establish that the “institutes” of which Johonnot had long been a part were shaping American education in the nineteenth century and that they were endorsing the teaching of reading by “meaning.” The following comment on page 91 is from “Report of the Normal Institute of South Carolina for 1881,” by Professor L. F. Soldan, Principal of the Normal School in St. Louis, Missouri:

“Normal institutes are all important. Let one be ... held in every educationally dark corner of the land and soon the light of education will shine there. All the States which are eager for general education have normal schools or institutes.”

This also implicitly confirmed that “institutes” were widespread and were a form of “normal school.”

The 1885 Government publication, *Teachers Institutes*, also proved that neither McGuffey’s nor true phonics were dominant at that time. Appleton’s, a phony phonics series, was frequently mentioned. Most of all, the institute reports showed that the word method was the norm, or the word method with some phonics (“phony phonics.”) For instance, on page 99 appeared a summary of comments on reading made by H. P. Archer, the principal of the Bennett School in Charleston. Soldan said on page 88 that Archer was one of the “corps of instructors” at the 1881 South Carolina institute, which Soldan said (page 87) was attended by 335 teachers:

“The introduction of the word method of teaching reading was recommended as the only rational method suited to the books used in the state.... The stopping to spell is avoided because we should learn words as words.... Reading at first should be sentence reading.... There are variations of the word method. Advised combination of the word and phonic methods.... Used Appleton’s first (book for the) first lessons to illustrate: Make children say my cat as one word.... (Stress) the elements of good reading in the beginning; (with) practice on the sounds.... After drill on the words, let the class read sentences. Then converse about the picture, after which phonic analysis and the writing in script follow.... The old plan was to have the children “print” the words on their slates.... The topic of new methods led to a brief exposition of the so-called Quincy plan and the method tried by Superintendent Parker. The so-called ABC method was in particular spoken of, and its great shortcomings illustrated practically and theoretically. The phonetic and phonic methods were fully set forth and practical exercises given to the institute.... Reading in higher grades... drill until words can be recognized at sight.... Drill the class until they can read well in concert. Make frequent changes between class and individual reading. This plan secures attention. Practice until each word is recognized and understood. Next ask a few questions in order to teach the pupils to read thoughtfully and to remember what they read.... A selection from Appleton’s Fifth Reader, p. 161, was read for illustration.”

Note the endorsement of the “sentence” method in South Carolina by 1881. Note the implicit attributing of the new use of script for beginners in South Carolina to the influence from Quincy, where Parker and his methods had only arrived six years before! Also, combining the word and phonic methods as discussed above produced phony phonics, the kind used in the Appleton readers, and not unlike basal reader phonics of today.

In the South after about 1880, teachers’ institutes were held with support from the Peabody fund.

Professor L. F. Soldan of St. Louis said the Appleton’s series and the Walker, Evans & Cogswell’s series were in use in South Carolina (page 76 of his 1880 “Report of the First Normal Institute of South Carolina”). The Harvard library has an 1869 copy of the second book of the series published by Walker, Evans, and Cogswell Company of Charleston, South Carolina, entitled *Reynold’s New Pictorial Readers for Schools and Families*, by James Lawrence Reynolds. The series was also mentioned by R. R. Reeder in his history on page 52. *Early American Textbooks...* lists an 1870 edition of Reynolds New Fourth Reader published elsewhere than Charleston, by Duffie and Chapman of Columbia, South Carolina, and by E. J. Hale of New York. The dates and locations suggest Reynolds’ was in general use in South Carolina from 1869 to after 1880. It is probable the series was “meaning” oriented, like Appleton’s.

This remark was made at the 1881 South Carolina institute (page 95), apparently by Soldan, echoing what was being said about the same time in New England and across the water in “Old England”:

“When children have read for too long a time in a reader, they are apt to know the pieces by heart and rereading is no longer an exercise in pronouncing words at sight....”

The following preceded the above remark:

“In this State there is uniformity of textbooks by law; but perhaps it cannot be well enforced. I think teachers should try to convince parents and school officers of the benefits of uniformity. If a teacher cannot get all his pupils to get the same book, he should form classes which use uniform books. This can be done in some studies like reading even when there is a variety of books; the teacher may let two or three read from one book. Even where one series of books is used as a rule, it has been found a good plan to have children read from one book a while and then another... if the teacher has succeeded in convincing the great majority of parents to (pronounce) in favor of a uniform series of books, the question of a single individual parent ought not stand in the way. At the beginning of instruction, there is no necessity at all for several classes in reading, on account of the variety of books which the pupils have brought to school. The teacher should use the blackboard in teaching the element(s) of reading and print the words or letters on it. Even if its members have ten different books, the class can thus be kept together. It is still better to use charts in teaching reading.”

The expression, “ten different books,” for beginners in reading in 1881 in South Carolina hardly supports the McGuffey Myth, nor even that parents had themselves learned from McGuffey’s since the books the children brought to school might sometimes have been very old.

The recommendation of printing words given above was soon replaced by script, as shown by the previous quotation. The change to script was an obvious result of Quincy influences. Giving words to children initially in which all the letters were tied together as in script was a move towards teaching children to perceive words as “wholes.” This was particularly so since learning the alphabet first and oral “spelling” or the naming of the letters in sight words had generally been dropped by that time.

Starting on page 122 appeared the summary for “The Institute for Colored Teachers,” by H. P. Montgomery, Principal, held in South Carolina in 1882.

“Primary reading. No branch taught in our schools presents more difficulties to the minds of children than elementary reading.... The absurdity of the old and tedious methods was pointed out and the new and excellent method by Mrs. Rickoff, as set forth in the Appleton Readers and Chart substituted. Frequent drills in phonic spelling and reading were given.”

Phonic “spelling” meant proper pronunciation of learned sight-words, not decoding of new words: walk: w - au - k. Nila Banton Smith reproduced comments made shortly after this period, quoted elsewhere in this history, which confirmed that oral phonic drill on already memorized sight words left children helpless when faced with unknown words.

At the end of James Johonnot’s *The Sentence and Word Book*, published by D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1885, was the following advertisement, which confirms that the Appleton charts were not teaching true phonics:

“The “Appletons’ Elementary Reading Charts. Forty-seven Numbers, including a beautiful Chart of Colors. Prepared by Rebecca D. Rickoff.

“These Charts are designed to give a thorough exposition of the Word and Phonic Method especially, and at the same time all that is best in all other methods of teaching reading. The Charts are 27 x 34 inches in size....”

A full-page advertisement in the back of Appletons’ School Readers. The First Reader, printed in 1883, said the charts were:

“...Designed to cultivate the observing powers of children. Designed to teach young minds how to think. Designed to educate the child by philosophical methods.... They are in accord with the educational spirit of the day, and with the methods followed by the best instructors. They are the only charts planned with special reference to the cultivation of language and the power of expression. They follow the natural method of teaching, appealing to those faculties of the child that are most easily awakened, and inciting correct mental processes at the outset....”

“Philosophical methods...” that incited “correct mental processes at the outset” were exactly what one would expect from movers-and-shakers after 1878. The date Mrs. Rickoff produced these charts is not known, as they were not listed in the American Catalogues. However, Appleton’s Chart Primer by Mrs. R. D. Rickoff was shown in the 1885-1890 American Catalogue as published in 1884, presumably a book form of the charts which were advertised in the 1883 Harvard copy of *The First Reader*.

Appleton was unlike most other publishers from the mid-1860’s to the mid-1870’s, since I have found no record anywhere that they ever published a Leigh-print edition. Appleton apparently avoided producing the editions of its first and second readers in Leigh pronouncing print that would have permitted children to learn to read by “sound” instead of “meaning.”

The probability is that it was Appleton’s non-Leigh-print, vastly used 1878 series, and Farnham’s very carefully placed paper at the 1873 NEA meeting proposing the sentence method, that were deliberately used to kill off Leigh print at the height of its success. However, since the Appleton series’ principal author, William Torrey Harris, must have personally known Leigh for over twenty years, as noted elsewhere, for Harris to have been involved in publishing the first important non-Leigh-print series in many years was an extraordinary snub to Leigh. Also, it is just one more indication that our “leading educators” over the years have been a rather nasty bunch.

Mrs. Rickoff’s Appleton reading charts probably paralleled the Reading Disentangled charts by Mrs. Mortimer, discussed elsewhere in this history. Mrs. Mortimer’s phony-phonics charts had been published in England since the 1830’s and were authorized for government textbook subsidies there when such subsidies were first provided in the late 1840’s. The use of such charts was an outgrowth of methods in Lancaster’s monitorial schools from the early 1800’s, which methods relied heavily on charts for teaching groups of children. Charts were apparently heavily used later in infant schools and elsewhere. Charts appeared in Harper’s 1860’s series and Butler’s 1880’s series, and undoubtedly in many other places.

Blackboards were also used as charts. The use of blackboards for teaching any subject probably was not common in America before the 1840’s. Horace Mann told glowingly of their use in Prussia in the early 1840’s. The 1843 advertisement for a teacher’s institute in New York State, which is reproduced in Appendix A, states, “...Particular attention will be paid to... the use of the slate and black board.... Blackboards and other apparatus will be provided....” John Goldsbury wrote *Exercises and Illustrations on the Blackboard* in 1847 recommending American use of blackboards.

As mentioned in PART 3, the earliest reference I have seen to blackboards was Pere Demia’s recommending the use of a “table noire” in France in 1668. Presumably blackboards were an

already-existing European device by 1668, and could serve to illustrate material to any group, whether composed of adults or children.

Yet the massive and almost sole use of blackboards for teaching beginning reading shortly after 1875 was apparently the result of the Quincy influences. Blackboard use for beginning reading generated clouds of chalk dust in first grades all over America for some thirty years. Sight words were first presented to children in script form, not in separated letters. In his 1912 Beacon reading series, James Fassett found fault with the use of blackboards and chalk and recommended instead the use of his reading charts for beginning reading. The extent of blackboard use in first grades appears to have lessened about that time.

Starting on page 143 is the report, "The Normal Institute for Colored Teachers at Petersburg, 1882" by H. P. Montgomery, Principal. Mrs. E. V. Montgomery had charge of the sessions on primary reading and language. Concerning primary reading, the report said (page 144):

"The waste of time and nerve in the old methods struck everyone when the more excellent and natural way, as set forth in the Appleton Readers and Chart, was seen. In connection with the reading, phonic spelling received special treatment."

The phony-phonics Appleton Readers were apparently making almost a clean sweep in the southern institute sessions after 1880.

Professor M. A. Newell (no other identification) was in charge of the four-week "Institute for White Teachers," in August, 1882, in Columbia, South Carolina. He said (pages 115-116) that the memorizing of definitions was not "merely useless" but -

"...positively injurious. It does not improve the memory and it does weaken every other mental faculty."

Newell said it contributed more largely than any other agency to the:

"...artificial production of stupidity in schools.... The most essential of all mental habits for a student, whether young or old, is the habit of attaching some definite meaning to every sentence which he reads."

Newell had possibly been reading Dugald Stewart or a summary of Stewart's work.

Newell's institute in Abingdon, Virginia, in 1881, was four weeks long, with 20 days of sessions and teachers from 25 counties. The following remark was made (page 135) by "Principal" Newell:

"The class exercises of the principal, with the exception of a few lessons on word building and the history of words and on verbal parsing, were confined to reading..... Untrained teachers will find the word method simpler in theory and quite as effective in practice. The theory is that words of one syllable are simply objects whose names must be learned as names of other objects are learned."

These following comments appeared on page 97, and were from the "Report of the Normal Institute of South Carolina for 1881" by Professor L. F. Soldan. They apparently were Professor Soldan's own remarks.

“Children learn to do things by doing them. They learn to talk by talking... so a child should learn to spell by spelling, to read by reading....”

The recommendation, “learning by doing” was obviously from the Parker influence, later called the Dewey influence. Mitford Mathews quoted John Dewey on page 104 of *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1966):

“Writing in 1930, John Dewey said that Francis Parker ‘more nearly than any other one person was the father of the progressive educational movement.’”

M. A. Newell, the “Principal” of The Abingdon Normal Institute, 1881, which lasted four weeks, gave an evening lecture on “The New Education” (page 137):

“growth from within, not accretion from without.... The new education makes a distinction between productive and unproductive knowledge.”

How can anyone possibly know, ahead of time, what knowledge ultimately is going to be “productive” and what knowledge ultimately is going to be “unproductive?” I met an elderly mathematician once, on a trip to the Galapagos, who was a delightfully cultivated man. He said (not altogether in jest) that the only mathematics which was really interesting to mathematicians was the mathematics that was useless. It is this kind of dizzyingly difficult and contemporarily “useless” mathematics, however, that may ultimately get “used” by people like Einstein.

It is strange that Angela Medici of France wrote *L’Education Nouvelle*, Presses Universitaires de Paris, France (1940, 1948) and apparently had no knowledge that the roots of “The New Education,” the history of which she was writing, possibly lay with Colonel Parker at Quincy and Chicago. The New Education possibly spread abroad through Parker’s influence on tourists attending the 1893 Chicago Worlds’ Fair.

“The Normal Institute for White Teachers at Salem, 1882,” had two co-conductors, Professor W. B. McGilvray of Richmond, Virginia, and Professor E. V. De Graffe of Paterson, New Jersey. The ten-day institute started August 7, 1882. The institute summary report included these comments which confirmed the continued devotion to teaching sight-words and concentrating on “meaning,” which was called “reproducing thought”:

“Reading - Errors of ABC Method. Word method explained and illustrated. Practical, because natural and sensible. Recommended by results. Instruction of advanced classes. Gaining thought, reproducing thought, transmitting thought by voicing expression.”

Institute reports from Michigan confirmed the use of the word method there, instead of real phonics. County Institutes in Michigan were reported, and on page 154 this appeared:

“Common errors in teaching.... [That] The word method solely is the correct plan of teaching reading.... Pupils not prepared for subsequent work... Do not have vocal organs cultivated to distinct articulation.”

Note the use of phonics for “articulation.”

A county institute in Indiana in 1882 (page 176) reported reading lessons. One was on silent reading, confirming that the teaching of “silent reading” has been around for a long time. Another reading lesson was one hour long, spent drilling on reading a single paragraph of 75 words! The change-agents of 1826



were still casting a long shadow with “elocution,” though it was to disappear from schools by the twentieth century.

Institute reports from West Virginia for 1882 and 1883 reported institute lessons on teaching beginners to read with the “sentence “ method, the “word method,” and the “abc method.” The 1883 institute session was illustrated by a class of little children who had never attended school. Many of the poor little ones involved in these West Virginia demonstration lessons probably never did learn to read, or, at the very least, never did learn to spell accurately.

The “word method” with which those little West Virginia children were being afflicted in 1882 did not originate with J. Russell Webb as was wrongly claimed, but he certainly deserved credit for increasing its use. The vicinity of Watertown in Jefferson County, New York, is where J. Russell Webb first tried his whole word method about 1845, about which Nila Banton Smith wrote, crediting 1846 as the date Webb’s first book was published. On the closely printed back cover of Miles’ United States Spelling Book, published by Lamport, Blakeman & Law of New York in 1854 and which advertised their many materials, appeared an advertisement for Webb’s Normal Readers. It was followed by a paragraph which read:

“These readers are used in the principal cities and villages throughout the United States, and are rapidly coming into use in the smaller towns of the country. Their merits have been fairly tested, and they have universally been pronounced superior to any series of Readers extant; not only for the improvement in the system of teaching, which is the WORD METHOD; but also in the high moral tone...” (etc.).

That 1854 New York advertisement testified that Webb’s “word method” was only then “rapidly coming into use in the smaller towns of the country,” so, obviously, it was moving even later into the isolated little country schools. If the date Nila Banton Smith gave for the first edition of Webb’s material is correct (which is questionable), Webb’s series first appeared in 1846. Yet sight-word primers had preceded Webb’s 1846 version, such as Worcester’s (1826), Angell’s (1830), Bumstead’s (1838), Sanders (1840), and others. Their use had been dominant in the larger towns and cities, particularly in Massachusetts, since not very long after 1826, which seems to be confirmed by the fact that Noah Webster, himself, wrote a primer by 1832 to precede his speller.

Outlying country schools were outside the change-agents’ network until later. The switch from “sound” to “meaning” did not reach them in force until the “institutes” finally spread in number and influence in “certifying” teachers. That most probably was not until the 1860’s. The institutes which were injecting “whole word” poison into the little country schools by the 1860’s and which had originated in their final form only in 1843, had simply not become powerful enough by the time of the comment quoted above from 1854 to influence all the schools, those in the small towns and rural countryside as well as in the large towns and cities. Therefore, old methods, like the use of Webster-type spellers, did linger longer in the countryside until they were finally displaced by the “institute” influences.

An anecdote from a northern New York rural teacher confirmed that Webster’s speller was still in dominant use in some of those northern New York State country schools in 1847, before the massive spread of the institutes. The anecdote was quoted on pages 500 and 501 of Readings in American Educational History, edited by Edgar W. Knight and Clifton L. Hall, published first in 1951 by Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., and reprinted by Greenwood Press, Publishers, in New York in 1970. The short anecdote is titled, “Description of a School in New York State, 1847,” and was taken from J. W. Hooper’s Three Score and Ten In Retrospect, published by C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York, in 1900. Hooper began to teach as a very young man, apparently about eighteen years of age, in a little country

school in 1847, and presumably taught for at least a few years after that. The school was near Antwerp, which was, like Webb's Watertown, in Jefferson County. Hooper wrote:

"...I found myself surrounded on Monday morning by forty or forty-five as bright, as intelligent-looking a class of boys and girls as I have ever met in school.... I am unable to find a full list of the books in use. I find the Old English reader, Daboll's arithmetic, Webster's speller, and Kirkham's grammar. I do not remember to have used any geography.... All from seven years old up were expected to read, write, spell and cipher from the same text-book.

"The school was organized and ready for work. I think I never felt more proud than when standing at my little home-made table in about the centre of the room, surrounded by that class of boys and girls. And, think of it, they called me master! And I was their teacher."

Hooper implicitly confirmed that the little children under seven in his country school were using Webster's speller in 1847, since they never could have moved into the use of those other textbooks at age seven if they had been unable to read independently. But, with Webster's "sound" speller to begin with, they learned to read by seven, just as the old Scottish Schoolmaster's little students had done for some thirty years when they were taught by "sound." Another implicit confirmation that the young teacher was working with a literate class is the way he felt about them, at that time and in retrospect. If many of his students had been unable to read those books (and Murray's "Old English" reader was very demanding!) Hooper would have been a very frustrated instead of a very contented young teacher. Since he said that some of the students were as old as he was, he might have found the experience a very difficult one if they had not all been able to succeed.

A second confirmation that the "sound" speller was still in use in such country schools until perhaps about the 1860's is the statement concerning Webb's "meaning" readers, quoted previously. The 1854 advertisement quoted above testified that Webb's "improvements" had not yet reached little country or small town schools by 1854 (and therefore should not have done so until appreciably after 1854). It was not until the institutes blanketed the states that the "best" methods of teaching beginning reading finally forced out the "sound" spellers like Webster's for beginners.

The experiences of members of my mother's family in Jefferson County, New York, confirm the sequence of changes in reading instruction methods that took place over those years. My mother, Katharine Geraldine Murtha Rodgers, was born in 1884 in northern New York State on the farm of her parents, Thomas and Mary Ann McCartin Murtha, outside the small town of Carthage in Jefferson County, New York. Carthage is about 18 miles from Watertown, also in Jefferson County, in the vicinity of which Webb "invented" his whole-word method first published reportedly in 1846, and about 30 miles or so from Antwerp in Jefferson County, where Hooper was still using Webster's speller in 1847 and probably later.

My mother had said that, when she was growing up (and she would have been from six to sixteen from 1890 to 1900), there were some people nearby who were "bright in every other way, as with their hands, but they never could learn to read." When I had asked her how reading was taught in the little country school to which she had gone, she said, "They just showed you the words." That was, of course, Webb's beginning method, and the standard whole-word method, and the undoubted reason some of her adult neighbors in the 1890's had never learned to read.

By the 1860's, institutes had become massive in New York State, and actually used a corps of institute instructors officially appointed by the state. By the 1860's, therefore, even the little country schools could have "certified" teachers. By the 1860's, such Jefferson County institute-trained teachers, unlike Hooper in Antwerp in Jefferson County in 1847, would use whole-word "meaning" methods like

Webb's. Such "expertly" trained teachers turned out illiterates like those my mother remembered, and undoubtedly phalanxes of functional illiterates, as well.

As discussed elsewhere, phonic exercises in spelling returned to the schools at second grade and above between 1885 and 1890. Since my mother probably started school in 1890 at six years of age, she was probably given, in that little country school, a heavily phonic spelling book before second grade. One such text was Stickney's 1889 second grade spelling book, and it taught the heavy phonics that had been omitted in the sight-word first grade reading texts of the period, and so did other spelling books that came out in the late 1880's. My mother was a rapid reader and flawless speller, as were her younger brother and sister as demonstrated by their letters, and the probability is that they became so because they were exposed to such spelling books.

So apparently were her father and mother rapid readers, since they were both reportedly avid readers. They had also been born in Jefferson County in northern New York in 1843 and 1849 respectively, and educated in Jefferson County country schools in Carthage and Redwood respectively. However, as discussed, that was before the spread of institutes and their baleful effect on country schools. The continued use of Webster's or some other speller, and the failure to use the "improved" materials like Webb's, is the probable reason both of my mother's parents really learned to read in little country schools in Carthage and Redwood in Jefferson County about 1849 and 1855. Their first-grade experiences were not far in either time or space from Hooper's little country school in Jefferson County outside Antwerp in 1847 and later, which is known to have been using Webster's speller.

My mother's six-years-older and intelligent sister would have started school about 1884, by which time Webb-type "improvements" would have spread into the country schools through the teachers' institutes, and after the speller had been dropped even in upper grades because of the later 1875 Quincy influences. It is therefore not at all surprising that she was a bad speller. As a teen-ager, I was startled by the inaccurate spelling in her letters, particularly in contrast to the highly literate letters of my mother's younger sister and brother. It is sadly obvious that my mother's intelligent older sister was one of the hosts of children in America since 1826 who were hurt by our powerful - and unpunished - education "experts."

The little beginners being taught to read by "meaning" methods at the 1883 West Virginia institute demonstration classes would also have been harmed by the "meaning" approach, just as my aunt was about 1884 in rural northern New York State. The highly organized octopus of harmful, standardizing "experts" operating largely through the teachers' institutes had succeeded long before 1883, probably from the 1860's, in reaching into and spoiling almost every school in the United States of America.

They succeeded in doing so under a hullabaloo and very expensive cover of "expert" noise about "improving" education. That is the same kind of "expert" thing we are getting today on America 2000, which, if it succeeds, will tighten the vise of centralized education control until it finally chokes the Bill of Rights to death.

My mother's older sister did not, however, achieve the heights of sparkling originality in spelling that I found much later in the Lyndhurst Board of Education minutes from the 1890's (then called Union Township), referred to elsewhere in this history. The men writing those minutes would all have learned to read, probably in New Jersey, when the word method was dominant, as shown by the institutes which have been described, one of which was run in 1881 in Virginia by Professor E. V. De Graffe of Paterson, New Jersey. This suggests that "experts" traveled a lot in those days, too - undoubtedly with all their expenses paid by somebody else, just like today. Yet De Graffe would have spread his wisdom first in New Jersey, and so would have other New Jersey institute instructors like him. They affected teachers in

such schools as those that had been attended by the men who wrote the Lyndhurst (at that time, Union) Township school minutes in the 1890's.

By some very early date, teachers were required to pass "tests" to earn state "teaching certificates," and expressing original thinking on how to teach reading on such tests was not likely to result in getting a teacher's certificate. Colonel Francis Parker referred to institutes in the School Journal, August 12, 1899 (page 118), when he was describing conditions twenty-five years before, or about 1874:

"Many teachers' institutes were supplementary to regular school work, and were held for the purpose of aiding candidates for teaching to pass their examinations."

Confirmation on the influence of Farnham's "sentence" ideas at these omnipresent teacher's institutes is given on page 11 of the September, 1883, issue of The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York. Each month, the paper ran a contest for the best answers to that month's questions which had been submitted by subscribers. However, the publisher of the School Bulletin, C. W. Bardeen of Syracuse, New York, was also the publisher of Farnham's book in 1881, so there may well have been some vested interest in the choice of the prize selection mentioned below! The prize for the July questions was awarded to Harold S. Smith of Indianapolis, Indiana. Smith's "prize" answer follows question "171":

"I ask for information in regard to teaching reading by the work (sic: obviously word) method. Will some one be so kind to inform me how it is done? C.E.C."

"171. The Word Method of teaching reading consists in giving the beginner entire words from the first, instead of first teaching the letters. The letters are learned only incidentally. In effect, the child is taught that C A T is a certain sort of picture of a cat, and that it always means a cat, just as the pictorial illustration means a cat.

"This method is best carried out by reading charts, especially Appleton's, but may be taught from the blackboard.

"There is no longer any discussion as to the value of the word-method, among intelligent teachers. It is accepted as at least an element of the proper way to start the beginner. But there are two other methods sometimes used to accompany it. One is the Phonic Method, which teaches the sounds of the letters, and thus enables a child to make out a word not before seen. The other is the Sentence Method, which gives at first a sentence instead of a word; as, This is a cat. This is a prominent feature of the Quincy system, and is explained fully in Superintendent Farnham's "Sentence Method of Teaching Reading," price 50 cents, which has been a prominent text-book in Iowa institutes, this summer."

It seems probable that Smith of Indianapolis must have attended the Iowa institutes, possibly as an instructor. His short 1883 comments confirmed the dominance of "meaning" methods in teaching beginning reading in the 1883 schools, the influence and widespread existence of teacher's institutes by 1883, and the widespread acceptance of Farnham's "sentence-method" material by 1883. His reference to the "Phonic Method" would most probably concern two-step whole-word phony phonics, like that endorsed by the Boston schools' report, also of 1883, which will be described.

#### Concerning Institute Instructor Johonnot's Influence on Farnham

From 1866 till 1872 as an institute instructor, Johonnot would have been in the midst of all the fermenting "new" ideas coming from the "experts" in education and would have been free to attend lectures elsewhere than New York State concerning such "new" ideas - lectures like those, perhaps, being

given by Agassiz in Boston in 1870. It is certain that Johonnot was tied to the Agassiz group by 1873, because Johonnot was one of the very small group “privileged” to attend Agassiz’ famous summer session in 1873 at Penikese Island.

Farnham had stated that his “psychological” sentence theory was influenced by Johonnot. Johonnot was influenced by Agassiz definitely in 1873 and as a member of New York State’s institute faculty was in a position to have been “influenced” by Agassiz and those around him since 1866. (Johonnot’s use of widespread influence appears to be confirmed by his prestigious 1872 appointment in Missouri, far from New York State.) Agassiz very definitely influenced James. These connections are very slender, indeed, between Farnham and James, but it is my conjecture that Farnham was only the “laboratory equipment” used by James to test his “sentence” ideas in Binghamton in 1870. James could not have tested his ideas openly in New England as Parker referred to hostility there to “psychology” in education.

No evidence beyond the foregoing relationships is yet available, except that about 1930 someone went to the trouble to steal some unidentifiable volumes from James’ personal collection of his own writings that had been donated to a Harvard faculty room, as will be mentioned later. No such theft from the shelves in the faculty room had ever occurred before, according to the professor who had stocked those shelves for years. Furthermore, copies of James’ formally published works (but not his unpublished works) were on the open library shelves at Harvard and would probably have been easier to steal. The probable target of the 1930-1931 thief was the unpublished James material. What was in that unpublished James material? However, two additional facts are certainly suggestive. One is that there is a remarkable similarity between Farnham’s ideas and James’ ideas. The other is that the kind of experimental psychology to which Farnham referred was virtually unknown in the United States in 1870 except in the mind of William James.

#### Concerning the Post-Philbrick Reading Methods in Boston

The Suggestions Accompanying the Course of Study for Grammar and Primary Schools, School Document No. 17, 1878, put out by the Boston schools a few months after Philbrick was fired, made the following statements under “Reading,” on pages 11-14:

“The object to be sought in this branch of instruction is twofold. The pupils should be taught (1) to take in, with the eye and the mind, the meaning of the printed sentences; and then (2) to express this meaning intelligently by the voice.... The methods used to accomplish this result in the different grades must vary with different teachers....

“The following suggestions may be of use: -

“After children have learned to recognize simple words they may be taught to read short simple sentences from the black-board or chart and from the book, the teacher aiding them by reading each sentence; for at the outset they can be expected to do little except by imitation.”

The emphasis on the “sentence” is obvious, as is the assumption that the children would be incapable of sounding out words in these sentences but would have to be told them by their teachers.

This 1878 document sounded remarkably like Farnham’s 1881 book. The 1878 paper also said (page 14):

“The classes should have as much supplementary reading as possible, outside the book assigned.... As soon as a child can read easy sentences he should be encouraged to read other books than the reading-books.”

Supplementary reading was Colonel Parker's special enthusiasm, and it was moved right into the Boston schools with the new curriculum of 1878. The supplementary reading which the 1878 curriculum guide endorsed for lower grades was the use of other first grade books than the official books, all of which had very limited vocabulary. However, with L. H. Marvel, Parker wrote Supplementary Reading for Primary Schools, First Book and Second Book. These had revised editions in print in 1882, according to Leypoldt's 1876-1884 American Catalogue. Harvard has a copy of the first edition of the First Book which came out in 1880, and it is a terrible thing consisting of very high frequency words and is almost devoid of sense.

What can be shown from the above curriculum guide of 1878 is that it made it impossible to teach Leigh phonics to beginners. Leigh's method required the use of his wall chart for rank beginners to learn letters and their sounds before being given words. Instead, this studiously vague course outline in reading for Boston schools gave a casual emphasis on sentences. Chanting a sentence after a teacher had already read it can hardly be called "reading," but this is what replaced Leigh phonics for beginners. So, sight-word sentence-reading was moved in and Leigh phonics moved out of the Boston schools with NO OPEN RECOGNITION in the Boston school document that a major change was taking place! A table was included which listed curriculum at each grade level. In the last half of first grade, it showed "Spelling, by sound and by letter, some easy, common words from the reading lessons." Note that, in the last half of first grade, "sound" is used only on SOME EASY words in the reading lessons! Leigh phonics had obviously been outlawed for beginners without even mentioning it by name.

Under the section, "Spelling," on page 15, this statement is made:

"Pupils in the upper classes may be led to perceive the few fundamental rules of orthography and pronunciation which belong to our language."

Being "led to perceive" was Agassiz's teaching method. He liked to leave a student alone in a room with a natural history specimen. Agassiz then expected the student to "discover" the truths about the oyster, or whatever it was that had been placed in front of him. Now upper grade Boston students were to be "led to perceive" the rules of orthography and pronunciation, which they would have acquired long before if they had learned to read with phonics.

The 1878 Boston curriculum was highly influential. On page 229 of the December, 1878, The Primary Teacher, published in Boston but sent all over America, this appeared:

"...owing to the great interest felt in all parts of the country, in the course of study recently adopted for the Boston Primary Schools, which, is, in some respects, a "New Departure" in this grade, we print the entire course in this issue of The Teacher. In subsequent issues, we shall furnish the courses of other leading cities."

The similarity between the specific lessons outlined in Farnham's 1881 book and the specific lessons outlined later in School Document No. 1, 1883, Method of Teaching Reading in the Primary Schools, Boston, "Prepared by The Board of Supervisors for the Public Schools of Boston," is striking. Both teach individual new words, as would be expected in the atmosphere of the time, from objects, but always in the context of sentences. Both then move to reading whole sentences. Both emphasize that the sentence is the natural unit, the 1883 material starting with the opening statement:

"Reading may be defined as the act of the mind in getting thought by means of written or printed words arranged in sentences."

The 1883 report referred back to the Outline Course of Study of 1878 and was an obvious outgrowth of it. Any phonics, according to that earlier document, was to be held off until the last half of first grade, and even then it was minimal. The alphabet was obviously not taught before reading was begun, according to the table entitled “1878 Outline Course of Study - Primary Schools,” and only a few script letters were given for copying in writing lessons in the first half of first grade and then used to copy simple written words. The rest of the written script letters were not shown till the last half of first grade. Copying a few script letters and words as pictures, with no reference to their sound, of course, had nothing to do with teaching reading by sound.

In the Boston schools which had so enthusiastically adopted Leigh print, there must have been great resistance to the 1878 edict, so the 1883 document included a section, “Phonics,” which purported to allow its use after the beginning stage. When analyzed, however, it is nothing but elocution plus elaborate phony phonics. The real emphasis of the “Document” remained on “meaning,” not “sound,” as shown by the following at its beginning:

“...The main point, therefore, to which the attention of the teacher should be directed at every step, from first to last, in the teaching of reading is this: Are the pupils led to get the thought?....”

“... When children are trained to utter sentences by merely imitating... there is established the vicious habit of uttering words without perceiving their sense, - a habit which is broken up later with extreme difficulty.

“A written or printed word is used to recall an idea; it has no other use. A word which has been associated with a particular idea in the mind will, when seen, recall that idea, faintly if the association is weak, vividly if the association is strong. An association grows stronger by repetition of those acts which first produced it. A word is learned only when this bond of association has grown so strong that the word instantly at sight recalls its appropriate idea. It follows that the teaching of reading consists essentially in evoking acts of association between written or printed words and their appropriate ideas. That teaching which assists these acts of association assists the child in learning to read; that which does not assist these acts is useless. If this be so, the best method of teaching reading will include all those devices, and only those, which aid efficiently in causing associative acts between ideas and written or printed words....”

It should be superabundantly clear that this was written by a psychologist in Boston, by 1883. (The overuse of italics is striking: William James was given to an overuse of italics in his 1890 psychology book. Note also the use of the subjunctive tense, “If this be so...” which had been common in ordinary writing before 1826 but was rare by 1883 except in the writing of highly educated people like William James.) Mitford Mathews thought Colonel Parker may have written this unsigned Boston report, but it does not sound like Parker’s writing nor his ideas. Apparently, the only psychologists in the modern sense in the Boston area before 1883 were Hall and James (although Royce, for whom psychology was only a sideline, had arrived as James’ substitute at Harvard for the 1882-1883 year). Hall was incapable of writing anything lucidly, and could not have written the above. Having read later material by Thorndike, James’ ex-student, in which so much of the above vocabulary occurs (“bond of association”), and having read some of James’ material which sounds so much like the above, I have little doubt in my own mind that at least the last paragraph of the above selection was written personally by James. Leigh phonic print had been thoroughly defeated by then, so the 1883 text could be more far outspoken than the 1878 text. It is even likely that substantial portions of the 1883 text had been written long before 1883 but that it was only safe to publish them in Boston by that date.

The 1883 report was a “teacher’s guide” for almost all of the wrong approaches in the teaching of reading which have afflicted America ever since. Given below are excerpts from various pages. They are obviously drenched in “psychological” language.

(Page 7:) “THE WORD AS A WHOLE. Spoken words are learned as wholes. That is, there is no conscious analysis of the word into its elementary parts; or sounds, in learning to talk. Indeed, most people use words all their lives without a conscious knowledge of phonic analysis. Again, in respect to written words, it is to be remarked that they are first visually grasped as wholes. Any attempt to see a part before the whole is seen only weakens the mind’s power to take in the whole. A too early struggle with the parts of a word, whether spoken or written, absorbs the attention, and thus prevents the only act of importance - the act of association between the word and the idea - from taking place.

“The written word, to be effectually associated with its idea in learning to read, must be dealt with as a whole, just as the spoken word is dealt with as a whole when first associated with its idea in learning to talk.”

(Page 8:) Under “The Sentence and the Thought,” it read, “Words arranged in sentences recall ideas in their relations.... The use of sentences should begin after a few single words and phrases have been taught....”

(Page 18:) “...For the convenience of teachers a list has been prepared, consisting of all the words found in the first forty pages of the Franklin (new) Primer, in the whole of Monroe’s Chart, and in the first forty pages of Supplementary Reading - First Book... [Ed. Obviously, this was Parker’s.]

“It is believed that from one hundred to one hundred and fifty of these words may profitably be taught in script, on the black-board, before the change is made from script to print....

(Page 19:) “...It is of the utmost importance that the words taught be thoroughly learned....”

(Page 25:) “...A few words, well taught, is a far better result than one hundred words poorly taught.

Immediately under this clear admission that sight words were being taught as wholes, came this seemingly placating section:

“PHONICS.

“There should be frequent drills on the elementary sounds in all the primary and grammar classes, varying in character according to the needs of the pupils. The Chart of Sounds here given for reference is nearly identical with the lists given in Monroe’s “Physical and Vocal Training,” an authorized book of reference. The chart, without the illustrative words, should be placed on the black-board in script at first, and later, when the children begin to read print, in both script and print.”

The chart consisted of vowels and consonants marked very much like the keys in today’s dictionaries. The children worked their way down the columns, imitating their teacher’s pronunciation. Yet the report made it clear that, at the beginning of first grade (which is the critical part), a teacher was only to exercise the children orally on repeating words after her slow pronunciation, without reference to a written chart on the board.



The intent in many places giving such training was only to train the voice, but this 1883 report claimed the chart ultimately could help children to read independently. Yet the 1883 report, when read as a whole, makes it very clear the only “phonics” it was endorsing was phony phonics, Code 3 at the best. While it claimed to teach analytic phonics on long and short vowel sounds, it openly relied on “analogy,” the comparing of whole words to each other, or two-step phony phonics, and provided lists of words on which to use such analogies. Page 18 of the report stated that “All the words... in the whole of Monroe’s Chart...” were included in the basic sight-word list given to the teacher, so they obviously were to be taught as wholes. Therefore, Monroe’s “phonics” chart was certainly not being used to teach real phonics, but only whole-word, two-step phony phonics.

Synthetic phonics was almost totally rejected:

(Page 29:) “In the exceptional cases, where children cannot be led to the pronunciation of new words by the analogies of the language, they may be helped by the use of diacritical marks. The premature and too frequent use of diacritical marks may lead to rapid word-calling, and away from the expression of thought, and should therefore be avoided.”

The 1883 remark quoted above was the first clear and outspoken dumping of Leigh print in Boston, because Leigh print essentially consisted of diacritical marks. Aside from material written to promote phonic methods such as Leigh’s and Pollard’s, it is also the first of only two known references in American “reading instruction” literature to the fact that children learn to read far faster and more accurately with synthetic phonics than with sight words (with “sound” instead of “meaning”). At least two such admissions, however, have occurred in the European literature promoting the sight-word “global” method, one by Robert Dottrens in Switzerland in *Au Seuil de La Culture* in 1965, and the other by J. E. Seegers in Belgium in *La psychologie de la lecture et l’initiation a la lecture par la methode globale*, 1939 in Belgium, both of which will be referred to later.

The 1883 report also stated (page 29)

“The dependence upon analogy gives valuable training in language, and should be early and constantly encouraged.”

The “analogy” to which it referred is Gallaudet’s visual comparison of whole words already learned by their meaning, not by their sound: “bread, spread, thread,” or “pin, tin, spin.” E. L. Thorndike, James’ student, wrote an article, “Word Knowledge in the Elementary School,” in the *Teachers College Record* for September, 1921. It included a section, “Material for Phonic Drills,” in which he showed “phonograms,” or parts of words, followed by words which contained them, one of which was: “own - brown crown down town.” (This was an interesting choice, as “own” has a second sound!) Since Thorndike endorsed only whole words, however, this was pure visual phonics, or two-step phony phonics, the comparing of whole sight words to each other to see like parts. However, as mentioned earlier, visual analysis of meaning-bearing sight words was common in sight-word books after about 1826. Its intent was very different from the grouping of like words by sound in the pre-1826 analytic phonics spellers, all of which words were learned by emphasizing “sound” and not “meaning.”

Visual analysis compared whole words learned for “meaning” to new words so that the new words could also be memorized as meaning-bearing wholes. After 1826, such words were pronounced first by the teacher and not worked out by the pupil.

Yet, by contrast, before 1826, if Webster-type synthetic phonics was not used, phonic analysis was used by a pupil to compare parts of known syllables or words to parts of new words to determine the sounds. Words of similar sounds and spellings appeared in meaningless columns, and “meaning” had

nothing to do with their arrangement. There cannot really be any doubt whatsoever that the old spellers using such analytic phonics were “sound” and not “meaning” oriented, since it was precisely because of all the old spelling books’ lack of “meaning” that they were drummed out of beginning reading.

As is implied by pages 30 and 33 of the 1883 report, Boston beginners in 1883 were to be given in script, apparently on the blackboard, the first thirty-nine pages of the Franklin Primer, (apparently the “new” edition set up by University Press), “Monroe’s Chart,” and the first forty pages of Colonel Parker’s unspeakably poor Supplementary Reading - First Book. They were then to change to print, as outlined on page 30, by practice from the blackboard. Afterwards, they were to read the following in print, not script:

“It is recommended that Monroe’s chart be read first; then the first forty pages of the Franklin (new) Primer; then the whole of Supplementary Reading-Book First; then the Franklin Primer, from page 41. After these use the First Readers of the circulating supplementary reading books.

“Pupils should not begin the Second Readers until they have full and ready command of the First Reader vocabulary.”

Note the reference to the Franklin Primer - obviously not in Leigh print. As discussed elsewhere, before the change-agents threw out Philbrick, the publishing information on copies of surviving primers at Harvard shows the change-agents had made sure they had non-Leigh editions of the Franklin Primer printed by University Press a year ahead of time so that non-Leigh-print copies would be on hand by the fall of 1878 when they needed them.

In this connection, a very queer comment appeared in Boston School Document No. 6 of 1883, Committee on Examinations. That official committee of the Boston schools had asked all the Boston schools to send them statistical data dating back to 1869. The committee made this comment on page 6 of their May 22, 1883, report:

“The committee were much disappointed at the imperfect returns received in answer to several of the questions issued. But many of the masters state in their replies that, during the summer vacation of 1878, the record-books, especially of their Primary Schools, were gathered up and carried off, together with other school property, and never returned. The books were probably destroyed, as no trace of them can be found.

“The loss of these books is greatly to be regretted, as it renders it impossible to procure exact information, however much desired and important, in relation to the statistics of former years.”

Philbrick had been fired some six months before these record books disappeared. Leigh-print primers were obviously replaced with the “new” Franklin Primers in ordinary print in September of 1878. However, after the convenient theft of the primary school records in the summer of 1878, no one would ever be able to compare the sight-word primary classes of 1878 and later to the Leigh-phonics classes before 1878.

A further possibility might be considered: Did the other school property that was “carried off” in the summer of 1878 by unknown persons, who apparently had legal access to the Boston primary schools, possibly include the Leigh classroom phonic charts and the Leigh-print Hillard/Campbell texts that had been used right up to the spring of 1878 when Philbrick was fired? If those phonic texts and charts were gone by September, 1878, even unwilling teachers would be forced to use the new, non-phonics materials.

This School Document No. 1 - 1883, Method of Teaching Reading in the Primary School, “Prepared by the Board of Supervisors, for the Public Schools of Boston” is the single most important text ever

published in this country on the teaching of reading. Its influence has been massive. It provided the formula and the philosophical justification for every one of the dominant reading programs used in this country ever since. Even Gates' and Gray's deaf-mute readers were ultimate elaborations on the ideas it contained.

Its roots, of course, lay in Gallaudet's deaf-mute method, which used a visual "phony phonics," but the document incorporated a far more elaborate phony phonics in the pattern followed ever since, even by Gates and Gray. Its elaborate phony phonics was also possibly inspired by Code 3 contemporary texts from England, discussed later, but the philosophical justification behind all of its recommendations is pure psychological jargon.

In my opinion, the ideas and even some of the phrasings which School Document No. 1 - 1883 contained show the clear influence of that very earliest American experimental psychologist, William James, though it is abundantly clear that the move to "meaning" in the Boston schools had to be the result of work by a determined group of activists, and certainly not by one man alone. The record suggests the activists were the disciples of Agassiz, who had died in 1873.

The record also suggests that these activists included the "philosophers" spoken of in the 1871 Boston school report, mentioned in a quotation given below, who were enormously disapproving of Leigh phonics, and William James was a philosopher, even in his youth. James' work was first published in a journal edited by William Torrey Harris, mentioned elsewhere. It is an intriguing fact that America's leading philosopher at the time, William Torrey Harris, was the principal author on the massively used 1878 Appleton series, which had no Leigh-print edition and which was primarily responsible for pushing the earlier reading series in Leigh print out of American schools.

William James was unemployed in 1870 and the usual references to this period in his life, after he received his doctorate in 1869 and began teaching at Harvard in 1872, is that he was in a state of nervous semi-collapse. That is a very long nervous collapse, to put it mildly: from 27 to 30 years of age. He undoubtedly shared his family's tendencies to hypochondria, but could act when he saw fit. On page 20 of Leon Edel's biography of Henry James, Edel referred to a letter Henry James wrote Charles Eliot Norton shortly after Henry James returned to America in May, 1870. Henry James mentioned William James' activities, and his comments suggest that his brother was very well in the late spring of 1870, despite William's famous and frightening psychic experience in March of 1870 (quoted, for instance in William James, a Biography, by Gay Wilson Allen, page 166. His father, who became a Swedenborgian afterwards, had had a similar horrifying psychic experience many years before.) Concerning William James' activities in the late spring of 1870, Edel said William James had finished his medical training, and according to Henry James' comments in his letter to Norton, was mixing with intellectual young men who had started a metaphysical club, in which they argued humorlessly and stayed to the topic chosen. Henry wrote that just to think of their activities gave him a headache.

According to Allen's biography on page 168, William James wrote in his diary on April 30 that he had passed a crisis in his life the day before, and had determined to believe in free will. For the rest of the year, he intended to avoid speculating, and would concentrate on moral freedom, by reading books supporting it, and by his actions. After the beginning of the next year, he felt he might return to his philosophical studies of skepticism without having such studies interfere with his ability to act.

Allen wrote concerning the period after May, 1870, on page 172:

"During this period when both William and Henry were at home in Cambridge, William was not writing many letters, and therefore documentary evidence for this year in his life is scarce. He was not even keeping his diary, but this is a good indication that he was successfully avoiding

emotional stress, for it was during periods of strain and crisis that he wrote most copiously in his diary.”

Therefore, during the most of 1870, when Farnham was first using the sentence method, James was healthy and in a frame of mind to “act.”

William James had been a student of Agassiz of Harvard, who, for a few years before his death in 1873, had urged his followers to go out and do something about education. James Johonnot, who wrote *Principles and Practice of Teaching* in 1878 included a chapter on Louis Agassiz, the Harvard biologist whose expedition to the Amazon in 1865 William James had joined. Johonnot had attended Agassiz’s famed natural history course at Penikese Island off Massachusetts in the summer of 1873, just before Agassiz’s death. Johonnot wrote:

“The life of ‘the master,’ as he was affectionately called by his pupils, was cut short at the very commencement of this most important enterprise of his life, and it is left to others to carry on to a successful termination the work he had begun....”

Concerning Agassiz’s “enterprise,” Johonnot had said earlier, as previously quoted in part:

“(Agassiz) saw that, in the prevailing education, language largely took the place of thought; that more attention was given to the symbols of knowledge than to the knowledge itself....”

“Those errors, he saw, could be corrected only by a radical and fundamental change in the whole system of education, in which the scientific spirit and methods should play a prominent part. He commenced the work of reform with his characteristic caution and energy, calling attention to some of the prominent defects of education in his public lectures.... His success was so great, that he resolved to try and reach the public schools by instruction offered to teachers....” (at Penikese in 1873).

That Agassiz was campaigning for major changes in education in the school year 1870-1871 is evident from Philbrick’s comments. In the Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston - 1871 for the school year 1870-1871, on page 142, Philbrick said:

“I find around me conflicting opinions, not only as to what should be the aim in education, but also on the details of means and methods. I am often button-holed and lectured by persons holding opposite and extreme, and, what seem to me, one-sided views on educational matters. In this way, I am sometimes entertained and instructed, and sometimes not. I am, on the whole, rather fond of hearing what the enthusiast and the man of one idea has to say.”

He outlined his experiences in a number of such encounters, and then said, on page 149:

“Being an honest seeker of truth, or at least imagining myself to be such, and appreciating very highly the privilege of listening to the instruction of learned and wise men, I make a point of attending a meeting where a truly great man is to speak to teachers on education. I am charmed and edified with what he says of the importance and the ways and means of teaching in our elementary schools the rudiments of natural science. EVERY PRIMARY SCHOOL, HE SAYS MUST HAVE ITS LITTLE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY. That sentence I felt sure would live and be quoted the world over, for he who uttered it was the very best authority in such a matter. He then goes on to depreciate the value of the study of words, and finally declares that the study of English Grammar should be abolished as a useless waste of time. Here the query

naturally arose, whether a man who was an acknowledged authority in one department of learning is equally entitled to respect as an authority in those branches which are outside his specialty?"

There can be no question that Philbrick was referring to Louis Agassiz, and that fact is confirmed by Johonnot's comments. Therefore, Agassiz (the idol of a near cult, eventually, as Johonnot made clear) was publicly downgrading in lectures the value of "words" in education, during the school year 1870-1871, the same school year that Farnham introduced the sentence method into Binghamton, which method could eventually be "justified" by William James' sentence "stream of consciousness" ideas which would only come out in print in his psychology book of 1890. That year, 1870, was also the same year that John Quincy Adams, Jr., chose to join the Quincy school board, with the presumed desire to aid education.

It is probable Agassiz' proselytizing had something to do with the winds for change blowing in Quincy, through the actions of the Adams' brothers, starting with John Quincy Adams' school committee membership in 1870 and that of his brother, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., by 1872.

It is very clear that Charles Francis Adams, Jr., agreed with Agassiz on the uselessness of teaching much grammar. Charles Francis Adams, Jr., was on the Quincy School Committee in 1872-1873, two years before it hired Colonel Parker. In the Harvard copy of the Report of the School Committee of the Town of Quincy for the School Year 1872-73, someone has put an asterisk after the word, "me" in the following sentence on page 14, and, at the bottom of the page, written in pencil in an old-fashioned script, "C. F. Adams, Jr." Here is that sentence and some of the comments which followed, a portion of which has been quoted previously:

"Under the division of duties during the past year, the examination of all the schools in grammar was assigned to me. As a general conclusion from my observations during that time, I am compelled to say, that, although there is abundant evidence of much honest labor and drilling on the part both of instructors and scholars, yet, as now taught in our schools, English grammar is a singularly unprofitable branch of instruction. The children are indeed taught the names of the parts of speech, and are drilled to parse the words of an ordinary sentence, - in the better schools they may even attain to some slight knowledge of analysis. I am, however, wholly unable to see that this labor at present results in any thing more than a dry, useless, and unattractive mental discipline. This I do not understand to be the object of a common-school education, in which utility is the one end which should always be kept in view...."

Adams was obviously not endorsing the idea that all men should have access to all wholesome knowledge, or that such learning is, of and by itself, a good thing, or that the human mind hungers after truth for its own sake just as the human body hungers after food. Adams' ideas on the "utility" of the kind of education that should be available for ordinary citizens sounds uncomfortably like the old marauding Vikings' practice known as the drowning of the books.

Adams continued:

"In this respect, an immediate reform is called for...."

"The object of studying English grammar is to learn how to speak and write the English language correctly... The fact is, nevertheless, apparent, that the study of grammar, as now pursued, wholly fails to accomplish its object. It fails also, not because too little, but because too much, is attempted. The theory of a science is taught, and the practice of a thing is neglected.

“I would respectfully urge that a new system ought to be adopted to secure a better instruction. More time - a great deal more time during, at any rate, the last year of the grammar school course - should be directed to that practice which alone enables any one to put his thoughts on paper, either correctly or legibly.... the best instruction...is apt to be that which is least pretentious. Half of the labor now expended in mastering abstract rules would produce accomplished penmen; and any child who can talk can, if the pen is familiar to his hand, with but little practice, learn to write what he thinks...”

That last comment certainly has Parker overtones. Parker was famous for having said, more or less, that he wanted children to “talk with their pencils.” It should be noted that Adams, who was himself no authority on language, was diametrically opposed in his opinion on grammar to one of the greatest authorities on language who has ever lived, Professor Mario Pei of Columbia University. As mentioned elsewhere, Pei considered the study of grammar to be indispensable. So, it is interesting to note, did the early Irish monk scholars (and presumably their lay associates) who, as outlined by Louis Holtz of France, mentioned elsewhere, produced a rash of Latin grammars in the seventh century, not too long after Latin learning had arrived in Ireland with St. Patrick in the fifth century. It was these Irish monk scholars who helped to bring learning back to England, and then with the English monks, back to the Continent in the centuries that followed. Would these Irish and English monks before the tenth century have been such missionary scholars if they had not also been such grammarians?

It is not unreasonable to assume that Agassiz’ belief that language in schools largely took the place of thought may have also affected his ex-pupil, William James that same academic year, 1870-1871. If the idea was familiar to audiences attending Agassiz’ public lectures that year, certainly James must have known of it.

His relationship with Agassiz was hardly casual. In James’ comments at the reception of The American Society of Naturalists December 30, 1896, which comments were printed in Cambridge in 1897, as Louis Agassiz: Words Spoken by Professor William James,” the following is recorded on page 8:

“I had the privilege of admission to his society during the Thayer expedition to Brazil. I well remember at night, as we all swung in our hammocks in the fairy-like moonlight, on the deck of the steamer that throbbed its way up the Amazon between the forests guarding the stream on either side, how he turned and whispered, “James, are you awake?” and continued, “I cannot sleep; I am too happy; I keep thinking of these glorious plans.” The plans contemplated following the Amazon to its head-waters, and penetrating the Andes in Peru....

“There is probably no public school teacher now in New England who will not tell you how Agassiz used to lock a student up in a room full of turtle shells, or lobster shells, or oyster shells, without a book or word to help him, and not let him out till he had discovered all the truths which the objects contained. Some found the truths after weeks and months of lonely sorrow; others never found them.”

In the three empty years in James’ life, it seems possible he may have “acted” to improve reading with the sentence method, a kind of simplified version of his “stream of consciousness” ideas. After all, the sentence method concentrated on the teaching of “meaning,” instead of the presumed meaninglessness of Leigh phonics, and should have been justified by the ideas of Agassiz. Interestingly enough, the “sentence method” is the variety of the “sight-word” method that Parker used at Quincy starting in 1875, six years before Farnham’s book on the method appeared in print, but only two years after Farnham wrote his NEA paper. When Edwin Austin Sheldon of the Oswego, New York, State Normal and Training School published his insufficiently phonic readers in 1875, he specifically mentioned the sentence method

(but considered it to be only a variation on the dominant whole-word method). (His co-author was E. Hubbard Barlow, Professor of Rhetoric and Elocution at Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania, where J. M. Cattell's father was President and from which school Cattell graduated in 1880.) Obviously, by 1875, the sentence method was very, very well known. Yet no one had ever heard of the sentence method before 1870!

William James was almost certainly acquainted with the three Adams' brothers who were involved in the Quincy schools: Charles Francis Adams, Jr., John Quincy Adams, and Brooks Adams, all direct descendants of President John Adams and President John Quincy Adams. As already mentioned, one of young William James' close personal friends in Boston was young Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., and a fourth Adams' brother, Henry Adams, was on the staff of Harvard, when William James began teaching there in 1872, and Henry Adams was also a personal friend of William James' brother, the novelist, Henry James, by 1870. That was the Boston/Cambridge social circle in which James moved in the 1870's and it must have included all of the Adams brothers.

William James was married on July 10, 1878, to Alice Howe Gibbons, a teacher in Miss Sanger's School for Girls in Boston. On page 17 of *The Death and Letters of Alice James*, Ruth Bernard Yeazell's book about James' sister, Yeazell wrote:

“In May of 1878, (William James') future wife put an end to an uneasy courtship of several years by accepting his proposal of marriage.”

During the time of his courtship of a schoolteacher, James must have listened to a lot of conversations on school matters besides reading the public relations releases in the newspapers which were bringing people from as far away as Syracuse, New York, to visit the Quincy, Massachusetts, schools in April, 1878, only a month before James became engaged to a Boston schoolteacher.

Although James did not complete his *Principles of Psychology* until 1890, he had contracted with Holt and Company to write it in June, 1878, a month after his engagement in 1878 (according to Yeazell). Therefore, James' ideas about language expressed in his 1890 text may well have been conceived by him in 1878 or before. It is impossible to assume that James was unaware in 1878 of the nearby Quincy experiment. It seems likely from James' later written comments on language in his psychology text that James would have agreed with Colonel Parker in 1878 concerning Parker's ideas on teaching beginning reading by “meaning.”

Yet Parker only came to the Boston schools in 1880, and the sight-word and sentence “meaning” approach was adopted in the Boston schools at the end of the 1877-1878 school year, for use the following September, 1878. Parker was therefore not personally responsible for the initial move in Boston from “sound” to “meaning.”

Philbrick, who had supported Leigh phonics, was fired as of March 1, 1878, being replaced by Samuel Eliot as Superintendent of the Boston schools. Whether Samuel Eliot was related to President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, who lived directly across the street from the James' family on Quincy Street in Cambridge in the 1870's, is not known. (Leon Edel's *Henry James: The Conquest of London - 1870-1881*, page 20, recorded that Eliot's home was opposite the James' family home.) What is evident from the quality of Philbrick's reports compared to Samuel Eliot's reports, however, is that the highly intelligent and competent Philbrick was replaced by an academic hack.

So, two years before Parker arrived, the sight-word method had already been moved into the Boston schools, displacing the phonic Leigh print which had been so successful before Philbrick was fired. Therefore, Philbrick's Leigh phonics obviously had determined enemies long before Parker showed up on

the Boston scene. It must have been they who hired Parker in 1880! As the School Committee said in the Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston - 1871, pages 7 to 9, in telling of the great success of the Leigh phonics method, before it had spread into almost all the Boston schools through the voluntary choice of the schools themselves:

“When the system of Dr. Leigh is mentioned, many excellent people, committee men, teachers and parents, shake their heads incredulously. It has been stigmatized as a ‘fancy method.’ Philosophers have proved (to their own satisfaction) that the plan is vicious. Practical men (who have never examined it) declare that its results are barren. Teachers (averse to change) say they have no difficulty now; that the old way is good enough for them.

“We beg leave to say that six years of careful experiment in several schools in this city have shown the best results from this system... Within six months ordinary pupils under this system get nearly through the second reader, - a point which pupils by the old method are always eighteen months, and often two years in reaching. This is a constant, unvarying result.... At an exhibition of a primary class in the Lincoln District, several pupils who had been less than eighteen months under instruction read at sight from books they had never seen.”

But the facts in the report for 1870-1871 on the success of Leigh phonics did not move Philbrick’s opponents, including, very interestingly, the “philosophers,” who “have proved (to their own satisfaction) that the plan is vicious.” It was only a year before the School Committee’s 1871 comment about “philosophers” that Henry James spoke of his brother’s metaphysical club, in which they argued humorlessly and never left the topic. Was William James one of the “philosophers” disapproving of Leigh phonics?

Rudolph R. Reeder (1859-?), who in 1900 was Instructor in Theory and Practice of Teaching, Teachers College, Columbia University, wrote *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, Columbia University Contributions to Philosophy, Psychology and Education, Volume 8, No. 2, The Macmillan Company, New York, May, 1900. Bound immediately after it in the same volume, but dated 1901, appeared Vol. 8, Nos. 3-4, *Notes on Child Study*, by Edward Lee Thorndike, Adjunct Professor of Psychology, Teachers College, Columbia University. Reeder and Thorndike must have been well acquainted with one another, and since Thorndike was so closely associated with Cattell of Columbia University, it seems likely Reeder would have also been an associate of Cattell.

It is highly interesting that Reeder, writing in 1900, knew enough to check Philbrick’s annual report from Boston 28 years before in 1872 (page 77) when Reeder himself was only thirteen years old. Reeder quoted Philbrick’s strong plea for the spelling book and Philbrick’s comment that the spelling book’s antagonist was “the modern educational maxim, ideas before words.” The Boston annual reports each year were encyclopedic, yet Reeder could put his finger on a specific pertinent quotation from one 28 years before, even though he apparently had no personal connection with Boston. Reeder said that Philbrick had stated further that “Reading is spelling on the book, naming the letters, and syllabifying.” Yet poor Philbrick was fired in 1878, 22 years before Reeder wrote, and “spelling on the book, naming the letters, and syllabifying” were not only thrown out of Boston with Philbrick but were largely forgotten along with Philbrick himself.

It is unlikely that Reeder could have known Philbrick, who died about 1885 and whose name dropped into oblivion. It is probable that Reeder was directed to Philbrick’s comments buried deeply in the many annual volumes of the encyclopedic Boston schools’ reports by someone else. That would have been someone who knew there had been a conflict in Boston back in 1878, and who could isolate specific



items from the encyclopedic Boston school reports back to 1872 (which indicates, interestingly, a period of conflict running from at least 1872 to 1878).

That person might have been Cattell, who was then at Columbia University as was Reeder, and who could have learned of Philbrick's comments through his close friend, William James, or possibly through his teacher at Lafayette College, Professor Francis A. March. It is highly improbable that Cattell could have found Philbrick's comments by himself, as Cattell was only twelve years old in 1872 and was living in Pennsylvania, while his close friend in later years, William James, was thirty years old in 1872 and living in Cambridge, right across the Charles River from Philbrick's Boston. In 1872, James had just begun teaching at Harvard, across the river from Boston. James' former professor and close associate, Agassiz, was also still teaching at Harvard, and Agassiz had been campaigning against empty language at least from the 1870-1871 academic year. The neighbor who lived across the street from the James' family home in Cambridge, President Eliot of Harvard, had possibly already begun his campaign for real literature in school readers by 1869, to judge from his collected writings mentioned previously.

The founding of the "Board of Supervisors" operating under the Boston School Committee, of which board Parker eventually became a member, dated from the school year 1877-1878, and presumably only from March 1, 1878, the date Philbrick was fired. The board filed its "sixth annual report of their work as a Board and as Supervisors, for the school year beginning Sept. 1, 1882," on September 25, 1883, which supports the presumed date of their organization as March 1, 1878. They were obviously a very busy group in 1882-83, as they said in their 1883 report they had held seventy-four meetings in the year from September 1, 1882 to September 1, 1883. According to this report, their duties were "specified in the Rules and Regulations of the School Committee under Sections 136-153 inclusive," which it would be of interest to see. This 1883 report of the board referred to its 1883 paper on reading, which has been discussed, and said further, under "Reading:"

"No subject has attracted more attention among the teachers of the country than 'Reading' as taught in the public schools. No one subject comprehends so much nor is so far-reaching in its effects upon the training of the child.

"During the present year the Board of Supervisors, at the request of the School Committee, undertook to revise the whole plan of teaching reading in the Primary Schools, and, if possible, to present some method that might be adopted, and followed by all the Primary teachers of the city.

"In the plan presented (School Document No. 1, 1883) the pupil begins by learning a few familiar words as names of objects equally familiar. A few other common words are also learned, that short sentences may be formed and written on the black-board. These sentences are carefully copied by the children upon their slates, more to impress the form of the word or the sentence upon the child's mind, than because of its value as an exercise in writing.

"Constant effort is made to associate the spoken or written word with the idea it is intended to convey.

"Very soon the pupil's attention is called to the sounds of the letters, uttering them only in imitation of the teacher, that the ear of the pupil may be carefully trained from the first to recognize correct sounds."

Note the clear admission here that "phonics" at this beginning stage was concerned only with pronunciation and had nothing to do with decoding.

“When so much has been accomplished the progress becomes exceedingly rapid. Each new word learned is a help to the learning of analogous words, and the skill of the teacher is shown in the selection of such new words as will present the fewest difficulties to the pupil.

“A large number of words has been arranged in classes, and printed in a convenient form in the school document referred to for the purpose of assisting the teacher in her selection, and facilitating her work in its earliest stages.”

Note the clear endorsement of two-step phony phonics: the comparing of one whole meaning-bearing word to other whole sight words.

“It is confidently believed by the Board of Supervisors that when the plan is thoroughly understood, and skillfully carried out in all its details by the Primary teachers, excellent results will be gained.

“Individual preferences as to methods must give way to the general good, and if the best, as we conceive it, cannot be had, the best that we can have, ought to be accepted in good faith.

“This document has been issued by the authority of the School Board; and a copy has been placed in the hands of each Primary teacher as a guide in this department of her work in the future.”

This so-reasonable-sounding document is a cushioned announcement that any primary-grades teacher who used “sound” to teach beginning reading could anticipate being fired. It was the underpaid and overworked women teachers with enormous primary grade classes in Boston who had been doing the real work of teaching. They had, almost without exception, been using Leigh phonics successfully for some years before 1878, since almost every school district in Boston had freely chosen to use Leigh phonics. Yet after five years of “change,” by 1883, the controlling vise of the change-agents had tightened: if first-grade teachers in 1883 did not drop the Leigh phonics they had used so successfully and teach sight-words in its place, they could anticipate being fired.

Most meaningfully, portions of the unsigned 1883 paper, *Method of Teaching Reading in the Primary Schools*, published by the Board of Supervisors for the Public Schools of Boston in 1883, sound exactly like James’ prose and certainly contain his ideas about “meaning” and sentences. Furthermore, the portions could only have been written by someone trained in psychology, in the modern sense. It is my opinion that they were written by James sometime before 1882, at which time he left Harvard on a year’s leave of absence.

Concerning the only other probable authors, Colonel Parker had absorbed a lot of Hegelian ideas in Germany from 1872 to 1874 but had not studied with the psychologist Wundt. The psychologist G. Stanley Hall by 1883 was in Baltimore training the future psychologists Cattell and Dewey at Johns Hopkins. Josiah Royce had studied logic briefly with Wundt and practical philosophy and metaphysics with Lotze in Germany, and, it is true, formed a Psychology Club at the University of California in 1880, but a dominant influence on Royce was from William James, whose friend he had become when James gave lectures at Johns Hopkins University in 1878. By September, 1882, Royce had left the University of California to fill in for James while James was on sabbatical leave in the academic year of 1882-1883. Royce stayed permanently at Harvard and remained a close friend of James, but Royce was primarily a philosopher. (Biographical data is contained in *The Letters of Josiah Royce*, Edited and with an Introduction by John Clendinning, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1970.) Royce would hardly have become involved in writing a tract for the Boston public schools immediately upon becoming a substitute instructor at Harvard in the academic year 1882-1883. That left William James as the only

psychologist, in the modern sense, other than Hall and George Trumbull Ladd (1842-1921), anywhere in America before 1883.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), George Trumbull Ladd, an experimental psychologist and philosopher, was born on January 19, 1842, in Painesville, Ohio. In 1864, he was graduated from Western Reserve College and in 1869 from Andover Theological Seminary. For ten years until 1879, in Ohio and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Ladd was a preacher, not a psychologist or professor. It was not until 1879-81 that Ladd became professor of philosophy at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine. He next became Clark Professor of metaphysics and moral philosophy at Yale from 1881 to 1901, and then became the head of the graduate department of philosophy and psychology. He became professor emeritus in 1905 and died in New Haven on August 8, 1921. The brief biography stated Ladd had been influenced by the German, Lotze, whose *Outlines* he translated in 1877 and that Ladd was one of the first to introduce in 1879 the study of experimental psychology into the U. S., the Yale psychological laboratory later being founded by him. Ladd wrote a major psychology text published in 1887, three years before William James' text, begun in 1878, was finally published in 1890.

However, the above shows that Ladd was still a preacher while James and Hall were actively concerned with experimental psychology, William James having made the claim that he founded the first psychology laboratory in America in 1874. Ladd's first public contribution came with his 1877 translation of Lotze's work (Lotze being the man with whom Cattell had first intended to study, but Lotze died). It is very unlikely that Ladd would have been working in psychology before 1879, or that his Bowdoin or Yale psychology students who began studying with Ladd only in 1879 could have had enough influence by 1883 to affect the Boston curriculum. The psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, was incapable of writing anything as lucid as the 1883 Boston material. That leaves James as the probable author of the 1883 Boston material which was so obviously written by a psychologist, in the modern sense of the word.

It is an intriguing fact, as referred to previously, that some of James' personal literature, left for faculty use in a faculty room at Harvard, was stolen in 1930 or 1931, much to the shocked indignation of a faculty member who left his written reactions to this ungentlemanly theft in the Harvard library.

The following card is in the card catalog of the Harvard library:

"WJ 200.200 James, Wm. Collection of articles including Harv. Crimson 1/13/31 with Prof. Palmer's account of loss of James' books from Emerson Hall. EAT 5 Jan. 1931 - Prof. George H. Palmer, Cambridge."

Also in the library is a handwritten sheet of paper, about four by seven inches, with the note:

"This set of the writings of William James was given by Professor George H. Palmer to the Faculty Room, Emerson Hall, and after the loss of several volumes was transferred by him to the William James collection in the college library, January 5, 1931."

Another note on Harvard College Library letterhead, dated July 1, 1932 was initialed G P W (G. P. Winship, who was assistant librarian):

"This is one of the volumes that Professor Palmer placed in Emerson B and which he withdrew and gave to the college library when he 'fancied' that the books in Emerson B were disappearing."

That note suggests that the separate collection was broken up by G. P. Winship in July, 1932, and mixed in with other library materials. In addition, the use of the word, "fancied" by Assistant Librarian

Winship over a year and a half after Palmer first made his claim of a theft made Professor Palmer out to be a fool, and discounted the reality of a theft. Yet it seems highly unlikely that Palmer was a fool, and had imagined such a theft, since Palmer had stocked the room with other rare books for many years, and apparently had never previously made such a claim. Palmer's outrage in his letter quoted below implicitly confirms that he had never previously claimed a theft of other rare books.

However, what is particularly interesting about the Harvard theft of some of the personal books of William James is its time frame, late 1930 or very early 1931. That is because of a comment in Charles F. Heartman's third edition of his *Bibliographical Check-List of the New England Primer*, published in 1934. Heartman remarked on the:

“...most curious fact....”

It was the fact that some primers could no longer be located:

“...probably due to the crime wave which spread, a few years ago, over all the libraries in the country.”

That library crime wave all over America took place in 1930 or 1931. However, as mentioned later, periodic sweeps of Soviet libraries to remove “objectionable” books had been common in the Soviet Union in the 1920's and were not considered to be a crime there. Those library “sweeps” were carried out at the behest of Lenin's widow, Krupskaya (recorded in Robert H. McNeal's biography, *Bride of the Revolution*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan: 1972.)

Palmer's letter published in *The Harvard Crimson* on January 31, 1931, page 2, was addressed, “To the Editor of the *Crimson*.”

“In Emerson Hall many years ago a room was provided and put under my charge where advanced students might find a chance for quiet study or talk. It was made in every way comfortable, books even. Its walls were paneled. There was a long leather lounge, closets for overcoats, a round work center table, portraits along the walls, and two cases filled with rare books, each book bearing a label, “Not to be taken from the room.” Of the books of William James, a complete set had been given by his son. These were precious and impossible to duplicate. Yet from this set a handful have been stolen - how many I cannot say, half a dozen, I should guess.

“Dirty business, this! A generous return for abounding kindness! I do not write this paper in the hope of recovering the books. All William James' books are now safe in the college library, with a record of the facts. This paper will merely tell the great body of Harvard students how contemptible a person lurks among them. G. H. Palmer. '64.”

His letter in the Harvard files was dated on the back 1/5/31, 11 Quincy Street Street.

Professor Palmer used the terms, “the books of William James,” and “all William James' books,” and indicated he could only guess how many were missing from what had been the complete set which was “impossible to duplicate.” Yet the library used the term, “This set of the writings of William James.” By 1931, twenty-one years after the death of world-famous William James, a published bibliography of James' formally published writings must have been available in some fashion, or at the very least a record in the library catalog of James' formally published works. A collection of his formally published works certainly should not have been “impossible to duplicate.” It should have been very simple to check off missing books in any such set by consulting a bibliography of James' formally published work. Professor

Palmer's comment that he could only guess how many were missing from the set of materials donated to Harvard by William James' son was therefore senseless if the books consisted only of James' formally published work. Instead, the volumes must have been just what Palmer said they were, "the books of William James,' or James' personal library, which would, of course, have included James' own formally published work mixed with his other more casual writings. Such casual writings might have included material prepared for the many psychologists' meetings in which he was involved or, most significantly, any material he might have prepared for the use only of local schools. Without a written record of the titles in such a complete personal collection which would have included such informal pamphlets and studies written originally only for limited circulation and short-term use (some of which possibly were published in book form with the writings of associates), no one could have done anything but hazard a guess on how many had disappeared.

One of the catalog cards in the Harvard libraries for a book that had probably originally been among the collection referred to by Professor Palmer in January, 1931, which collection apparently was broken up by Winship in July, 1932, showed the following call number and information:

"Phil 5208.6 \*80-550 James, Wm. The Experience of Activity. The Macmillan Company, 41 North Queen St., Lancaster, Pa., 66 Fifth Ave., New York 1905. Reprinted from The Psychological Review, Vol. XII, No. 1, Jan. 1905. (Card 2) Another copy. MH 56-3742. A passage beginning on p. 5 and to p. 8 cut out. P. 10 contains ms. correcting by the author."

Since the corrections were assumed to be in James' own handwriting, this suggests this copy was among the materials in James' personal collection donated to Harvard by his son. It would be of interest to learn what was on pages 5, 6, and 7 that were cut out of the copy.

Note, however, that in 1905, Macmillan had a Lancaster office, where Science Press was later - and possibly at that time - located. This suggests ties with James McKeen Cattell and the publishing of The Psychological Review by Macmillan in Lancaster. That periodical was very possibly printed in Lancaster for Macmillan by Science Press through Cattell's influence. Cattell was closely associated with Science Press in Lancaster, and Cattell's daughter, Psyche, founded and ran a nursery-kindergarten school in Lancaster for many years, possibly from as early as the 1930's until her recent death.

However, that theft of material from the collection that had been owned by William James, himself, was a very curious one. That unknown and unknowable material was stolen about December, 1930, three months after William Scott Gray's Dick and Jane deaf-mute-method readers first arrived in American schools, with no reference, of course, to the fact those 1930 reading books used the deaf-mute method to teach reading. Yet it was that same deaf-mute method that had really been used in Farnham's 1870 Binghamton so-called "sentence method," and in the new method that had been introduced in the Boston schools in 1878. Perhaps those missing volumes of William James might have confirmed whether or not William James, himself, was involved in the origin of that deaf-mute-method that was invading American schools in 1930. As has been discussed, the record certainly does suggest that James may have been involved in Farnham's 1870 Binghamton sentence method and in the removal of real phonics from the Boston schools in 1878.

James' lengthy account in his 1890 psychology text of a deaf-mute's highly intelligent thoughts before acquiring any language, James' "stream of consciousness ideas" and James' contempt for "empty" language, seem to provide an excellent rationale for the pure deaf-mute method in teaching reading, with only phony phonics, which is the visual comparison of meaning-bearing whole words to each other to see like parts.

I suggest that Cattell's 1880's experiments seemed to give James' ideas "laboratory" proof, and may have been the initial reason for the friendship between Cattell and James. I further suggest that James' disciples deliberately carried out in the twentieth century what James probably attempted to do in the nineteenth: They removed all pure phonics (the "sound" of print, divorced from the "meaning" of print) from the teaching of reading.

## Chapter 25

### The Reading Texts of the Seventies and Eighties

The “expert” view on reading instruction in 1882 showed up in *The Dictionary of Education and Instruction* by Henry Kiddle and A. J. Schem, (N. Y., E. Steiger & Co.; London, Sampson Low & Co., 1882). That publication was based on the *Cyclopedia of Education* that had been published a few years before in England. (Kiddle was apparently still the superintendent of schools in New York City.) The following is from the article, “Reading,” (pages 245-246). Note that at its end Johonnot is cited as a kind of ultimate authority, but he is only parroting the “sentence” ideas that seem to have originated with William James.

“The alphabet method, or A-B-C method requires that the child should learn the names of all the letters of the alphabet, and, then, by means of a spelling process, learn the proper pronunciation of their combinations. This process is condemned by most teachers of the present time, as long and tedious, as well as illogical; the method most generally preferred being that denominated the word method, by which the child learns at once to pronounce short words, and is taught the sounds and names of the letters, by an analysis of them. When the sounds of the letters are used instead of the names, the process has been called the phonic method, which in modern didactics, is most generally approved....”

This approval was not given to real phonics but to a variety of “phony phonics” which was actually elocution. The children were taught the whole words first as sight words, and afterwards were drilled in reciting their letter sounds, as a review of American and English reading texts shows. (“Walk” might eventually be recited as “w - au - k.” It is obvious such “phonics” was really elocution.). That real phonics was not meant was shown by the following remark:

“...the teacher must always bear in mind, that what the child is learning to pronounce is a symbol of thought; and hence, at every step, the pupil’s understanding is to be addressed. ‘Each sentence read,’ says JOHONNOT (in *Principles and Practice of Teaching*, N. Y., 1881, ‘should be the embodiment of a thought which the pupil thoroughly understands, and should be delivered precisely as it should be spoken. The practice of allowing the words of a reading lesson to be pronounced separately should never be permitted.’”

Another statement by Kiddle which will be quoted shortly showed he did not endorse real phonics.

The Scots philosopher/psychologist, Bain, in his book, *Education as a Science*, 1881, was quoted in an article on the ABC method on page 19 of *The Dictionary of Education and Instruction*. It confirms that by 1882 the “word” method in both England and America was the norm for beginners, but that the ABC method which it had replaced after about 1870 had really been the same thing.

“Much stress is now laid by teachers on the point of beginning to pronounce short words at sight, without spelling them; and a strong condemnation is uttered against the old spelling method. The difference between the methods is not very apparent to me; after a few preliminary steps, the two must come to the same thing.”

No indication exists that the Scottish philosopher/psychologist Bain was concerned to any real extent with beginning reading theory, except to report on prevalent practices. Bain’s general background has been mentioned earlier.

Confirmation that the pure “word” method, and before it the ABC method, had been producing disabilities for a very long time also appeared in *The Dictionary of Education and Instruction* (pages 228-229), in the article, “Orthography.” The best indication of reading disability is spelling disability and good spellers are the norm with the “sound” method. Yet the 1882 article assumed that such good spelling was a rare achievement. Elsewhere in this history, it is noted that nine out of ten civil service candidates in England failed spelling tests during the 1880’s!

“The standard spelling of our language is so irregular, that continual practice for many years is necessary to make any approach to the mastery of it.... with all aids and arts, good spelling is one of the most rare and costly accomplishments....”

Therefore, by the 1880’s, “meaning” had effectively defeated the movement back to “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading in the English-speaking world, and it was producing its customary disabilities in spelling and reading. Note the disgusting influence of the male “experts,” Bain, Johonnot, Kiddle, et al, who were meddling with first grade reading, even though they had probably never taught it. Women teachers, who lacked status, had to do what they had been told to do by the normal schools and by the appalling reading texts if they did not want to be fired.<sup>23</sup>

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the nationwide publicity in America from before 1878 until after 1883 given to both the Quincy and Boston change-agent programs, which endorsed teaching beginning reading by “meaning” and which rejected teaching beginning reading by “sound,” three excerpts from two nationally distributed teachers’ magazines are quoted below.

The term, “new departure,” in the first excerpt from 1878 had apparently been used first in connection with the Quincy program under Colonel Parker starting in 1875. (Confirming the association of the term with Quincy, Estes published a book in 1879 by Charles Frances Adams, Jr., entitled *New Departure in the Common Schools of Quincy, and Other Papers on Educational Topics*.) The second excerpt from a teacher’s magazine from 1880 seems to suggest that the famous and widely praised Colonel Parker was very much of an intellectual lightweight, and a confused one, at that. The theme of the third excerpt from 1883 was “off with the old, on with the new,” or change for the sake of change, itself. That, of course, was nicely Hegelian. It legitimized the switch from “sound” back to “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading. That switch had started in Quincy, Massachusetts in April, 1875, and in Boston, Massachusetts in March, 1878 (two years before Parker left the Quincy schools and went to the Boston schools), and had made an almost clean sweep in America by 1883, except in parts of the Midwest using the 1879 McGuffey phonic edition or Leigh print.

The following appeared in *The Primary Teacher*, T. W. Bicknell, Publisher, Boston. December, 1878, Vol. II, No. 4, page 119:

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<sup>23</sup> The “progress” fallacy is perhaps nowhere more noticeable than in relation to women’s welfare. In its article on double monasteries, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913 (Vol. X, pages 452-453) discussed the norm in the fifth to tenth centuries for such establishments in England, Ireland, and the Continent. Separated by a wall, women members were in the monastery on one side, and men on the other, both meeting in the church which was common to both. The women in these monasteries were often famous for their learning. The advantage of double monasteries was that priest monks could say Mass for both groups. Yet, customarily, the head of BOTH monasteries was the nun in charge of the women’s monastery! The Anglo-Saxon author, Caedmon, worked and wrote his great work, presumed to be the source for Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, in just such a monastery. Giving the principal authority to a woman seemed normal enough to the monks in the so-called Dark Ages. Compare that to the “enlightened” nineteenth century, when women had virtually no authority anywhere and customarily were paid only half of a man’s salary for the same teaching job, as confirmed by published records from that period.



“Our Notebook... Owing to the great interest felt in all parts of the country, in the course of study recently adopted for the Boston primary schools, which is, in some respects, a ‘new departure’ in this grade of instruction, we print the entire course in this issue of THE TEACHER. In subsequent issues we shall furnish the courses of other leading cities....”

This appeared in *The Primary Teacher*, September, 1880, page 24:

“Our Note-Book... In all sections of the country there is an intense interest felt in regard to the admirable reformatory work in elementary instruction, which has been largely stimulated by Col. Parker, recent Superintendent of Schools at Quincy, Mass., and now one of the Board of Supervisors of Boston. That our readers may have the benefit of all his helpful suggestions, we quote some of his remarks made at the National Educational Association at Chautauqua:

“The richest fruitage of the past is the ability to move forward, and the essential condition of progress is freedom, - freedom to grow and help others to grow. What superintendent is not hampered? The teacher who is looking out for a re-election can’t advance. The principal with one eye on a book-publishing house can’t carry his school forward. A teacher chained to examinations can’t be free. Our great battle is for freedom: freedom from interference; freedom from methods. Have our own plans, and carry them out....”

“Let the end be mind-development of yourself and pupils, - the power to see and think. Whatever best develops the mind, that is the most practical education....”

“God determined how the child’s mind shall grow. All the teacher can do is to aid that growth. But you must have freedom to do this. Well, suppose your school-committee stands in your path. Take your life in your hand and say, ‘Turn me out if you will; here I stand for children’s rights.’ We are a servile set, thinking too much of our bread and butter.”

“A superintendent who don’t allow his teachers freedom, is a nuisance, and ought to be put out. A teacher who has no ideal, no lifting horizon, is a nuisance. I say to my teachers, Don’t follow me, go your own way to work. Do a little well. But one thing I do demand. You shall move. Move on, like poor Jo. Do nothing twice alike. Don’t do things you have done before. If the child stood up before, have him set down now. Whatever you do, do something different. Have no patterns. Uniformity is death, - unity is life. If we all study the principles that underlie education and the child-nature, we won’t quarrel so much.”

It might be noted in passing that Parker threw out the grammar in the elementary schools, but it is obvious Parker badly needed to study grammar himself. It is also obvious that his much-praised “wisdom” as contained in the above remarks was largely emotional, unfocused nonsense.

This appeared in Vol. 1, No. 1, September, 1883 of the periodical, *The American Teacher*, which had been newly formed from *The Primary Teacher*, *The Public School*, and *The Kindergarten Messenger*. Its Editors were Thos. W. Bicknell, Wm. E. Sheldon, and W. N. Hailman.:

“Editorial Notes... We are in the midst of the greatest educational activity that our country has ever seen. Old methods are laid aside; new ones meet with a hearty reception. The best teachers are inquiring for the better ways, and thoughtful minds are discussing principles and weighing theories. None can afford to stand still, or go backward. Forward is the only line of motion, that is rational or consistent with the spirit of the true teacher. The good must give place to the better, the better to the best, and the old and useless must go by the board....”

What had actually gone “by the board” by 1883 was Leigh phonics for teaching beginning reading, and the developing phonics “sound” revival of the 1860’s and 1870’s in beginning reading, even though the “sound” revival, and Leigh phonics, had reached almost a flood tide by 1875 when Parker first arrived in Quincy. Yet by 1883, after far greater opposing floods of nation-wide publicity on teaching beginning reading “meaningfully,” Parker (or, more accurately, Parker’s promoters) had succeeded in having almost all American children taught to “talk with their pencils,” copying script “meaning-bearing” sentences from the blackboard before the children knew even the letters of the alphabet. By 1883, after that massive publicity, “meaning” had won out once again over “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading.

Even during the short-lived popularity of the Leigh phonic approach, most of the primers of the 1870’s had remained sight-word readers, with only lip service given to phonics. Yet, before 1875, most of the major series also had a Leigh-print edition as well as the standard print edition, so the effect in those places using the Leigh phonic print editions had usually been to teach by “sound.” The 1879 new McGuffey series continued the phonic emphasis of the 1870’s, as it was written to support real phonics, marking letters in a similar fashion to Leigh’s system. However, the new McGuffey series covered only a fraction of the textbook market of the day, despite statements in the literature to the contrary.

By the time the pro-phonics new McGuffey series was published in 1879, the death-blow to Leigh phonics had already been dealt by the Appleton sight-word, phony-phonics series of 1878, on which the “philosopher,” William Torrey Harris, was the principal author. The Appleton series dominated the market after 1878, displacing the earlier popular series, most of which had Leigh-print editions. Except for Sheldon’s 1875 series, and in sharp contrast to most earlier major series, Appleton’s was the first new major series in many years without a Leigh-print edition. By displacing those earlier series and dominating the market, the Appleton series killed off Leigh pronouncing print. The Appleton series, in combination with the Franklin series in its non-Leigh-print editions, appears to have been used by the change-agents starting in 1878 to remove Leigh-print editions with their true phonics from beginning reading instruction in America.

The year the Appleton readers were published, 1878, was the height of the “meaning” activism emanating from Colonel Parker’s Quincy schools. In Colonel Parker’s Quincy schools, first-grade children were being taught to “talk with their pencils.” The children copied whole sentences in script from the blackboard at the very beginning of reading “instruction” even though they may not have known a single letter of the alphabet. Real phonics was verboten in Parker’s Quincy schools. Despite its window-dressing phony phonics, real phonics was verboten in the Appleton series, too.

Articles about the Appleton materials in *The Primary Teacher*, which articles were written by Rebecca Rickoff who wrote the beginning charts for the Appleton series, make it clear the Appleton readers rated only a Code 3, phony phonics label.

It was in 1873 that Dr. Edwin Leigh had given a defensive paper on his phonic method before the National Education Association, obviously trying to placate opposition by claiming his materials could be combined with the word or sentence method. He obviously did not succeed in quelling opposition. Leigh print was essentially gone before 1880 except in St. Louis and in the McGuffey adaptation being used in parts of the Midwest like Missouri and Ohio. The newest enthusiasm of gullible school administrators was Parker’s Quincy “meaning” methods. As a result, by 1880, real phonics or “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading was gone from almost all American schools except some in the Midwest.

Evidence of texts in use by 1879, after the Parker influence was in full bloom, is given in the *Primary Teacher*, Boston, January, 1879, pages 151-152. However, it is ALSO impressive that the “psychology” jargon had reached that Boston publication full-blown less than a year after “psychology” pushed phonics

out of the Boston public schools. The job the activists did was very thorough, indeed, just as with “whole language” today, and they succeeded in enlisting the Primary Teacher in their campaign.

“A Kansas teacher asks us for a general course of study for the first year in a primary school. We publish below a course of instruction:

“FIRST HALF.....Suggestions and References...Thought and Expression, Part I.<sup>24</sup>, Munroe’s<sup>25</sup> Chart and Chart Primer, Appleton’s First Readers,<sup>26</sup> Model First Reader<sup>27</sup> Harvey’s First Reader,<sup>28</sup> Sheldon’s Primer,<sup>29</sup> Franklin First Reader,<sup>30</sup> How to Teach<sup>31</sup>, Calkins’s New Primary Object Lessons....<sup>32</sup>”

One curious thing which all of the highly recommended materials in *The Primary Teacher* in January, 1879, seemed to have in common was that they did NOT have editions in Leigh-print, except for the Franklin, even though most widely used series had Leigh-print editions by then.

Yet, as shown by the history of the Franklin series written by Hillard and Campbell, the use of Leigh-print earlier Hillard and Campbell editions in Boston had suddenly ceased in 1878. They were apparently replaced in September, 1878, by non-Leigh print editions set up by University Press in Cambridge only the year before, at which time apparently almost all schools in Boston had been using Leigh-print editions of Hillard’s and Campbell’s earlier readers for beginners. That bizarre fact, the printing of non-Leigh-print readers in Harvard’s Cambridge by Harvard’s privately-owned but official press, for which reading books no apparent market yet existed across the river in Boston in 1877, should

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<sup>24</sup> I have not located the text, *Thought and Expression, Part I*. However, it obviously concerned drilling beginners on the “meaning” of print and not its “sound.” Appleton’s, Sheldon’s and the Franklin readers all used phony phonics with the primary emphasis on “meaning.” Sheldon’s Primer would have been part of E. A. Sheldon’s 1875 series published by Scribner, and it did not have a Leigh-print edition according to the 1876 American Catalogue. “Sheldon’s Primer” was obviously not from Sheldon & Co’s later 1881 Model School series, which apparently had no primer. See Appendix C on the two different “Sheldon” series. See extensive remarks on the critically important Appleton’s and Franklin texts elsewhere in this history. The approach of Harvey’s 1875 series which was put out by McGuffey’s publishers is unknown but the series is briefly discussed later. According to the 1876 American Catalogue, Harvey’s did not have a Leigh-print edition, even though the earlier McGuffey edition by the same publisher is shown with a Leigh-print edition.

<sup>25</sup> Monroe’s: a “meaning” approach with inadequate phonics, which is discussed in Appendix C. According to the 1876 American Catalogue, Monroe’s First Reader published by Cowperthwait did not have a Leigh-print edition in 1876, although *Early American Textbooks* shows that it did have one in 1873. This primer material dates at least from 1875 since it is listed in another Monroe text published by Cowperthwait in 1875. Yet it was not listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, nor is it listed in *Early American Textbooks*.

<sup>26</sup> See footnote 25.

<sup>27</sup> See the comments later on Webb’s 1873-1876 Model Readers published by Sherwood which used a “meaning” approach. Edwards’ and Webb’s 1st to 6th, plus “Intermediate” Analytical Readers of 1866-1871 listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as published by Sherwood of Chicago and Taintor of New York, show a Leigh-print edition. For that Leigh edition, a Harvard copy of the First Reader confirms a date of 1871, which is late in comparison to other leading series. Yet according to the 1876 American Catalogue, Webb’s four-volume (1st to 4th) 1873-1876 Model Readers listed as published by Sherwood of Chicago did not have a Leigh-print edition, nor did his much earlier five-volume (1st to 5th) Normal Readers listed as published by Taintor of New York in 1876.

<sup>28</sup> See footnote 25.

<sup>29</sup> See footnote 25.

<sup>30</sup> See footnote 25.

<sup>31</sup> Probably the text written in 1873 by Henry Kiddle, City Superintendent of Public Instruction in New York City. Kiddle did not endorse real phonics for beginners. See the later comments on Kiddle.

<sup>32</sup> In 1873, Calkins was First Assistant Superintendent of Primary Schools in New York City. Calkins did not endorse real phonics for beginners. See later comments on Calkins and object lessons.

be considered along with the following fact. This January, 1879, magazine recommending the Franklin series by Hillard and Campbell was published in Boston less than a year after the switch had been made from Leigh-approving Superintendent Philbrick to a non-Leigh-approving superintendent, and only about four months after the switch had been made in the Boston schools from Leigh-print to non-Leigh-print Hillard and Campbell materials, apparently using the readers that had been printed by University Press only the year before.

Why was University Press used? Non-Leigh editions had been available from the publisher at that time and could easily have been ordered directly from them. No publisher objects to filling book orders and taking profits from them. Yet, such a publicly-placed very large book order for non-Leigh-print editions in 1877, of course, would have had to be placed by someone who had no authority over the Boston schools, since then-Superintendent Philbrick wholeheartedly endorsed the Leigh-print-editions. Yet, if enough copies were to be available to provide all Boston primary schools by 1878, when the switch was apparently planned, those copies would have to be ordered and set up a year or so in advance. The record suggests, therefore, that people with no official authority whatsoever chose to subsidize financially (and secretly so that their names and their plans would not be known) the printing of a very large number of beginning reading books in ordinary print in 1877 (or 1876). They did so in order that enough books would be available when their planned take-over of authority in the Boston schools was completed by 1878. That kind of underhanded, distasteful manipulation is characteristic of change-agents.

As has been discussed, Leigh phonic print was a special type of print, in which words were spelled in their dictionary spellings, but the letters were made to serve the function of diacritical marks by giving them various shadings and changes in shape. Beginners learned, not the regular alphabet, but the Leigh-print alphabet, and with that as a key, could sound out and read anything which had been transposed into Leigh print. Apparently, it was Dr. Edwin Leigh himself who took beginning reading books in their normal spellings and translated them into his specially marked letter spellings. Leigh's transposed materials are read without any difficulty by anyone who can already read English. However, their advantage for beginners was that, once the beginners knew the sound of each specially marked letter, all they had to do to read new material in Leigh print was to string the learned sounds together: true sounding-and-blending phonics. As Boston Superintendent Philbrick made clear, the Leigh materials were spectacularly successful in teaching little beginners to read, since the children had no trouble in switching to regularly printed materials in second grade, which regularly printed materials they then read with far greater fluency than previous second-graders had read.

This 1879 Primary Teacher list of recommended readers omitted any of the widely used series published by three very large companies, Ivison, Barnes and Harper. Since the first two were publishing Leigh-phonic-print editions of their reading series as well as standard editions, their reading series may have been excluded precisely because those companies published such Leigh-print editions. The history strongly suggests that all Leigh-print materials, and their publishers, were subject to blackballing since perhaps 1875 (or possibly 1873).

However, no indication exists that Harper's 1860 material by Marcius Willson was in Leigh print by 1879. Yet it was an old and therefore perhaps outdated series and would most probably have reasonably been excluded for that reason. (See Appendix C for a listing of readers by these three companies.)

In 1876, as in 1890, the largest American textbook companies were probably Ivison, Barnes, Appleton, and Wilson (later Van Antwerp), which four companies became American Book Company in 1890, and Harper, which sold its textbook section to American Book Company in 1890. After that 1890 merger and purchase, which is discussed more completely elsewhere in this history, the textbook sales from these five companies were estimated at 80 per cent of the American market total. Presumably, even by 1876, these five companies made most of the reading text sales in America, with Brewer of Boston and

the Sherwood/Taintor associated companies of Chicago and New York also making large reading text sales. There were, of course, many other American companies such as Cowperthwait and Scribner whose reading texts were listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, but their sales were much smaller.

Edwin Leigh first published his phonic method in 1864. Therefore, its success by 1873 can easily be judged by the relative influence of Leigh print on these eight American reading text publishers: the six companies of Ivison, Barnes, Appleton, Wilson (which became Van Antwerp), Harper, and Brewer, and the two associated companies of Sherwood and Taintor.

By 1873, Ivison, Barnes, and Wilson (later Van Antwerp) were publishing Leigh phonic print editions, as well as standard editions, of most of their beginning readers, as were Brewer and the two Sherwood/Taintor related companies. All these companies had been publishing Leigh editions since about 1866 and 1868. (The smaller Philadelphia publisher, Cowperthwait, published a Leigh edition of the readers of the *Bostonian*, Monroe, in 1873, according to *Early American Textbooks*, but dropped it by 1876, if the 1876 American Catalogue is correct. Yet none of E. A. Sheldon's series by Scribner, which were apparently not widely used, were ever in Leigh print.) In 1876, Barnes even published the beginning books of its brand-new 1873 reading series in Leigh print as well as standard print. Therefore, of the eight major reading-text publishers which were listed above, only Appleton and Harper stood clear of Leigh influence by 1873. (Obviously, most of the smaller series did not appear in Leigh print, as translating the readers from standard print to Leigh print was apparently done by Dr. Edwin Leigh himself, and the job must have been very time-consuming. Leigh also did some work on pronouncing foreign languages by using his print, so he may have been very busy.)

It was in 1873 that Leigh received a medal at the Vienna exposition for his Leigh print. That year, 1873, was the high tide of Leigh print, after which the tide receded with astonishing speed because of the NEA paper by Farnham. The influence of Leigh print was almost totally gone by 1879, even though earlier Leigh editions of Sherwood/Taintor materials seemed to have remained available on the market, to judge from the advertisements on the back of Sherwood/Taintor book-covers into the 1880's.

Whether Leigh-print orders would have been filled by Sherwood/Taintor is another matter. No Leigh-print editions have turned up after 1876 of any of Sherwood/Taintor's various reading series. By 1878, those series included not only materials by Edwards and Webb which had a Leigh edition by 1871, but materials by Hillard and Campbell which had been handled by Brewer before 1878. The 1864 Hillard and Campbell series had Leigh editions of the first reader in 1866 and the second in 1868. The Hillard and Campbell Franklin series had a Leigh edition which possibly dated from 1873 when its primer was first published by Brewer. Brewer went out of business by 1878. The record suggests it was the power-play of blackballing the sales of those textbook companies which promoted Leigh print which succeeded in forcing those companies to drop Leigh print materials in such an astonishingly short time. In the case of the Brewer company of Boston, the possibility exists that the Brewer company was forced out of business in 1876 or 1877.

The *Primary Teacher* was a new magazine published in Boston from October, 1877, which apparently immediately had nation-wide distribution, to judge from the letters it received and published. It was very much in tune with the "New Education" emanating from Colonel Parker's Quincy schools since 1875. The views of the new magazine concerning beginning reading instruction were also in tune with all the "improvements" in reading instruction being promoted by the Parker clique. As quoted above, The *Primary Teacher* listed recommended reading series in January, 1879, less than a year after the pro-Leigh-print Boston Schools Superintendent Philbrick had been fired. As discussed elsewhere, the Brewer Leigh-print editions had obviously been removed from the Boston schools by September, 1878, and had been replaced by non-Leigh-print editions (now published by Brewer's successors, Taintor and Wm. Ware). The *Primary Teacher* of Boston, which was apparently read all over America, flatly rejected

real phonics in the first-half year of school (thereby rejecting Leigh-print without naming it) and listed a number of acceptable reading series. Except for the Taintor/Ware (ex-Brewer) materials so unhappily associated with the Boston change-over, discussed at length elsewhere, not a single reading series it listed was available in Leigh print in 1879!

Wilson (before 1879 renamed Van Antwerp) had published Harvey's new readers in 1875, curiously without a Leigh edition, even though its McGuffey readers had a Leigh edition ever since about 1868. That seems to suggest some kind of non-Leigh influence on Wilson in 1875. Non-Leigh-print Harvey's was listed by *The Primary Teacher* in 1879, but not the earlier Leigh-print McGuffey's which was shown in the 1876 American Catalogue as still available in that year. Cowperthwait's Monroe materials were listed by *The Primary Teacher* in 1879, and they were apparently without a Leigh edition by 1876. The non-Leigh print Appleton series of 1878 was listed. Webb's newer series published by Sherwood, which had never been available in Leigh print, was listed, but none of the earlier materials that had been available in Leigh print. Yet omitted from *The Primary Teacher* listing of recommended series were ALL of the formerly massively used reading series of Ivison and Barnes! The record suggests that all of Ivison's and Barne's beginning materials had been available in Leigh print in 1876, including Ivison's very elegant new 1873 series, a portion of which was reproduced by Buisson in his 1876 report, referred to elsewhere.

The Parker/Quincy/Boston clique had become the single most authoritative voice in American education by 1879, apparently as the result of a massive publicity campaign. It was that clique which determined the "correct" way to teach just about any elementary subject, and it had pronounced, through such avenues as *The Primary Teacher*, what were "correct" beginning reading materials. NONE of the formerly massively used Ivison and Barnes reading materials were included as "correct" materials in *The Primary Teacher* listing of 1879. It is obvious that the reading textbook sales of the Leigh-supportive Ivison and Barnes companies were being choked off by *The Primary Teacher* and its associated clique in 1879. It is therefore hardly surprising that by 1882 both Ivison and Barnes were putting brand-new "meaning" reading series on the market, neither of which were available in Leigh print, which new series could meet the "discriminating" tastes of the change-agents! Leigh print, which had been the toast even of the Vienna exposition in 1873, passed into near oblivion by 1880. It obviously did so because of painstaking work by change-agents.

Of the eight major publishers of reading materials listed above, only Harper had remained outside both the "approved" list of 1879 and the list of Leigh publishers. Harper was a major publisher of all kinds of materials, so its textbook sales, even though large, probably represented only a small part of its total sales. Harper had the famous Marcius Willson "meaning" series on the market by 1860, but it had apparently published no new reading series in the intervening 19 years to 1879. That *The Primary Teacher* omitted Harper's, despite the fact it was not available in Leigh print, seems only natural. Harper's series was simply outdated. Yet, by 1889, Harper had the new Baldwin "meaning" series on the market, the year before it sold its textbook section to American Book. By 1901, Baldwin had rewritten the 1879 McGuffey series for American Book, who was the publisher of McGuffey's by that date. The 1901 Baldwin McGuffey's used a "meaning" instead of "sound" approach in the beginning reader. Yet that 1901 "meaning" Baldwin edition is virtually unknown today. It is only the 1879 "sound" McGuffey edition published by Van Antwerp, Wilson's successor, that is commonly thought of as the McGuffey material.

The history on Leigh print, outlined above, provides a frame of reference in which it is far easier to understand that 1879 McGuffey edition, which used a phonic approach to teach beginning reading. In Vail's 1911 history of the McGuffey readers, in which Vail identified himself as the editor of that 1879 McGuffey series, he stated the first reader as originally presented to him by his staff was unsatisfactory. Therefore, Vail, himself, rewrote the first reader as it was finally published. It is evident that Vail

invented a kind of variation of Leigh print. The material in the book itself is carefully arranged in a truly phonic sequence, and Vail stated he edited the book so that it could be used to teach phonics. Yet, Vail also said it could be used for the “word” method.

Since Harvey’s 1875 edition by Wilson, Van Antwerp’s predecessor, had not been published in Leigh print, that fact suggests some kind of anti-Leigh pressure on Wilson in 1875. Vail also did not use Leigh print in 1879, suggesting Vail recognized the power of anti-Leigh forces in 1879. Instead, Vail wrote material which he said could be used either for the phonic or word method. All of the phony phonics materials which began to come from the presses after Appleton’s 1878 series made the same claim, so that made Vail’s material seem like the rest of the “approved” materials. Appleton’s famous series also had claimed it taught phonics.

The record suggests, therefore, that Vail outsmarted all the “experts” in 1879. The new McGuffey’s rejected Leigh, which made it very au courant, and it seemed to endorse both the word and phonic method, like Appleton’s, which also made it au courant. Yet it was, sub-rosa, the real thing: it taught by phonics! What Vail did was very clever, indeed. He had invented a kind of phonetic print for use in his book, but he focused very little open attention on that phonetic print, and in addition he used a true phonic sequence. Then Vail announced that his new materials could be used to teach either the word or phonic method, making him acceptable to the “experts!” It would be of great interest to learn whether Vail was deliberately trying to outsmart the anti-“sound” forces in 1879, or if the 1879 first reader he produced was simply the product of his own common sense about teaching reading, combined with his knowledge of the widespread bias against Leigh-print by those who endorsed the “word” and “sentence” methods.

Yet both Barnes and Ivison dropped their support of Leigh-print and true phonics by 1882, as shown by their new series which began to be published in that year, so they obviously fell in line with the change-agent steamroller which was apparently centered in the Boston area.

#### Concerning Methods Endorsed by The Primary Teacher in January, 1879

The Primary Teacher “instructions” of January, 1879, for the first half year in primary school clearly demonstrated that none of the materials it listed were to be used to teach phonics during the psychologically critical first half year of school. (The alphabetic codes after the items below have been copied, although they were unexplained in the excerpt.)

“READING.

“Steps (c) Vocabulary of First Reader taught on blackboard.

Incidentals and Directions. - (c 1) Use script alone in teaching reading. (c 2) Associate words with familiar ideas, using objects, blackboard sketches, pictures, and stories, in order to make the ideas vivid in the acts of association. (c 3) Repeat these acts of association until the words taught recall instantly, in any sentence, the ideas of which they are signs. (c 4) Teach single words, phrases, and sentences; adjectives, prepositions, conjunctions, etc., should be taught in phrases and sentences, and not alone. (c 5) Pupils must never be allowed to try to read a sentence aloud until the thought it expresses is in their minds.

“Suggestions and references. - (S 3) The child should be taught to read by the same methods by which it learned to talk; the main thing is, that the acts of association of ideas and words be made effective. (S 4) Pupils should remain unconscious of the parts of a word until at least one hundred words have been taught. (S 5) The words should be arranged for teaching in phonetic order, under the different vowel-sounds: for example, - a, e, i, o, u, u, a, e, i, o, u, a, a, o, oi, ou. Words may be taught, however, not in this order.”

The vowels listed above had distinguishing diacritical markings which it is not possible to show here, and so they are omitted here. The reason for the “phonetic order” was that children would be drilled in “orthoepy,” or pronunciation, AFTER the teacher had told them the words. It was not for decoding.

Concerning the failure in decoding that resulted from such teaching, Dr. Joseph Mayer Rice reported the following concerning Kiddle’s and Calkin’s New York City by 1893, although both Kiddle and Calkins were probably gone by then. Rice’s remarks appear on page 38 of Rice’s *The Public School System of the United States, 1893*, quoted by Dr. Mitford Mathews on pages 110-111 of *Mathew’s Teaching to Read - Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1966. Edward G. Ward of the Brooklyn schools in New York City published his famous phonic series, *The Rational Method in Reading*, in 1894, stating it was such failure which had made him write his materials. Ward’s comments are further confirmation that reading failure was pandemic in New York City government schools before 1893. Reports on reading failure in New York City before 1876 were also specifically noted by Buisson in his 1876 report on the Philadelphia Exposition, as noted elsewhere.

Rice wrote:

“In reading, the word method is followed. The pupils are taught to read the number of words prescribed for the grade and no more, and they are taught to spell the words as they learn to read them. They are not encouraged to acquire the ability to read new words, each new word being developed before it is shown to the child, which means practically that the child is told what the word is before he is allowed to name it. But this method is typical of the New York primary schools. I asked the principal whether the children in the highest grade (third-year class) were not able to read new words without being told what they were. She answered in substance: “How can they know what a word is when they have never seen it before? Could you recognize a thing that you had never before seen?”

The Primary Teacher of January, 1879, made the following comments on writing and spelling:

#### “WRITING AND SPELLING

“Steps. - (d) Copy from the blackboard, on slate or blackboard, every word, phrase, and sentence taught. (e) Train pupils to make the letter i on slate and black board.... No matter how awkwardly the child begins to copy, notice and encourage every effort... Pupils should read all that they write upon their slates....”

The children were obviously copying whole words without knowing the alphabet, since at that point they were only practicing one letter, “i.” “Expert” advice of the period specifically said beginning children were NOT to be taught the alphabet! In November, 1881, the Primary Teacher, Boston, quoted on page 150 this remarkable advice given by William M. Giffin, Principal of the Newark (N.J.) City Training School in his manual, *How Not to Teach, or One Hundred Things the Teachers Should Not Do*:

“A teacher should not take time to teach the youngest children the names of the letters.

A child can be made to understand that certain lines placed thus... form a right-angled triangle, and that other certain lines placed thus, leg, form the word ‘leg.’ His knowing that the first letter is l, the second e, and the third g, does not help him any; in fact, his natural reasoning might lead him to think the word was ell - e - gee (elegy).”

Giffin was not recommending much spelling for older children, either, as he wrote:



“A teacher should not ask pupils of ten years of age, or less, to learn more than five new words a day in spelling. Five words a day for four days will be twenty words a week, giving one day for review. Twenty words a week will be eight hundred a year, - quite enough for pupils of this age to learn.”

Giffin was telling a sad truth with the last advice. In contrast to sight-word trained children, most children (not all) who learn by phonics in first grade pick up “spelling” with almost no exertion of effort. My first graders astonished me with the ease with which most could spell before the end of the year most of the 300 commonest words in English. They did so with only casual study. Nor am I alone in recognizing how easy “spelling” is for phonically trained children. One very important phonics reading series omitted a spelling book entirely, because it was considered unnecessary! Yet, for thirteen years, the great majority of my third graders from about seven to eight years of age, who had learned with the basal reader sight-word approach in first grade, could not achieve the same success with the 300 commonest words as my first graders did later. It is very doubtful that most of Giffin’s sight-word-trained ten-year-olds could really learn to spell correctly as many as 800 words in a year.

It is my conjecture that the difference in spelling achievement between phonically-trained and sight-word-trained children is the result of the permanent establishment of different and opposite conditioned reflexes at the time children are first taught to read. Presumably, those reading “global,” whole sight-words by “meaning,” like pictures, establish a conditioned reflex to the right angular gyrus area of the brain, and the right side of the brain operates “globally,” or all at once, and processes pictures. Those reading by “sound,” presumably establish a conditioned reflex to the left angular gyrus area of the brain, and the left side of the brain operates sequentially, and processes language. Therefore, those with a conditioned reflex for “sound,” using the left side of the brain, would automatically perceive and record letters in words in their natural sound sequences, so spelling for them of these recorded visual memories would be remarkably easy. Yet those with a conditioned reflex for “meaning,” using the right side of the brain, would perceive and record only “global” and therefore non-sequential memories of words as soundless pictures. Spelling or reproducing those generalized visual memories of whole “words” should correspondingly be far more difficult. The vast difference in spelling achievement of “meaning” versus “sound” trained pupils supports my above conjecture. (I discussed this conjecture at length on pages 18 and 19 of my unpublished book dated January 5, 1985: *On the Production of Permanent and Faulty Conditioned Reflexes in Reading Skills*, and in some of my later writings.)

Webster’s speller to teach children to read was just a memory by 1879! Any kind of imitating scrawl of whole words, of which beginning “readers” and “writers” could not even name the letters, was to be “encouraged.” Notice in the above excerpt from *The Primary Teacher of 1879* that the only isolated letter the children were actually to be taught in this lesson in the first half of first grade was the letter i! Obviously, “whole Language” educational malpractice is anything but new. Needless to say, the emphasis in teaching reading was totally on “meaning,” and had nothing to do with “sound.” The “generation of bad spellers” referred to in the preface to J. H. Stickney’s *Word by Word, An Illustrated Primary Spelling Book*, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1889, came from such shameful “teaching.”

#### Concerning Webb and Webb’s Model Readers Recommended in 1879 by *The Primary Teacher*.

According to the 1876 American Catalogue, J. R. Webb’s Model Readers in four volumes were published between 1873 and 1876 by Sherwood (the Chicago company which was bought out by Scott, Foresman, in 1894). Webb’s Model Readers were not available in Leigh print, even though Webb’s earlier materials written with Edwards from 1866 to 1871 were published by Sherwood in Leigh print in 1871. At least, the first reader is known to have appeared in Leigh print in 1871, as shown by the

copyright date for the Leigh edition on a Harvard copy, and the second reader may have appeared in Leigh print in that year or shortly afterwards.

Webb long before had wrongly claimed to be the author of the Word-Method. Whole sight-words, of course, had been in use since 1826, but beginners usually had to recite their letters orally. Webb's only "contribution," and even that was not original, had been to drop the spelling of sight words for beginners and then to call what was left the Word-Method. Webb promoted the Word-Method in his first book of 1846 (if the date given by Nila Banton Smith is correct). Yet Gallaudet and Mrs. Horace Mann (Mary Peabody) had dropped the spelling of the initial sight words for beginners in the 1830's, but the approach had not been popular until Webb came along. Although the approach had been used sporadically before for years, Webb apparently did not know that.

Webb's famous five-volume earlier series which began in 1846, the sight-word Normal Readers, which were discussed by Nila Banton Smith, were still being published by Taintor in 1876, and his Analytical series written with Richard Edwards, LL.D., president of the Illinois State Normal University, between 1866 and 1871 was being published by both Sherwood and Taintor. On page 98 of *Early American Textbooks* was shown *The New Model First Reader Sentence Method*, Chicago: Geo. Sherwood & Co., 1889, so Webb's Model series was obviously revised by 1889. (As mentioned elsewhere, Edward's Student series published by the Sherwood Company by 1880 was revised by Florence Holbrook for Scott, Foresman & Co. in 1897. Scott, Foresman & Company bought out Sherwood in 1894.) None of these series were in print when the 1912 United States Catalog was published. At that time Scott, Foresman was publishing Elson's readers, and Taintor of New York as well as Sherwood of Chicago had disappeared from the listings.

The Analytical Speller, with a copyright of 1867, was published in New York by Taintor & Co. and in Chicago by Geo. and C. W. Sherwood. It had been written by Richard Edwards and Mortimer A. Warren, Principal of Avery Normal Institute, Charleston, S. C. On the back cover of a copy of the speller printed in 1868 was an advertisement for the Analytical First Reader through the Sixth Reader, and the advertisement included testimonials from normal school personnel in Oswego, New York; Westfield, Massachusetts; Minnesota; Illinois; and elsewhere.

Webb's first series, the Normal readers, had been enormously successful, and endorsements from normal school personnel like those above for the Analytical readers probably accounted for the success of the Normal readers. Harvard has an 1854 copy of the United States Spelling Book of 1851, written by Josiah Miles of Watertown, New York. It was published by Lamport, Blakeman and Law of New York, who also published "Mr. Webb's Readers" at that time. The speller, meant for upper grades, carried endorsements from B. F. Bush, Principal of Carthage Seminary of January 19, 1851, and Lysander H. Brown of Watertown, County Superintendent of Common Schools in 1842, 1843, and 1844, and Chairman of the (schools) Committee, New York State Legislature in 1845. An endorsement for the speller also appeared from George L. Farnham, Principal of Public School No. 8, Syracuse, dated February 21, 1851, the Farnham from whom so much would be heard later. Comments on the back cover of that 1854 speller concerned Webb's books, which were published by the same company:

"These readers are used in the principal cities and villages throughout the United States, and are rapidly coming into use in the smaller towns of the country. Their merits have been fairly tested and they have universally been pronounced superior to any series of Readers extant; not only for the improvement in the system of teaching, which is the word method, but also in the high moral tone and inspiring character of the pieces selected. The author, Mr. Webb, was recently from the State Normal School in Albany."

So, of course, were Farnham and Johonnot. However, Webb's Normal readers received a kind of ultimate endorsement. Hon. S. S. Randall, Deputy State Superintendent, Common Schools, for New York State, wrote:

"They are the best Practical Readers that have come under my notice; they are all and everything they should be."

B. F. Bush, Principal of Carthage Seminary on January 19, 1851, must surely have agreed with Hon. S. S. Randall and done his part to see to it that little beginning readers around Carthage, New York, had the "benefit" of the Webb readers. Some of those Carthage children must have become those adults my mother knew about when she was growing up in that area in the 1890's, about whom I heard her say, as mentioned elsewhere, that they were "bright in every other way, as with their hands, but they never could learn to read."

Yet the late Jean Crankshaw Ferrara, who is mentioned elsewhere, and who worked with retarded children in Newark, New Jersey, in the 1930's, said that her school had success teaching children with intelligence quotients as low as 60 to read when they were taught with phonics.

The "Hon. S. S. Randall" back in the 1850's, like most "honorable" today who sit on government panels and discuss the reading "problem" from typed material prepared by subordinates, simply did not know what he was talking about. I witnessed a New Jersey state governor address a group of educators in an auditorium in New York a few years ago, and his remarks seemed to be very relaxed and natural. Yet, directly ahead of me sat someone who was presumably one of the governor's aides, or conceivably a reporter, with a copy of the same remarks in large print, which the aide or reporter was able to amend for any lapses in the governor's choice of words. It seems highly unlikely that the governor's pre-packaged, relaxed and natural comments on the "education problem" were really his own comments, instead of someone else's. What good are such comments, if they are not really the official's own? Why not let the subordinate give the talk, and have the official admit that he does not know enough about the problem to discuss it?

Webb's Model readers, not in Leigh print, recommended by The Primary Teacher in 1879, would have produced the same result as Webb's earlier materials: reading failure.

Concerning Calkin's New Primary Object Lessons Recommended by  
The Primary Teacher in 1879, and Concerning the Background on the  
Object-Lesson Craze

Since Calkin's original Primary Object Lessons had been published by Harper, as shown below, it is probable the New Primary Object Lessons were also published by Harper. How to Teach Phonics, Beckley-Cardy Co., undated, 80 pages, by N. A. Calkins is shown on page 78 of Early American Textbooks. However, it was not that book on phonics but Calkins' book on object lessons that was one of those named in the list of recommended books in the Primary Teacher. Calkins would not have endorsed real phonics in any of his books. That Calkins of New York City, like Superintendent Kiddle of New York City, did not endorse real phonics is clear from other entries about his views in the Primary Teacher. Furthermore, Calkins had collaborated with a sight-word author. The original Calkins' Primary Object Lessons (394 pages) was advertised on the back cover of Willson's Larger Speller, from Willson's School and Family Series, about 1863, which was written by Marcius Willson and published by Harper & Brothers, New York. Also advertised were Marcius Willson's and N. A. Calkins' School and Family Charts (22 colored charts), on reading, colors, animals and plants, which presumably was a kind of object teaching as well. The Larger Speller was preceded by Willson's Primary Speller, a straight sight-word approach, dated 1863.

Object teaching had become a great enthusiasm in America by the early 1860's. As previously described, Dr. John M. Keagy had written *The Pestalozzian Primer* in 1826 with an object-teaching approach. Keagy mentioned in his introduction that he was influenced in his ideas on education by Francis Joseph Neef, who had studied under Johann Pestalozzi before coming to America some years earlier. Neef had been one of the "experts" on the famed "boatload of knowledge" back in 1826. Keagy said he named his book after Pestalozzi because that "celebrated reformer in Education, who is still living in Switzerland..." began by using sensible objects and oral explanations. The theme of Keagy's book was knowledge of real things, through the senses. Keagy had not been the only American author writing on object lessons long before the 1860's. In 1832, Flagg and Gould of Andover, Massachusetts, published a 140-page book by Samuel R. Hall entitled, *The Child's Instructor, or Lessons on Common Things* (call number PE III9.AIH.H3 pages 69-70 of *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, OERI, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985). Samuel R. Hall had started what was probably the first private normal school in America at Andover shortly before, and Hall was also the author of a very popular text in 1829, *Lectures on School Keeping*. Yet, despite this early emphasis by influential people, object teaching had never received much attention in America until E. A. Sheldon of Oswego Normal School had popularized the English version shortly before 1862.

The following quotations which shed much light on the thinking of the 1860's and 1870's are all from the book, *Object Lessons: Prepared for Teachers of Primary Schools and Primary Classes*, by A. S. Welch, Principal of Michigan State Normal School, published by A. S. Barnes & Company, New York and Chicago. The text was copyrighted in 1862 but an internal advertisement for *The Independent Child's Speller* which it said was published in 1872 shows the copy of the book that I saw at Harvard was published by Barnes after 1872.

"Preface. The first instruction given to the child in school, should be based on the fact that his intellectual activity consists in seeing and hearing rather than in reasoning and reflecting. His restless curiosity about material things is natural and proper to childhood, and equally natural, also, is his aversion to abstract thinking. Any mode of teaching, therefore, which thwarts the former while it seeks to overcome the latter, is false in its philosophy and bad in its results. Since the senses of sight and hearing are first in exercise and development, the first step in school training should be to give them a systematic culture, and the period between the ages of five and ten years ought to be devoted mainly to this object.

"The order of instruction which I have thus briefly indicated, was announced sixty years ago by Pestalozzi, an eminent Swiss teacher, as the only natural order. Since that time it has prevailed in the schools of Germany and England, and is now being adopted in the better class of schools in this country.

"But the want of a suitable book, from which teachers could learn the best methods of training the senses of children by means of their appropriate objects, has proved a serious obstacle to the introduction of the Pestalozzian system into our primary schools. While lecturing on the subject before teachers' institutes and educational conventions held in different States of the West, I have been invariably met with the question, 'Where shall we find the right book?'

"It was this general inquiry that suggested the idea of publishing the series of *Object Lessons* which I had prepared in MS. for the experimental department of the Michigan State Normal School. These lessons have been given to large classes by the teachers of that department, and are found to answer fully the object designed. Similar lessons have also been given by normal pupils in various schools of the State, with similar success. It is hoped that the same matter, in the form of a book, will be equally acceptable to primary teachers generally. I may add that I have limited

the number of pages, so that neither its price nor the time required for its perusal, shall operate as a hindrance to its circulation. The youngest teachers will be able to prepare additional object lessons at pleasure from the models furnished.

“It is not intended that this book should supersede any of the text-books now in use. On following the plan of the first ninety pages, the teacher need not depart from the ordinary course of instruction first given to the child. I have only sought so to modify that course as to make it subserve the object of all primary instruction, namely, the cultivation of the senses of the pupil.”

Note Welch’s bizarre statement:

“...the object of all primary instruction, namely, the cultivation of the senses of the pupil.”

Senses of healthy living creatures do not need any cultivation. Their maturation in their normal environment is automatic, unless the creature has been damaged in some fashion. If Welch had said, instead, that the object of primary instruction was to teach children about the material world through their senses, that would be unobjectionable but very insufficient, since it left out the 3 R’s.

However, Welch very possibly meant exactly what he said, since the conflict persists today. “Experts” endorse education as a “process,” as with Welch’s apparent idea that the purpose of educating a child was to get his senses to perform more efficiently. Non-“experts,” like the writer, endorse education as a “product,” to be measured by what children manage objectively to learn (which means to “condition,” and it must be appropriate for their mental ages.) For instance, instruction in reading comprehension which is endorsed by “experts” concerns the vague and never-defined “process” of comprehending, but real instruction in phonics, which is a concrete “product” and something that can be learned or “conditioned,” is deplored by “experts.”

The open promotion of “process” over “product” is sometimes very sanctimoniously done at conferences run by “experts.” This was the case during the Open Classroom period in the early 1970’s. At that time, I was exposed to quantities of nonsense philosophy concerning “process” during the conferences arranged by the school system by which I was employed.

Welch continued:

“In the course of my labors I have consulted freely the English and German books on primary teaching, and in preparing my last sixty pages I have received valuable suggestions from the works of Miss Mayo.

“I gladly acknowledge my obligation to Mr. John Goodison for his aid in the Drawing Lessons and the first series of Lessons on Colors. I also proffer my hearty thanks to friends who have kindly commended the work in advance, especially to Mr. Wells, Superintendent of the Public Schools of Chicago, and to Mr. Gregory, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Michigan.

“A. S. Welch. State Normal School, Ypsilanti, January, 1862.”

Welch’s “Preface” has been reproduced in full to demonstrate two things: to show the cosmopolitan nature of teaching theories at the time, and to show the pipeline through which such “correct” thinking reached the little, seemingly isolated American country schools. That pipeline was the omnipresent teachers’ institutes and the educational conventions, radiating out from the normal schools. The normal schools themselves were available to only a few teachers because of the cost of attending, and so they

were not directly the dominant influences on American education. The dominant and massive influences in the nineteenth century came from the teachers' institutes. Yet knowledge of these once massively-held teachers' institutes has almost totally dropped from today's literature on the history of education.

Welch's material from Michigan on object lessons was published in New York City by Appleton's and then, presumably, blanketed America. Concerning the material itself: it is typical of top-down "expertise." Welch, himself, was not a teacher of little beginners and probably never had been. Much of his book is sheer nonsense and wheel-spinning activity, often either far below or far above the abilities of normal children. To review it properly would require many pages. However, it had little to do with teaching children to read by sound. The last half of the "First Series of Lessons" was concerned with elocution and the first part of the "Second Series" was concerned with "Drawing Lessons Preparatory to Learning the Alphabet." After 45 pages of such drawing lessons, the last 26 of which finally were concerned with drawing the letters (and the little-used capital letters first!!!), only three pages from pages 89 to 91 were devoted to "Sight and Sound Spelling." In the rest of the 173-page book, nothing more concerned the teaching of reading, which makes Welch's opinion in 1862 of the utility of "phonics" very clear. (With his 173 pages, it should be noted that Welch thought he had "limited the number of pages"!)

On page 89, Welch defined "sight" and "sound" spelling:

"Sight spelling is writing and naming in their order the letters that compose a written word. Sound spelling is uttering separately and combining properly the sounds that compose a spoken word."

Note that Welch's definition said nothing about silent letters, patterned phonetic spellings, or irregular spellings. What help could such "sound spelling" give a child in spelling or reading common words like "plate," "eight," "climb," "only," "talk," or "pretty?" Yet their silent letters and patterned phonetic or irregular spellings are carefully covered in all true phonic programs.

"Sight spelling, being addressed to the eye, should be taught with the pen, pencil or crayon. [Ed.: the term "chalk" was apparently not used then.] The pupil should be required to write the word instead of merely naming its letters according to the old method.

"Sound spelling is addressed to the ear and should be made a simple vocal exercise, the teacher pronouncing the word and the pupil uttering and combining the sounds that compose it."

Note that the teacher pronounced the word first, which means that the pupil was being given the word as a sight word, not working it out for himself.

Welch listed words for practice: me, he, be, at, up, no, on, "etc." On the next and last page of "phonic" directions, page 91, he directed that an object lesson on a hat should be taught, followed with teaching these words: mat-pat-rat-cat; pig-gig-jig-rig, top-mop-sop. This, of course, is consonant substitution on learned whole words, or two-step phony phonics.

Welch concluded:

"Such exercises may be continued until the class can print easily any word of one syllable. The teacher may then teach words of two syllables in the same manner."

What Welch was describing was not, of course, real phonics. The teacher was pronouncing and teaching printed whole words to the children, which they then copied. The children were not learning to read independently. In no way could Welch's three ridiculous pages on so-called "phonics" take the place

of the extensive phonic teaching in Webster's old speller. E. A. Sheldon of Oswego Normal School also claimed to be using phonics. His readers, when published, were only Code 3, using sight words and phony phonics. What Welch recommended would have been, in practice, probably the same.

A very sane critique on such object lessons - and on Pestalozzi - is given in *Suggestions on the Principles and Methods of Elementary Instruction*, by H. B. Wilbur, M. D., Superintendent of the New York State Asylum for Idiots, which was published in Albany by J. Munsell in 1862. Yet, not surprisingly, like most others of his generation, Wilbur endorsed sight-words, but his other views are more original and very wise. Wilbur said on page 19:

“It has quite frequently occurred, when the cultivation of the powers of observation has been made a leading end in early education, that the exercises to that end have run directly into scientific instruction. Thus lessons on form have passed into pure or mixed geometry; lessons on color into the science of color; lessons on the relations of numbers into all the intricacies of higher arithmetic; and lessons on language into grammatical analysis.”

He added a footnote at this point. (The blurred sections on my photocopy have been surmised and are enclosed in brackets.)

“In the brief discussion in the Association that this address elicited, the superintendent of the public schools of Oswego, where this ‘object system’ has been (instituted), arose and denied the fact that such a progression as I had described, was a feature in their system. To whom the credit of misstatement belongs, the reader may judge by the following quotation from a paper read before the education convention at Oswego last winter, by Miss E. M. Jones of London. Miss Jones, I hardly need to say, is an experienced teacher from the Normal School of the Home and Colonial Society of London. She came out to this country expressly to introduce their system of instruction into the Oswego schools, and has also (conducted exclusively) the training school for the Oswego teachers. She says, ‘We (go) from form to geometry, from place to geography, from weight to mechanics, from color to chromatography, from plants to botany... from human body to physiology, from objects to mineralogy...from actions to arts and manufactures, from language to grammar.’

“An illustration of the results of this process was afforded by a class examination... at this same convention, just alluded to. A class of bright children... were introduced in an exercise in the harmony of colors. In answer to questions propounded by the examining committee, it appeared that the pupils had been so confused by the attempt to learn the scientific (theory underlying) the harmony of colors, that they had absolutely lost the true idea, (that by ) ‘harmony of colors’ was meant such an arrangement of colors as is most (pleasing) to the eye.”

Wilbur made the following remarks from pages 22 to 31, in this paper which was originally a speech he had been invited to give before some group which he did not name.

“I trust that I may be excused for now transcending a little the boundaries of my own peculiar province. That eminent educational reformer, Pestalozzi, was at the outset of his labors, so opposed to the senseless use of language (words before ideas), that he even clamored against the art of printing, as contributing to it. But even he was guilty of committing the same error in practice....

“‘Observation,’ says he ‘is the absolute basis of all knowledge. The first object then in education, must be to lead a child to observe with accuracy; the second, to express with correctness the result of his observations.’ It will be observed that this second conclusion (is) a

‘non-sequitur’ from his premise. He says elsewhere, ‘out of the observation of an object, the first thing that arises, is the necessity of naming it.’ Von Raumer, one of his biographers, commented upon this among other notions of Pestalozzi, and well remarks, ‘Language itself has nothing to do with observation. Why (should) not I be able to form a perfectly correct notion of an object that has no name, for instance, a newly discovered planet?’ I would (add) that the uneducated deaf mute has such correct notions every day.

“But Pestalozzi is not content with this. In another connection, after lauding the power of language, he adds: ‘Therefore I make use of it, and endeavor by the guidance of its uttered sounds to reproduce in the child the self-same impressions, which in the human race, have occasioned and formed these sounds. Great is the gift of language. It gives to the child in one moment, what nature required thousands of years to give to man.’

“This was so grievous a lapse from his own principles, that his colleagues and successors repudiated such precepts almost without exception. So, too, did those American educators who almost forty years ago introduced into this country all that was valuable in the reformed system of education, inaugurated by Pestalozzi. To this point, let the early numbers of the American Annals of Education, and the early proceedings of the American Institute bear witness.

“In England, however, it was otherwise. A Mr. Mayo, one of Pestalozzi’s admirers, introduced his system into that country. He professes to have preserved Pestalozzi’s ideas, but modified their form. He professes to have discarded, in the books prepared at his suggestion, what in Pestalozzi’s text-book, was insufferably tedious.

“Through this man’s agency, a system of schools has grown up in England, known as the Home and Colonial Society System of Education, in which, the natural observation of childhood is so devitalized, in part by this haste for naming, and a clumsy method of naming, and in part by wrong principles of association; so subverted from its ordained purpose of imparting power and warmth and vigor to the whole spiritual nature, as to draw upon itself the scolding (anger) of the satirist.”

He put a footnote at this point, “(See) Dickens’ Hard Times.”

“Pestalozzi’s reason for this early and constant associating of names with objects and ideas was, that by repeating in language, the conception of objects and ideas, was fixed so as not to be forgotten. This is measurably true, only when the name given is one of frequent recurrence in the child’s hearing, in the child’s use - where it is a familiar word.....

“No one can doubt who reads the criticism of Pestalozzi’s colleagues and successors, that he was most unfortunate in assigning the place he did, to language, in his educational scheme. And this though the nature of the German language is such as to obviate some of the evils arising from his mistake. But in the English adaptation of Pestalozzi’s system, the case is very different. Here we find his errors wofully (sic) exaggerated. The fact, that all our scientific terms ... are borrowed from the dead languages, involves the necessity of loading the child down with words, that he never hears elsewhere, but in the school room, if names must accompany all ideas...

“That I may do no injustice, let me quote from one of the English text-books. I have before me a book, on the title page of which is read, ‘Lessons on Objects as given to children between the ages of six and eight, in a Pestalozzian school.’ It is the thirteenth edition, imprint: London, 1853. It is written by Miss Mayo, also authoress of the manual of instruction used in the schools of the Home and Colonial Society. This book is also used as a text-book in the same schools.



“On page seventy-six, lesson forty-five, I find an article described in this wise: It is fibrous, knotty, sapid, rough, jagged, inanimate, vegetable, tropical, foreign, aromatic, pungent, dry, dull, solid, hard, conservative, light, yellowish-brown, pulverable, medicinal, stimulating, wholesome, opaque and inflammable.

“Now remember Pestalozzi’s definition of a definition. ‘A definition,’ he says, ‘is the simplest expression of clear ideas.’ (I give but a part of it), and now, pray tell me, what this object is, thus described. Or let me rather say, guess what the object is!

“Here is another specimen of the abuse of language taken from the Society’s Manual. The pupils have had pointed out to them all the features of a geometrical solid, known as the rhombic dodecahedron. At the close of the exercise they are required to repeat the following and to treasure it up in their memories: ‘The rhombic dodecahedron is a solid bounded by twelve equal rhombs; it has eight solid angles, each of them formed by three obtuse plane angles, and six solid angles, each of them formed by four acute plane angles; it has twenty-four equal edges.’

“Now I ask, will this memorized definition recall the peculiar features of the solid in question, if the conception of the solid is once lost by the child? Has this definition any utility, as a test of the child’s correct appreciation of the form of this solid?.... Finally is there any greater virtue, as a mental exercise, in learning by rote this complicated formula, than in committing any other dozen or more hard words arranged, I might almost say, without reference to their meaning?....

“‘Observation is the absolute basis of all knowledge,’ says Pestalozzi, and then he draws two practical conclusions therefrom: ‘The first object then, in education, must be to lead a child to observe with accuracy; the second, to express with correctness the result of his observations.’ As I have before said, this second conclusion has no relation to the premise....

“I would not have ventured on this digression, but that just now many earnest teachers in this country, dissatisfied with a routine system of instruction, that has had possession of our primary schools, and groping for an improvement - any improvement - are proposing to transplant on our shores, without any effort at acclimation, what I regard, as a misshapen, dry and fruitless production of English schools. This system does not embody the views or practice of the best educationalists of England, any more than the primers of the Sunday School Union, represent the highest talent of the American school book compilers. But rely upon it, no system of education, however humane its design, however complete its organization, or however successful its apparent results, can ultimate in any permanent good, with such dogmatic principles and such questionable methods.”

One of the effects of the “object lesson” movement was the inclusion of some kind of object teaching in the very first lessons in reading, including the first pages of some primers. After about 1880, from the Quincy influence, primers were usually not even begun until the teacher had given the children considerable work from the blackboard with script, and they commonly used “objects” to do so. In 1881, Farnsworth used a simplified version of the object-teaching approach in his manual for teaching reading by the sentence method.

Welch’s ridiculous book on object lessons nevertheless does serve a very worthwhile purpose. It is a window on attitudes and practices in the year 1862 when Welch wrote his book until sometime long after 1872, after which date the copy I saw was published by A. S. Barnes & Company. Such object lessons were still in very wide use in 1879, to judge from the recommended materials listed in the January, 1879,

Primary Teacher, which list included Calkin's revised book on object lessons, and such object lessons were intimately associated with teaching beginning reading by "meaning."

Concerning Barnes' Widely Used Materials, Many of Which  
Were Available in Leigh Print, Not Listed in the January, 1879,  
Primary Teacher

In addition to Welch's revealing comments from 1862, Welch's book published by Barnes contains many pages at the back advertising Barnes' numerous materials on sale some time after 1872 but probably considerably before 1882 when their new "meaning"-emphasis reading series began to be published. However, if Barnes' 1882-1884 Code 1 reading series had reached the market by 1879, it is probable it would have been included in the Primary Teacher recommended list.

The Barnes' advertisements confirm how ludicrous the McGuffey myth is for all those years. From these 1870's advertisement alone, it is obvious the Barnes company must have outweighed Wilson, Hinkle and Company, the publishers of McGuffey's, in the early 1870s. A further indication of the weaker position of the McGuffey publishers in the early 1870's is that Vail said the 1879 McGuffey edition had been the best selling of all. Therefore, its publishers' market share had probably expanded after 1879 but had been weaker previously.

Five of these advertising pages are devoted to two series of readers which Barnes was publishing until some time after 1872. The older, obviously more important and more expensive series was the Code 1 Parker & Watson's National Readers. The newer, less important and less expensive was Watson's Independent Readers which used some phonic approaches.

By 1832, R. G. Parker already had in print a second edition of his Progressive Exercises in English Composition. The shelves of Harvard's remarkable collection of American textbooks are studded with copies of Parker's composition books, which copies had been published over a period of many years. (Composition was obviously of great importance in schools of that period, and yet I read not long ago a remarkable statement by a current "expert" that American schools had not concerned themselves with teaching composition until after 1900!) According to Leypoldt's American Catalogue of 1876, Barnes was also still publishing Parker's earlier 1849-1852 six-volume set of school readers in 1876, even though they had not advertised it in Welch's book from the 1870's. Parker had joined with Watson in compiling the National Readers of 1857-1866 (the dates shown by Leypoldt's American Catalogue of 1876). The Harvard library has a copy of The National Pronouncing Speller of 1858 by Richard G. Parker and J. Madison Watson, inscribed "1860, Jan. 24, Gift of Richard G. Parker of Cambridge (Class of 1817)." Its "preface" made Parker's spelling philosophy very clear: "...It is now generally conceded, by eminent American and European educators, that the shortest and most successful mode of learning spelling is by the eye...."

The newer Independent series written solely by J. Madison Watson published a speller in 1872 according to an advertisement in the Welch book, so that reading series presumably was published about 1872. (The American Catalogue does not show the dates for the Independent series.) A further addition to that series, The Independent Primary Reader, was published in 1875. Barnes was therefore publishing three sets of readers by these men in 1876: Parker's 1849-1852 series, Parker and Watson's series of 1857-1866, and Watson's series of about 1872. Only the last two newer series were advertised in Welch's book.

The advertisements in the Welch book said the Parker & Watson's National Readers used "The Word-Building System." The "word-building" system was appalling: starting with a meaning-bearing whole word like "one," letters were added, which produced other meaning-bearing whole words like

“tone” and then “stone,” etc. The system had nothing to do with phonics. It claimed to be original but certainly was not, and could be seen in less elaborate form in English readers from the 1830’s.

As discussed earlier, the method was promoted in America as early as 1802, in the Code 7 text, *The Child’s First Book, Being an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading*, which showed no author but only that it was published by Lincoln and Edmunds, Boston, in 1816, and that it had originally appeared in 1802. It had a syllabary and arranged words by sound analogies, but recommended building new whole words from previously memorized words: each, reach, preach. The author recognized the method’s novelty, as he said of his approach, “In teaching the monosyllables, I would recommend a different method than is usually practiced....”

This building of longer meaning-bearing words from shorter meaning-bearing words can be seen in a modified form today, by a careful reviewer, in the so-called “phonic” Scribner’s first-grade material. (That Scribner material is a 1987 and later revision of *Basic Reading*, the former J. B. Lippincott series first published in 1963 by Charles C. Walcutt and Glenn McCracken, which was a weak but truly phonic series. Walcutt was apparently the only author on later versions of the Lippincott material.) In the Scribner material, longer phonetically regular words are built from previously learned shorter phonetically regular words. The identical letters from one word are printed directly above the identical letters in the other word. That careful and obviously deliberate placement of the letters obviously is meant to aid in the visual comparison of the two whole meaning-bearing words, and to demonstrate where a letter or letters have been added to the previously learned whole, meaning-bearing word. Comparing one meaning-bearing word to another, to see likenesses and differences, is phony phonics.

The advertisement for the Parker and Watson readers read:

“This famous progressive method for young children originated and was copyrighted with these books. It constitutes a process with which the beginner with words of one letter is gradually introduced to additional lists formed by prefixing or affixing single letters, and is thus led almost insensibly to the mastery of the more difficult constructions. This is one of the most striking modern improvements in methods of teaching.... Each of the higher readers... contains... thoroughly practical treatises on elocution.”

The advertisement for Watson’s *Independent Readers* was different:

“This Series is designed to meet a general demand for smaller and cheaper books than the National Series proper, and to serve as well for intermediate volumes of the National Readers in large graded schools requiring more books than one ordinary series will supply... The Publishers believe that the aesthetic tastes of children may receive no small degree of cultivation from their very earliest school books, to say nothing of the importance of making study attractive by all such artificial aids that are legitimate. In accordance with this view, not less than \$25,000 was expended in their preparation before publishing, with a result which entitles them to be considered ‘The Perfection of Common School Books.’

“Selections. They contain, of course, none but entirely new selections. These are arranged according to a strictly progressive and novel method of developing the elementary sounds in order in the lower numbers... The Type is semi-phonetic, the invention of Prof. Watson. By it every letter having more than one sound is clearly distinguished in all its variations without in any way mutilating or disguising the normal form of the letter.

“Elocution is taught by prefatory treatises of constantly advancing grade....

“All the Great Features. Besides the above all the popular features of the National Readers are retained except the Word-Building system. The latter gives place to an entirely new method of progressive development, based upon some of the best features of the Word System, Phonetics and Object Lessons.”

Watson’s imitation of Leigh by the early 1870’s is obvious, and so is the fact that Watson’s new readers came in on the phonic flood of the sixties and early 70’s, in contrast to earlier sight-word reading materials like the Parker and Watson series which was started in 1857 and completed in 1866. The tide had receded by the early 80’s because of the hard work of change-agents, as has been discussed. Barnes then put out a new word-method series which was more marketable in that changed educational climate, Barnes’s New National Readers. The series was written by Charles J. Barnes and J. Marshall Hawkes and copyrighted by A. S. Barnes & Co.

The advertisement in Welch’s book said, concerning Watson’s 1872 *The Independent Child’s Speller* (which was the first of his three-volume series in print by 1876, according to the *American Catalogue*):

“Published in 1872, [it] is the first to be consistently printed in imitation of writing; that is, it teaches orthography as we use it.”

Even though the quotation establishes that script was not consistently used for beginners before 1872, the total switch to script for beginners did not come from Watson, despite the fact that he used only script in his spelling book. Watson did not exclude the use of print for teaching reading, since he said in his 1875 book that words for beginners could be written on the board in either print or script. It was after Parker’s influence at Quincy dating from 1875 that beginners in reading were shown words only in connected script. After Parker’s Quincy influence, words were customarily written in script on the blackboard and almost always only in whole sentences, the use of reading books being held off for some time. The experience chart approach appears to have developed by the 1890’s at Parker’s Chicago school from this heavy use of the blackboard and the use of “meaningful” sight words written only in “meaningful” sentences. The use of experience charts there is described on pages 297 to 300 of Edmund Burke Huey’s *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, 1908, The Macmillan Company, New York (reprinted by The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1968).

Colonel Francis Parker of Quincy (not the textbook author, R. G. Parker) made a great issue after 1875 of having beginners “talk with their pencils.” Yet the remarks on Watson’s 1872 speller established that beginners before 1872 were seldom asked to write anything:

“Among the novel and valuable features of the lessons and exercises, probably the most prominent are their adaptedness for young children and their being printed in exact imitation of writing. The author believes that hands large enough to spin a top, drive a hoop, or catch a ball, are not too small to use a crayon, or a slate and pencil; that the child’s natural desire to draw and write should not be thwarted, but gratified, encouraged, and wisely directed, and that since the written form is the one actually used in connection with spelling in after-life, the eye and the hand of the child should be trained to that form from the first. He hopes that this little work, designed to precede all other spelling-books and conflict with none, may satisfy the need so universally recognized of a fit introduction to orthography, penmanship, and English composition.”

Watson’s comments are additional confirmation of two facts not acknowledged today: spellers in 1872 were normally for upper-grade students, not beginners, and “English composition” in 1872 was a standard school exercise for upper-grade students. Watson therefore confirmed the schools’ teaching of “English composition” in 1872, continuing the practice so prominent since Parker’s book on composition

had appeared some forty years previously. Watson's speller also acknowledged the spelling problems of the period, since he said in his preface, "Success in teaching English orthography is still exceptional...."

Another page of advertisements in the Welch book contained "Specimen Testimonials" for both the National and the Independent series published by Barnes.

"Rev. W. T. Brantley, D. D., late Professor of Belles Letters, University of Georgia" was quoted, from his talk, "Text-Books in Reading," which he had given before the Teachers Convention in Georgia on May 4, 1870.

"The National Series by Parker & Watson, is deserving of its high reputation. The Primary Books are suited to the weakest capacity; whilst those more (advanced) supply instructive illustration on all that is needed to be known in connection with the art."

President Robert Allyn of McKendree College in Illinois said:

"Since my connection with this college, we have used in our preparatory department the Series of Readers known as the 'National Readers' compiled by Parker & Watson, and published by Messrs. A. S. Barnes & Co. They... contain the right system of elocutionary instruction...."

Allyn referred to "that noblest of school arts, GOOD READING." He obviously meant elocutionary declaiming. It should be remembered that children at that time actually memorized their reading texts at the lower levels because they were read aloud in class so much, "with expression."

H. T. Phillips of Atlanta said:

"The Board of Education of this city have selected for use in the public schools of Atlanta the entire series of your Independent Readers.... As a member of the Board, and of the Committee [on] Text-books, the subject of Readers was referred to me for examination. I [gave a] pretty thorough examination to ten (10) different series of Readers and in endeavoring to arrive at a decision upon the sole question of merit, and entirely independent of any extraneous influence, I very cordially recommended the Independent Series. This verdict was approved by the Committee and adopted by the Board."

Note the mention of ten series of reading texts with no reference to McGuffey's in this testimonial which is probably from the early 1870's. Yet far more reading series than ten were available then. The 1876 American Catalogue listed about 39 different reading series in print in America in 1876, without even counting several series for Catholic schools, some series for Protestant schools, and American reprints by Cassell, Nelson, and Macmillan of their series from England. Yet the Myth has it that all of these publishers shared only ten percent of the American market, while McGuffey's claimed the other ninety percent!

D. N. Rook, Secretary of the School Board in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, wrote:

"I would say that Parker & Watson's Series of Readers and Spellers give the (best) satisfaction in our schools of any Series of Readers and Spellers that have ever been used. There is nothing published for which we would exchange them."

D. H. Harris, Superintendent of Public Schools, Hannibal, Missouri, said:

“The National Series of Readers are now in use in our public schools, and I [think] them the best that I have ever examined or used.”

W. T. Harris, Superintendent of Public Schools in St. Louis, Missouri, wrote:

“I have to admire these excellent selections... [whose qualities] I find still more admirable than in the former series of [National] Readers, which I considered models in these respects.”

S. Findlay, Superintendent of Akron Schools, Ohio, said:

“We use no others, and have no desire to. They give entire satisfaction.”

Whether he meant the National or Independent series is not stated, but what is clear is that the schools in Akron, which was McGuffey territory, were not using McGuffey readers at the time the letter was written, probably in the early 1870's.

Professor H. Seele of New Braunfels Academy, Texas, wrote:

“I recommend the National Readers.... They inculcate good morals without any sectarian bias. [They] are truly National, because they teach pure patriotism and not sectional [next word not clear, probably prejudice.]”

Honorable J. K. Jillson, Superintendent of Education in the State of South Carolina, wrote:

“I have carefully examined your new and beautiful Series of Readers... ‘The Independent Readers,’ and do not hesitate to recommend it as the... most excellent ever presented to the public.”

Another advertising page in the Welch text listed states and cities where the Barnes' reading series been adopted. It was headed, “The National Readers and Spellers. Their Record.” (Both the Independent and National were considered National readers, according to another advertisement in the back of Welch's book.)

“These books have been adopted by the School Boards, or official authority, of the following important States, cities and towns - in most cases for [words unclear: apparently “exclusive use.”]

“The State of Missouri. The State of Kentucky. The State of Alabama. The State of Florida. The State of North Carolina. The State of Delaware. The State of Louisiana.

“New York: New York City, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Albany, Rochester, Troy. Syracuse. Elmira, &c., &c.

“Pennsylvania. Reading, Lancaster, Erie, Scranton, Carlisle, Carbondale, Westchester, Schuylkill Haven, Williamsport, Norristown, Bellefonte, Wilkesbarre, &c., &c.

“New Jersey. Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Trenton, Camden, Elizabeth, New Brunswick, Phillipsburg, Orange, &c., &c.

“Delaware. Wilmington.

“D. C. Washington.

“Illinois. Chicago, Peoria, Alton, Springfield, Aurora, Galesburg, Rockford, Rock Island &c., &c.

“Wisconsin. Milwaukee, Fond du Lac, Oshkosh, Janesville, Racine, Watertown, Sheboygan, La Crosse, Waukesha, Kenosha, &c., &c.

“Michigan. Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Adrian, Jackson, Monroe, Lansing, &c., &c.

“Ohio Toledo, Sandusky, Conneaut, Chardon, Hudson, Canton, Salem, &c., &c.

“Indiana. New Albany, Fort Wayne, Lafayette, Madison, Logansport, Indianapolis.

“Iowa. Davenport, Burlington, Muscatine, Mount Pleasant, &c., &c.

“Nebraska. Brownsville, Lincoln, &c., &c.

“Oregon. Portland, Salem, &c., &c.

“Virginia. Richmond, Norfolk, Petersburg, Lynchburg, &c., &c.

“South Carolina. Columbia, Charleston.

“Georgia. Savannah.

“Louisiana. New Orleans.

“Tennessee. Memphis.”

A claim to exclusive use or even of heavy use can be taken with a grain of salt. On the opposite page, Barnes advertised the North Carolina First Reader, Second Reader and Third Reader:

“Prepared expressly for the schools of this State, by C. H. Wiley, Superintendent of Common Schools, and F. M. Hubbard, Professor of Literature in the State University.”

Yet North Carolina had been on Barnes’ long list of adoptions just quoted for the National and Independent readers. It is apparent that the National and Independent series were not for exclusive nor probably even for heavy use in North Carolina. Comments from institute meetings shortly after this time, quoted elsewhere in this history, concern the fact that children’s parents in some places still personally bought their children’s school books, and when they did they sometimes paid little attention to formal adoptions. Concerning those places where the school district bought the books used, the fictional story from the School Bulletin about this time, mentioned elsewhere, tells of textbook wars and pokes fun at the inflated claims of publishers for massive sales in every possible location.

However, the Barnes claim for sales of readers and other publishers’ similar claims in advertisements from the period which survive establish that in no conceivable way could the McGuffey readers have controlled eighty or ninety percent of the entire U. S. reading textbook market from 1850 through the mid 1870’s. Material published after the 1870’s provides the same proof until after 1900. Note the testimony about 1870 referring to the availability of ten series of readers for examination in Georgia, and another testimonial referring to the fact that a teacher’s convention in Georgia in 1870 had considered text-books in reading, and had pronounced National the best, not McGuffey’s.

There were a great many reading series besides the Barnes' series at that time, as confirmed by the 1876 American Catalogue listing of a total of about fifty in print in 1876, about 39 of which were domestic series aimed at the government schools, and not English series or series prepared for American Catholic or Protestant schools. (Unfortunately, most of the American Catholic school series, as well as the Protestant material, appears to have been largely "meaning" oriented, too, just like the government school series.)

Popular series for the government schools available from the late 1860's to the late 1870's included Lucius Osgood's Progressive series popular in Pennsylvania after 1855 and published by A. H. English & Co. of Pittsburgh; Town and Holbrook's Progressive series very popular in New England and elsewhere after the late 1850's (but apparently out of print by 1876) which was published in Boston by Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company, and Oliver Ellsworth; Hillard's several series whose Boston and New York publishers are mentioned elsewhere; Epes Sargent's old and new series by John L. Shorey of Boston and others, and his series with Amasa May of 1871 by E. H. Butler & Co. of Philadelphia; Marcius Willson's series of 1860 by Harper of New York; Sanders' new Union series about 1861 by Ivison of New York, and Ivison's following series of 1873, the American Educational Readers; Bancroft's Pacific Coast Readers which had a new edition in 1874; Edwards' and Webb's Analytical series of 1866-1871 by Taintor of New York and Sherwood of Chicago; J. L. Reynolds series of 1869 used in the South, by Duffie & Chapman of Columbia, S. C., and E. J. Hale & Sons of New York; and Lewis Monroe's series about 1872 by Cowperthwait & Co. of Philadelphia. There were others, in addition to older series, some of which continued to be published in 1876 and even into the twentieth century.

Barnes was a publisher of a vast number of books on education. That the Barnes company was dwarfed by the publishers of McGuffey's appears highly improbable, even judging solely from the list of books they advertised at the end of Welch's text.

The Barnes materials included many spellers, but Barnes was not alone in publishing spellers in the early 1870's and all presumably would have been profitable competitors of Webster's, which was being published at that time by Appleton. Harper's had its own series of spellers at the time and they were dreadful sight word books. Yet Webster's was racking up enormous sales of over a million copies a year in 1885, as shown by the publisher's comment in the back of *Johonnot's* book published by Appleton, quoted elsewhere, and presumably Webster's was also making huge sales in the early 1870's. These sales were despite the fact that the spelling book had been dropped in many places after the late 1870's for about ten years because of the influence from Parker's *Quincy*. (See the quotation elsewhere in this text from *Stickney's* 1889 speller referring to the fact that the speller had been generally dropped for a period of time.) The textbook market in those years must have been enormous to have supported so many spellers, particularly in view of the reported history that spellers were unpopular for a period of time after 1875.

As mentioned elsewhere, however, it appears probable that the massive sales of the Webster spellers were to families, and not to schools.

Like Appleton's in 1885, Barnes had an Orthography Department in the early 1870's, as shown by the advertisements in Welch's book. Barnes published Smith's *Series of Spellers*, in five volumes, Sherwood's series in three volumes, Price's *English Speller* and a few other books for spelling. They also published Pooler's *Test Speller*, "The best collection of 'hard words' yet made... The book is designed for Teachers Institutes and 'Spelling Schools,' and is prepared by an experienced and well-known conductor of institutes."



Notice again the recurring reference to the omnipresent “institutes” of the nineteenth century. Yet such institutes have faded almost totally from the history of education.

At the end of the Welch text, Barnes had its “Department of General Literature - The Teacher’s Library.” Welch’s book on object lessons was included, as was “The Normal - Holbrook.” The advertisement for that book read:

“Carries a working school on its visit to teachers showing the most approved methods of teaching all the common branches, including the technicalities, explanations, demonstration and definitions introductory and peculiar to each branch.”

Another text was “School Management - Holbrook:”

“Treating of the Teacher’s Qualifications: How to overcome Difficulties in Self and Others; Organization; Discipline, Methods of inciting Diligence and Order; Strategy in Management; Object Teaching.”

Another was “The Teachers’ Institute - Fowle:

“This is a volume of suggestions inspired by the author’s experience at Institutes, in the instruction of young teachers. A thousand points of interest to this class are most satisfactorily dealt with.”

Fowle had published Horace Mann’s Common School Journal shortly after it began, and, as described elsewhere in this history, Fowle certainly was not recommending “sound” in the teaching of reading. Whether “Holbrook” could have been the activist Holbrook from the 1820’s and 1830’s is unknown, but the possibility is intriguing. Since Fowle’s books were still in print in the 1870’s including his Bible Reader, so might Holbrook’s have been, if he wrote such books.

Another text in print by the early 1870’s concerning the training of teachers in “expert”-run institutes was the Teachers’ Handbook by William F. Phelps, Principal of Minnesota State Normal School, which discussed Teachers Institutes and covered “Methods of Teaching” “in detail.” The completeness of the book was praised in a review from the New York Tribune, which stated:

“The country schoolmaster... holds a position of vital interest in the destiny of the republic.... In view of the supreme importance of the teacher’s calling, Mr. Phelps has [written] an elaborate system of instruction in the elements of learning, with ...detail of methods and processes....”

Barnes also published:

“The Complete Examiner - Stone. Consists of a series of questions on every English branch of school and academic instruction, with reference to a given page or article of leading text-books where the answer may be found in full. Prepared to aid teachers in securing certificates, pupils in preparing for promotion, and teachers in selecting review questions.”

Teachers in the nineteenth century could only get the certificates they needed before they could be employed if they answered questions correctly, and the correct answers on how to teach reading were supplied to them by “experts” at institutes and in books. Now, in the 1990’s, the Carnegie group has been working on a test for teachers to certify informally that teachers passing their test are well “qualified,” which it is presumed would aid school districts when employing new teachers. This, of course, is a very public-spirited thing for the Carnegie group to be doing, even though the voting public whose taxes support the schools never authorized the Carnegie group to do so.

Other texts published by Barnes were:

“Institute Lectures - Bates. These lectures, originally delivered before institutes, are based upon various topics in the departments of mental and moral culture...

“Method of Teachers Institutes - Bates. Sets forth the best method for conducting institutes, with a detailed account of the object, organization, plan of instruction and true theory of education on which such instruction should be based.”

The Ivison publishing company added to the publications on institutes. In the 1876-1884 Leypoldt's American Catalogue, the Ivison company was recorded as having published their Institute Reader in 1880, at a price of 20 cents. According to Leypoldt's 1876 American Catalogue, Wilson, Hinkle & Company, the publishers of McGuffey's, put out the Institute Reader and Normal Class Book by W. H. Cole in 1870, at a price of \$1.15. However, most of the literature on institutes probably appeared in the many educational journals published all over the United States after about 1840.

As the above material on the Barnes company demonstrates, the list of recommended books published in 1879 by *The Primary Teacher* in no sense covered the whole textbook market since it omitted books published by the two huge textbook publishers, Barnes and Ivison. At that time both Barnes and Ivison had materials on the market that had been influenced by the enthusiasm for phonics, and they either incorporated some phonics or were available in Leigh phonic print. Such materials were obviously being ignored by the “experts” recommending materials in *The Primary Teacher*. Therefore, it is not surprising that both Barnes and Ivison by the early 1880's replaced those 1870's semi-phonetic materials and their series in Leigh print with reading series that instead focused on “meaning.”

#### Concerning Henry Kiddle's How to Teach - A Manual of Methods Recommended in 1879 in *The Primary Teacher*

As discussed earlier, “phonics” when it was used after 1826 was commonly only for elocution, and this often continued to be the case as late as the 1880's. Henry Kiddle, City Superintendent of Public Instruction in New York City, wrote *How to Teach - A Manual of Methods*, which was published by J. W. Schermerhorn & Co. in 1874 but copyrighted in 1873. On page 21, Kiddle said that phonetics for the lowest primary grade (a five months' term), should be simple sounds “solely for training the organs of hearing and of speech.” Therefore, Kiddle who was responsible for all the children in the New York City government schools obviously did not endorse phonics for teaching beginners how to read.

Kiddle apparently adopted other views which were popular with the “advanced” thinkers of the time. The American Catalogue for 1876-1884 showed that in 1879 Kiddle published *Spiritual Communications: Presenting a Revelation of the Future Life*. Leypoldt's American Catalogues for 1876, 1876-1884, and even later had numerous entries under “Spiritualism,” reflecting its popularity. What is most remarkable is that it was popular with many of the so-called intellectuals in America and Great Britain.

It was not popular, however, with everyone. The American Catalogue in 1876 showed that the Methodist Book Connection published a book by W. M'Donald, entitled *Spiritualism; with Testimony of God and Man Against It*, in 1866. The Southern Baptists published a book by J. R. Graves, *Middle Life*, listed as an “Expose of Spiritualism and Swedenborgianism.” William James' father was a Swedenborgian, which sect is not spiritualism but an unusual sect founded by a Swedish man in the eighteenth century. Yet the title of the books suggest that the groups had some connection at that time.

The same 1876 Catalogue showed that in 1874 Allen Putnam (whose lifespan was shown elsewhere as 1802-1887) had published *Agassiz and Spiritualism, Involving the Investigation of Harvard College Professors in 1857*. William James, a professor at Harvard fifteen years later, is also known to have been interested in spiritualism for many years and even wrote an article concerning a medium he thought might be credible. (See the comments in Yeager's text on Alice James.)

Therefore, Agassiz and some other members of the Harvard faculty in 1857, even before William James attended Harvard and then later became a professor there, William James himself by the 1880's, and Superintendent of Schools Kiddle in New York City in the 1870's endorsed the practice of trying to arouse and to traffic with ghostly manifestations. Such activities received a blasting condemnation from both Methodist and Baptist publishers.

Yet Kiddle's ideas on "how to teach," which included omitting real phonics for beginning readers, apparently met with no opposition, so far as can be found.

#### Concerning Harvey's Readers Recommended in 1879 in The Primary Teacher

Except as has been indicated previously, all the texts or authors listed by the Primary Teacher on pages 151-152 in January, 1879, are traceable today. Yet there was no mention of McGuffey's, but only of Harvey's which the McGuffey publishers were then publishing as their replacement for the old McGuffey series. If the old McGuffey series had been blanketing America in 1875, reaching nine out of every ten children when Wilson, Hinkle and Company put out the new Harvey's series, why would the company have bothered to publish that new series? Vail noted that the new Harvey series failed to sell well, so an almost totally new McGuffey's series was published in 1879, and Vail noted the 1879 series was overwhelmingly their most successful. Yet, why should the publisher have bothered with these revised series if they had already controlled the market?

Wilson, Hinkle & Company also published *The Phonic Readers of A. Knell and J. H. Jones* in 1868 and *Little Teacher, First Book in Reading, on the Word Method*, in 1855, both of which are referred to elsewhere in this history. Why should they have bothered with all these alternate reading texts, if the old McGuffey's series had been in almost total control of the American reading textbook market over those years? The McGuffey Myth looks ridiculous when historical facts are trotted out.

What the method was that was used in Harvey's series is unknown. Since the series was endorsed by *The Primary Teacher*, however, the possibility exists that it was "meaning"-oriented. At the very least, it omitted the use of Leigh print, according to the 1876 American Catalogue, even though the earlier McGuffey's series had been available in Leigh print.

#### Concerning Lewis Baxter Monroe's' Chart and Chart Primer Recommended in 1879 in The Primary Teacher

This material is discussed in Appendix C and elsewhere in this history, published by Cowperthwait. It was written to promote "elocution." For reading instruction, it used Code 3 two-step phony phonics. According to the 1876 American Catalogue, no Monroe material was available in Leigh print in that year, and no Monroe primer was listed, but only *The First Reader*. Yet Early American Textbooks reported Monroe's *The First Reader* had a Leigh edition in 1873. There is a confusion in titles between this and Mecutchen's later material for the Butler company. The Butler company also later published Monroe's and Monroe's widow's materials.

### Concerning Sheldon's Primer Recommended in 1879 in The Primary Teacher

E. A. Sheldon's materials published by Scribner were "meaning" materials with Code 3 two-step phony phonics. According to the 1876 American Catalogue, they were not available in Leigh print.

### Concerning the Franklin First Reader and Appleton's Recommended in 1879 in The Primary Teacher

These two series were critically important in stopping the 1870's revival of phonics teaching, and are discussed at length later. These pro-meaning materials were, not surprisingly, included in the recommended list of materials given by *The Primary Teacher* in January, 1879. Appleton's did not have a Leigh-print edition, according to the 1876-1884 American Catalogue. The Franklin series was available in Leigh-print, but, as discussed, only non-Leigh editions appear to have been used in Boston after 1877. Rather surprisingly, it was a non-Leigh-print edition by the original publisher, not set up by University Press, which Buisson saw at the Philadelphia Exposition in 1876 and on which he reproduced a few pages in his report, which report is discussed later.

### William Torrey Harris and the Appleton Readers

The *Primary Teacher* article of January, 1879, had recommended the use of the Appleton readers, among others. The Appleton readers had been on the market at that time less than a year, and showed clear ties to "experts," the most notable of whom was the "philosopher," William Torrey Harris, who was then Superintendent of Schools in St. Louis, Missouri. Biographical material is given on William Torrey Harris (1835-1909) in *Dictionary of American Biography*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York: 1934-1962. Harris left Yale as a junior in the school year 1856-1857 and then went in 1857 all the way from his home state of Connecticut to St. Louis, Missouri to begin teaching.

The *Dictionary of American Biography* states the following on Harris but omits any mention of the vastly used 1878 Appleton series on which Harris was the principal author and which did not use Leigh print. (In Nila Banton Smith's "history," Harris, the Appleton readers, and Leigh and his print do not appear in her index, like so much else that is of real importance in reading history.) The Appleton series fought the famous McGuffey series to a draw in the Midwest, according to Vail. Considering the huge publicity on the McGuffey series, the omission of any mention of the Appleton series in Harris's biography is, to say the least, peculiar:

"His rise in the educational system was rapid; he was soon made principal of the Clay School, became assistant city superintendent in 1866, and superintendent in 1868."

Such a rapid rise for the unknown 22-year-old Yankee outsider who had arrived only in 1857 suggests sponsorship by someone with considerable influence. St. Louis was a big city with many teachers. Yet everyone else was passed over in favor of this young Yankee immigrant who became assistant superintendent of all city schools at the age of 31 and superintendent at the age of 33.

"...in 1908 he was able to say that he had read Hegel's *Philosophy of History* sixteen times, while even more important to him was Hegel's *Logic*, which became his philosophical Bible. In the exposition of Hegel's thought and in the application of his principles to every department of knowledge but especially to education, Harris found his lifework. Hegel's doctrines of the solidarity of the individual with society and of the importance of the state temporarily met the needs of the new American feeling for national unity.

“In 1867 he founded the Journal of Speculative Philosophy.... in it such later writers as... Dewey and James made their debut... In 1880... he resigned his St. Louis position and moved to Concord, Massachusetts, to assist in the establishment of the Concord School of Philosophy.... In 1889... Harris accepted the position of United States Commissioner of Education... (till) 1906... when he voluntarily resigned.... He labored especially to place education upon a psychological basis....”

In 1878, D. Appleton and Company, a very large publisher with offices in New York, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco, published The Appleton’s School Readers, which were phony phonics texts.

Appleton was only following its past history in rejecting real phonics. According to Early American Textbooks, in 1838, D. Appleton & Co., New York, and George S. Appleton, Philadelphia, published E. Hazen’s Code 1 The Symbolical Spelling Book; in Two Parts, Part I, which had first been published in 1829 and which was pure Code 1 material. That material, however, had many publishers, and Appleton was only one of them. By 1844, they published the “First American from the Sixth London Edition” of Very Little Tales for Very Little Children, “In Single Syllables of Three and Four Letters.” Appleton’s said it had put out four editions of the book in eighteen months so sales must have been good. The writer of the book from England said it was hard to write stories for “infants” with only three or four letters, and her book “is meant only for children who have just acquired their alphabet.” The book was a straight sight-word approach. In addition to that text, Geo. S. Appleton of Philadelphia had copyrighted in 1848, and both the Philadelphia and New York branches published in 1850, Little Annie’s First Book, in words of three letters, by “A Mother” for children from three to five years old. It was a straight Code 1 book and was appalling. Other appalling books Appleton’s was publishing in 1850 were Little Lessons for Little Learners in words of one syllable, Little Annie’s Second Book in words of one syllable, and Mother Goose in Hieroglyphics. (Of course, all their sight-word books for children were hieroglyphics, anyway!) Appleton’s included a catalog of its books at the end of Little Annie’s First Book, which catalog establishes that Appleton’s was large and important in 1850 and must greatly have overshadowed the publishers of the McGuffey Readers in that year. Among Appleton’s books were “Miss Sinclair’s A Series of Tales,” with a review from the Edinburgh Advertiser, Divine and Moral Songs by Isaac Watts, and books by Maria Edgeworth and Mrs. Sherwood.

Appleton’s also published Little Annie’s ABC in 1850, purportedly “Showing the Use and Sounds of the Letters, in Words of One Syllable.” Yet its philosophy was Code 1, since inside its title page was an advertisement for Little Annie’s Primer which makes that fact clear:

“The idea on which this little book is founded, although not an original, is a useful one. It was suggested by Mr. Wood, of the celebrated Edinburgh Sessional School. It is simply this: that as soon as a child learns the letters of the alphabet, and even while engaged in learning them, he should be taught their use and sound in real words, such as he is uttering every day, and not in unmeaning syllables, which convey to his mind no ideas, and are associated with no real objects.... Uttering sounds without meaning and being told that b, a, spells ba, he justly esteems rather dry work. But at the moment he is able to connect the sounds he is acquiring with the objects he sees, he may easily be induced to learn his letters without repugnance.”

The reasoning in this excerpt is obviously defective. A normal child cannot deduce the functioning sounds of letters in a sight word, if he has only been taught to recite their names: “see-aye-tee, cat.”

Appleton’s was only continuing its devotion to “meaning” over “sound” by its publication of the 1878 Appleton reading series. It was copyrighted by D. Appleton & Company of New York in 1878 and written by William T. Harris, Superintendent of Schools, St. Louis, Missouri; Andrew J. Rickoff, Superintendent of Instruction, Cleveland, Ohio, and Mark Bailey, Instructor in Elocution, Yale College.

(Mark Bailey had previously written a treatise on elocution for The Franklin Fifth Reader, part of the widely used Hillard and Campbell Franklin series, and also for an earlier Hillard series.) On page I of The First Reader of the Appleton series (not called a primer) in the address “From the Authors to the Teacher,” it said, “...the experience of many years has convinced us that a judicious combination of the word and phonic methods is the best.”

The first three lesson pages are headed, “Words and Phrases to be Learned by Sight only.” By the third page, two full sentences have been introduced: “Has the cat a rat? The cat has the rat.” On the top of this page is a picture of a cat biting into an obviously terrified, conscious rat, a sickeningly inappropriate picture for a little child beginning school.

The next two pages are analytic/synthetic phonics on some of the words used, not all of them. (Having taught beginning reading to six first grade classes, I can state it would be impossible to teach normal children to read phonically with these grossly inadequate and incompetently designed phonic lessons.) The following two pages have two short lessons labeled “By Sight and Sounds” and two much longer lessons, “By Sight only.” each with complete sentences. The phonics is very heavily mixed with “sight” teaching, and it is all done with the sentence approach. The effect on children would be to teach them to read for “meaning” and not for “sound.”

William T. Harris, as principal author of this series, had the series on the market in 1878, only ten years after the St. Louis schools, of which he was Superintendent, had switched officially to the Leigh print. Yet there was no sign of Leigh print in his Appleton first book, though towards the end vowels and silent letters were marked.

Since it takes several years to assemble and publish a reading series. Harris and the others must have been working on it at least since 1875. According to the 1876-1884 American Catalogue, the 1878 Appleton series was not available in Leigh print.

An advertisement promoting Leigh print appeared on the back cover of Leigh’s Hillard’s Second Reader, (Brewer and Tileston, Boston: 1868). It said that, in St. Louis, Missouri, Leigh’s print:

“...was put on trial by order of the School Board September, 1866. In June, 1867, The SUPERINTENDENT reported a satisfactory result. The BOARD, August 9, 1867, in view of this success, and of ‘its promising a great saving of time, and great increase of efficiency in teaching to read,’

“‘Resolved, That its adoption in the primary grade of our Schools be made general, as early as practicable, the coming year.’ The SUPERINTENDENT writes, February 19, 1868, ‘The phonetic plan has proved a far greater success than was at first anticipated. Not only has it proved effective in eradicating defects in enunciation, but it has also proved a great saving of time, so that classes have been able to gain a whole quarter, in the course of this year, upon classes taught by the other method.’”

A record of who the superintendent was in 1866 (possibly the same man who was quoted in 1868, above) is given on the back of the Leigh’s Pronouncing Edition of Hillard’s Primer, Boston: Brewer and Tileston: 1866:

“Testimonials

“From Ira Divoll, Supt. of Public Schools, St. Louis.

“I believe it will facilitate the teaching and learning of reading, spelling, proper pronunciation, and the distinct utterance of words, and shall be glad to see such editions introduced into our primary schools.

“From Chas. W. Irwin, Esq., Chairman of the Text-book Committee.

“I am so well pleased with your phonotypic text, that I shall recommend the introduction of that system into the St. Louis Public Schools.

“From Emil Ulrici, and other members of the School Board, St. Louis.

“I concur in the opinion of Mr. Ira Divoll, and expect of the introduction of the method into our public schools great advantages to both teacher and scholar.”

None of the 1866 testimonials mentioned Harris, who has been credited with having introduced the Leigh print, and none was from an assistant superintendent. The actual months in which Harris was appointed Assistant Superintendent in 1866 and Superintendent in 1868 are not known. However, if both appointments were in September, then the Board’s decision to install Leigh print in the St. Louis schools by September, 1866, would have been made before Harris became assistant superintendent in 1866. Also, if Harris were appointed Superintendent in September, 1868, then he would not have been the Superintendent who was quoted first in February, 1868, praising the Leigh print (probably still Ira Divoll).

Harris would not, then, have been an administrator at any time when the Leigh print was introduced and may actually have had nothing to do with it. An indication that he probably had nothing to do with it, even as a school principal, is given by one of the statements already quoted from the back of an 1866 edition of Leigh’s Pronouncing Edition of Hillard’s Primer (Harvard call number EducT 758 66.510). That statement establishes that St. Louis had a textbook committee which was authorized to make textbook recommendations to the administrators, and that the recommendations were not the responsibility of school principals like Harris in 1866:

“From Chas. W. Irwin, Esq., Chairman of the Text-book Committee.

“I am so well pleased with your phonotypic text, that I shall recommend the introduction of that system into the St. Louis Public Schools.”

The title page of this primer clearly carries the date, “1866.” Therefore, at some time before it was printed in 1866, it was the chairman of St. Louis’s text-book committee (and St. Louis HAD a textbook committee) who personally recommended the introduction of Leigh print. There is nothing in any of these clearly established facts to suggest that Principal Harris in and before 1866 was in any way responsible for introducing Leigh print in St. Louis.

It is possible that the same thing happened to the 1868 St. Louis Superintendent, probably Ira Divoll, which happened to Superintendent John Dudley Philbrick. He would have displeased the “philosophers,” of which Harris was certainly one, by supporting Leigh phonics, and they may have used influence to have that superintendent fired. The young 33-year-old Assistant Superintendent Harris replaced him. Harris, of course, would not have displeased “philosophers” because he was a particularly influential “philosopher” himself, and by 1878 was an author on a “phony phonics” series which achieved massive use in the United States but which was NOT available in Leigh print, according to the 1876-1884 American Catalogue.

What is exceedingly strange is that Harris's reading textbook series was not, apparently, used in St. Louis since it is recorded that St. Louis used Leigh print till 1886. The record suggests that Harris, himself, may well have been fired as Superintendent of Schools in St. Louis in 1880, in which year he is reported to have "resigned," only two years after the Appleton's series was first published.

Nevertheless, in his history of the McGuffey readers, Vail testified that the sales of the Appleton series were enormous. Vail said that Appleton's and McGuffey's fought to control the market (obviously in the Midwest) but that the battle ended in a draw, although he felt that the McGuffey's series succeeded in selling considerably more than the Appleton's series afterwards, also obviously in the Midwest.

Appleton's won in some other areas. According to *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, published by the U. S. Department of Education in 1985 (page 86), Appleton's series was adopted as The Minnesota Text Book Series published by D. D. Merrill in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Department of Education listing showed a second and third reader published there in 1878, and a first reader published in 1887, so the series was in use in Minnesota for at least nine years.

At the back of James Johonnot's *The Sentence and Word Book*, published by D. Appleton And Company, New York, in 1885, is an advertisement for Appleton's American Standard Geographies, "Based on the Principles of the Science of Education." The advertisement read:

"The remarkable success which Appletons' Readers have attained is due to the fact that no effort or expense was spared to make them not only mechanically superior, but practically and distinctively superior, in their embodiments of the best results of modern experience in teaching, and of the methods followed by the most successful and intelligent educators. In the same spirit, and with the same high aim, this new series of Geographies has been prepared, and it is in harmony, therefore, with the active educational thought of the times."

However, the department at Appleton's which was preparing its readers was not in apparent contact with the department at Appleton's which was working on "Orthography and Orthoepey." That department also had a page at the back of Johonnot's book advertising its publications, one of which was Webster's Elementary Spelling-Book (obviously the gutted 1857 edition prepared long after Webster's 1843 death.) That advertisement read:

"The enormous sale and remarkable popularity of this famous Speller are among the marvels of the age.

"The original of this work, by Noah Webster, was published in 1783, and since that time nearly 50,000,000 copies of it have been made and sold. It would be impossible to say how many of the men and women of our country, now living, and under sixty years of age, began their education with this book, learned from its pages to distinguish between the shapes of those terrible tormenters of child-life, the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, and were initiated into the great mysteries of a, b - ab, and kindred combinations. The number is very large, but of the rising generation certainly a great majority will be of this class. We still print considerably over 1,000,000 copies of the famous old 'Blue Black' per annum."

This 1885 figure of over one million copies a year for the Webster speller should be compared to the presumed blanketing sales of McGuffey's. In 1885, Webster's single speller, with sales of considerably over a million copies a year, was apparently selling more copies than all grades of the McGuffey readers, to judge from the probably firm figures given by Dillman for 1888 and 1889, discussed elsewhere. Those 1888 and 1889 sales figures must have been compiled to be used in the discussions that preceded the



merger of the McGuffey publishers with three other publishers. The merger took place in 1890 and produced the new, massive American Book Company.

Yet the 1885 Appleton advertisement for Webster's speller still only claimed that "a great majority" were using it, not virtually all American children. That advertisement, of course, was singularly blind. The advertisement on the very next page told of the "remarkable success which Appletons' Readers have attained...." and the Appleton series began with a sight-word book meant for beginning readers, not with a spelling book.

Soon after Webster's death in 1843, Geo. F. Cooledge & Bro. of New York had become the publishers of Webster's spelling book, as shown by an advertisement on their 1847 book, *The Illustrated Primer*. The fact that the Cooledge company had become the "Proprietors of the Copyright of Webster's Elementary Spelling Book," is shown by the title page and the page opposite it from a Webster speller of 1848. Both of these 1848 pages are reproduced on page 117 in *Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900*, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington: 1985. Wrongly identified as from their item 2592, page 123, it is obvious the reproduced pages are instead from their item 2595, page 123, "New York: G. F. Cooledge & Bro., 1848."

As the reproduction showed, by 1848 Cooledge claimed that 30,000,000 copies of Webster's speller had been sold, and that 1,000,000 were still being sold annually. The Cooledge company had made the same claim of sales of 1,000,000 a year on their 1847 copy of *The Illustrated Primer*, mentioned above. Webster's speller is known to have been enormously popular also between 1783 and 1809, a period of 26 years, selling 3,000,000 copies in those years. If Cooledge's claim of total sales to 1848 of 30,000,000 copies is correct, then 27,000,000 copies would have been sold between 1809 and 1848.

Although another source referred to elsewhere indicates that G. and C. Merriam copyrighted a revised Webster speller in 1857, also copyrighted by Webster's children, which is puzzling, it is reported that the Appleton company became the publishers of Webster's speller in 1855. American Book Company, formed in 1890 by the merger of Appleton and other companies, became the publishers in 1890.

As has been discussed, in 1848, the Cooledge company claimed 30,000,000 copies of Webster's speller had been sold and announced that their annual sales were about a million copies. Thirty-seven years later, the 1885 Appleton company claimed that sales were over a million a year, but that a total of only 50,000,000 had been sold. Therefore, in the intervening 37 years between Cooledge's and Appleton's statements, that would mean that only 20,000,000, and not the anticipated 37,000,000 had been sold. Yet it can be seen that this reasonable assumption is flatly contradicted by an 1880's statement from Appleton quoted below.

Appleton clearly claimed in 1880, as quoted below, that 40,500,000 copies were sold from 1840 to 1880 and that sales had been steady, except for one bigger year, at about a million copies a year. If 8,000,000 are subtracted from Appleton's 1880 figure (for the years 1840 to 1848, the year of Cooledge's estimate) and the resultant figure, 32,500,000, is added to the 1848 Cooledge figure of 30,000,000, a total of 62,500,000 is reached by 1880. Yet, in 1885, five years and a presumed 5,000,000 copies later (or 67,500,000 total), the Appleton company claimed in its advertisement in the *Johonnot* book that only 50,000,000 had been sold! The Webster speller sales total certainly has a chameleon-like nature, but the total is, nevertheless and beyond any question, a very big chameleon.

Information on Webster's speller is given in the article, "Webster, Noah," in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963), Volume 23, page 476. It stated that editions of Webster's dictionary after his death were published by G. & C. Merriam Co. The last dictionary published under Webster's control would have been in 1841, since he died in 1843. The first edition after his death was in 1847. Presumably,

therefore, at some time in or after 1843, Merriam obtained the dictionary rights, and it must have been about that time that George F. Cooledge & Bro. obtained the speller rights. The Cooledge company was definitely publishing the speller in 1847, as mentioned previously. The speller rights passed to Appleton, presumably from Cooledge, but possibly with some connection with Merriam as noted above, in 1855. The rights then went to American Book Company in the 1890 merger in which Appleton was one of the principals. The encyclopedia article claimed that a total of more than 70,000,000 of Webster's spellers were eventually sold, but truly firm figures are probably unobtainable. Nevertheless, total sales were unquestionably enormous.

On page 126, Volume 2 of Mark Sullivan's series, *Our Times*, he said:

"In 1855, the plates of the [Webster] Speller were taken over by D. Appleton & Company. The Speller was then seventy-two years old, a longer life than any other text-book had ever had. [Ed.: not true: the small Donat Latin grammar lasted over 1,500 years, as mentioned elsewhere, from the days when St. Jerome was a schoolboy in the fourth century until the twentieth century.] But the Appletons took it up with as much enthusiasm as if were the newest and most up-to-date manuscript. By 1880, William H. Appleton was able to reply\* to an interviewer who asked him what was the best selling book published by his firm:

"Webster's Speller; and it has the largest sale of any book in the world except the Bible. We sell a million copies a year. Yes, and we have been selling it at that rate for forty years. The year following the emancipation of the slaves we sold one million five hundred thousand, because every negro in the South thought it only necessary to have Webster's Speller to read. After that year it fell back to the original million, and has never varied. We sell them in cases of seventy-two dozen, and they are bought by all the large dry-goods houses and supply stores, and furnished by them to every cross-roads store."

"One of the largest presses in the Appleton plant ran day after day, on this one book, until it was completely worn out. By 1890, the sales of "old Blue-Back" had reached the astonishing total of over 35,000,000 copies, in which some five generations of American youths adventured among the mysteries of English orthography."

\* "Quoted in the *Youth's Companion*, May 27, 1880."

Obviously, Sullivan's "astonishing total of over 35,000,000" is hopelessly wrong. Appleton's comments that Sullivan, himself, had quoted JUST IN THE PREVIOUS PARAGRAPH had accounted for a total of 40,500,000 copies JUST FROM 1840 TO 1880, and NOT INCLUDING THE VAST AMOUNT SOLD FROM THE TIME SPELLER CAME OUT IN 1783 UP UNTIL 1840. But Sullivan and the rest of the "experts" obviously would have made very bad accountants. They just liked to babble big numbers.

Of course, Appleton's 1880 claim that "we" had been selling Webster's speller for forty years was also wrong. Forty years before 1880 was 1840, and, while it is true that Appleton was in business long before that year, Webster's speller was probably still being sold in that year by Noah Webster, himself, who did not die until 1843!

It is pertinent to repeat here some of the background material on Webster's speller which was given in Part IV. Webster's speller had provided income for Webster and his family for years, so its copyright was an important financial resource. Sometime before 1847, but probably after 1843, the year of Webster's death, Geo. F. Cooledge & Bro. had become the "Proprietors of the Copyright of Webster's Elementary Spelling Book," as shown by the title page and the page opposite it from a Webster speller of 1848.

Yet the first year that the Cooledge company turned up in sources accessible to this writer was 1839, when Cooledge's United States School Primer showed Cooledge's location as "George F. Cooledge, Second Story of M. Day & Co.'s Book Store, 374 Pearl Street, New York." Cooledge (without his "bro.") was apparently just starting out in 1839, leasing the floor above Mahlon Day's very well known book store in New York City. By 1840 Cooledge had moved to 323 Pearl Street, so he must have prospered. However, George Cooledge, starting out alone without his brother could hardly have been important enough in 1839 to have been used by Webster as Webster's sole printer. Furthermore, Webster had never used only a single printer, but had always used many local printers in cities and towns all over America as his publishers. The fact that the Cooledge company became the sole proprietors of the copyright on the Webster speller was an enormous change from Webster's former practice. Such a change almost certainly would not have taken place before Webster's death in 1843. It appears probable that the Webster family sold the copyright for the Webster speller to the Cooledge company on Webster's death in 1843, or shortly after.

As the reproduction mentioned previously showed, by 1848 Cooledge claimed that 30,000,000 copies of Webster's speller had been sold, and that 1,000,000 were still being sold annually. (From the Webster figures quoted earlier of 3,000,000 copies sold between 1783 and 1809, that would mean 27,000,000 had been sold between 1809 and 1848.) Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, also shows by its entries on page 123 that D. Appleton & Co. of New York had become the publishers of the Webster speller by 1857. Yet, as indicated elsewhere in this history, the actual date of the change was probably 1855, not 1857. Nevertheless, another source referred to elsewhere indicates that G. and C. Merriam copyrighted a revised Webster speller in 1857, also copyrighted by Webster's children, which is puzzling. At what date Cooledge went out of business or was absorbed by another publisher (possibly Appleton) is not known, but Early American Textbooks of the U. S. Department of Education shows that G. F. Cooledge and Brother published, along with Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co. of Philadelphia, The National Speaker by Henry B. Maglathlin in 1851. Therefore, the Cooledge company may still have been in existence in 1851, if the report is correct, and possibly went out of business in 1855 when Appleton's acquired the Webster speller.

On page 126, Sullivan reproduced the title page, "D. Appleton & Co., Revised Edition of The Elementary Spelling Book, Being an Improvement on 'The American Spelling-Book'". The "Revised Edition" was, of course, not the 1829 Elementary Spelling Book which Webster, himself, wrote to replace his 1783 The American Spelling Book, but the gutted 1857 revision of Webster's 1829 book prepared long after Webster's 1843 death (and curiously copyrighted by Webster's children). The 1857 gutted revision, heavy with the addition of sight-words at its beginning, was useless for teaching beginners to read by "sound." The reproduced Appleton title page carried the note:

"The Cheapest, the Best, and the Most Extensively Used Spelling Book Ever Published."

The 1880 comment of William H. Appleton which Sullivan quoted is very helpful, however, despite the inconsistency concerning actual numbers published. Although the numbers given in various sources concerning Webster's actual sales volume are unreliable, they are consistent in one thing. It is reasonably certain that the Webster speller was sold in enormous numbers until after 1890. Yet, there is an apparent contradiction, even shown on the 1885 Appleton book mentioned above, which simultaneously advertised the Appleton reading series for beginners, claiming enormous sales, and a few pages later the Webster speller, commonly assumed to be for beginners, also with enormous sales. Appleton's 1880 comments quoted earlier accidentally contain the explanation for the seeming contradiction. The explanation is that Appleton's readers and Webster's speller were really meant for different markets, and the following confirms that explanation.

The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York, June, 1878, carried chapters from the book, Roderick Hume, by the Managing Editor, C. W. Bardeen, one of which chapters was titled, "A Change of Text-Books." (A copy of that chapter is included in Appendix A.) The chapter poked fun at the swarms of book agents which descended on schools in those days, and it poked fun at their inflated claims. One agent said to Hume, who was a school principal in a village:

"All the big cities use [our books] exclusively. They have just been re-adopted in Boston, and when Smintheus's tried to displace us in Hong Kong, we not only held them in there, but drove out theirs for ours in Yang tsi Kiang."

Hume decided to write leading publishers for sample copies.

"So he got what addresses he could from the advertisements in a school journal..."

One of the book company answers read:

"We are delighted to get your letter, intimating that at last you are prepared to adopt a uniform set of books. News of your remarkable success at Norway had already reached us, and we have been hoping that our Mr. Hook would find time to call upon you. Don't fail to come and see us, the first time you visit the city. Our establishment turns out fifteen million books an hour.... Our publications are used in all the best schools.... Most of [our books] are in such universal use that you may feel under obligation to adopt them, because children who move into or out of your village will thus have the same books which are already in use."

Most book companies were more than willing to send sample copies:

"Other letters flowed in, followed by express packages, till Roderick's shelves, and table, and floor, were successively over-flowed..."

Bardeen was associated with schools in the 1870's and knew the real state of things. So did his contemporaries. His contemporaries must have been very familiar with high-pressure salesmanship and overblown advertising from book companies or Bardeen would never have chosen to parody them. Publishers' claims for book sales in the 1870's and for years before, therefore, may reasonably be taken with the gravest reservations. However, what Bardeen's 1878 parody clearly establishes is that schools were NOT buying their textbooks from cross-roads stores or dry-goods establishments, but from book agents or directly from the publishers.

Yet Appleton's 1880 comments, only two years after Bardeen's 1878 comments, made it absolutely clear that, unlike other textbooks, Webster's very cheap little speller was being sold to dry-goods establishments and to cross-roads stores all over the United States. What, then, was the nature of the market for the very cheap little Webster speller if it was necessary to market it so differently from school books?

A very early nineteenth-century copy of Webster's speller which is in the New York Public Library suggests one class of users: immigrants learning English. The copy is carefully marked with notations from an adult who was obviously German. A second and probably far larger class of users was the rural adult population. It is certain, from many sources, that "spelling" was in a near-catastrophic state for large numbers of American adults in the nineteenth century, because of the switch to "meaning" in teaching beginning reading after 1826. Just reading the letters in The School Bulletin from school board members, or the board minutes in various parts of the country, can attest to that. If even a small proportion of those spelling-disabled adults recognized that they had a spelling problem, the presence of a Webster speller in

the house would be a great help when letters were to be written, which must have been often, since there were no telephones available then to call friends and relatives! Some, of course, of those spellers might well have been bought by parents to help their children, or for children to use when doing school assignments. However, what is near certain from Appleton's comment is that the Webster spellers were not being sold to most schools at that time.

Average Americans had little "cash" money in those days, and the very cheap Webster speller could obviously fill the family need for a dictionary, a far more expensive volume that most American families certainly could not afford to buy. That is the obvious explanation for the unflagging sales of the cheap Webster speller until after 1890. It was sold to American families, when most of America was still rural, and it was sold through the rural cross-roads stores. Most of those Webster spellers did not reach children through the normal route for textbooks: by way of the swarms of book agents who worked so hard to supply books to the schools.

The contradiction may be more apparent than real, therefore, in the two advertising pages in the Johonnot 1885 text, since the probability is that the bulk of these Webster speller sales were to families, and not to schools. Nevertheless, although its sales had remained at about the million-a-year mark for many decades, they were proportionately far, far less in the 1880's than in the 1840's since the American population had become enormously greater.

The fact that the St. Louis history might have been the reverse of the history in Boston is suggested further by some excerpts from John Dudley Philbrick's Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education, No. 1 - 1885, City School Systems in the United States, Government Printing Office, Washington, published seven years after Philbrick had been fired as Schools Superintendent in Boston:

"Recently the plan of supplementing the readers by the introduction of other reading matter has come into vogue, quite extensively. With a view to meet the demand for this supplementary reading, a good many books have been compiled and published. Besides books designed for this purpose, juvenile periodicals and newspapers, and sometimes a second series of readers, have been introduced; and finally, biographies, histories, and works of fiction have been more or less used for supplementary reading.

"Some of the advocates of this plan have put forth most extravagant claims in its favor. Compilers and publishers naturally did what they could to sound its praises, as it could not fail to put money into their pockets.

"In a short time this supplementary reading business was in some quarters greatly overdone. Fortunately, a reaction has set in, and much of this supplementary rubbish is finding its way to the junk shop, while the regular readers are again coming to the front in the school room."

"Supplementary reading" was reaching the market in quantity by 1885, the year when John Dudley Philbrick derided it. One example of such supplementary reading appeared in an advertisement in the back of James Johonnot's The Sentence and Word Book, published by Appleton and Company, New York, in 1885. That page advertising "Readers and Reading Charts" included the six-book series, The Standard Supplementary Readers, edited by William Swinton and George R. Cathcart:

"Comprising a Series of Carefully Graded Reading-Books designed to connect with any of the regular series of readers...."

Note the innocent reference to "any of the regular series of readers" in 1885, instead of to the presently-reputed monolithic McGuffey's.

Leyboldt's American Catalogue for 1876-1884 also listed a series of six books by Swinton and Cathcart published in 1881, but the publisher was Ivison and not Appleton. The titles and prices of the books suggest they were graduated from material for beginning readers to material for advanced readers, and they are very possibly the same series as that being published by Appleton by 1885. (A curious overlapping of publishers sometimes appeared in books of the period.)

G. R. Cathcart's earlier Literary Reader had been published by Ivison in 1874, so Cathcart had possibly been commissioned by Ivison to write the 1881 supplementary reading series along with Swinton. Swinton's own regular reading series was later published by the same company, Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Company in 1882-1883. It was in 1883 that Ivison copyrighted Swinton's Primer and First Reader, a phony phonics text.

The publishing record shows other texts which were undoubtedly meant to be "supplementary" besides those by Swinton and Cathcart. Philbrick's hostility to such "supplementary reading" was understandable. It was the invention of Colonel Parker, whose "improvements" were associated with Philbrick's being fired. Parker used to go around in a wagon in Quincy to distribute such books to his schools.

It is Philbrick's footnote which is of particular interest. That footnote quotes the St. Louis Superintendent who had replaced Harris in 1880:

"No additional reading matter has been introduced in the recitations, it being the theory in our schools that more real progress is made by thoroughly mastering a few lessons than by superficially reading many. - (St. Louis Report for 1880-1, by Mr. Edw. H. Long, Superintendent.)"

The St. Louis superintendent who replaced Harris not only kept the phonic Leigh print that had been rejected in Boston, but he rejected the idea originating with Parker at Quincy that the classrooms should have great amounts of "supplementary reading." The hostility in St. Louis to "supplementary reading" and its simultaneous use of Leigh print in 1881 suggest that Harris may have been invited to leave in 1880. It was in the Midwest that the new, phonic editions of McGuffey's which started to come out in 1879 were so successful. Educational winds were obviously blowing in a different direction in the Midwest by 1880 than in those areas which appear to have been influenced by Boston.

When Rice reported on the method used to teach beginning reading in St. Louis and the resultant excellent reading ability in 1892, which will be discussed later, he found that the use of "sound" in beginning reading was still producing success in 1892. Smart St. Louis may have never thrown out true phonics. What the record suggests is that instead they threw out Superintendent William Torrey Harris in 1880 and never used his 1878 Appleton readers.

Eventually, it was said that Harris:

"...labored especially to put education upon a psychological basis...."

That must have been after 1874, since, as has been mentioned, Colonel Parker wrote the School Journal on August 12, 1899 (page 118), concerning practices twenty-five years before (which would be in 1874):

"Psychology in education, especially in New England, was tabooed. It was called 'splitting hairs.'" "

Harris certainly must have known the trendiest philosophers of the period, though, the kind that were so disapproving of Leigh phonics, according to the Boston School Committee in its 1871 report. The Harris biographical entry that has been quoted stated:

“In 1867 [Harris] founded the Journal of Speculative Philosophy. ...in it such later writers as... Dewey and James made their debut....”

#### Hillard and Campbell's Readers, Including the Franklin Series

The Primary Teacher of January, 1879, had recommended the Franklin First Reader. That was another highly successful reading book that appeared about this time, entitled in full The Franklin Primer or First Reader, by George S. Hillard and Loomis J. Campbell, which they personally copyrighted originally in 1873.

The Franklin series was the third reading series written by Hillard, his first coming out in the late 1850's. The “Preface” to The Third Primary Reader by G. S. Hillard in Boston, May, 1858, said:

“This book is designed as an introduction to my Fourth Class Reader, and to be used by the highest classes in Primary or Intermediate Schools. It has been chiefly prepared by a gentleman long engaged in teaching, and of much practical experience in all that relates to education, but under my direct and careful supervision....”

Hillard did not name that 1850's collaborator, but his co-author on his two later series was Loomis J. Campbell.

The earliest book in George S. Hillard's first series, A First Class Reader meant for the highest, not the lowest, class, appeared in 1855. When Hillard revised the series, it became the Sixth Reader, with “An Introductory Treatise on Elocution” by Professor Mark Bailey of Yale, according to Nietz, page 92. The First Primary Reader appeared in 1859, but was meant for the lowest class. By 1864, Hillard and Campbell were publishing the second series. The lowest readers in the 1864 series were available in Leigh print. From the fact that the copies of the lower readers of the series in the Harvard library are apparently all in Leigh print except for one in 1859 and one in 1878, the 1864 Leigh-print editions must have been the norm, even though they were also advertised in ordinary print. The Library of Congress also has a Leigh-print second reader of the 1864 series, although I could find no first reader or any other second reader of that series. The fact that only a Leigh-print edition survived at the Library of Congress seems to suggest Leigh print on Hillard's materials after 1864 were in wide use.

Then, in 1873, Hillard and Campbell copyrighted the Franklin Primer of the third series, the Franklin series. The Franklin Primer was essentially a sight-word book, suitable for teaching the sentence method, very like those of today. However, to unwary parents, it looked as if it taught phonics. It was also available in Leigh print, according to advertisements on the back of 1877 and later copies in the Harvard library. Yet no Leigh copies of the 1873 Franklin Primer are in the library that I could see, nor are there any Franklin Primer copies earlier than 1877. That is very strange, to say the least. Certainly the Boston schools would have been likely to use the newer Hillard materials of 1873, rather than the 1864 materials. Until Leigh-endorsing Superintendent Philbrick was fired on March 1, 1878, it seems probable that the Boston schools had Leigh editions of the 1873 Franklin Primer. As reported elsewhere, school property disappeared over the summer of 1878 a few months after Philbrick was fired. The property included primary school records and other unspecified materials. Possibly Leigh editions of the Franklin Primer disappeared at that time, which might account for none surviving to reach the Harvard library.

The Franklin Primer and Advanced First Reader of 1881, only by Loomis J. Campbell, was published by Taintor Brothers, Merrill, & Co., New York, and William Ware and Company, Boston, and a copy survives in the Harvard library.

However, since the later primer written by Loomis alone was printed in 1881 by Taintor Brothers, Merrill, & Co., the Syracuse copy of the original Franklin Primer which I saw with the change in the publisher's name to Taintor Brothers & Co., dropping Merrill, must have been printed after 1881. That Syracuse copy had written inside on the fly leaf in an adult's flowing hand, "Josephine E. Lane, Syracuse, N. Y., Porter School, 10th Ward, Feb. 14th, 1888." This copy apparently belonging to a teacher suggests the use of the Franklin Primer in Syracuse as late as 1888. The copy did not use Leigh print and was called the Webster-Franklin Primer because it used Webster spellings.

It appears likely that the Franklin Primer has dropped into education history's black hole because of its possible ties to "movers and shakers" in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1877. The promoters are unknown who arranged to have the Franklin Primer printed by University Press, Cambridge, in 1877 in normal type when almost every school in Boston was using primers in Leigh type.

The press used on available copies of Hillard's earlier series was not University Press, as it was on the non-Leigh-print Franklin readers, nor did University Press show on almost any other reading materials which I examined, except one with possible ties to the change-agents and one Code 1 earlier series which may possibly not have had change-agent ties.

The one with possible ties was the 1879 *Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book* by Phillip Findlay, published in 1880 by Estes & Lauriat (Charles Francis Adams' publisher on education topics) of Boston, and printed by University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge. It was printed on peculiar, large-size paper and would have met Superintendent Eliot's 1878 demand, referred to elsewhere, for story books for the Boston primary grades, just as the collection of old tales by Henry Cabot Lodge, also printed on peculiar paper, met that "need." Lodge's 1879 book carried the notation that it was prepared for the Boston schools.

The other material showing University Press as the printer was an 1865 edition of the 1860 Code 1 *The Standard First Reader, Part Two, With Spelling and Defining Lessons - Sargent's Standard Series*, by Epes Sargent. A Harvard copy shows it was published in 1865 by John L. Shorey, Boston; J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, W. I. Pooley & Co., New York, and carried the notation "University Press, Cambridge: Printed by Welch, Bigelow and Company." University Press, at that time, was a private press and so obviously might have been available to do such non-university printing, just as it might also have been available for influences from university members. However, University Press did not show, so far as I could see, on any other of the reading materials originating in Boston which I examined until the critical Franklin series appeared.

Whoever the activists were, they had an apparent interest in using sentences for beginners and a distaste for Leigh phonetic print (both of which certainly suggest influence from Professor William James of Harvard). The "Preface" to the Hillard and Campbell Franklin Primer (presumably written in 1873 when the material was copyrighted) shows the preference for sentences for beginners, although the phonics referred to is, of course, "phony phonics."

"The lessons in this Primer have been constructed with especial reference to both the Phonic and the Word modes of teaching to read. They are also adapted to the Alphabetic mode.... The words in the reading-lessons are such as young children commonly use, and of which they know the meaning. The aim has been to form sentences which will interest the youngest learner, and, in each lesson, to have the sentences relate wholly to the picture. In this way the lessons take a more



connected form, and the pictures become a most important aid in showing the meaning of the words and sentences.”

G. S. Hillard who was the senior author on the 1873 Franklin Primer was a highly regarded literary man and anthologist. His very popular first reading series published starting in 1855 which did not use the name “Franklin” was revised in 1864 to become the second series, the “New Series,” under the names of G. S. Hillard and L. J. Campbell. As discussed, it was in 1873, that Hillard and Campbell copyrighted the brand-new The Franklin Primer, part of Hillard’s third series.

To judge from actual surviving texts of the Hillard and Campbell Franklin series described in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, published by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Washington, D. C., 1985, the first book in the Franklin series that was ever printed was the Franklin Fifth Reader. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement has an 1871 copy published by Brewer & Tileston, in Boston, and J. W. Schermerhorn & Co. in New York. Brewer & Tileston, and their predecessors with a slightly different name, who were the successors to the publishers of the 1826 Worcester Primer, had been the publishers for the two earlier series of Hillard readers. However, OERI also possess another copy of the Franklin Fifth Reader under the date of 1871, but this copy was published by Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co. in New York and William Ware & Co. in Boston. Although most of the copies of the Franklin series OERI possess were published by Brewer & Tileston and J. W. Schermerhorn & Co., OERI also have a fourth and an advanced fourth Franklin text published by the Taintor company and the Ware company dated 1873, as well as an advanced fourth dated 1874, and a sixth dated 1874. By 1877, the original publishers of the Franklin series, Brewer & Tileston and J. W. Schermerhorn & Co. had disappeared, and only Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co. and William Ware & Co. are shown, not just for the Hillard and Campbell Franklin series of 1871-1873, but for the 1864 Hillard and Campbell series.

Apparently the seeming conflict in publisher’ names and dates arises from the fact that the books showed the copyright date, not the publishing date. This is confirmed by copies of the Franklin Primer published by Taintor which show a copyright date of 1873 but which the knowledgeable Harvard librarians have clearly dated to 1877 and 1878. The 1876 American Catalogue shows the publishers of all of Hillard’s books as the Taintor group, but that catalogue was not printed until a year or two after 1876. It may very well reflect a change in the publisher’s names which dated to 1877, the date the Harvard librarians gave for the first Taintor copy of the Franklin Primer. That this is so seems to be confirmed further by the fact that the library has an 1876 second Hillard reader of the 1864 series in Leigh print still published by Brewer & Tileston, so Brewer & Tileston were still in business for at least part of 1876. The probability is that the switch in publisher’s names took place in 1877, when the first University Press copies were printed, which credited Taintor as the publisher of the Hillard materials. Such a change might have been possible because the materials were copyrighted, not by Brewer & Tileston, but by the authors themselves.

Copies of the Franklin Primer in the Harvard Library carry the 1873 copyright date, but the name of the publisher is shown as Taintor Brothers, Merrill, & Co. in New York and William Ware and Company (“Successors to Brewer and Tileston”) in Boston. The reference to “successor” proves the copies were printed after early 1876 because, as shown elsewhere, Brewer and Tileston and their associated New York company, J. W. Schermerhorn & Co., were still publishing in 1876. However, The American Catalogue, under the Direction of F. Leyboldt, *Subject Entries of Books in Print and for Sale (Including Reprints and Importations)*, July, 1876, “Compiled by Lynds E. Jones” seems to suggest that the Taintor company and the Ware company had taken over the Franklin series by the date of July, 1876, and Hillard’s other materials, as well. This is because the Catalogue shows no other publishers’ names for these texts as of July, 1876, but Taintor’s and Ware’s. Yet, as mentioned, the Catalogue was a year or two in preparation and might very probably reflect a publisher’s change in name that took place after 1876.

Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co. were also the publishers of The Analytical Series of Readers, by R. Edwards and J. R. Webb, a classic sight-word series. It was still available in 1876 in Leigh or standard print, as many readers were at that time, although Harris's Appleton series which came out in 1878 was not, according to any sources I have seen.

The switch in publishers' names not only in Boston but in New York apparently came immediately before the critical school year for Boston school books of 1877-1878, as Harvard also has an 1876 copy from the earlier Hillard and Campbell series, Leigh's Hillard's Second Reader in Leigh's type, which has on the title page "Boston: Brewer and Tileston, New York: J. W. Schermerhorn & Co. - 1876." Concerning the actual printers of this 1876 earlier Hillard work, a note on the bottom of its third page states, "Electrotyped by Lovejoy & Son."

An 1877 copy of the Franklin Primer (not in Leigh type) in the Harvard library showed that it had been copyrighted in 1873 by G. S. Hillard and L. J. Campbell and that it was printed by University Press: Welch, Bigelow & Co., Cambridge (and published by Taintor Brothers, Merrill, & Co., New York, and William Ware and Company, "Successors to Brewer and Tileston, Boston"). Harvard has another copy showing that it was printed by University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge, and John Wilson & Son were the successors to the printers, Welch, Bigelow & Co. (However, the publishers were the same as on the 1877 copy.) That later copy most probably is an 1878 edition, because in 1878, Taintor Brothers copyrighted an altered "Webster" edition of the Franklin Primer, (using Webster's instead of Worcester's spellings) and the printer of their 1878 revision held by the Harvard library was also shown as University Press: John Wilson and Son, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The obvious question arises: why, in 1877, was University Press used to set up the 1873 Franklin Primer in non-Leigh type when almost all sales in the Boston area were in Leigh type? (Buisson reproduced a non-Leigh type version he obtained at the 1876 Centennial published by Brewer & Tileston. Although Buisson did not name its printer, if it had been University Press, the same question remains.) Why did University Press continue to be used on non-Leigh editions in 1878? Although privately owned, University Press at the time was the press used by Harvard. The University Press was not used on the earlier 1876 text of the earlier Hillard and Campbell primer from Brewer and Tileston in Leigh type, which was mentioned above (which would suggest it had not been used either on the non-Leigh Franklin Primer which Buisson saw in 1876). Nor was University Press apparently used even on a later 1881 purely sight-word text for first grade by L. J. Campbell alone which instead shows only the name of William Ware and Company.

The cover of the 1877 Franklin Primer did mention Leigh versions were available from the publishers, but they must not have been in use in the Boston area after 1876, where Harvard has three non-Leigh copies, (one with Webster spellings) after that date, nor in the Syracuse area, where the public library has a non-Leigh copy (also with Webster orthography) after that date.

It appears obvious that the Franklin Primer printed in ordinary instead of Leigh type by the University Press is the watershed text which divided the success of Leigh in Boston before 1877 from the failure of Leigh in Boston after 1877, and that the change is somehow associated with University Press which set it up, probably in 1877, with the publishers shown as Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., New York, and William Ware and Company, "Successors to Brewer and Tileston, Boston."

As previously discussed, a possible tie existed between some person or persons at Harvard when the radically different "meaning" Worcester beginning reader was introduced in 1826. The same kind of possible tie appeared some fifty years later in 1877 and 1878 when Welch, Bigelow and Co., and then

John Wilson and Son owned the University Press and printed the sight-word texts for beginning readers, *The Franklin Primer* and *The Webster-Franklin Primer*.

To summarize these complex changes, in 1877 University Press: Welch, Bigelow and Co., and in 1878 University Press: John Wilson and Son printed editions of a straight sight-word, non-Leigh-print, “meaning” text, *The Franklin Primer*. In 1878, University Press: John Wilson and Son published a different non-Leigh version with Webster orthography, *The Webster-Franklin Primer*. Those printings by University Press in 1877 and 1878 were for publishers who had taken over Brewer & Tileston, the Boston company which had been publishing both standard print and Leigh-print phonic “sound” versions of the earlier readers by George Hillard and L. J. Campbell as late as 1876 but who had not used University Press on any of those readers which I examined. (F. Buisson reproduced pages from a *Franklin Primer* in normal print which he saw in August or September of 1876 at the Philadelphia Exposition, as described elsewhere, and Buisson named Brewer & Tileston as the publisher of that copy but the printer is unknown. It could, of course, have been University Press, but that would still suggest a possible tie to someone at Harvard, although a far more open one.)

Hillard and Campbell’s earlier primer, *Hillard’s Primer or First Reader*, had been available in Leigh print. It had been published in 1864 in standard print and was available in Leigh print as well by 1866. It was still being printed in Leigh print as late as 1876 by the old publisher, Brewer & Tileston of Boston, which indicates Brewer & Tileston had been distributing Leigh editions for ten years before it apparently suddenly went out of business after 1876, apparently at the exact time that University Press began printing the *Franklin Primer* in non-Leigh type. That Brewer & Tileston went out of business after printing the 1876 book just mentioned is established by the fact that Brewer & Tileston were not listed as Hillard’s and Campbell’s publishers in the *American Catalogue of 1876*, which reported on books for sale in that year.

It is true that the cover of the newer Hillard’s and Campbell’s *Franklin Primer* advertised regular print and Leigh-print versions as available from the newer New York and Boston publishers, along with the 1864 *Hillard’s Primer or First Reader* in Leigh print or regular print. Yet the three copies of the *Franklin Primer* from 1877 and later which survive in the Harvard library and the one in the Syracuse library are not in Leigh print. Although Leigh-print primers had been taking over the American market before 1876, only non-Leigh print primers turned up from Boston and Syracuse after 1876. By contrast, the copies in the Harvard library of the 1866 edition of *Hillard’s and Campbell’s 1864 Hillard’s Primer or First Reader* are in Leigh print, except for a non-Leigh copy printed by the publishers which took over Brewer & Tileston after 1876. Harvard has that non-Leigh-print copy entered under a publishing date of 1878.

It is clear Leigh-print Hillard primers which apparently had been in almost exclusive use in the Boston area by 1876 went out of print in Boston by 1877, at the height of the success of Leigh print in the Boston schools. This is obvious since only Leigh-print Hillard/Campbell copies survive from between 1866 and 1876 in the Harvard library and only non-Leigh print copies of any Hillard/Campbell editions survive after that date. Could there be any clearer evidence of meddling by extremely nasty influence peddlers?

Is it the influence from the circle of Harvard “experts” that Nila Banton Smith was trying to hide when she left about fifty years out of American reading instruction history? That she did so can be demonstrated by arranging her 1932 (1965) bibliographical references in calendar order, instead of the order of the book’s chapters, as she listed them. A rough review of her bibliography (which review is not finalized) shows that for 1848 to 1894, a period of 46 years, she cited only 13 references, two of which were European, two were Webb readers, and one was McGuffey’s. That left a total of only 8 other citations for those 46 years. Yet, for only the following ten years from 1895 to 1905, she gave 20 citations. Specifically, between 1857 and the 1889 reference to Pollard, a period of 32 years, she cited

only THREE American references. Yet in the 32 years preceding 1857 she had cited 25 references and in the very next decade after 1889 cited 10, but, significantly, all but one were after 1894. However, her references between 1845 and 1853 were also scant. In effect, Nila Banton Smith cut the half century from 1845 to 1894 out of American reading instruction history.

Her gutted bibliography obviously had a purpose. It buried the reign of sight-words and “meaning,” their failure, the opposition to them, and the actions of the “experts” associated with Harvard in the 1870’s and again in the early 1890’s to see that sight-words and “meaning” remained in place in American schools. Also, in effect, Nila Banton Smith omitted not only James’ and Cattell’s influences, but G. S. Hall’s and Colonel Parker’s influences. She gave only two dates on Parker. One was on page 243 when she mentioned that 1901 was the date the new Francis W. Parker School opened in Chicago (but Parker died the following year!). The other was in her bibliography, not likely to be checked by a casual reader, when she gave 1894 as the date for Parker’s book, *Talks on Pedagogics*. To someone unfamiliar with reading instruction history, that pushed Parker’s influence beyond the date of 1894 and into the twentieth century, when the fact is that he died in 1902. Smith wrote her “history” at Columbia Teachers College, when Thorndike, William James’ close friend and ex-student, was still teaching there, and when William James’ close friend, James McKeen Cattell, was still a neighbor and close friend of Thorndike.

Superintendent Philbrick of the Boston schools was fired as of March 1, 1878, and the Leigh phonic texts Philbrick had introduced in the Boston schools had to be dropped in September, 1878 because of the adoption of a new curriculum which implicitly outlawed the teaching of letter sounds at beginning first grade. The Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston - 1878 includes the September 2, 1878, report of the new Superintendent of Schools, Samuel Eliot, who replaced Philbrick. Eliot said, on page 12:

“The course of study in the Grammar and Primary Schools, laid out by the Board of Supervisors, was adopted by the School Committee at the close of the last school year. It now goes into operation.”

Therefore, the 1877 printing date for the non-Leigh Franklin primer for first grades by the company which replaced Brewer & Tileston, at the time when practically all Boston first grades were still using Leigh material, would indicate someone was aware of an impending need which would arise by September, 1878, for large numbers of first grade books NOT in Leigh print to replace those in Leigh print. The fact that University Press: Cambridge, was the printer for those materials which seemed to serve little purpose in the Boston area in 1877 when they were printed suggests the person with that peculiar foresight might well have been associated with Harvard, as the 1826 promoter of the Worcester book, the predecessor to the Hillard books, may have been fifty years earlier.

Concerning the 1888 Illustrated Primer by Sarah Fuller of the Boston School for the Deaf Which Had Been Founded by Philbrick, Which Deaf-Mute Primer Was Recommended by E. B. Huey in 1908

As mentioned, Samuel Eliot replaced the remarkable Philbrick as Boston Schools Superintendent when Philbrick was fired. In the 1878 Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston, the new Superintendent Samuel Eliot stated on page 12 of the “Superintendent’s Report:”

“...Spelling-books, for instance, block the way they profess to open. Children should learn to spell partly from their reading-books, partly from the other books they use, and partly from oral and written exercises.... The work is to a large extent unconsciously done....”

Eliot thereby announced that he was the same kind of “new broom” as Colonel Parker in Quincy (where a later superintendent announced that throwing out the spelling book in Quincy after 1875 had been a failure). By contrast to Eliot, Philbrick had said (page 151 of the “Superintendent’s Report” portion of the 1871 Boston schools report):

“The spelling-book is the symbol of popular education, and justly so, for it is the first word-book....”

Philbrick was acknowledging with the description, “the first word-book,” that in 1871 the speller came after the primer.

“No school-book in these latter days has fared so hard as the dear old spelling-book.... But the great antagonist of the speller has been the modern educational maxim, ‘Ideas before words,’... But the spelling-book is probably destined to a great longevity....”

The spoiling of beginning reading instruction for hearing children after Eliot took over and threw out Leigh phonics, as well as throwing out the speller at upper grades, was apparently not enough for the change agents in their war against “sound” and in favor of “meaning.” Philbrick had installed Bell’s phonics for deaf children in the precedent-setting and extraordinarily successful municipal school for the deaf which Philbrick had founded. For obscure reasons, that school was named, apparently after Philbrick was fired, the Horace Mann School for the Deaf. It should more properly have been named the Philbrick School for the Deaf. A book which came out some years later revealed the meddling after Eliot had replaced Philbrick had affected the deaf children, too, and that some school personnel who had served under Philbrick changed their ways under Eliot. Apparently the maxim we know worked then, too: if you want to get along, you have to go along.

Eliot wrote a preface for a book published by Sarah Fuller, Principal of the Horace Mann School for the Deaf, Boston, who had worked there when Philbrick was Superintendent. Her book was entitled, *An Illustrated Primer*, copyrighted in 1888. It was, significantly, recommended for hearing children by Edmund Burke Huey in his 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. It can be taken as another maxim that any reading book praised by Huey had to have something very wrong with it. The copy of *An Illustrated Primer* which I saw was published in 1893 by D. C. Heath & Co., who were also publishing G. Stanley Hall’s text on the teaching of reading and works by other “scientists” of the period. This suggests a tie between the Boston school administration and those wonderful “scientific” people whose motto might well have been, “Science Is a Sacred Cow,” the title of a fine book by a true scientist some years ago. It might truly be said that in Jacques Barzun’s *House of Intellect*, “Science” belongs only in the kitchen and not the parlor. Eliot’s preface read in part:

“This primer is intended to help little children who are deaf, in their earliest language lessons. They are supposed to have learned to speak and to associate the words they utter with the objects represented in words. Here, in this volume, they find the printed forms of the words which they speak, and of the sentences which they have been taught gradually to construct. As they master the words and sentences of the primer, they gain the power to learn other words containing similar vowel and consonant elements, so that their vocabulary may easily grow beyond the limits of this little volume. In the same way, these sentences lead to the construction of others, and prepare the child for more advanced lessons in language.”

Note the analytic comparison phonics from memorized whole, meaning-bearing sight words, which the children were expected to use to work out unknown words. That was quite a contrast to Alexander Melville Bell’s synthetic phonics.

“The illustrations are simple but numerous, in order to facilitate the all-important association of words and phrases with the objects for which they stand.

“It need not be said that deaf children, especially the little ones, meet many difficulties unknown to those who hear. Because they do so, they need a different primer from any in use among the hearing, and it is out of the actual necessities encountered in teaching the deaf, and the actual means by which they have been met in the Horace Mann School, that this primer has grown.

“The hope is entertained that teachers of the deaf in other schools will find their labors assisted by the methods that have proved helpful in the school where they originated.

“Nor should our desire that this book may be serviceable confine itself to the teaching of the deaf. Hearing children, it is hoped, may be helped by it in their first lessons whenever the common primer may be found unsuited to them. Like all other text-books of any real value, its purpose is comprehensive.

“I have much pleasure in writing this preface at Miss Fuller’s request. Samuel Eliot, July 1888”

The table of contents of the book referred to the vowels being taught, but it revealed absolutely no discernible phonic pattern, though it may have matched the articulation lessons for the deaf children. The effect of the book, however, despite its puzzling phonic arrangement, tended strongly towards sight-reading. It was bluntly advertised on the back of an 1893 edition, which listed “Reading” books for D. C. Heath, with the statement, “This book presents the ‘Word Method’ in an attractive form for little children.” “Fuller’s Phonic Drill Charts” were also advertised, with the statement, “These charts have been prepared for the purpose of exercising pupils in making the elementary sounds and in combining these to form syllables and words.” They were meant to teach speech, and had nothing to do with teaching children how to decode print. The Horace Mann School for the Deaf obviously was the successor to Philbrick’s school. Yet, under Philbrick’s successor, Samuel Eliot, it was moving rapidly away from “sound” and towards “meaning.”

### Town and Holbrook’s Progressive Series

The fact that the first of the three Hillard series (the Franklin series being the last) had been enormously successful is shown by a September 17, 1862, pamphlet in the Harvard library entitled, *Truth Vindicated: A Correction of Sundry Falsehoods and Misrepresentations in a Circular Signed by Oliver Ellsworth*” (Educ 2199.01 bx), by Brewer & Tileston (the obvious successors to Hickling, Swan & Brewer), and Brewer & Tileston’s pamphlet of January 19, 1863, *To the Readers of the “Maine Teacher,”* (Educ 2199.01 bx), in response to Ellsworth’s answer, which is not available. Ellsworth’s sales were obviously hurting from the Hillard competition, and, among other charges, he had (apparently very unfairly, if the Brewer & Tileston circular can be believed) claimed that some of the selections were unsuitable for young children. Ellsworth also claimed that Brewer & Tileston had tried to influence legislation in Maine that was intended to forbid changes in textbooks more frequently than every five years, which legislation had been passed elsewhere.

Brewer & Tileston denied all charges, convincingly at least in their brochure, and were considering a libel suit. Interestingly, Brewer & Tileston paralleled in their recourse to the courts the actions of their predecessors against the McGuffey readers, as discussed later. However, that legislatures should have concerned themselves with forbidding textbook changes less than every five years demonstrates how competitive the textbook market was by the 1860’s.

In 1857, Oliver Ellsworth's company, Bazin and Ellsworth of Boston, had published the Progressive Series by Salem Town (the author of an earlier series) and Nelson M. Holbrook. The Descriptive Catalogue of Town and Holbrook's Progressive Series of Text-books, 1860 (Harvard Educ 2199.02 bx) said the series used the "orthography of Webster" which was still controversial, some still preferring Worcester's. The comment on page 7 said:

"We are aware that a few still oppose the Webster Orthography, but these individuals are principally confined to Boston and Cambridge."

The series certainly had some impressive authors, even though Salem Town was probably functioning only as a well-known old authority. Concerning other authors:

"Thomas Bulfinch, of Boston, author of the 'Age of Fable,' a popular treatise on Mythology, has been engaged upon three of the books of this series...."

"D. B. Tower, author of Tower's Series of Readers... has also been engaged in the compilation of two important books of this Series, the PRIMER and the SPEAKER" (page 9).

Tower had introduced phonics (for elocution, not decoding) into first grade in his own series. Yet the copy of The Progressive Pictorial Primer which I have seen was not a phonic primer. It was copyrighted in 1857 and printed in 1862. Though missing all pages up to 15, it is evident from what remained that it was in no sense a phonic primer, although a few words which rhymed were included in the short word lists that followed paragraphs. Neither was Hillard's a phonic series. Though Hillard touched on elocution in his own series, neither was any real phonics to be found in his First Primary Reader, any more than it had been found in Worcester's reader which had been its immediate predecessor.

The advertisement on the back cover of Town and Holbrook's The Progressive Speller (1860) read:

"This popular series of Text-Books has already been wholly or partially introduced into a majority of the schools in New England, and also into the schools in many of the cities and large towns in the Middle, Western, and Southern States. It was the ONLY series of Readers ADOPTED by the New Hampshire Board of Education, in March, 1857; also the ONLY series ADOPTED by the Vermont Board of Education in December, 1958...."

The series was still being published in 1867, despite the conflict with Hillard's, as an 1867 revised copy of The Progressive First Reader is in the Harvard library. It was apparently out of print by 1876 as it is not listed in the 1876 Leypoldt's American Catalogue. The series was certainly popular when it came out. In the 1860 pamphlet, the publishers stated:

"New England towns alone have furnished us with over one thousand testimonials, to which we invite the attention of the public. These recommendations can be seen in bound volumes at our office."

By the publication of their new Hillard series starting in 1855, the former publishers of the Worcester series were most likely trying to compete with the publishers of Salem Town's 1844-1847 popular series, and the new Progressive Series by Salem Town and Nelson M. Holbrook which started to come out in 1856. Both the new Progressive series and the Hillard series reached the market about the same time, but in pieces. In the nineteenth century, such series were not issued as a finished whole, but in such pieces, as each book became available. As mentioned, the predecessor to the Progressive Series by Town and Holbrook had been Salem Town's older series, and it continued in print while the new series was being

issued. Holbrook had previously written an arithmetic for Town's publishers (although the names of the publishers were constantly changing and reforming, even more so with Town's publishers than with the publishers of McGuffey's.)

The new Hillard series was also fighting for the Cleveland market. The brochure on the Hillard readers quoted many testimonials from Ohio, saying the Hillard books had displaced other series. One specifically mentioned that the Hillard books had displaced McGuffey's. It is obvious this Cleveland business was the result of work by Bragg after 1858, before he switched sides in the textbook war and joined McGuffey's, as discussed elsewhere. (Concerning the "heat" of these textbook wars, an amusing narrative from the School Bulletin is in Appendix A..)

#### Concerning the 1883 Royce Readers, and Their Use in California, St. Louis, and Indiana

In 1883, at least briefly, the public schools in St. Louis, Missouri, may have used or have been unsuccessfully pressured to use a series of reading books with ties to the change-agents. That series was called the Standard Education Series and it was published in St. Louis.

The book, *The Letters of Josiah Royce*, "Edited with an Introduction by John Clendenning," The University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1970, contains two letters (pages 470-472) written by Josiah Royce (1855-1916) which have a bearing on that 1883 series of readers. The series was one of three almost identical series that were published in simultaneous but separate editions. One was published in California as the A. L. Bancroft Series, one was published in Indiana as The Indiana State Series, and the third was published in St. Louis, Missouri, as the Standard Education Series.

The first of those two letters by Royce (although it does not specifically mention the readers) is dated February 20, 1904, and it is addressed to James McKeen Cattell. Cattell at that time was both a publisher and a professor at Columbia University. Royce wrote that, in answer to a request from Cattell a few weeks earlier, Royce had the Harvard Library prepare, at Royce's own expense, a bibliography of Royce's writings, as least as far as was possible. However, Royce said that quite a few of the articles he had written as a young man were not included. Royce added that he could not understand why a bibliography of his articles should be of any interest to Cattell or to any of Cattell's associates.

However, Clendenning thought that he had found an explanation for the request that Cattell had made about January, 1904, which request had so puzzled Royce. Clendenning wrote:

"Royce was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1906. The bibliography was evidently used by Cattell in presenting Royce's nomination."

The two-year lag between Cattell's request and Royce's election does seem unusually long, if Cattell's circa January, 1904, request really did concern Royce's election some time in 1906.

The second letter was written only four days later, on February 24, 1904, to George Brett Platt (1858-1936), president of Macmillan Company, and Royce's publisher, in answer to a question that Platt had asked Royce. The timing suggests that Platt's question had been sparked by the list of Royce's writings that Royce had sent to Cattell, particularly since Platt's company, Macmillan, published materials from Columbia, where Cattell was located. Royce wrote Platt that he intended very soon to announce publicly the background concerning his own association with The Indiana State Series of school readers. Royce had been surprised to learn that the current Indiana series, in its 1903 revision, showed Royce's name on the title page. Royce assured Platt that he presently had no connection with those



readers. However, Royce said the readers were a revision of a series originally prepared in California during the early 1880's as the A. L. Bancroft's series, on which Royce and two others had worked.

Royce said that Bancroft, in the early 1880's, wanted to prepare a reading series for use only locally. At the time, Royce was a young English Composition instructor in the University of California, and he was asked, with two others, to prepare the readers. Royce was paid for his work when it was done, and, as far as he knew, that ended the matter. Royce had heard that Bancroft had passed the copyright on the reading series to others, but until recently Royce did not know who had the copyright or even that Royce's own name was still being used on the materials. Royce did not consider the work he had done on the readers in the early 1880's to be any importance, and he thought it very inappropriate that his name should appear on a 1903 revision. Royce told Platt that he was free to repeat the contents of his letter to anyone who had any interest in textbooks, but that he felt it was wrong to have his name on the current, revised series.

Clendenning's footnote reads:

“Bancroft's First (-Fifth) Reader, ed. Charles H. Allen, John Swett, and Josiah Royce (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft (1884). See Frank M. Oppenheim, S. J., 'A Critical Annotated Bibliography of the Published Works of Josiah Royce,' *Modern Schoolman* 41 (1964): 345, where this item is listed with the following note: 'These readers were adopted at least by the Standard Education Series, St. Louis, and the Indiana State Series, and underwent repeated revisions. Royce's contribution to the first edition remains to be clarified as does his connection with subsequent editions of these readers.'”

Clendenning's 1970 publication of the above two letters certainly clarifies “Royce's contribution” which was apparently minor in the 1883 edition and non-existent in its revisions, but it does raise other questions.

An earlier series, *The Pacific Coast Readers* of A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco, in 1873, is listed in *Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900*, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C.: 1985, in several places, under the authors' names, Anne Wilson Paterson and S. L. Simpson. However, Bancroft also had a slightly later *Pacific Coast Series, Revised Edition*. *Leypoldt's American Catalogue of books in print in 1876* listed an 1875 edition of the *Pacific Coast Readers* of Bancroft in six volumes.

Therefore, Royce and two others about 1880 and 1881 were preparing what was at least the third edition of a Bancroft series. The preparation of such a new edition every few years was normal for reading series at that time (and still is). What is interesting is that Royce was obviously misled into thinking that the new series on which he was working would also be only for local use, as the earlier two series apparently had been, when the fact is that it was immediately published in three editions in three widely separated areas. That is apparent proof that the new edition, from its very beginning, was intended to be far more than a local edition.

That the earlier two series were only used in California is suggested by the fact that they were printed only in California, unlike the edition on which Royce worked. On page 75 of *Early American Textbooks...* appear the entries for the texts in the OERI library which were prepared by “Allen, Chas. H., John Swett, and Josiah Royce.” In contrast to the scanty entries for the two earlier Bancroft series, many copies were listed of the series that Royce said they finished about 1882, the earliest of which were published in 1883. However, these editions were published in 1883 not only in California but also in Indiana and Missouri. The intent, therefore, from the beginning of the 1880's revision, had obviously

been to provide state editions not just for California but for Indiana and Missouri, but that intent had not even been announced to at least one of the authors of the revised readers, Royce!

Bancroft's Second Reader and Third Reader appear in Early American Textbooks with publication dates of 1883. Indiana State Series, First Reader, published by Indiana School Book Co., Indianapolis, appears with publication dates of 1883 and 1894, as well as a revision "by Annie Klingensmith" of 1894. The Indiana Second Reader carries a publication date of 1889, their Third Reader of 1889 and 1895, their Fourth Reader of 1883, and their Fifth Reader of 1889. Early American Textbooks shows that the Standard School Book Co. of St. Louis published Standard Educational Series. Standard Second Reader, in 1883, Standard Third Reader in 1883, Standard Fourth Reader in 1883, and Standard Fifth Reader in 1883.

It should be emphasized that these are chance, surviving copies, but the recurring dates strongly indicate a publishing "push" in 1883 to get these materials into government schools in three widely separated states: California, Indiana, and Missouri. Considering that all the surviving copies from Missouri are dated 1883, the push there may have been intense, but largely unsuccessful, as appears to have been the case in California. It is possible, however, that the series was reprinted or revised by the state of California under another title, as the Harvard library has an 1886 copy of the California State Series of School Text-Books, First Reader, "Printed at the State Printing Office, Sacramento, California." The Indiana copies, by contrast, appeared over a period of many years and so were in use over many years. Yet, obviously, some net of influence must have existed prior to 1883 or this simultaneous distribution of what were apparently intended to be "official" state texts in 1883 could not have occurred. It is in this distribution net that the change-agents may be looked for.

Royce's sincerity need not be doubted. As a young man, he was given an assignment, for which he was paid, and about which he never thought again until someone called his attention to the use of his name on a 1903 revision, about which use he had then been taking advice from some friends. (William James was probably his closest friend.) Who called Royce's attention to the continued use of his name? Even the President of Macmillan publishing, obviously shortly after Royce's attention was called, asked Royce about the reading books, so someone must have told the Macmillan president. (Macmillan was the publisher of some Columbia University materials, such as Reeder's 1900 history.)

It is unlikely that the bibliography that the Harvard library prepared for Royce and that Royce sent to Cattell would have contained the name of the 1883 Bancroft edition, since Royce said that someone had called his attention to the use of his name, not that he found it on the bibliography he paid the Harvard library to prepare. If the bibliography did not include the Bancroft readers, then someone, someplace, must have spent some time reading the title pages on school readers and have stumbled across Royce's name. Royce's name must have been familiar to that person and eventually resulted in Royce's attention being called to the use of Royce's name. Royce wanted the facts to be made clear to anyone interested in textbooks, and who might that have been? The request for Royce's complete bibliography had originated with Cattell, so it is very likely that it was Cattell, himself, who found that Royce's name was still being used. It may have been that which sparked Cattell's request to Royce for a complete bibliography of Royce's works. Royce's letter to Cattell certainly indicates that Royce had been nonplused by Cattell's request for such a bibliography.

However, the fact that the reading series finished about 1882 was obviously meant to be used at least by 1883 in three states simultaneously, apparently as state-adopted texts and not texts competing on the open market, certainly suggests the existence of a net of influence before 1883. That was before Cattell came on the scene and first started to wield his influence in the 1890's. It is because of Royce's apparently unknowing relationship to this early net of influence that Royce's surviving letters are of interest. Royce's letters showed that he had used the influence of powerful people to further his career.

Apparently, it never occurred to Royce that such “influence” might use him, but the following summary of his early letters certainly seems to suggest that was what happened.

John Clendenning edited *The Letters of Josiah Royce*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970. After his excellent “Introduction,” which was a brief biography of Royce, Clendenning divided his collection of Royce letters into five sections, the first of which, Part I, concerned the period from 1875 to 1882, when Royce would have been from nineteen to twenty-six years of age. It was about 1880 or 1881 that Royce was asked to become one of the editors on the revised Bancroft series. The list of letters shown below with the dates and names of those to whom Royce wrote contains almost all the surviving letters for the period leading up to the completion of that reading series about 1882, which was published in 1883. In an appendix, Clendenning listed other letters in existence which he had not reproduced, but they are very few for the period 1875-1882. Therefore, the summary below concerns almost all of the surviving Royce letters for that period.

Concerning the names shown in the following summary, Daniel Coit Gilman was the president of Johns Hopkins University, having come there from the University of California where he had been president and where Royce had been a student under him. Gilman promoted Royce’s career and raised money to send him to Germany for a year’s study, after which Royce was given a two-year fellowship at Johns Hopkins under Gilman. Gilman had been a Yale graduate whose biography and influence are discussed in *America’s Secret Establishment*, by Anthony C. Sutton, Liberty House Press, Billings, Montana, 1986. William James of Harvard had given lectures in 1878 at Johns Hopkins while Royce was a fellow there, and their sincere friendship dated from that period, although Royce was some thirteen years younger than James. As discussed earlier, Albert Torrey Harris, a Hegelian and a native of Connecticut, had become Superintendent of the St. Louis schools, and was also the editor of *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. Lanman had been a fellow at Johns Hopkins at the same time as Royce, and was his very close personal friend. The Coale family of Baltimore had also become Royce’s close friends.

A summary of Royce’s early letters, involving all of these names, follows:

To Daniel Coit Gilman, June 14, 1875

Acknowledges grant of funds arranged from sponsors by Gilman so that Royce could spend a year studying in Germany, under Lotze, Wundt and others.

To Daniel Coit Gilman; July 11, 1875

Announces his sailing to Hamburg on the following Thursday, and going on to Heidelberg from there.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, December 11, 1875

From Leipzig, where he said he had almost no money left.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, February 2, 1876

From Leipzig. He thanked Gilman for sending funds, and said he hoped to repay it all within a few years.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, July 17, 1876

From Gottingen, concerning returning to Baltimore by September.

To William Torrey Harris, January 4, 1878

On Gilman’s advice, Royce sent him a manuscript for possible use in Harris’s *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*.

To Charles Rockwell Lanman, June 6, 1878

To Charles Rockwell Lanman, June 11, 1878

A personal friend, who lent him some money. He said he did not want to borrow from William James, if it could be helped, although James was kind.

To William James, June 11, 1878

Declined James' offer to visit him. Congratulates him on forthcoming marriage.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, July 1, 1878

Asked his advice about accepting a job offer from the University of California.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, July 16, 1878

Royce wrote that he had accepted the offer of Dr. Stebbins of the University of California. He said that he wanted to travel through St. Louis on his way to California, and to meet Harris. He asked Gilman to give him a letter of introduction to Harris, and thanked him for Gilman's offer of letters to New Haven. Royce said that he had already visited there, along with Dr. Lanman, and had been privileged to see President Porter of Yale briefly.

To William James, July 16, 1878

Royce said that, after asking Gilman's advice, he had decided to accept the job at the University of California. He said that they would probably let him teach some philosophy, if it were not atheistic in front of Freshman classes.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, August 11, 1878

Concerned in part the future payment of his debt to Johns Hopkins University.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, September 16, 1878

Reported on his new job at the University of California. Thanked him for the introduction to Harris whom he had met in St. Louis.

To George Buchanan Coale, September 16, 1878

To Daniel Coit Gilman, November 27, 1878

Reported that he felt intellectually isolated in California.

To William James, January 14, 1879

Royce complained that there was no philosophy to be found in California. He said that from the Golden Gate to the top of the Sierra mountains there were not enough brains to form even one respectable thought. Royce also said that Harris wanted him to compose a short review.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, January 26, 1879

Royce wrote that Professor Sill gave him some time in his Junior literature class so that Royce could present to the Juniors a revision of the Romantic School course that Royce gave at Baltimore.

To Charles Rockwell Lanman, January 26, 1879

To Daniel Coit Gilman, March 26, 1879

Royce wrote that he was presently heavily at work on his proposed Romantic School Literature course. He thanked Gilman for a copy of the proposed program of the Summer School of Philosophy at Concord.

To Charles Rockwell Lanman, May 25, 1879

To William James, January 8, 1880

Royce wrote that, since it was useless to try to find a market for philosophy in California, he was thinking longingly of his friends in the East who were so interested in metaphysics.

To William James, June 7, 1880

Philosophical discussion: Shadworth Hodgson, consciousness, and “time-stream,” conceivably an influence on James’ “stream of consciousness” ideas.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, September 5, 1880

Royce said that William James, while in England in the summer, told Shadworth Hodgson of some comments Royce had written to James on some obscure items in the *Philosophy of Reflection*, which book was apparently written by Hodgson. Royce said that, as a result, Hodgson had sent Royce a nice letter.

To William James, September 19, 1880

Philosophical discussion. Announces marriage plans.

To George Buchanan Coale, September 23, 1880

To Charles Rockwell Lanman, January 3, 1881

To William James, April 3, 1881

Reports his sending his application to Harvard.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, April 3, 1881

Reports that James wrote Royce of an opening at Harvard and that James had promised to support Royce’s application. Royce asked Gilman to write a letter of recommendation to Harvard to support Royce’s application for that Harvard job.

To William Torrey Harris, August 23, 1881

Concerns the possible publishing of one of his essays.

To William James, August 28, 1881

Chatty. Royce wrote that a wealthy Californian had endowed a chair for ‘Moral and Intellectual Philosophy and Civil Polity.’ Royce doubted that he would be considered but that some old Methodist minister would be more acceptable than someone under forty and someone who might be suspected of heterodoxy. The candidate would have to satisfy the active orthodox enemies of State Universities. Royce also said that he hoped that someone would summarize Lotze’s work for Americans, and wondered if Hall might do so.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, August 28, 1881

Royce thanked Gilman for writing Harvard about his job application, although nothing had come of his application. Royce did think that his prospects in general had been improved by the kind letters from friends.

As Clendenning showed, Royce's English-born parents had both been devout, his mother a Baptist. But, like John Dewey, whose own mother was devout, and G. Stanley Hall, who was himself a conservative Protestant until his trip to Germany, Royce lost his faith by trying to absorb the intellectually indigestible philosophies that were coming into America largely from Germany.

The roots of these lay in the mad statement of Rene Descartes in France in the seventeenth century, "I think, therefore I am." Descartes had used the fact of his own thought to prove his own existence, even though, as has long been pointed out, it is logically evident his existence had to precede its thought just as the subject, "I" in English precedes the English predicate, "think." By making his own thought the proof of reality, Descartes in effect denied the existence of objective truth. The grammatical structure of Descartes' Latin statement, "Cogito, ergo sum," lacked the clarity of English grammatical structure, "I think, therefore I am," and came to be considered by most philosophers to be bedrock "truth." With the acceptance of that statement, "truth" became not objective, but subjective.

Philosophy has progressed in a dream - or nightmare - state ever since. Royce's pathetic confusions showed up in the following letter:

To George Buchanan Coale, December 5, 1881

Royce wrote that he remembered how his heart had seemed to fail when he rejected his own creed, and said that he therefore came to believe, for instance, that he must accept the theory of evolution as truth. For some reason, Royce thought that accepting the theory of evolution had to result in his also giving up his belief in immortality.

To William James, December 28, 1881

Refers to his having spent the summer at Cambridge, to philosophical articles he had written, and ends with a convoluted discussion of reality as subjective, not objective.

To William James, January 19, 1882

Thanks James for his offer to write to one of the trustees of the University of California about him. Ends with more philosophical discussion.

To William James, February 1, 1882

More philosophy.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, February 1, 1882

Royce asked Gilman if Gilman had recovered his health. Royce said he was just as anxious as before to get a good job in the East. He said Gilman's friends in California were inquiring after Gilman.

To William James, May 2, 1882

Concerning Royce's acting as replacement for James at Harvard while James was to be on a leave of absence for a year. Royce said that he had telegraphed his acceptance the night before, and was looking forward to official confirmation. Royce said that a Cambridge egg (obviously the temporary job at Harvard, which would be only during the sabbatical leave of James, and which had no offer of a firm job at the end of that year) would be more valuable than a whole collection of chickens in California (obviously, his future prospects in the California job).

To William Thomas Reid, June 2, 1882

Tendered his resignation as Instructor in the English Language and Literature because he said he had accepted a year's appointment in the East.

To Daniel Coit Gilman, July 12, 1882

Royce wrote Gilman that he had finally obtained an Instructor's rank at Harvard to fill in for James for a year, although the job was only temporary and he had no promise of a future job there.

To Charles Rockwell Lanman, August 14, 1882

To William James, October 31, 1882

Reports on progress of his work at Harvard.

As the letters confirm, after his two-year fellowship at Johns Hopkins where Gilman was President, Royce was unable to get a position in the East, so went in 1878 to the University of California to work under Edward Rowland Sill, teaching elementary courses in composition and literature. Until his close friend, William James, personally arranged for Royce to act as his replacement in 1882, for four years Royce found it impossible to find the employment he yearned for in the East, despite Gilman's "influence."

Yet what Royce did not see was the correspondence between Gilman and Sill at the University of California, where Royce was serving so unwillingly and so unhappily. Clendenning recorded for 1878 (page 19):

"On September 4, Sill wrote to Gilman with the air of a man who had just purchased a product through a mailorder catalog: 'Royce has been duly recd, & found to answer the description.'"

Royce thought he had been using influence, and he desperately did not want to go back to California. Yet, to Gilman, Royce had been just a chess-piece, so to California Royce went and in California Royce stayed for four long and miserable (to Royce) years, until someone other than Gilman finally found a position for Royce in the East.

Why would Gilman have gone to such trouble to train someone like Royce and then to install him in the University of California, obviously ignoring Royce's intense desire to work in the East? By Royce's admission, old-fashioned Methodist ministers were considerably more welcome there in 1878 than the quasi-atheistic Royce. But that, apparently, was just the point. Royce had been turned into a post-Christian, most probably by the combination of his training under Gilman, by his training in Germany, and by his training at Johns Hopkins University.

As Orestes Brownson pointed out, as referred to previously, one of the chief aims of the change agents in 1829 and 1830 had been to remove the influence of Christianity from the schools. Brownson indicated at the time he wrote his autobiography years later that he felt such change agents as he himself had been were probably still operating, and he drew attention to the changed content of school materials. Gilman was possibly such a change-agent as Brownson had been, and, if so, Royce would have provided a convenient post-Christian tool for whatever Gilman's purposes were at the time. Of most importance, as a professor, Royce had become an unwitting anti-Christian and anti-Jewish influence on college students, in what Royce found to be at that time a philosophically conservative California.

Over the years, Royce ground out volumes of philosophy on semi-religious topics, but it was dreadful and loquacious pantheistic stuff, in the tradition of "Let the Force be with you." However, it is also conceivable that Royce's altered kind of thinking, as a result of his "education," showed up not only in his philosophical writings and in his college lectures but in his choice of reading selections for the new

Bancroft series. If the last were true, that would have been in sharp contrast to the kind of traditional and often religious selections in older reading textbook series like McGuffey's.

Obscure philosophical writings by "intellectuals" such as Royce have been around for a very, very long time, to judge from comments in *The Catholic World Report*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, California, January, 1992, pages 32-33. An article quoting from the writings of St. Irenaeus of Lyons (c.120-c.202) was headed:

"The great aim of St. Irenaeus was to refute the adherents of Gnosticism, who flourished in the 100's...."

An insert gave St. Irenaeus' reaction to the obscure ideas which were coming from the Gnostics, demonstrating that such fuzzy obscurity as Royce's is anything but new:

"The teachings Irenaeus fought are extremely difficult for modern readers to understand. The language is opaque, the doctrine like an onion with layers and layers of peels. Such terms as 'Dyad,' 'Tetrad,' 'Ogdoad' abound, each used to refer to one or another of the divine or semi-divine realities at the center of the cosmic drama. Irenaeus is often given to sarcasm in his description of these teachings, on one occasion renaming the Gnostic divinities 'Utter-Emptiness,' 'Gourd,' 'Cucumber,' and 'Melon.'"

To return to the Bancroft series: Sill was head of the Literature department at the University of California. Someone asked three members of that department to write a reading series. That someone very probably was their superior, Sill. Upon its completion, the series was promoted immediately in three states, California, Missouri and Indiana. It is unlikely that Sill was an employee or part owner of the publisher, Bancroft, and equally unlikely that either Sill or Bancroft would have been able to arrange such an immediate and wide distribution.

Concerning Bancroft's undoubtedly limited influence, the 1876 American Catalogue showed that in 1867 Bancroft had published an edition of *Common School Reading* by J. Swett for \$1.50, simultaneously with A. S. Barnes of New York who published it for a price of \$1.25. With Josiah Royce and C. H. Allen, J. Swett later was an editor on the Bancroft 1883 readers. Whether Swett was at the University of California in 1867 as in 1883 is unknown, but the publishing arrangement shown on the 1867 book listed in the 1876 American Catalogue suggests that Bancroft was only acting as a West Coast distributor for Barnes on that text, and not as its principal publisher, since Bancroft's name was listed after Barnes in the 1876 American Catalogue. Yet Bancroft clearly was the principal publisher on the 1883 series.

Bancroft had apparently published its previous two reading-textbook series of 1873 and 1875 largely for the local market and so presumably lacked the necessary contacts for nation-wide distribution. However, it is highly likely that Gilman, with whom Sill obviously had a close relationship, and who had been Sill's superior at the University of California before Gilman went to Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, could have arranged for a wide distribution through his nation-wide contacts such as Harris in St. Louis.

Since the Indiana series, described later, was Code 1 to Code 3 material at its beginning, then the almost identical California and Missouri materials must also have been Code 1 to Code 3, or a "meaning" approach, at their beginnings. Harris had left St. Louis just before the academic year 1880-1881. It is a matter of record, as discussed elsewhere, that St. Louis continued using Leigh print after 1880. That meant that St. Louis could not have been using Harris's 1878 Appleton readers at first grade, since the American Catalogues show no Leigh-print edition for the Appleton readers. Therefore, Harris's 1878



Appleton readers with their “meaning” approach at first grade had not succeeded in displacing “sound”-approach Leigh print at first-grade in St. Louis after 1880.

Yet Royce’s series, which he said was finished in 1882, and which was published in 1883, must have been begun just about the time that Harris left (was fired from?) his job as Superintendent of Schools in St. Louis in 1880. Published in 1883 as a St. Louis series (as well as an Indiana and California series), and using a “meaning” approach at the beginning levels, those Bancroft materials which Royce helped to write were possibly planned as a second attempt (after Harris’s Appleton 1878 series had obviously been rejected) to displace “sound”-approach Leigh print in St. Louis.

The records show that St. Louis continued to use Leigh print after 1883, so that attempt (if there had been such a deliberate attempt) failed. However, it certainly would have been a strong attempt since so many 1883 copies of the St. Louis series survived to find their way into the publication, *Early American Textbooks*. The listings in *Early American Textbooks* also suggests that such a St. Louis attempt (if it did exist) must not just have failed, but must have failed resoundingly, since not even a single copy of the St. Louis series with a publishing date after 1883 survived to find its way into the listings.

Yet the size and efficiency of the net of influence on the Bancroft series in 1883 (involving California, Indiana and St. Louis) is certainly dwarfed by a comparison to the size and efficiency of the later 1930 nationwide net of influence on the William Scott Gray readers, which resulted in the total adoption of the deaf-mute reading method in American schools and the plunging of a once-literate America into a sea of functional illiteracy.

Unlike the apparently unsuccessful St. Louis version of the 1883 Bancroft series on which Royce worked, the Indiana version of the Bancroft series was very successful. Concerning that success, the *Indiana School Journal* in 1890 printed this advertisement from the Indiana School Book Co. of Indianapolis:

“To the School Officers of Indiana:

“The Several Complete Series of Readers, Geographies, and Arithmetics published by this company were adopted on July 10, 1889, by the State Board of Education for exclusive use in the common schools of Indiana for the next five years. This action was taken under the law of March 2d, 1889. The best evidence of the merits and value of these books is afforded by the resolutions of the Board of Education, taken from the official record....[quoted at length in the advertisement] The above resolutions were adopted by a practically unanimous vote....”

Listed as a member of that disgraceful board approving government textbook control was David S. Jordan, “President of Indiana University.” The reading series being mandated for use in all Indiana schools was the same California one of 1883 on which young Josiah Royce had worked, and which had been promoted, apparently unsuccessfully, in St. Louis in 1883. Possible ties to Gilman at Johns Hopkins have been discussed concerning both the initial writing of that series, which was done in part by Gilman’s protege, Royce, and concerning the subsequent unsuccessful promotion of that series in St. Louis as a substitute for Leigh print. As the above makes clear, that reading series which showed signs of change-agent activity in its preparation and in its St. Louis promotion continued to show such signs when it was used in Indiana. That is because it was actively promoted by Jordan, and Jordan’s tie to change-agent Agassiz is certain, as will be shown.

The mandatory use of the textbooks in Indiana was challenged in court. An editorial on page 37 of the *Indiana School Journal*, Volume XXXVI (apparently January, 1890) read:

“Testing the New School-Book Law.... Judge Frazier... agreed with the governor and attorney general that the law is constitutional and will stand but disagrees with them as to its being compulsory. He says: ‘It is not expressly required that these (Indiana) books shall be exclusively used in the schools, nor can that requirement be fairly implied. It is one thing to secure good books at a low price, and quite a different thing to compel their exclusive use in the schools.’”

On page 159 of the Indiana School Journal (apparently the March, 1890, issue), the Journal referred to the public reaction:

“...last August, before the law had taken effect, when there was great excitement and great difference of opinion as to whether the law was compulsory, and as to the merits of the books, etc....”

Of course, no “difference of opinion” would have existed if there had not been some highly visible and influential people who were interpreting the law as “compulsory.”

It is evident the law was a steamroller operation, in total disregard of the convictions of many people. Yet it is also interesting that David S. Jordan is shown plainly allied with those forces of coercion. David S. Jordan had been on the fast track by the time the Indiana textbook coercion took place, and was then, in 1889, President of Indiana University. By 1900, the apparent date of the article “Agassiz at Penikese” by Professor Burt G. Wilder, which bears Harvard College Library’s stamp of October 29, 1900, and which had appeared in the American Naturalist, Vol. XXXII, Jordan was President of the Leland Stanford Junior University in California. When the Anderson Summer School of Natural History had been held by Agassiz at Penikese Island in 1873, Jordan at that time had been simply Instructor in Botany at Appleton, Wisconsin. Yet young Jordan in 1873 was of enough importance for Agassiz to have included him on his short list of 44 adult pupils. In April, 1892, Jordan wrote an article, also called “Agassiz at Penikese” for the Popular Science Monthly, Volume XI, p. 721-729. The Penikese experience had obviously been important to him.

What is very curious about Agassiz’s 1873 Penikese school is the very peculiar financial support that it received. Agassiz had sketched the idea the previous December, according to the article in the Harvard College Library, and had initially intended to hold the school elsewhere. However:

“In the following spring, the munificent offer by an utter stranger, Mr. John Anderson of New York, of the island of Penikese in Buzzard Bay, together with a dwelling house and barn and an endowment of \$50,000 not only led to the change of location but enabled Agassiz to carry out certain parts of his plan more fully.”

That was a very strange occurrence. Since Anderson was “an utter stranger,” who got Anderson involved in the project - and why? Agassiz had already decided where to hold his 1873 summer school and had apparently not canvassed for any such help. If Agassiz had openly done so, the above 1900 report by a probably knowledgeable near-contemporary of Agassiz would have been written very differently.

It is clear from portions of the Indiana series which were quoted and discussed in the Indiana School Journal that the “official” reading textbooks that Jordan approved as a member of the state board were a “meaning” series, Code 1 to Code 3. Whether the Indiana materials approved in 1889 were exactly like the original 1883 Indiana materials is not certain, but it is highly unlikely that they were very different. Therefore, sight unseen, it is fairly safe to conclude that the 1883 California and Missouri series would also have been Code 1 to Code 3.

The Indiana School Journal had articles on teaching beginning reading by Howard Sandison, Professor of Methods in the State Normal School. In January, 1890, Sandison said on page 12:

“In primary reading, the first phase is that which results in the mastery of a group of some forty or fifty words as letters, standing for meaning. This work is oral, and occupies perhaps, two or three months in time. In it, the sole purpose is to directly associate a printed word as a whole, with its meaning. In this work, the attention of the children is not called in any way to the letters or sounds. If the children learn anything in regard to these, such knowledge is incidental. The one aim of the work, is to impress the children with the idea that words stand for meaning; and to give them a basis for determining the meaning of new words in connected sentences, through the meaning of these familiar words that are also found in such sentences.

“Words signify, however, more than meaning. They signify sounds. Therefore, printed words must be taught as standing for sound, but this work is not to be taken in connection with the preceding phase, because it unduly and unnecessarily complicates the work in that phase, and also prevents the child from acquiring the idea that the main function of words is to express meaning...”

Sandison then endorsed at that point the use of a vague kind of phonics from whole words, and said,

“These two phases of work having been well done, the child is prepared to enter upon the definite use of a First Reader, and the study of simple thought in connected sentences.

“The nature of work with connected sentences is the question now to be considered. Take for example, Lesson XV, on page 23 of the First Reader of the Indiana Series:

“Come, mamma, do come!” says Dickie Rat. “See this little box. May I go in to play? It is a nice box to play in.”

“Oh no, Dickie! it is a trap. We will not use it.”

The content of Sandison’s article was unusually vague and confused, even for a “reading expert,” but he had nevertheless made it clear that systematic synthetic phonics was not recommended before starting a child on the Indiana Series first book, and that by an early lesson, Lesson 15, in that book, the children would be forced to read the irregularly spelled words as wholes by “meaning” and “context” instead of by “sound.” With his comments and his quoted section, Sandison had conveniently labeled the Indiana Series in use in 1890 as a Code 1 approach at its beginning, no matter what “phonics” may have been used in it later. (However, Rice’s 1892 contradictory comments, discussed later, indicated that he saw “supplemental phonics” in use in Indianapolis by that date.)

Sandison made his ideas on “phonics” very clear in a later 1890 article, appearing on page 143 of the magazine’s 1890 volume. Sandison was describing a lesson given five months into the first grade year, at which point most phonically trained first-graders can independently read aloud, very slowly but with fair success, almost anything in print. Sandison’s “lesson” lasted ten minutes and concerned reading the simple word, “red,” for its meaning and sound. He made the incredible statement that for his first graders, after five months of so-called “reading instruction,” “The next step was to awaken the idea that the oral word consists of separate sounds.” Sandison’s “phonics” was manifestly whole word, phony phonics.

Indiana in 1890 was obviously under the control of the “meaning” camp in reading, not only in its normal school where Sandison was employed but in its mandatory school books. (Yet, happily, Rice found in his 1892 visits to the Indianapolis schools, mentioned later, that “supplemental phonics” was

being used, very probably in connection with the “experience charts” which were also being used there.) Indiana was an important link in the whole “school improvement” crusade carried on by the activists. William Hailmann who was famous for his promotion of kindergartens became Superintendent of the La Porte schools, to judge from page 80 of the 1891 volume of the Indiana School Journal. That would have made the La Porte schools very prestigious as a later job reference for its primary school teachers.

It is therefore very interesting that a woman closely associated with the W. S. Gray’s Scott, Foresman “Dick and Jane” readers came from La Porte. Verna Sharp died at 91 in 1981 (on a Wednesday which was apparently June 19) and had been a teacher and principal in the La Porte primary schools before joining Scott, Foresman. She headed an editorial staff and is said to have written much of the text for “Dick and Jane,” obviously under W. S. Gray. Her obituaries in the Chicago Tribune and New York Times said she had observed children repeating such words as, “Look, look!” and “Run, run!” when she sunned on the Chicago beach in the 1920’s and that this was the source for the “Dick and Jane” deathless prose. She was called the “Mother of ‘Dick and Jane’” The Times said she “often referred to Dick and Jane as ‘my children.’”

What the obituaries did not say, of course, was that the idea of constantly repeating words in print to fix them in memory came from the “meaning” method for teaching deaf-mutes to read and had been standard in most sight-word readers for close to a hundred years by the 1920’s. Its use in the “Dick and Jane” readers is more properly attributed to the reading theories of W. S. Gray than to Verna Sharp, no matter how convenient her observations on the Chicago beach may have been to support what he wanted to do anyway: to write deaf-mute “sight-word” readers with strictly controlled vocabulary for hearing children. Verna Sharp’s observations just made it easier: the necessary repetitions to fix the sight words in memory now did not have to be separated by any intervening words. After her contribution, the necessary repetitions could sometimes come in unbroken salvos!

## **Chapter 26**

### **On the History of the McGuffey Readers, On the Origin of Their Last Publisher, American Book Company, and On Their Greatly Inflated Sales Estimates**

In American Reading Instruction, widely accepted as a reliable source, Nila Banton Smith began a largely fictional history of the McGuffey Readers by repeating other fictions. She began by wrongly claiming that the New England Primer and, after it, Noah Webster's speller had been almost universally used to teach beginning reading in America from early in the seventeenth century until about 1840. Smith then claimed these two had been replaced in turn by a third massively dominant material, the McGuffey Readers, which remained in heavy use until about the beginning of the twentieth century. The fictions made the blanketing of the United States in 1930 with the deaf-mute "meaning" method Dick-and-Jane readers seem to be a continuation of an American tradition.

Of course, these fictions have kernels of truth. Concerning McGuffey's, it is true that the 1836-1842 "meaning" or sight-word McGuffey series was widely used in the Middle West, and also in parts of the South along the Mississippi where it could easily reach that market by riverboats. The even more popular 1879 "sound" or phonic-approach McGuffey series was very widely used in the Middle West. The reason for the heavy sales of McGuffey Readers in those areas in those years is that its publisher could supply readers in those areas more cheaply than most other publishers since it had lower transportation costs. Almost all the other schoolbook publishers were in New York, Philadelphia, or Boston, but McGuffey's publisher in Cincinnati, Ohio, was far closer to those markets.

Concerning the New England Primer "enlarged", the first historical reference to it was an advertisement in an almanac entitled *News from the Stars*, published in Boston in 1691. That advertisement was by the publisher, Benjamin Harris, while he was in Boston for a few years before he returned to England. Harris said his "enlarged" edition would include material that is known to have been in his earlier book, *The Protestant Tutor*. That earlier book has a surviving edition of 1685 now in the American Antiquarian Society library in Worcester, Massachusetts. Most of the remaining material in the "enlarged" edition was a catechism.

Yet it is the material by Harris, such as "Verses Made by Mr. Rogers, The Martyr," taken from *The Protestant Tutor*, and the "Illustrated Alphabet," probably also by Harris, which people today consider most meaningful when referring to the New England Primer. The New England Primer in the "enlarged" form known today most probably was put together by Harris after 1685, since that is the year he published *The Protestant Tutor* in Boston.

Boston imprints of other books published by Harris in America are dutifully reported in Evans' American bibliography. Records survive of his publications after he returned to England, as reported by Alston. Yet no record exists of the presumed 1691 American edition by Harris of his advertised New England Primer "enlarged". Thirty-six years after that 1691 advertisement of the "enlarged" edition "now in the press" (which may never actually have been finished since no other record of it survives), the second record of the New England Primer appeared, well into the eighteenth century. That second record is provided by the first surviving "enlarged" copy, printed in 1727, presently held by the New York Public Library.

The New England Primer "enlarged" manifestly was of little importance before 1727 since, unlike it, many other primary school texts published before 1727 (and even the 1685 Boston edition by Harris of

The Protestant Tutor) have surviving copies. Yet almost no one but historians have ever heard of these other surviving school texts, while almost everyone over fifty years of age has heard of the New England Primer. It is true that the New England Primer had vast sales after 1760 (but not before), as confirmed by Charles F. Heartman's 1934 check-list of surviving copies, *The New England Primer Issued Prior to 1830* [Bibliographical Check-list of the New England Primer], which he had also issued in less complete editions of 1916 and 1922. The New England Primer with the material by Harris was even printed in Great Britain after about 1770. Yet it was used as a catechism, not as a schoolbook. That is confirmed in part by Noah Webster's own testimony quoted earlier concerning the schoolbooks that were in actual use in Connecticut in the 1760's. It is also confirmed by the fact that Noah Webster himself prepared a version of the New England Primer after 1800 to make it suitable for school use, which is a clear admission that it had not been used in schools before that time! Heartman's checklist of New England Primer editions lists Webster's version.

Heartman also included the only surviving reference to the New England Primer in its unimproved, pre-Harris form. It seems to confirm that the earlier version was simply a catechism, and not a beginning reading book. Heartman wrote:

“...the first edition of this book was probably printed in England. In the Stationer's Register in London under the date of October 5, 1683, a certain John Gaine entered a title in accordance with the statute requiring the registration of all books for sale. This entry reads:

““Mr. John Gaine

Eodem Die et Anno. Entred then for his Book or copy Entituled the New England Primer or Milk for Babes with Wm. Scoresby.

Jno. Gaine”“

As discussed earlier, all that this establishes is that two men in England in 1683 were selling a book called “New England Primer or Milk for Babes.” There is no indication that they either wrote it or even that they printed it. Furthermore, it would have been very odd indeed for someone in England to put the title “New England” on his own work. The copies they were registering for sale in England might very well have come over by ship from Boston, since even copies of New England texts printed for American Indians in an Indian language are known to have done so earlier. Furthermore, “Milk for Babes” was a term for catechism - and so was “primer,” as shown by the bibliography of Evans. Of course, the two men may also have reprinted a New England original for the English market. Therefore, instead of this entry's suggesting an English origin, it instead tends to confirm the American origin of the New England Primer and to suggest strongly that in its pre-Harris, pre-1691 form, it was only a simple catechism, which was thought of as providing spiritual “Milk for Babes,” not beginning reading instruction. A careful review of the historical record does demonstrate that the New England Primer was not a beginning reading text from 1691 into the late eighteenth century, as reported by Nila Banton Smith in her so-called “history,” *American Reading Instruction*.

Concerning Nila Banton Smith's claims about the use of Webster's “sound” or phonic-approach speller of 1783, it is true, of course, that Webster's speller had been in enormous use as a schoolbook in America. It certainly was the most enormously used of the three major texts which Smith cited: the New England Primer, Webster's speller, and the McGuffey Readers. Nevertheless, at all times it had heavy competition, unlike the later McGuffey Readers, the use of Webster's speller was not largely limited to one part of the United States but covered almost the whole United States as early as the 1790's, as shown by the “planter's” anecdote quoted earlier. However, Webster's “sound” or phonic-approach speller was usually not used at the critical beginning reading stage after 1826, in which year the activists began their successful drive to replace the “sound” spelling books for beginners with the “meaning” sight-word primers. The activists' drive which took off in earnest in America in 1826 has been discussed at length in

this history, and was joined to their drive to replace private education with government-controlled education. The activists' largely forgotten but successful drive to achieve both aims is confirmed by a great number of surviving documents, and it resulted in widespread reading disability, which fact is virtually unknown today.

Furthermore, Webster's 1783 Code 10 "sound" or phonic speller had never been almost the sole speller in use. (To repeat, Code 10 represents a "sound" approach in teaching beginning reading, and Code 1 a "meaning" approach, with the numbers in between representing relative mixtures of the "sound" and "meaning" approaches.) Webster had fought for copyright laws in the early nineteenth century specifically to protect his speller from imitators. That fact alone is testimony to the existence of competition even long before 1826 when the use of a spelling book to teach beginning reading largely ceased.

Before stating the facts on the McGuffey Readers, a portion of Nila Banton Smith's material on McGuffey's should be quoted for comparison since that fiction has been so widely promoted that it is generally accepted as fact. The quoted material from her 1965 edition of American Reading Instruction published by the International Reading Association presumably is the same as the material in her 1934 edition published by Silver, Burdett and Company. The original edition had been prepared from Smith's doctoral dissertation at Columbia Teachers College, apparently in 1932.

Since her original faulty "history" had been prepared at Columbia Teachers College about 1932, that obviously placed its author, Nila Banton Smith, in the circle of influence of the psychologists, John Dewey of Columbia University, and Edward L. Thorndike of Columbia Teachers College, and of the "reading expert," Arthur Irving Gates of Columbia Teachers College. Also, through them, she very possibly could have been influenced by the psychologist, James McKeen Cattell, formerly of Columbia, who was Dewey and Thorndike's close friend. She could also have been influenced through them by the psychologist, Charles H. Judd, and by the "reading expert," William Scott Gray, both of the University of Chicago and both close associates of Thorndike. Judd and Gray were also associates of Cattell, as surviving letters testify which are in the Cattell manuscript files in the Library of Congress.

Nila Banton Smith also had a much earlier tie to the psychologist, Edward L. Thorndike, before taking her doctorate at Columbia Teachers College about 1932. In 1920, the Picture Story Reading Lessons by Nila Banton Smith and Stuart A. Curtis had been the first material to use Thorndike's list of the commonest words, even before Thorndike published his list in 1921. Curtis also had ties to Columbia and Thorndike at least by 1919 when Curtis took an academic degree there in middle age and when he prepared a paper on arithmetic jointly with Thorndike. (Curtis probably had far earlier ties, since he had worked on the 1911-1913 New York City school survey carried out by Hanus of Harvard. That survey had a very murky history, Hanus having been very badly used, as his autobiography implied.)

Yet in her "history," Smith did not mention Picture Story Reading Lessons, copyrighted in 1920, that she and Curtis had written. It had been a Detroit schools pilot program, teaching beginners to read by silent reading and pictures (a pure "meaning" approach), just as Gallaudet's deaf-mutes had been taught. (Gallaudet had even published in 1830 a remarkably similar book, The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book. Although the 1830 book was not meant for beginners, as his 1835 Code 1 "meaning" method Mother's Primer was, the 1830 book was intended to be used by both deaf and hearing children and contained pure Code 1 "meaning" philosophy.) The 1920 book by Smith and Curtis had revised editions in 1924 and 1926, and the 1928 United States Catalog showed it was still in print in 1928. The "Readers" section of the United States Catalog listed all readers in print in 1928, only a few of which had additional separate listings elsewhere in the catalog. Those with additional separate listings were obviously the best-sellers. Apparently Picture Story Reading Lessons was selling very well in 1928, only six years before Smith's "history" was published commercially in which she omitted any mention of that

1920 book. That is because Picture Story Reading Lessons had its own special alphabetical entry elsewhere in the United States Catalog, besides being shown in the general section, "Readers," and apparently only best-sellers rated such a separate listing.

Although Smith omitted any mention of the 1920 Picture Story Reading Lessons in her 1932-1934 "history," even though Picture Story Reading Lessons had obviously been having large sales as late as 1928, she did mention other materials she had written. Smith also mentioned silent reading materials written by other people. Therefore, Smith's omission of Curtis's and her own highly successful 1920 silent reading program for beginners certainly suggests that Smith was attempting in 1932 and 1934 to suppress the facts about the origin of that widely sold 1920 program. Its origin was, of course, very unusual, because it had been the very first to make use of Thorndike's list of the commonest words, and it did so to teach little beginners with normal hearing by the same Code 1 "meaning" approach that Gallaudet had used with deaf-mutes.

In pages 17, 210 and 211 (and possibly elsewhere) of his 1930 book, *Interest and Ability in Reading*, Arthur Irving Gates cited studies specifically carried out on deaf children just learning to read, the studies apparently being carried out under his direction at Columbia Teachers College. For the little deaf beginning readers, one new word was introduced for every 150 words of a story. Gates specifically noted on page 785 of the June, 1925, issue of *The Elementary School Journal*, concerning teaching deaf children under eight years old to read, "Incidentally, study of the deaf should throw light on the values of phonetic training, since they cannot, of course, utilize this device." This comment of his and the study of beginning reading for the deaf clearly indicate that Gates understood the origin and nature of the inferior deaf-mute method he and William Scott Gray were to inflict on American children with their 1930 deaf-mute-method primers. Gates' so-called "intrinsic phonics" method was simply that same deaf-mute sight-word "meaning" method in new dress, and it was used in Gates' 1930 Macmillan series and in William Scott Gray's far more widely sold 1930 Scott, Foresman "Dick and Jane" series.

Although those facts are never mentioned in the literature after 1930, both Gates by 1916 and Gray by 1913 had been Thorndike's graduate students at Columbia Teachers College, and both had works published jointly with Thorndike, Gray in 1914 and Gates during the 1920's. Also, Curtis and Smith, in writing the 1920 material, were clearly influenced by Thorndike. For Smith to have listed the 1920 Picture Story Reading Lessons in her 1934 commercially published book might have made unnecessarily obvious the clear influence of the psychologist, E. L. Thorndike, on Smith and Curtis, and perhaps even on Gates and Gray. It conceivably also might have put unwelcome light on the fact that all four people who had been influenced by Thorndike had later used the deaf-mute "meaning" method to teach beginning reading in their enormously sold materials (and the special listing of the Curtis/Smith material in the United States Catalog establishes that their material was being very widely sold by 1928). Smith's and Curtis's 1920 work had been the most blatant and the most obvious use of the deaf-mute method - perhaps far too obvious for the "experts" liking after 1930. It had lacked the armor against possible criticism which protected Gates and Gray by their use of the phrase, "intrinsic phonics." (However, Curtis later wrote a widely used, and undoubtedly highly profitable, picture dictionary for primary grades, but that was a less obvious application of the deaf-mute "meaning" method.)

Any mention after 1930 of the connection of the psychologist, E. L. Thorndike, to the teaching of beginning reading disappeared totally from the literature. So did the connection of "intrinsic phonics" to the teaching of deaf-mutes. "Intrinsic phonics" is simply the deaf-mutes' silent, visual comparison of the parts of whole, meaning-bearing sight-words to each other in order to tell the whole words apart (exactly like visually comparing the pieces of jig-saw puzzles). That comparison exercise is carried out with the "help" of the "meaning" context of a reading selection in which the words are embedded. Gallaudet had to use the context-guessing method to enable his deaf-mute students to distinguish the differences between the whole printed words his deaf-mutes were learning by their "meaning." Yet it is certainly no



accident that it was only after the publication of the two massively-used 1930 deaf-mute “meaning” method series by Gates and Gray, Thorndike’s graduate students, which used Gates’ so-called “intrinsic phonics,” that America was flooded with functional illiteracy.

Excerpts concerning the McGuffey Readers from pages 103 to 109 of Nila Banton Smith’s so-called “history” follow:

#### “McGuffey Readers

“We have seen that The New England Primer was the favorite reader during the period of religious emphasis [Ed.: 1607 to 1776], and we have noted that Webster’s famous old Blue-back Speller held sway in the classrooms of the nationalistic-moralistic period [Ed.: 1776 to 1840]. Now we are about to consider the characteristics of the reading text which outstripped all others in sales and popularity during this new period [Ed.: “Education for Intelligent Citizenship,” 1840-1880?]. It was none other than the famous McGuffey series.

“McGuffey’s complete set of readers first appeared between the years 1836 and 1844. They came into immediate popularity and continued their strong hold on the American public for the next forty years, after which they were gradually replaced by the more attractive new books that came from the press. There has been a demand for these readers, however, until recent times. The last editions intended for general school use were printed by the American Book Company in 1896 and 1907. Still more interesting is the fact that Henry Ford had a private edition printed in 1925. In that year Mr. Ford opened a new experimental school on his estate at Dearborn, Michigan. Evidently his interest in restoring various features of the past led him to supply the school with McGuffey readers. In other respects the equipment of the school was ultra-modern, and it was staffed with a highly trained personnel, including a psychiatrist and a dietitian....

“McGuffey must be given the credit of being the first author to produce a clearly defined and carefully graded series consisting of one reader for each grade in the elementary school....

“...The [first reader] consists chiefly of sentences about children and animals. These sentences are usually subservient to the phonetic elements which McGuffey selected for drill purposes....

“In spite of this objection to the [dull] content, one feels a relief to find at last an author who recognized the necessity of repetition for fixing new words. McGuffey was the first who definitely provided for repetition. He also made an innovation in decreasing the number of new words introduced per page. In his lessons in the first reader the new words range in number from ten to twelve per page....

“His upper grade readers in general, however, were of a high literary standard. Mark Sullivan in his *America Finding Herself* (page 15) says that ‘to millions, to probably nine out of ten average Americans, what taste of literature they got from McGuffey’s was all they ever had; what literature the children brought into the home in McGuffey readers was all that ever came. Broad classical reading was not general. McGuffey, in short, because of the leverage of his readers, had a large part in forming the mind of America.’”

On that final massive piece of fiction, Nila Banton Smith left the topic of the McGuffey Readers and went on to discuss Tower’s readers. The Tower series fitted in nicely with establishing her fiction that phonics had been in use in the mid-nineteenth century because the Tower series did teach phonics, but it was for elocution, not decoding.

Smith's selection just quoted is bulging with falsehoods. Most prominent is her totally avoiding the critical fact that there was not just one long-lived series of the McGuffey Readers but three major and largely totally different series of the McGuffey Readers. Henry H. Vail's *A History of the McGuffey Readers*, which was published by The Burrows Brothers Co., Cleveland, Ohio, in 1911, clearly provided the facts, so there is no excuse whatsoever for Nila Banton Smith's glossing over any of those facts. The original sight-word series begun by William Holmes McGuffey in 1836 was replaced with a truly phonic series in 1879, on which Henry H. Vail himself had been the editor. That new series was almost totally different except for retaining many of the original selections from the highest readers. The 1879 series was replaced with the final series in 1901, which once again was a sight-word series and which once again was largely new. The higher readers in all three of the major editions did contain a considerable number of the original selections, but it was the lower readers which were most widely used, and the lower readers were almost totally different in each of the three major editions: 1836-38, 1879 and 1901. (There had also been minor editions at various times on the first series before it was replaced by the 1879 series.)

Rather than having sales "fall off" forty years after the first to fourth readers were published (1836 to 1838), the most massive sales did not even begin until forty years after the original series was on the market. (The fifth reader of the first edition, *The Rhetorical Guide*, was prepared by William H. McGuffey's brother, Alexander H. McGuffey, in 1842 and was then revised with Dr. Timothy Stone Pinneo in 1844. The sixth reader of the first edition was prepared later, and partial revisions were made before 1879 in all levels of the first edition.) Furthermore, those massive sales were not of that original sight-word edition, but of the 1879 phonic edition. The massive sales of the almost completely different 1879 phonic series took place only over a period of about fifteen years, until about the mid-1890's. Furthermore, it is absolutely false that McGuffey's first sight-word series came into "immediate popularity" after 1836, because the series was largely unused outside the Middle West and the Southern states along the Mississippi until that 1879 phonic edition appeared, and even that was most widely sold only in the Middle West.

Whatever the meaning of Smith's expression, "The last editions intended for general school use were printed... in 1896 and 1907," the fact is that the 1836 series was not even listed as available in the 1912 United States Catalog of books in print, which showed only two McGuffey's series, obviously the 1879 and 1901 editions. Furthermore, the American Catalogue for 1895-1900 of books published during those years does not list a re-issue of the 1836 series, which the catalog almost certainly would have done if a new edition had been printed in 1896. The edition dates of 1896 and 1907 must therefore refer to reissues of the enormously popular 1879 edition, which Vail said, as will be quoted, was still having good sales in 1911.

That the 1907 edition Smith mentioned must have been a re-issue of that 1879 series certainly seems to be confirmed by the fact that the first reader carries a 1907 renewed copyright by Vail himself instead of by American Book Company, who had owned the original Van Antwerp 1879 copyright. Vail had personally written the phonic 1879 book one of the McGuffey series and possibly had also written the supplementary phonic primer of 1881 (and possibly the *Chart Primer* of 1896). Since Vail is known to have obtained the copyrights on the 1879 McGuffey book one in 1907 and on the 1881 McGuffey primer in 1909, and since he renewed a copyright on book one as late as 1920, Vail possibly obtained the copyrights on all of that 1879 series in 1907 or shortly afterwards. Vail may very well have obtained some kind of agreement about the copyrights when he left the company in 1907. Vail implied in his 1911 history that at that time the 1901 edition apparently was outselling the 1879 edition. Therefore, American Book Company might very well have been willing to dispose of the copyrights on that very old, less profitable series in 1907 in some kind of termination agreement with Vail.

Although American Book Company was still publishing the 1879 series in 1928, American Book Company must have done so under some kind of contract with Vail (or his possible heirs) since Vail owned the copyrights, at least on the primer and book one. A very interesting and untold story apparently lies in the Vail/American Book Company relationships in 1907 and afterwards. Vail's history praising the McGuffey Readers was printed only privately about 1910, and when it was finally published publicly in 1911, it was NOT published by American Book Company! That was despite the fact that Vail had left the company only in 1907, and despite the fact that American Book Company was still publishing the 1879 McGuffey Readers in 1911! Those circumstances are very, very strange. Since Vail implied no criticism of American Book Company in his 1911 history, despite the fact the evidence suggests he may have had conflict with them, it is possible Vail felt he had to protect his royalties by avoiding any direct conflict with the publishers of what had become his books.

Henry Ford's curious involvement with the McGuffey Myth will be discussed later. As will be seen, it appears highly probable the involvement was only with his public relations staff, and not with old Henry Ford himself. However, Nila Banton Smith's claim that 1925 was the year of Ford's official involvement with McGuffey's, by Ford's republishing an old edition of McGuffey's, should be taken with the gravest reservations, as well as her claim that Ford started his experimental school in 1925. The McGuffey Myth was really launched only in November, 1927, with the publication of the Saturday Evening Post article, "That Guy McGuffey." That year, 1927, appears to be a far, far more probable date than 1925 for Ford's McGuffey reissue and for the founding of Ford's public-relations-serving school. If those two Ford events did actually take place in 1927, as I strongly suspect they did, then to move them back two years, to 1925, would provide a stronger foundation for the "experts'" highly-publicized McGuffey-Myth.

To continue with demolishing Nila Banton Smith's "unthink" in the above-quoted excerpt, McGuffey's was not the first "clearly defined and carefully graded series consisting of one reader for each grade." Even to think of writing a series for each grade would have been almost impossible in 1836, anyway, since such graded schools were virtually unknown in America for many years afterwards! Nor was McGuffey's the first series to be graded simply in difficulty, as this history has demonstrated. Noah Webster, Lindley Murray, John Pierpont, Samuel Wood, Samuel Worcester and many others deserve credit for having produced series that were graded in difficulty. As Vail stated, Worcester sued McGuffey for plagiarizing material from Worcester's own graded series, as will be discussed, so Worcester certainly preceded McGuffey in producing a series that was graded in difficulty!

The sentences in the first reader were not "subservient to the phonetic elements... for drill purposes." The 1836 series had NOTHING to do with the teaching of phonics, and was purely sight-word material. The 1879 series which Smith never even mentioned was the phonic series.

Nor was McGuffey the first to provide for repetition of new words for hearing children, nor the first to decrease the number of new words for hearing children. Gallaudet certainly did both things in his 1835 Mother's Primer which he wrote specifically for hearing children, using the deaf-mute-method he had used in his Hartford school for the deaf. So apparently did Oliver Angell and Lyman Cobb provide for repetition of new words and so did they apparently decrease the number of new words in their two reading series written in 1830. So apparently did other authors before McGuffey. Nila Banton Smith must have picked her statement about limiting the introduction of new words and about word repetition right out of the air. I did an informal study only on the introduction of new words in Gallaudet's 1835 Mother's Primer, and that informal study took a considerable time. To do such a study on the introduction of new words in many reading books, and then to add a study on the degree of repetition of those new words, would be a very formidable statistical task. Yet there is no indication that Nila Banton Smith ever did such a massive study on the great many reading materials which were published before McGuffey's appeared, which such materials known to me are listed in Appendix B. To my knowledge, no study has

ever been done on word frequency or word repetition in the sight-word materials that were produced in such abundance after 1826, starting with the Franklin Primer.

The most outrageous misrepresentation, of course, was Smith's quoting Sullivan's fiction without comment, which implicitly supported that fiction. An enormous number of reading series were published in the nineteenth century, as can be seen from Appendix B and Appendix C. Yet we have been conditioned to believe Sullivan's statement that the McGuffey Readers were being used by nine out of ten American children, which would mean all those other series had to divide only ten per cent of the market among themselves. That claim is perhaps the most ridiculous fiction which has ever been popularized, and deserves the title, the McGuffey Myth.

The best way to refute the McGuffey Myth, which Nila Banton Smith among others was promoting in 1932 and 1934 (and which first began to be promoted in 1927), is to cite testimony given by Henry H. Vail in *A History of the McGuffey Readers*. Vail had worked for the companies publishing the McGuffey Readers from the 1860's into the 1900's. Even though Vail gave very few figures on the numbers of copies printed, the figures he did give deflate the McGuffey Myth, and so does his general testimony, as will be seen.

#### On the Name Changes of the McGuffey Publishers, on Their Market Share, and on the Arrival of American Book Company in 1890

In his history, Vail told of the changing names and ownerships of publishing companies in the nineteenth century. Vail also outlined the many changes in the publishers and owners of the McGuffey Readers since their publication starting in 1836 by the Truman and Smith company of Cincinnati. Truman and Smith had commissioned William Holmes McGuffey to write the original series. The company name became just W. B. Smith in 1841, and W. B. Smith & Company in 1852. The company name became Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle in 1863, and Wilson, Hinkle & Co. in 1868. In 1877, the firm name became Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. In 1890, the firm merged with three others, as equals, to form a new company, American Book Company. All of these changes were partial, with personnel from the previous companies remaining with each change in the company name. However, the books themselves were vastly changed from their original date of publication, so much so that on page 5 Vail said of the major revisions of 1879 and 1901:

“Each of these revisions has constituted practically a new series although the changes have never included the entire contents. In the higher readers will be found today many selections which appeared in the original books.”

Mott Media of Milford, Michigan, reissued in a most attractive edition the original McGuffey Readers which first appeared from 1836 through 1838. (Unfortunately, on the lowest copies, Mott Media omitted the hyphenation which had originally been shown on some multi-syllable words as an aid to beginners.) Reproduced on the back cover of the readers Mott reissued is the original advertisement for the series as it was planned in 1836, before all the levels had actually been published. The advertisement listed the primer, books one through four, and the speller. Books one and two in the Mott reissue carry copyright dates of 1836, their original date of issue. Books three and four carry copyright dates of 1837, the year they were published. The speller by Alexander H. McGuffey, William H. McGuffey's brother, carries a copyright date of 1838, the year it was first published. The primer carries a publication date of 1836, but no original copyright date, apparently because the original publishers thought it unnecessary on such a flimsy little pamphlet which was obviously intended largely only to teach the alphabet.

Yet the revised primer first published thirteen years later in 1849 was another matter. It was a relatively long, straight Code 1, sight-word text clearly meant to teach beginning reading by sight-words

and “meaning.” By contrast, the 1838 Code 7 “sound” speller written by Alexander H. McGuffey stated clearly, at its end, that learners were expected to complete the speller before beginning to read books one to four. If the practice of using the phonic speller first had been followed, the original McGuffey sight-word series would have been turned into a phonic “sound” approach, as the speller was Code 7 material. However, the publication of the Code 1 “meaning” primer in 1849 suggests that the McGuffey series had always been used, in actual practice, as a “meaning” approach to teach beginning reading.

Minor revisions in the original McGuffey series took place over the years such as in 1843, but the major revisions of the McGuffey Readers were in 1879 and in 1901. The major revision in 1879 was carried out when Vail, the author of the 1911 history of the McGuffey Readers, was one of the partners in its publishing company along with Caleb S. Bragg and others. Vail was the editor on that 1879 revision, even writing the phonic book one himself. The firm name was then Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., which name had replaced that of Wilson, Hinkle & Co. on April 20, 1877. Then, in 1890, American Book Company was formed by a merger of four of the five leading grammar school textbook publishers in America, and one of the merging companies was Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. Therefore, after 1890, the new American Book Company became the publisher of the McGuffey Readers.

Some texts of Appleton, Barnes, and Ivison have already been discussed. Acting as equal partners, those companies joined with Van Antwerp to form the new American Book Company in 1890. Before the year was out, the new company bought the textbook list of Harper’s. Harper’s was the remaining one of the five leading grammar school textbook publishers in the United States in 1890. The result was the American Book Company, which was obviously enormous.

These roots of American Book Company were explained, not by Vail, but by an “Announcement” which the new company put out as an advertisement. It was dated May 15, 1890, and the “Announcement” originated from “New York - Chicago - Cincinnati.” A copy of that advertisement appeared on the back cover of the August, 1890, issue of the Indiana School Journal, Indianapolis, Indiana, and stated in part:

“The American Book Company has purchased the school book publications hitherto issued by D. Appleton & Co., A. S. Barnes & Co., and Ivison, Blakeman & Co. of New York; and of Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. of Cincinnati.”

A later advertisement added the school books of Harper & Bros. of New York to American Book Company’s list, although the Harper company remained independent while the other companies had merged to form the new American Book Company.

The officers of American Book Company listed in the “Announcement” had all been officers of the four merged companies. In the new company, Birdseye Blakeman was President and Alfred C. Barnes was Vice President, the former from Ivison, Blakeman & Co., and the latter from A. S. Barnes and Company. The chairman of the board was Caleb S. Bragg from Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. (the publishers of McGuffey’s). Besides Bragg, the board included two others, Hinkle and Vail, from Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co.; three from Ivison, Blakeman & Co., namely, Blakeman, Ivison, and Cathcart; three Appletons from the Appleton company; and three Barneses from the Barnes company. American Book Company was therefore at its beginning an amalgamation of four equally powerful publishers: Appleton; Barnes; Ivison; and Van Antwerp, each with three members on the board of directors.

Yet American Book Company denied that they were a cartel, controlling the textbook market, even with the addition of Harper’s schoolbooks to their list. Two editorials in the Indiana School Journal of 1890 provided more information, the first on page 267, apparently in April, and the second on pages 327 and 328, apparently in May.

The first editorial read in part:

“The American Book Company is the name of the new book house formed by the union of the old firms of Ivison, Blakeman & Co., A. S. Barnes & Co., Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., and D. Appleton & Co.....

“Bradstreet estimates the wealth of the new firm at not less than \$4,000,000, and says it may reach \$5,000,000.

“It has been estimated that the four houses composing the firm (“The Big Four”) furnish not less than two-thirds of all the common school text-books in the United States.

“The promoters of the new enterprise deny specifically and vehemently that it is in the nature of a “trust,” or that it has any of the features of trust management, organization, or policy connected with it....

“The headquarters of the new firm is in New York, and it begins business May 1, 1890.

“Various reports in regard to the absorption of other book houses have been going the rounds of the press, but they are largely speculation.”

The second 1890 editorial on the American Book Company the following month, apparently in May, read in part:

“...A later phase of the matter is as follows: Harper & Brothers, whose school-book list was perhaps equal in size and merit to any one of the combined firms, refused to enter the co-partnership, but offered to sell out their school book interest to the new house. This sale has been made, and it gives to the great firm control of at least eighty percent of all the books used in the United States in the schools below the high school.

“Another thing this new company has done is of peculiar and special interest to Indiana. The Indiana School-Book Co., which supplies the Readers, Arithmetics, and Geographies, by contract under the new school-book law, does not own the copy-right or plates of the books it furnishes, but gets them ready for use from the publishers. Now, the new company has bought the plates and copy-rights of the Indiana books, so that hereafter the Indiana School-Book Co., will have to buy all its books from the American Book Co. This will not affect in any way the contract of the Indiana Company with the state. The books will be supplied at contract prices and of standard quality.

“The final effect of this deal on the school interests of Indiana can not now be told. Two things it is likely to bring about are these: 1. The Indiana Co. and its special friends will hardly feel at liberty to berate the old companies in their new form and new relations and apply to them all the hard epithets in the category of criminal literature.

“2. The old companies will hardly feel at liberty to describe as utterly and everlastingly worthless the Indiana books, which they now own. If this new arrangement shall have the effect to take this text-book question out of politics, so that the law and the books can be discussed and dealt with on their merits, it will certainly be a consummation devoutly to be wished.

“The effect upon prices of putting under one control four-fifths of all the school books of the country, the future will have to answer. The company itself claims that the union has been in the interest of economy and lower prices, and the Journal has no ground upon which to doubt the statement. (For a fuller statement of the company’s purposes, see its advertisement.)

“As an evidence that the American Company expects to treat all other companies in an honorable and fair way, it has entered into an agreement with many of them not to put out each other’s books by even exchange or cutting prices, etc.: the same arrangement that existed before between the old companies.”

The Indiana School Journal made it clear that something remarkable had happened in 1890 as a result of the merger of those four companies and the buy-out of the textbook division of a fifth company. With their combined grade-school textbook volume, they now controlled about eighty per cent of the American market.

Since each of the four merging companies had about the same influence in the new American Book Company, their approximate market shares must have been about equal. This appears to be confirmed by the statement in the Indiana School Journal that Harper’s market share was probably equal to any of the others. McGuffey’s publisher had been one of those five companies, and manifestly only an “equal” on general grade-school textbooks, to judge from the material just quoted. McGuffey’s publishers therefore would have held only 1/5 of eighty percent, or sixteen percent of the total American grade school textbook market in 1890, including readers. It is very, very hard to inflate that estimate, based on testimony by contemporaries in 1890, into the estimate made years later in 1927 and 1928 that eighty or ninety percent of ALL reading books in America before and well after 1890 had been the McGuffey’s series!

Such an inflated estimate for the whole period from 1836, when the readers first appeared, into the twentieth century is particularly ludicrous since, according to Vail’s testimony, it was only from 1879, after the new edition was on the market, that the McGuffey Readers had their best sales. Yet at that time their estimated total textbook share including readers, as shown above, would have been only about sixteen per cent of the total American market. Their market share had been even less, not more, before the best-selling 1879 edition, though at all times the McGuffey Readers sold very well in the more sparsely populated Midwest.

The belief that there had once been a monolithic reading series, the uniform McGuffey Readers, capable of shaping the mind of 19th century America, as the study of the Bible had shaped the minds of preceding generations, is truly a myth. Furthermore, probably more than half of American children in the nineteenth century did not stay in school long enough to get the revised fourth, fifth and sixth readers which contained most of the inspirational material. These upper level readers had not originally even been meant as fourth, fifth or sixth grade books, but only advanced level books, because most schools were not graded when the books were first published. In addition, the McGuffey Readers over the years were actually several different series of readers, with largely different owners and publishers. They evolved to meet competition, and it is obvious from consulting original sources that they always had plenty of competition.

Therefore, it is mind-boggling to read unsupported statements like the following concerning the publishers of the McGuffey Readers from page xiii of the “Introduction” that was contributed by a professor of the history of education to *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985:

“By the 1870’s, the company W. B. Smith had founded was the largest textbook company in the world.”

That statement is refuted, not just by the facts already cited on the relative importance of the major American textbook publishers in the 1890's, but by remarks made in 1884 by a contemporary publisher concerning textbook market shares in 1884, six years before the American Book Company merger. The 1884 remarks were made by the New York publisher, Charles N. Taintor (the younger brother of the publisher Joseph Lord Taintor, who had died in 1881), in an interview published in the New York Tribune in 1884. Taintor's remarks are reported in Volume II of *A History of Book Publishing in the United States* by John Tebbel, published by R. R. Bowker of New York in 1975.

Tebbel reported that Taintor wrote in 1884 that some 25 firms published only textbooks. Their sales constituted a business of approximately \$8,000,000 a year, and they served about the same number of school children. Taintor had said that, of those 25 firms, only three were located in cities south or west of Philadelphia and Baltimore.

Obviously, two of those companies south or west of Philadelphia and Baltimore were John P. Morton & Co. of Louisville, Kentucky, and Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. of Cincinnati. Possibly Taintor meant A. L. Bancroft & Co. of San Francisco as the third, but that company was very probably publishing other materials than textbooks. However, despite Taintor's 1884 statement, there certainly were more than three publishers of school books in that vast southern and western area, although they obviously were not very large, and were probably publishing other materials as well.

Taintor reported that almost all the companies were in New York, except for one in Cincinnati. Taintor said that two-thirds of the textbook market was controlled by only five firms. Van Antwerp, Bragg & Company of Cincinnati, and Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Company of New York were the largest of those five. Each of those two did a yearly business of over \$1,500,000. The third largest textbook firm was A. S. Barnes, with sales of \$1,300,000. Taintor reported that most of the smaller companies publishing textbooks did not exceed sales of \$50,000 a year.

The other two of the five largest firms in 1884 whose names Taintor omitted were obviously Harper and Appleton. Yet Taintor (and Tebbel) omitted any reference to the Appleton company. Nevertheless, Appleton was obviously one of the five firms doing two-thirds of the American textbook business in 1884. Perhaps Taintor omitted Appleton because it published more than textbooks, such as an encyclopedia. As has been shown, Appleton joined with three of the five (Van Antwerp, Ivison, and Barnes) in 1890 to form American Book Company. The last firm of the five which were handling two-thirds of the textbook business in 1884 was obviously Harper, not specifically mentioned by Taintor but mentioned by Tebbel. Harper may have been omitted because it also published other materials, such as the well-known journal. As discussed, Harper sold its textbook rights to the new American Book Company in 1890. That resulted in American Book Company's control of 80% of the American textbook market in 1890, according to the 1890 article in the *Indiana School Journal*, referred to previously. The estimates of market shares do compare well: Taintor estimated that the five controlled two-thirds, or 67% of the market in 1884; the *Indiana School Journal* estimated that the five controlled 80% in 1890.

Tebbel added the names of six more leading textbook publishers in 1884, whose names had been omitted by Taintor. One in Philadelphia was Cowperthwait & Co. One in Boston was Ginn, Heath & Co., still only one firm instead of two in 1884. Apparently about 1885 it split to form two firms, since Ginn dropped "Heath" from its name and an independent firm called "Heath" appeared in Boston. The other four that he said were located in New York were Sheldon & Company, Clark and Maynard, Porter and Coates, and Harper.

Although Tebbel was right in locating the three firms of Sheldon & Company, Clark and Maynard, and Harper in New York in 1884, Tebbel was apparently wrong in placing the Porter and Coates company



in New York in 1884. As shown in Appendix C, Porter and Coates were definitely in Philadelphia at least as late as 1880, and most probably later.

However, just from Taintor's 1884 testimony, it can be seen that it is obviously not true that Van Antwerp, the publishers of McGuffey's, was the largest textbook company in the world in the 1870's, as *Early American Textbooks* stated. The firm of Van Antwerp was not even the largest in America in 1884, being equaled at that time by Ivison. Furthermore, the period of the McGuffey publishers' largest sales came immediately after the 1879 McGuffey's revision appeared on the market, according to Vail. Therefore, Taintor's 1884 report of their sales figures was during the period of their greatest sales, from 1879 to 1890. The McGuffey publishers obviously had been less successful before 1879, so the claim was even less true for the 1870's than for 1884.

Other countries also published textbooks, such as Great Britain with its vast empire, to all of which it exported textbooks. By the 1870's, the Nelson company in Great Britain had become a huge publisher and yet was still only one of many textbook publishers there such as Cassell's and Macmillan's. All three of those very large British companies were marketing their reading series in America, according to Leypoldt's 1876 *American Catalogue of books in print in America*. Those British companies must have been very large if they went to the trouble to try to capture part of the American market.

Yet no claim is ever made that McGuffey's publishers had a London, England, office, or a Sydney, Australia, office, or a Johannesburg, South Africa, office, or a Bombay, India, office, which would demonstrate that they had made similar efforts to those of the British companies. Instead, Vail said the McGuffey's publisher even had to buy out what was apparently its only fully licensed publisher of the McGuffey Readers, a New York company, in 1862, because that company had been bankrupted by its inability to sell books in the South during the Civil War!

On what grounds are those British companies considered to have sold fewer textbooks than McGuffey's publishers, which is implicit in the statement in the "Introduction" that was contributed by a professor of the history of education to *Early American Textbooks*? Furthermore, on what grounds were the vast numbers of other European publishers of schoolbooks presumed to have been smaller than McGuffey's publishers? Where were the heavily researched and provable footnotes to support that all-inclusive statement? It is that kind of fake "scholarship" which has disgracefully been permitted to maintain the McGuffey Myth.

Concerning McGuffey's competition in the 1870's and later, the period in which the statement in *Early American Textbooks* claimed its publisher was the largest textbook publisher in the world, the Appleton company was one of the major American publishers of books on education in that period. By the admission of Vail who was a part owner of the company publishing McGuffey's, the Appleton texts had fought the new McGuffey's texts to a draw for control of the market in the 1880's, starting some six years before Taintor's 1884 comments. Yet Vail implied further that Appleton and Van Antwerp fought to a draw only in the Midwest area, where McGuffey's later did greatly outsell Appleton's. The Appleton/Van Antwerp textbook war is certainly testimony against the statement which implied that the McGuffey's publishers dwarfed other textbook publishers.

Furthermore, Barnes was obviously an enormous American publisher of textbooks in the early 1870's, as is evident from the book lists in the back of their contemporary editions, like Welch's book on object lessons which has been referred to elsewhere. It is very probable, from the size of those book lists in the early 1870's, that Barnes was a larger textbook publisher than the McGuffey's publishers at that time. Yet they became equal by 1884, according to Taintor's 1884 testimony, which was after the enormously successful phonic 1879 McGuffey edition appeared on the market.

In 1890, less than twenty years after the company W. B. Smith had founded was supposed to be the largest textbook company in the world according to the statement in *Early American Textbooks*, it was swallowed up as only one-fourth of the new American Book Company, formed by the merger of the textbook publishers, Ivison, Appleton, Barnes and Van Antwerp. That fact is certainly an apparent contradiction of the statement in *Early American Textbooks*.

Concerning the final “meaning”-approach revision of the McGuffey Readers when American Book Company was the publisher, Vail said, (page 58), “Dr. James Baldwin, who was the author of the Harper Readers and of Baldwin’s Readers” did the last revision of 1901.

The 1901 “meaning”-approach McGuffey’s edition was the only revision after the general phonic “sound”-approach revision of 1879, on which Vail had worked. That 1901 revision used the “word method” and phony phonics instead of the real phonics of the 1879 series. (It is discussed at length in Appendix C, under American Book Company.) A copy of book one of the 1901 series is in the Department of Education library in Washington, D. C., but it was not listed in the 1985 *Early American Textbooks*, which publication had been intended as a representative sampling of the library’s holdings. The compilers of *Early American Textbooks* either did not see that 1901 revision or did not realize its significance.

There was something different about the copy that I saw (possibly the only copy) of the 1901 sight-word McGuffey’s book one in the Department of Education library in Washington, D. C. Inside its cover was a half-inch- or inch-wide white paper strip around its contents, so that it was impossible to turn the pages without breaking that strip. I had to break the strip to read the book. I have never seen any other book with such a seal around it. If the book had been rebound (as it very well may have been), that could account for such a strip. However, the fact that the paper strip was still unbroken suggests that the copy had not been seen by the editors of *Early American Textbooks*, so that they obviously could not have included it in their listings.

Concerning the publication of *Early American Textbooks*, I was told by an employee of the Department of Education library that it was very difficult to get that material published, because its publication was greatly opposed by some people. Why should that have been the case? Such a catalog, on the face of it, certainly should be considered innocuous. Despite the fact it is sometimes inaccurate, I have found it enormously helpful in compiling this history, and must applaud its publication. If more editing and checking assistance had been made available when the volume was being prepared, its occasional inaccuracies could easily have been removed. It was obviously a huge job to compile, and sufficient assistance should have been given to its compilers.

As has been shown, the changes in company names for the publishers of McGuffey’s were in 1841, 1852, 1863, 1868, 1877, and 1890. In 1890, Caleb S. Bragg became the chairman of the board of the new American Book Company, formed from his company, Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., and the three other companies, Ivison, Barnes and Appleton. Concerning Bragg’s originally joining McGuffey’s publishers, which had the name Wilson Hinkle & Co. at the time Bragg joined them in 1871, Vail said (page 54):

“Mr. Caleb S. Bragg had for years acted as the agent for a list of books selected by him from the publications of two or three publishers and was a partner in the firm of Ingham & Bragg, booksellers of Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Bragg sold his interest in the business in Cleveland and became a partner in Wilson, Hinkle & Co., on April 10, 1871; and at the same time Henry H. Vail and Robert F. Leaman, who had for some years been employees, were each given an interest in the profits although not admitted as full partners until three years later.”

The name of Ingham and Bragg appears on the title page of a competitor to the McGuffey Readers, Hillard's *The Third Primary Reader*, of 1858, part of the original Hillard reading series. Above "Cleveland: Ingham and Bragg" appears "Boston: Hickling, Swan & Brewer." This title page on a Harvard library copy shows, therefore, that Bragg was tied in 1858 to a firm publishing a competitor to the McGuffey Readers.

Furthermore, the predecessor to the Boston firm publishing that competitive Hillard series in 1858 had published the Worcester Readers for many years, and they had been McGuffey's first adversaries. Henry H. Vail wrote the following on pages 42-44:

"On October 1st [1838] Benjamin F. Copeland and Samuel Worcester brought suit in the court of the United States against Truman & Smith and William H. McGuffey for infringement of copyright, claiming that material had been copied from Worcester's Second, Third, and Fourth Readers and that even the plan of the two latter readers had been pirated.... To place themselves entirely in the right and remove every cause for cavil or complaint, [McGuffey's publishers]...expunged everything claimed as original, and substituted other matter.... The suit [was] settled by paying the plaintiffs two thousand dollars.... The Worcester Readers had a short and inconspicuous life. When this suit was brought, their publishers were Richardson, Lord and Holbrook of Boston. In 1836 Charles J. Hendee published them, and in 1854 they appeared with the name of Jenks, Hickling & Swan of Boston. These several publishers were probably gobbled up by some imaginary Book Trust sixty years ago."

My copy of S. T. Worcester's *A Second Book for Reading and Spelling*, New Edition, published in 1845, shows that Jenks & Palmer of Boston published Worcester's whole reading series in that year. *Early American Textbooks* shows Jenks, Palmer & Co. of Boston published *A Third Book for Reading and Spelling* in 1848, also one of the Worcester series.

Jenks, Palmer & Co. of 1848 were obviously the predecessor to Jenks, Hickling & Swan who Vail said published the Worcester reading series in 1854. Therefore, the Hillard series published by Hickling, Swan and Brewer in 1858 on which Bragg was shown as the Cleveland agent was the direct successor to the Worcester series.

Yet, before 1862, the Worcester series was no longer listed among its former publishers' current textbooks in pamphlets presently in the Harvard library. Instead, the Hillard reading series was listed. One of those pamphlets was dated September 17, 1862, entitled, *Truth Vindicated: A Correction of Sundry Falsehoods and Misrepresentations in a Circular Signed by Oliver Ellsworth*" (Educ 2199.01 bx), by Brewer & Tileston (the obvious successors to Hickling, Swan & Brewer). The other was Brewer & Tileston's pamphlet of January 19, 1863, *To the Readers of the "Maine Teacher,"* (Educ 2199.01 bx), in response to Ellsworth's answer.

Vail was certainly wrong that the Worcester readers "had a short and inconspicuous life" and that their "several publishers were probably gobbled up by some imaginary Book Trust sixty years ago," which would have been about 1850, since Vail published his book in 1911. Instead, the Worcester readers had lasted from 1826 until some time after 1854, probably until after 1858, and it was their publishers who retired them for a newer series: the Hillard books, which must be considered as their immediate descendants. The publishers of the Worcester readers in 1854, Jenks, Hickling & Swan, under the new name of Hickling, Swan & Brewer, became the publishers of the enormously successful Hillard series in 1858. It was most probably shortly after 1858 that the publishers stopped selling the Worcester readers. (See Appendix C for the sequence of publishers of the Worcester and Hillard readers.)

Under that successful publisher's name on the title page of The Third Primary Reader of Hillard's appeared "Cleveland: Ingham and Bragg." So Bragg had joined the competition to McGuffey's by 1858, but when he became a partner in Wilson, Hinkle & Company he was changing sides in the textbook wars of the period.

Concerning McGuffey's sales and competition before its most successful revision in 1879, Vail said (page 61-62):

"The Willson Readers, published by the Harper Brothers, were vigorously pushed into the schools of Ohio and Indiana about 1867.... In a few years the Willson Readers were out of the schools...

"The Goodrich Readers published by Morton & Griswold in Louisville, Ky., were perhaps the most constant competitors with the McGuffey Readers in the early years throughout the states of the Mississippi Valley.... They were first copyrighted in 1839 [sic] and were frequently revised. They finally became the property of the Louisville publisher. Mr. Smith and Mr. Morton kept up a most vigorous schoolbook war, especially in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky in the years from 1845 to 1860.... From the location of Cincinnati on the Ohio River, then affording the cheapest means of distributing goods to all parts of the South, Mr. Smith had obtained, before 1860, a very considerable part of the schoolbook trade in the Southern states of the Mississippi Valley."

Vail's inference at the beginning of the above excerpt that McGuffey's retained almost the entire Indiana market after 1867 is of interest in connection with the material quoted elsewhere concerning Indiana, and in connection with the Bancroft 1883 series also discussed elsewhere. The Bancroft sight-word "meaning" series first appeared in Indiana in 1883 under the title, Indiana State Series, published by Indiana School Book Co., Indianapolis. By 1889, it became the sole authorized series for government schools, obviously displacing earlier materials. From Vail's comments, it seems probable that the 1879 phonic "sound" McGuffey's series was the material which was displaced in Indiana by that government-authorized "meaning" series. If so, that was just one more instance when change-agents had used governmental control to displace "sound" for beginning readers with "meaning." It was the Indiana State Series which was referred to in the editorial from the Indiana School Journal quoted previously.

Vail told on page 53 of the change on April 20, 1877, from the old firm name of Wilson, Hinkle & Co. to the new firm name of Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., under which company name he eventually became a partner, Vail said (page 56):

"Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. issued many new and successful books and remade many, including the McGuffey Readers and Speller, Ray's Arithmetics and Harvey's Grammars. Most of these met with acceptance and this was so full and universal throughout the central West as to give opportunity to the competing agents of other houses to honor Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. with such titles as "Octopus" and "Monopoly," names that were used before "Trusts" were invented..."

Note he referred to "full and universal" acceptance of Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co.'s books (therefore after 1877) only through the "central West," an area with a minority of the American population in the 1880's. Vail said (page 58):

"The story of the revisions of 1843 and 1853 has been told. The books were apparently in satisfactory use in a large part of the West; but about 1874 the firm thought it wise to exploit a new series."

“In satisfactory use in a large part of the West” obviously makes no claim that Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co.’s predecessors had almost monopolized the American market, even in the “West.” It also makes it clear that the use of McGuffey’s before 1877 was largely limited to what Vail called the “West” (actually the Midwest). Vail went on:

“At its request Mr. Thomas W. Harvey prepared a series consisting of five books. This series was published in 1875; but the experience of a few years with the Harvey Readers showed that the people still preferred the McGuffey Readers and after long discussion and hesitation it was agreed that these should again be revised. This determination was hastened by the publication of the Appleton Readers in 1877 [sic], and by the incoming of a number of skilled agents pushing these books in the field that had for many years been held so strongly for the McGuffey Readers as to baffle the best endeavors of two or three Eastern publishers who had tested the market. On April 9, 1878, the firm of Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. determined upon making a new series of readers bearing the well-recognized title of McGuffey’s Eclectic Readers and distinguished as a ‘Revised Edition.’ ... The method of teaching in the first reader was to be adjusted to a phonic-word method, and the gradation was to be improved.... The first reader was entirely re-written by the editor.”

It is curious that Vail made no mention in his history of the fact that the primer of the earlier McGuffey’s edition had been available in Leigh phonic print since 1868. It must have been that “sound”-approach edition which the 1878 “meaning”-approach Appleton Readers were originally trying to displace in the Midwest before the 1879 phonic McGuffey’s edition came on the market. It must also have been largely that 1868 Leigh-print edition which the Harper “meaning” series had tried to displace for a few years after about 1867, which intense competition Vail also mentioned, as quoted previously. Yet Vail must certainly have approved of the use of such true phonics as Leigh print since Vail, himself, was the editor who produced the phonic McGuffey’s first reader of 1879. He had commissioned others to write it, but found their version unsatisfactory and so completely rewrote it himself.

Vail had said of the initial plans for the 1879 revision, “The method of teaching in the first reader was to be adjusted to a phonic-word method,” but the company had been selling phonic materials since the 1860’s. They had not only been printing McGuffey’s New Eclectic Primer, New Edition in Leigh’s phonic print since 1868, but had published *The Phonic Reader No. 1* by A. Knell and J. H. Jones, listed as #1837 on page 90 of *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, OERI, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985. It is shown there as being 112 pages long, and published in 1868 at Cincinnati: Wilson, Hinkle & Co.; Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger; and New York: Clark & Maynard (PE III7.A1K.K55). It was obviously their company’s response to the drive for more phonics that was characteristic of the 1860’s. Yet that book must not have been too successful. Vail never mentioned it in his history, but it is described on page 242 of Ferdinand Buisson’s 1876 report on his American visit, published later in French in Paris, which report is mentioned elsewhere in this history.

Vail said of the 1879 revision (page 60):

“In this revision the three lower books were almost entirely new. The fourth was largely new matter, while in the Fifth and Sixth such matter as could not be improved from the entire field of literature, was retained.”

Vail said (page 60):

“As soon as these books were completed, large editions were printed and they were most vigorously exploited not only to take the place of the older edition of McGuffey Readers, but to supplant the newly introduced Appleton Readers.

“This book-fight was a long and bitter one. Every device known to the agency managers of the houses engaged was employed. Even exchanges of books became common. It was war; and like every war was carried on for victory and not for profit. It is perhaps fortunate that such contests cannot in the nature of things last long. In the long run business must show a profit or fail. Contrary to popular opinion, a book war is not profitable in itself; but is a form of petition that has existed for fully a century. It presents no novelties even now. The two chief combatants at length withdrew with one accord. Neither firm could claim entire victory; but the McGuffey readers came through with much the larger sales and these increased for years....”

Vail’s earlier comments make it clear that the “war” with Appleton’s was fought in the Midwest area, since he referred, as quoted previously, to the “incoming of a number of skilled [Appleton] agents pushing these books in the field that had for many years been held so strongly for the McGuffey Readers as to baffle the best endeavors of two or three Eastern publishers who had tested the market.” It was in the Midwest that McGuffey’s came through with “much the larger sales and these increased for years....” However, Indiana in that “field” was lost by 1889 or earlier to the Bancroft “meaning” series prepared as an Indiana state-mandated edition, as is discussed elsewhere.

Vail spoke of the last revision of 1901 by Dr. James Baldwin, and said (page 57):

“These books acquired at once a large sale, and the sales of the previous editions are still remunerative.”

Why would American Book Company, the owners by then of the 1879 McGuffey’s materials, have revised the series in 1901 if it had been holding ninety percent of the total American market? If the 1879 McGuffey’s (the one most people know today as McGuffey’s,) were so highly regarded, why then did Baldwin’s McGuffey’s revision obviously outsell it in 1901, which is implicit in Vail’s comments?

### Concerning the McGuffey Myth

John H. Westerhoff III wrote the 1978 book, *McGuffey and His Readers*, which was republished by Mott Media, Inc., Milford, Michigan, in 1982. Westerhoff credited (page 16) Ralph Rusk, who wrote *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier*, Columbia University, 1925, with having said on page 25 of Rusk’s book:

“Upon the generations immediately succeeding the pioneer period the influence of McGuffey may well have been greater than that of any other writer or statesman in the West. His name has become a tradition not yet extinct.”

That may well have been true in the “Middle Western Frontier.” The error is in applying the statement to the whole of America.

Westerhoff referred to an article by Hugh Fullerton in the *Saturday Evening Post* on November 16, 1927, “That Guy McGuffey.” The article’s title is repugnant. It was an attempt to be “folksy” by the public relations associates of the “experts” who were inventing the McGuffey Myth. (It is well to refer here to a remark made by James McKeen Cattell in 1929, quoted at length later: “It is the object of psychology to describe, to understand, and to control human conduct....” In being fed the McGuffey Myth, American thinking was apparently being “controlled.”) In his 1927 article, Fullerton said:

“For year’s McGuffey’s system and his books guided the minds of four-fifths of the school children of the nation in their taste for literature, in their morality, in their social development, and next to the Bible in their religion.”

Then, after quoting Rusk’s 1925 Columbia University book, as well as Fullerton’s 1927 remarks in the Saturday Evening Post, Westerhoff said (page 16):

“It was such convictions, repeated countless times, that prompted Mark Sullivan in 1929 to chastise historians and scholars for ignoring McGuffey, the ‘most popular, most affectionately remembered person in the nineteenth century, a national giant to be ranked with George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.’“

In a footnote, Westerhoff cited Mark Sullivan, in the third volume of his *Our Times* series, New York: Scribner’s, 1929, p. II. In Sullivan’s second volume, copyrighted in 1927 and first published in 1928, Sullivan had referred on page 15 to the presumably massive use of the McGuffey Readers. That second volume was entitled, *America Finding Herself*. According to Lawrence A. Cremin, in *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876*, page 538, Sullivan’s series of six books were all entitled, *Our Times: The United States, 1900-1925*, New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1926-1935.

Dr. Cremin referred to the belief that the McGuffey Readers had shaped the mind of America, and referred to it as:

“...the so-called McGuffey myth, propagated above all by Mark Sullivan in the second volume of *Our Times: the United States, 1900-1925*....”

However, the McGuffey Myth should not be defined primarily as the belief that the series shaped the mind of America, but instead should be defined primarily as the delusion that McGuffey’s were the readers used by eighty or ninety percent of American children in the nineteenth century.

What Westerhoff did not realize was that Vail’s 1911 book in praise of the readers really made no such claims, and the “countless times” the “convictions” were repeated concerning McGuffey’s dated only from the 1925 book published by Columbia University.

A book which is reported to have been published about 1830 but which appears to be a figment of someone’s imagination is *A Treatise on Methods of Reading*, by William Holmes McGuffey (1800-1873). In *McGuffey and His Readers* by John H. Westerhoff III (Abington: 1978, Mott Media, Milford, Michigan: 1982), Westerhoff said (page 44):

“Previously, (McGuffey) is said to have published in London *A Treatise on Methods of Reading*.”

Westerhoff referred (page 72) to Harvey C. Minnich’s *William Holmes McGuffey and His Readers*, American Book Company, 1936, (page 32) as his source for the report on McGuffey’s treatise and added:

“Regretfully, the manuscript appears to be no longer in existence.”

It stretches credibility past the breaking point that a young frontier pioneer in Ohio about 1830 like McGuffey would choose to send all the way to London to have some company there publish his very first book when the United States at that time was awash with independently-owned printing companies, as the title pages on readers and spellers of the period demonstrate. Apart from the McGuffey Readers, that

mysterious text would have been almost the only book McGuffey ever wrote. (Westerhoff lists McGuffey's known writings on pages 163 and 164. Except for an unpublished three-volume work on philosophy written late in life by the college-philosophy professor McGuffey, only a few articles and essays are shown.) Such a report is not believable, even without Westerhoff's blunt admission quoted below that Minnich's book was "undocumented."

In a note on page 25, Westerhoff said,

"Now out of print, two of the most frequently quoted books written about McGuffey and his Readers are *A History of the McGuffey Readers* (Cleveland: Burrows Co., 1911) by Henry Vail, onetime editor of the McGuffey Readers, and *William Holmes McGuffey and His Readers* (New York: American Book Co., 1936) by Harvey C. Minnich, onetime professor of education, dean and curator of the McGuffey Museum at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. For years these basically undocumented works were relied upon as authoritative sources for understanding McGuffey and his Readers...."

Unlike Minnich's, Vail's history cannot be considered to have been undocumented, even for the years before he joined the company. Furthermore, from the 1860's onwards, as an employee of the publisher of the McGuffey books only some thirty years after McGuffey wrote his books, Vail was himself an unimpeachably authoritative source. It would be impossible to find anyone more authoritative. Yet Westerhoff admitted that "professor of education" Minnich did write an undocumented book.

However, the date of Minnich's original text was not 1936, but 1928. At the end of the section, "Readers," in the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932 appeared "About Readers." It was apparently very unusual not just then but today to have such a section discussing readers, and it contained this entry:

"Minnich, H. C. William Holmes McGuffey and the Peerless Pioneer McGuffey Readers. pa 25c '28 Miami University"

Therefore, Minnich's history first appeared in 1928. It joined the Saturday Evening Post article of 1927, and Mark Sullivan's 1928 book, written in 1927, as being among the very first of the "references" on McGuffey's that appeared during the years of the great McGuffey promotion, which dated from 1925 to about 1935. The full-blown McGuffey Myth was launched by the publication of the Saturday Evening Post article of November 16, 1927. In the 1920's, the circulation of the Saturday Evening Post in America was enormous, very much like that of the Reader's Digest in America today, and the Saturday Evening Post was equally respectable. It provided an ideal vehicle with which to influence American thinking. If, as this writer believes, the McGuffey Myth was the deliberate invention of "experts," it must have been conceived and its promotion planned a considerable time before that first full-blown appearance on November 16, 1927, most probably about 1925. The launching of the complete, full-blown McGuffey Myth by November 16, 1927, was almost immediately followed up by references on page 15 of Mark Sullivan's 1928 *America Finding Herself* (copyrighted in 1927), which was the second volume of Sullivan's *Our Times* series, and by the 1928 publication of Minnich's "history." It also was referred to in the third volume in 1929 of *Our Times* (page 11), which was cited in Westerhoff's footnote, as mentioned elsewhere.

As indicated elsewhere, Dr. Lawrence Cremin of Columbia Teachers College referred to Minnich's history but dated it to 1929, probably the date of the copy Cremin saw. Furthermore, as already mentioned, Cremin specifically stated that McGuffey's sales were largely confined to the Midwest, implicitly refuting Minnich, but Cremin's statement had no effect on the McGuffey Myth which persists to this day. Minnich's 1928 book became part of the supporting background for the massively publicized McGuffey Myth that about eighty or ninety percent of Americans in the nineteenth century had learned to



read with the McGuffey “phonic” readers. This made the take-over of almost one hundred percent of American schools by the deaf-mute-method “Dick and Jane” readers after 1930 seem only “natural” and in the American “tradition.”

Yet Vail’s historically acceptable account, which would have implicitly demolished the burgeoning McGuffey Myth, was NOT in print in 1928, according to the 1928 United States Catalog! It is still largely unavailable. The New York Public Library has only a microfilm copy available, made from a book missing pages five through sixteen out of the total seventy-two pages. One microfilm frame showed page four appearing on the left and page seventeen on the right, next to it. That means the intervening pages five through sixteen were already missing at the time the book was opened to those pages and the microfilm picture was taken. I had to send to a library in the West to obtain the missing pages, as so few libraries have copies of Vail’s work.

In his 1978 book, *McGuffey and His Readers*, John H. Westerhoff III said (page 15):

“McGuffey Readers sold over seven million copies before 1850 and by 1890 had become the basic school readers in thirty-seven states.”

Westerhoff’s source for that last shatteringly improbable “fact” was John L. Clifton’s *Ten Famous American Educators* (Columbus, Ga.: R. G. Adams & Co., 1933) p. 75. Note the 1933 publication date for this “historical fact.” It was during the height of the blitz to put Scott, Foresman “Dick and Jane” readers into all American schools. The blitz was so massively successful that the names, “Dick and Jane” became as much a part of the American vocabulary for most people over forty years of age as the name George Washington.

Yet almost all of the literature on the McGuffey Readers, such as Clifton’s, are dated from the 1925 Columbia University book onwards (except Vail’s credible 1911 text, Reeder’s passing reference in 1900, and a few casual mentions by Midwesterners who actually did use McGuffey’s in their schooldays). The exceedingly peculiar fact, apparently never before been publicly noted, is that almost all of the source materials on McGuffey’s date from 1925 and later, instead of the time frame in which references to McGuffey’s should have appeared in the literature, the period in which McGuffey’s was supposed to have been in massive use. The purported massive use of McGuffey’s was supposed to have been some twenty-five to one hundred years before 1925 when the flood of materials on McGuffey’s actually began.

Sometime during 1890, the states of Idaho and Wyoming were added to the Union. Therefore, depending on whether Clifton meant “by 1890” or “by the end of 1890,” the United States had either 42 or 44 states. To assert that only five (or seven) of those states by 1890 did not have McGuffey’s as “the basic school readers” appears to be the same kind of “reporting” as we see today in the “newspapers” sold at supermarket checkout counters, which contain questionable occurrences such as Egyptian mummies being resuscitated.

The “experts” in 1925 located at Columbia Teachers College in New York and the University of Chicago in Chicago obviously intended to blanket America in 1930 with the proposed deaf-mute-method “Dick and Jane” Scott, Foresman texts by William S. Gray of the University of Chicago, as well as the deaf-mute-method Macmillan series by Arthur I. Gates of Columbia Teachers College. (Of course, no open reference was to be made to the fact that the readers used an inferior method invented almost two centuries earlier for teaching deaf-mutes.) The blanketing effect would raise questions. That is the apparent reason that the whopping McGuffey Myth was fed by “experts” to the author, Mark Sullivan, of Volume II of *Our Times, America Finding Herself*, by 1927 or before. Sullivan apparently used the Myth in total innocence. As a review of some of his mutually contradictory “facts” demonstrates, Sullivan did

not spend much time checking on the accuracy of his statements but concentrated instead on making his story-telling entertaining.

Sullivan's book, copyrighted in 1927 but published in 1928, was the second volume of his entertaining and nostalgic series, *Our Times*, the first volume of which was published in 1926 and the last reportedly in 1935. In his second volume, Sullivan thanked "experts" for their "help" on historical details. Sullivan reported the Myth as quoted below on page 15 of his book published in 1928, and Nila Banton Smith quoted Sullivan on page 109 of her "history." Her "history" was her doctoral dissertation at Columbia Teachers College about 1932, and was published in 1934 (and revised in 1965). Characteristically, no listing for Sullivan was given in Smith's index or bibliography. Nila Banton Smith, or more likely those "experts" managing and promoting her work, just planted the Myth in her readers' minds, as it had been planted in the minds of the readers of the *Saturday Evening Post* article of November 16, 1927, by Hugh Fullerton, which article had carried the repulsively folksy title, "That Guy McGuffey." The 1927, 1928, 1932, 1933 and other "references" (and even the apparently valid reference in the 1925 text published by Columbia University, referred to earlier), could then pop up as "authentic" in future years. After planting the references, the "experts" could then recite to themselves what Shakespeare had Mark Antony say quietly to himself after his very public oration over the body of Julius Caesar: "Mischief, thou art afoot. Take thou what course thou wilt."

As has already been mentioned, Nila Banton Smith's "scholarly reference" about 1932 (commercially published in 1934 and 1965) quoted Sullivan's 1928 "scholarly reference" as follows:

"...to millions, to probably nine out of ten average Americans, what taste of literature they got from McGuffey's was all they ever had; what literature the children brought into the home in McGuffey Readers was all that ever came. Broad classical reading was not general. McGuffey, in short, because of the leverage of his readers, had a large part in forming the mind of America."

So nine of ten Americans in the nineteenth century were supposed to have learned to read with the conservative, high-minded, religious, patriotic McGuffey Readers. The Myth ignored the fact that there were, in effect, two almost totally different series of the McGuffey Readers in the nineteenth century, the first coming out from 1836 to 1838 and the second in 1879. The two series were almost totally different up to Book Four, and largely different above that level. The Myth also ignored the fact that, until after about 1880, probably considerably more than one half of American children left school before they even reached Book Four, which was not meant as a fourth grade book, anyway, but just a higher level book. The "phonic" McGuffey Myth is even more ridiculous in view of the 1901 successful sight-word "meaning" edition of the McGuffey Readers, unknown today. After its appearance, the 1901 edition was marketed simultaneously with the 1879 edition. It is obvious from Vail's 1911 comments that the 1901 "meaning" edition was considerably outselling the 1879 "phonic" edition in 1911.

It is astonishing how totally the McGuffey Myth has been swallowed by people over forty or fifty years of age, so it must have received an ENORMOUS public relations blitz in the general media starting in 1925, with the Henry Ford re-issue of the 1857 McGuffey Readers, referred to later. When that Myth had been absorbed, the blanketing of America after 1930 with the deaf-mute-method "Dick and Jane" reading series was presumed to be as American as saluting the flag when it goes by in a Fourth-of-July parade.

A curious thing about this intellectual error is that it is "known" most firmly by people who are among the most widely read. This can be taken as kind of direct ratio: the more widely read a person is, the more times he will have encountered this Myth which has been injected into the literature. I heard ex-Secretary of Education Bennett, a man who was trained in the classics and philosophy, repeat the Myth in a speech he gave. I am convinced he did so quite sincerely and innocently, when he said that the sales

of McGuffey's in America were surpassed only by the sales of the Bible. Bennett would have come a lot closer to the mark if he had said that, if the statistics could be made available, and they are very curiously totally unavailable, the sales of the "Dick and Jane" deaf-mute-method series almost certainly tragically surpassed the sales of the Bible in America.

Concerning some of the obvious omissions in her "history" of the teaching of reading, Nila Banton Smith at Columbia Teachers College in 1932 totally omitted any reference to R. R. Reeder's history of the teaching of reading, even though it had been written at Columbia only thirty-two years before. She also omitted any reference to G. Stanley Hall's text, *How to Teach Reading and What to Read in School*, which apparently never mentioned McGuffey's. Hall's book was published by Heath in 1886, but its first edition probably dates to 1874, which is the date cited by E. B. Huey in his 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. Yet Hall's book, despite the fact that Nila Banton Smith ignored it in 1932, was still in print in 1928, so it obviously had been well known for a great many years.

Rudolph R. Reeder's 1900 *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, The Macmillan Company, New York, was published while he was an instructor at Columbia Teachers College. Reeder's book is the apparent original source of the fable that McGuffey's was the dominant reading series in America, even though he acknowledged that it was only one of many series. That obviously reduced its market share from the ludicrous eighty per cent to perhaps twenty per cent or so, which is the probable reason his book written while he taught at Columbia Teachers College in 1900 was ignored by Nila Banton Smith at Columbia Teachers College in 1932. Yet, contrary to the fable which apparently had its roots in Reeder's reading history, at no time was McGuffey's the dominant series in America, even though in all its editions since the 1830's it had been popular. As mentioned, the journal materials, institute reports and other sources I have seen indicate that Appleton's was the dominant series in the 1880's, and before then many series published by other Eastern publishers were very popular.

Even though Reeder's history had commenced the McGuffey Myth, he only implied that McGuffey's was the most used among other widely used series. That established a market proportion for McGuffey's that was a little larger than perhaps one-out-of-five (perhaps 20%). That this contradicted the four-out-of-five (80%) or nine-out-of-ten (90%) McGuffey Myth appears to be the reason that Smith omitted Reeder in her "history."

Reeder's intent in limiting his post-1860 remarks largely to the McGuffey series was apparently to cover up the history of the 1870's Franklin and 1878 Appleton series, which he never mentioned. (He did mention the original series before 1860 by Hillard, who was the senior author on the Franklin series.) Nor did Reeder mention almost any series published after 1860, stating only that there were very many. Reeder made the astonishing remark on page 50 that between 1860 and 1880 there had been "little change" in school readers! Although he did mention elsewhere in his book that Leigh phonics had been used in that period, he did not state that most readers had a Leigh-print edition before the appearance of the dominant 1878 Appleton series which omitted a Leigh-print edition. It was the influence of the Appleton series which is probably most responsible for the demise of Leigh phonics, as has already been discussed. Nor did Reeder note the marked change that appeared in readers starting in 1860, largely as a result of the Leigh phonic influence. Between 1860 and 1880, some increase in phonics appeared in almost all readers. After 1880, Code 3 phony phonics became the norm, in sharp contrast to the pure sight-word materials that had dominated the market before 1860.

The Franklin and Appleton series were associated with the change-agents in Massachusetts who were opposing the return of phonics, or "sound," in the 1870's, of whom William James was probably one, and who were promoting the sentence method to teach beginning reading. As has been discussed, the teaching of silent reading to beginners (which is an obvious deaf-mute approach) originated in 1870 and apparently

grew out of James' ideas on the nature of the sentence, which he considered had to be dealt with only as an unbroken whole. Silent reading was supposed to guarantee that a child would concentrate first on a whole thought (a "sentence") instead of on its isolated words, as a child might do if a sentence were first read aloud. James considered the sentence to be the equivalent of his unbreakable basic unit (a "thought") in his "stream of consciousness." After Farnham introduced the sentence method in 1870, children were supposed to deal only with such whole "thoughts" or sentences. Isolated drill on sounds, or even separate words, apart from such whole sentences, was considered by well-informed "experts," to interfere with "thought."

Rudolph R. Reeder of Columbia University, in his 1900 reading history, wrongly stated that McGuffey's came out in 1850, over a decade after it actually appeared! Reeder never mentioned the fact that there had been two totally different McGuffey's series in the lower books, an 1836-1838 sight-word approach followed by an 1879 phonic approach in its beginning book one. (A phonic primer was added in 1881). Reeder then stated (page 51):

"McGuffey's series has probably attained the largest sale and widest distribution of any series yet produced in America."

They were two claims that even Vail did not make, despite his statement mentioned elsewhere concerning the total number of copies sold of the 1879 edition which had been on the market for so very many years. However, by comparing Vail's 1911 statement, word for word, with Reeder's 1900 statement, it is evident Vail accepted part of Reeder's "expert" opinion, but interpreted it in his own frame of reference.

Vail was apparently a very reliable man and meant to inform and not to mislead, despite his obvious desire to honor the McGuffey Readers. He spoke plainly of that of which he had direct knowledge, such as the few specific sales figures for McGuffey's quoted elsewhere, and the historical sequence in the company. In Vail's 1911 statement about over-all sales for all publishers, however, he was apparently citing an earlier authority for information outside his own field of experience, instead of information based on his own direct knowledge. After all, there was no way Vail could have known the textbook sales figures of other book companies. So far as I know, no such figures have ever been published, except for Taintor's estimates and those in the Indiana School Journal, both of which have been cited previously. Even the infamous "estimate" about 1927 by Dillman, the president of American Book Company, of sales of 122,000,000 McGuffey Readers up to 1920 implicitly admitted, with the use of the word "estimate," that firm figures did not exist. Vail could only have gotten the information that McGuffey's had outsold all others from an "expert." The two statements, placed one after another, suggest the prestigious "expert" Vail was quoting by 1911 was Reeder in 1900, whom Vail was only too happy to believe. Some words in the two statements are identical or very similar:

Reeder in 1900: "McGuffey's series has probably attained the largest sale and widest distribution of any series yet produced in America."

Vail in 1911: "The revised edition of the McGuffey Readers... attained the largest sales that have as yet been accorded by the public to a single series of books."

"Attained the largest sales" is not a common or high frequency phrase. Vail in 1911 was apparently drawing on Reeder in 1900 for this particular piece of "information" but it was just so much smoke. Furthermore, a great difference can exist between the words "series" and "editions." Reeder meant "series" to cover all the McGuffey Readers, from 1836 on. Vail meant "single series" to refer to the 1879 edition only, as he specifically said, "The revised edition."

In addition, it is apparent from checking published statements from the 1880's that Appleton's most probably briefly had the "widest distribution of any series yet produced in America," with "distribution" meaning geographical coverage. Vail specifically omitted the word, "distribution," from his apparent paraphrase of Reeder, because Vail knew very well that McGuffey's was primarily a regional series. Vail could not accept that part of the "expert" statement. Nor did Lawrence A. Cremin of Columbia Teachers College, many years after Reeder, accept it, as Cremin specifically acknowledged that McGuffey's was regional in distribution, as discussed previously. By doing so, Dr. Cremin deflated the McGuffey Myth, although almost no one seems to have noticed it.

But when Vail dropped the word, "probably," from the statement, the harm had been done. Reeder's use of the word, "probably" had acknowledged that sales had been fairly evenly split among perhaps four or five major series, which put McGuffey's share in the neighborhood of twenty per cent or so. When the word, "probably," was dropped, the statement could then be used to support the claim that McGuffey's supplied not just twenty per cent or so of the reading books in America but as much as eighty to ninety per cent, or even more. Honest Vail had therefore unwittingly provided a handy 1911 statement that could be used in footnotes, ever afterwards, to support the McGuffey Myth.

It should be emphasized that Reeder totally omitted mentioning Appleton's and the Franklin series. Reeder's listing of major reading texts ended by 1860, FORTY YEARS before his "history" was written, which fact he excused because he said so many series had been issued in the interval. There had, in truth, been a great many series, which is further testimony against the McGuffey Myth.

Reeder listed the McGuffey Readers, but made no mention of the fact that their highly phonic 1881 primer and 1879 book one were sharp departures from their earlier sight-word primer, or that the company had found it necessary to publish the earlier McGuffey Readers in Leigh phonic print in the 1860's because, without Leigh print, McGuffey's was a sight-word series. By omitting those facts, Reeder laid the groundwork for the fable that "phonics" was the standard approach for teaching reading in the nineteenth century. Yet McGuffey's 1879 revised edition was the only widely used phonic "sound" series in the following period when there were many widely sold "meaning" series on the market. (Rebecca Pollard's synthetic phonic series did not become commercially available until 1887 but was apparently generally boycotted by the government schools. The government schools were following the advice of the "experts" who opposed Pollard, such as Reeder (implicitly), the writers in the Public School Journal (openly), and Colonel Parker, then in Chicago. As mentioned elsewhere, Parker referred to Pollard's synthetic phonics method as the method "full of sin.")

In his 1900 book, Reeder nevertheless described at great length and implicitly praised Charles Eliot Norton's recently issued Heart of Oak series of 1893-95, which was a totally sight-word series currently on sale. Yet his Columbia Teachers College "descendant," Nila Banton Smith, who obviously had access to Reeder's work in the Columbia Teachers College library, totally omitted mentioning the Heart of Oak series in her 1932 book. (A copy of the Heart of Oak primer is in Harvard library which is stamped as having come from Columbia Teachers College, but at what point it was traded is unknown.) Smith's failure to mention the Heart of Oak series was presumably because of its obvious ties to the activists in the 1890's, and I believe Reeder's failure to mention the 1878 Appleton or 1873 Franklin series was for the same reason.

Yet Reeder obviously had some second-hand knowledge of the Boston 1870's conflict on reading methods in which the Franklin series was involved. That is because Reeder quoted a specific comment made by Superintendent John Dudley Philbrick in one of the Boston schools' voluminous annual reports, which comment endorsed the use of spelling books. As discussed elsewhere, it is exceedingly unlikely that Reeder could have had first-hand knowledge of that passing comment of Philbrick's which is buried deep in those enormous 1870's annual reports of the Boston School Committee. Those reports today

occupy a large section of the Harvard library book shelves. Someone else in 1900 had told Reeder of that remark of Philbrick's made almost thirty years previously, and it is obvious that person had considered Philbrick's remark to be important or it would not have been remembered for all those years.

Rudolph Rex Reeder of Columbia named almost no reading texts published between 1860 and 1880, the years in which phonics was coming back into reading instruction texts, and the years during which Leigh-print editions were so prominent. Reeder did mention the popularity of Leigh's method, without mentioning that almost every major series had a Leigh-print edition by 1878. However, Reeder did list one series which came out in that period: J. L. Reynolds' Southern Grade Series of 1869. Yet he omitted all Northern series! Reeder covered the period from 1860 to 1880 by stating merely (page 51):

“From 1860 to 1880 but little change took place in the character of school readers.... It was a very active period, in the study of method, as I have elsewhere noted.... Several new series were compiled during this period, and the great series of the preceding decade largely extended their circulation.”

Reeder's remark that there was “but little change... in the character of school readers” buried the evidence of the generalized move towards more phonics in the readers published between 1860 and 1880, including the 1879 phonic McGuffey's edition, and the earlier phonic-oriented materials of its publishers like the Knell and Jones material and the Leigh-print edition of McGuffey's, both in 1868. Reeder's assurance that there had been “but little change... in the character of school readers” in the 1860 to 1880 period also buried the absolutely startling “change...in the character of school readers” that resulted when almost all the major series, not just McGuffey's, put out first-reader editions in Leigh phonic print! Those editions came out sometime after 1864 but before 1878, right in the middle of that 1860-1880 period in which Reeder assured his audience there had been “but little change.” The fact that Reeder mentioned Leigh print elsewhere in his text does not, in any way, excuse his omission of the enormous impact that Leigh phonic print had on “the character of school readers” in the 1860-1880 period.

Even more than the move to Leigh-print editions, Reeder's remark covered up most of all the existence of the change-agent Franklin and Appleton readers which had dispensed with real phonics and which used phony phonics. They had been used after 1877, with much publicity about Parker's Quincy “achievements” in teaching beginning reading by “meaning,” to displace Leigh-print texts, even to displace the 1873 Franklin Leigh-print edition in Boston. (As has been discussed, the Leigh-print Franklin editions were possibly among the primary school property, including record books, that mysteriously disappeared the summer of 1878, after the activists' got control of the Boston schools in March, 1878, and fired Philbrick). The Franklin and Appleton series also displaced those non-Leigh-print series which had included more real phonics after about 1860.

The American Catalogue by Leypoldt for 1876-84, listed Appleton's School Readers of 1878 by Harris, Rickoff and Bailey. Yet it said nothing about an edition in Leigh print. Leypoldt's first American Catalogue in 1876 showed that the Hillard and Franklin series were both available in Leigh print. So were most other popular series by 1876. Therefore, it seems evident that Appleton's omission of a Leigh edition when it was published only two years later was very deliberate.

By failing to mention the vastly-used “meaning”-approach Appleton texts, Reeder obviously avoided having to mention that the new Appleton series had chosen to omit a Leigh phonic edition, and that such an omission was a glaring one of historical importance in 1878. The major competitor to the Appleton series in the years immediately following its publication in 1878 was the McGuffey series of 1879. In sharp contrast to the 1878 Appleton “meaning” series, the McGuffey series carried its own variety of effective phonetic markings, not unlike Leigh's, and was arranged for the teaching of phonics. The competition was so intense that there was an actual publisher's war, as attested to by Vail, presumably

almost immediately after the publication of the new McGuffey series in 1879. The existence of that textbook war apparently in the early 1880's between two major publishers, and the vast differences between the non-phonic 1878 Appleton series and the phonic 1879 new McGuffey series, were facts that were strangely missing not only from Reeder's "history," but from Nila Banton Smith's as well.

Ralph Rusk's 1925 book, *The Literature of the Middle Western Frontier*, published by Columbia University, had described (correctly) the influence of McGuffey's in the Midwest. It was that same year, 1925, that Henry Ford (spontaneously?) reissued the "historical" 1857 McGuffey's series, thus reinforcing his newer public image as a devotee of "history," in contrast to his highly publicized 1919 remark, "History is bunk." The birth of the McGuffey Myth can be dated to 1925 with Henry Ford's probably highly publicized re-issue of that 1857 McGuffey series. However, it was not until the end of 1927 that the change-agents injected the McGuffey Myth in its full-blown form into American culture. That injection can be dated to November 16, 1927, when the *Saturday Evening Post* published the article by Hugh Fullerton "That Guy McGuffey."

That 1927 article contained the massive lie that for seventy-five years the McGuffey books had been used by four-fifths of American school children, which obviously would have had to have been from 1836, when they were first published, to 1911. Note the implicit crediting of Vail with that lie, since the seventy-five years terminated in 1911, the date Vail's history was published. Yet Vail had made no such claim. The four-fifths figure was pulled straight out of the air. It is easy to suspect "controlling" psychologists behind that whopper. It is probably psychologically true that a very big lie is far more believable than a little one. As discussed, the change-agents had also made an even stronger version of the lie (nine-tenths, nor four-fifths) available in permanent book form with the publication of Mark Sullivan's second volume of his *Our Times* series, *America Finding Herself*, which was copyrighted in 1927 but not published till 1928. Sullivan thanked "experts" for their help, and he undoubtedly got a lot of help concerning McGuffey's. The full-blown McGuffey Myth continued to be promoted with Sullivan's third volume in 1929, and with Minnich's history starting in 1928.

#### Concerning Henry Ford and the McGuffey Readers

Henry Ford's "1925" (probably 1927) first reissue of the "historical" 1857 McGuffey's series was certainly a contrast to his highly publicized 1919 remark, "History is bunk." It certainly reinforced his newer (expensive) public image as a devotee of "history." The change-agents hit the jackpot with the Ford publicity on the McGuffey Readers in those most active years of the promotion of the McGuffey Myth, 1927 to 1935. This was particularly so since the Ford promotion did have some basis in fact, as did the highly publicized reminiscences by a few other people from the Middle West who had really used the McGuffey series. The McGuffey series did, after all, contain much fine material, as did so many other series of the nineteenth century.

According to page 15 of the 1978 book, *McGuffey and His Readers*, by John H. Westerhoff III, republished by Mott Media, Inc., Milford, Michigan, in 1928, Henry Ford (1863-1947) "personally issued a reprint of the six McGuffey Readers (the 1857 edition), which he nostalgically remembered as significant in his own education." Yet, in his book copyrighted in 1927, Sullivan gave the date of Ford's reissue as 1925. As discussed earlier, the reissue was probably first put out in 1927.

It is tempting to remark that someone about 1927 may have reminded Ford, who had publicly embarrassed himself in 1919 with that remark, "History is bunk," of the fact that Ford had used the "historical" McGuffey Readers. Ford may have received some such influence before he conveniently reissued (or, probably more correctly, signed the checks that paid for the reissue) of that probably highly-publicized nostalgic edition in the McGuffey-conscious years that began in 1927. If Ford's interest in the McGuffey Readers had been so long standing, why was it only in those critical years of 1927 to

1935 that it burst forth so publicly? Ford's personal involvement could have been minimal, but to obtain the lending of Ford's name to the publicity blitz at a time that Ford and his cars had become household names was magnificent public relations.

The 1928 United States Catalog was published during the period when the McGuffey Myth appeared in its full-blown form. It listed under "Readers" currently being sold by American Book Company only the 1879 Revised Edition of McGuffey's, and the 1901 New McGuffey Readers. The 1912 United States Catalog had also listed under "Readers" only the 1879 and 1901 editions, and under "Readers, Supplementary," the 1887-1888 W. H. McGuffey's Alternate Readers, primer to sixth reader. They were all sold by American Book Company in 1912, but nothing earlier than the 1879 edition of readers was listed. Under "Primers," the 1928 United States Catalog listed the 1881 McGuffey primer sold by American Book Company and also something called the McGuffey Chart Primer sold by the dozen and first printed in 1896. No information is available on that 1896 material. It was also listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as sold by American Book Company, along with an Alternate Primer and four unexplainable varieties of the "Eclectic Primer."

Therefore, emphatically, with the possible exception of primers in 1912, those earlier editions of the McGuffey Readers before 1879 were NOT in print as early as 1912 and very possibly had been out of print for a great many years before that. It is obvious that Henry Ford's (or his public relations staff's?) deciding to reissue the 1857 "meaning" edition, probably in 1927, was very extraordinary. That was particularly true since the 1901 "meaning" edition and the 1879 phonic "sound" edition were both still being sold commercially, according to the 1928 United States Catalog.

In his 1927 book, Mark Sullivan dated the Ford re-issue of the 1857 McGuffey Readers to 1925, but, as discussed, it was probably 1927. Westerhoff dated the reissue to 1928, the issue he probably saw. Yet the First Eclectic Reader in the Syracuse public library, the "Gift of Henry Ford," was published in 1932. The public library in Syracuse, New York, called the Onandago County Library, had McGuffey books 1, 2, 3 and 4 when I visited there on April 17, 1984. The first reader which I examined had been donated by Henry Ford and was in the 1857 "meaning" edition, and so, presumably, were the rest.

Now, that was a very interesting development: A press someplace, funded with Ford money, from probably 1927 to at least 1932, had been grinding out free copies of that long-expired "meaning" edition of the McGuffey series. Since the books in that 1857 edition were NOT listed among the books for sale in the 1928 United States Catalog or the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932, they must have been given out free of charge. That the books in the 1857 series were not for sale indicates that the interest in them was coming from someone other than the general public. It was reputed to come from Henry Ford, himself. When really considered, that reputed intensity of interest by Ford is seen as a very strange thing. (Was the Ford Foundation possibly involved instead?) Those Ford-funded editions can be dated probably to 1927, and definitely to 1928 and 1932 (and most probably were appearing in the intervening years, the greatest years of the promotion of the McGuffey Myth). There is no reason to think that the city of Syracuse would have been treated so very differently from other large American cities, being singled out for a "gift" if other cities were slighted. Those expired editions were probably being donated as prestigious "gifts" carrying Henry Ford's prestigious name to libraries all over the United States in 1932.

Between about 1927 and 1932, and possibly later, Henry Ford's name and money were being used to mass produce those "nostalgic" McGuffey Readers in support of the McGuffey Myth, and the evidence suggests the presses were turning out those "nostalgic" readers in numbers that may have rivaled the Detroit assembly lines turning out Ford's cars. The edition dates of 1927 (probable) and 1928 and 1932 (confirmed), and the presence of Ford's 1932 "gift" to the Syracuse public library, certainly seems to suggest that.



The Syracuse McGuffey's First Eclectic Reader with the date of 1932 has a Syracuse public library bookplate which reads, "Gift of Mr. Henry Ford." The copyright page shows that registrations were made in 1857 by W. B. Smith, in 1863 by Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle, and in 1885 by Van Antwerp, Bragg and Co. This 1857 edition is not the 1838 "sound"-approach spelling book that was meant to be used first, before the McGuffey reading series, when it was prepared by William H. McGuffey in 1838. Instead, the 1857 first book is a sight-word book, like the first book in the original 1836 edition that had been written by William H. McGuffey's brother, the Reverend McGuffey.

The flyleaf on the 1857 copy showed, "Reprinted by Henry Ford from McGuffey First Eclectic Reader, 1932." On the title page, a list was given in the "Publisher's Notice" of the books in the Eclectic Educational Series, including titles on arithmetic, grammar, "etc." Under the list appeared the company name, American Book Company, New York - Cincinnati - Chicago. However, it is doubtful, despite the 1885 copyright by Van Antwerp, that the revised 1857 edition had ever been published by American Book Company, since that company only came into existence in 1890 after the later 1879 series had already been in print for eleven years.

Henry Ford is reputed to have wanted the 1857 edition republished because it was the one he reportedly used as a child, but the record suggests that the title page may not have been a reprint of that original edition, but may have been set up in about 1927 or afterwards, since it showed the name of American Book Company.

In the 1928 United States Catalog section headed, "Readers," most entries were listed with the full information available. However, some few only showed, "See author entry." This obviously implied these few series were better-selling than the vast number of others listed as for sale in 1928. Appleton's 1878 series still appeared as in print in the 1928 United States Catalog, and it was listed under "Readers" like the vast majority of other series, with no such notation as "See author entry." Concerning the McGuffey series, only two editions appeared, those of 1901 and 1879:

McGuffey, W: H. New McGuffey readers;  
first-fifth readers, 5 v 1st 32c; 2d 40c; 3d  
48c; 4th 56c; 5th 68c; '01 Am. bk.  
- Revised eclectic readers. See author entry.

Unlike the 1878 Appleton "meaning" series and the 1901 New McGuffey Readers, also a "meaning" series, the 1879 Revised Eclectic Readers, the one on which Vail had worked, was a phonic "sound" series and the above quotation shows that it had its own special entry in 1928. That confirms that the 1879 series was a best-selling series in 1928, as it had not been in 1911 when Vail's comment clearly implied that the 1901 series was outselling the 1879 series.

Yet the re-issue of the McGuffey's series carrying Henry Ford's name and paid for with his money was the very outdated 1857 "meaning" edition, and it was obviously being widely promoted from about 1927 to at least after 1932. One of the unfortunate effects the Ford-supported 1857 reissue ultimately achieved, besides promoting the falsehood of the McGuffey Myth, was to confuse the public about the real identity of the McGuffey series. Sending out all over America free copies of the sight-word 1857 McGuffey re-issue submerged public awareness of Vail's 1879 phonic edition, even though that 1879 edition had once again been a best-seller in 1928.

In recent years, the 1879 edition has been in print once again, and the assumption now is that McGuffey's has always been a phonics series. That relatively recent reissue of Vail's 1879 McGuffey's series, republished by Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, Inc., of New York, Cincinnati, Toronto, London and Melbourne, very possibly had no connection with American Book Company, which was still

publishing the 1879 series in 1928. The original and renewed copyrights on the 1879 series must have all expired by the time of that Van Nostrand Reinhold reissue, and the material would have been in the public domain.

Von Nostrand Reinhold's copyright page listing those original copyrights shows, on McGuffey's Eclectic Spelling Book, only a copyright by Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. in 1879. On McGuffey's First Eclectic Reader, Revised Edition, the copyright dates shown on the reissue are 1879 by Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., 1896 by American Book Company, and 1907 and 1920 by H. H. Vail. The cover on the first reader of the reissue does show the name of American Book Company, as the originals would have done after 1890 when American Book Company became its publisher. However, the spelling book republished by Von Nostrand Reinhold does not show the name of American Book Company on its cover or any indication that American Book Company ever copyrighted it. Yet, from Dillman's statement referred to elsewhere on over-all McGuffey sales including the speller in 1888 and 1889, it is obvious the speller must have had very large sales in those years.

By 1896, seventeen years had elapsed since the 1879 McGuffey copyrights. In 1896, American Book Company went to the trouble to take out a new copyright on McGuffey's first reader and presumably the rest of the readers, but did not bother to do so on the McGuffey speller. An excellent explanation exists for American Book Company's disinterest in the McGuffey speller. In 1890, the same year that American Book Company acquired all the McGuffey titles from Van Antwerp, they acquired the Webster speller from Appleton. With ownership of the Webster best-seller of best-sellers, American Book Company may well have lost interest in McGuffey's speller by 1896. It was in 1896 that American Book Company issued the Chart Primer (whatever that was) according to the 1928 United States Catalog. Therefore, in 1896, American Book Company were apparently updating their copyrights on most of the 1879 McGuffey series but apparently deliberately omitted copyrighting the McGuffey speller.

The public relations job linking Ford's name to the 1857 edition of the McGuffey Readers obviously continued for many years. W. J. Cameron gave a talk on the McGuffey Readers on the Ford Sunday Evening Hour on March 27, 1935, which was a nation-wide radio broadcast on Columbia Broadcasting System in prime-time. Cameron's talk was reproduced on pages 533 to 535 of Readings in American Educational History by Edgar W. Knight and Clifton L. Hall, first published by Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., in 1951, and by Greenwood Press, Publishers, New York, in 1970. As part of his remarks, Cameron said:

“Mr. Ford's interest in McGuffey was revived by a simple incident. One afternoon as the school children danced and shouted past the Ford home, Mrs. Ford remembered some verses she had learned from McGuffey Readers in her school days -

“Hear the children gaily shout  
‘Half past four and school is out!’“

“Search was made for her old schoolbooks, but the First Reader, in which the verses were, was not to be found. Mr. and Mrs. Ford telephoned their friends, but none had the book. For a long time after that Mr. Ford haunted the old bookshops of many cities in search of McGuffey Readers. The result was one of the finest collections of these Readers in the country..... And then one sunny afternoon last September on that farm [on which McGuffey was born] in the presence of 15,000 people and presidents and professors of universities and colleges with which McGuffey in his lifetime had been associated, Mr. Ford's monument in honor of the author of the Readers was dedicated. It stands on the exact spot where the chimney of McGuffey's childhood home reared its squat and sturdy mass. And Mr. Ford made a speech that day. True, it was a very short speech, but even that is extraordinary. He doesn't believe that much is accomplished by talk. But

that McGuffey Day in Pennsylvania was an occasion! Mr. Ford is probably prouder of his knowledge of the six McGuffey Readers than of any other volumes in his extensive library.

“William Holmes McGuffey belongs in the calendar of our national prophets. He is honored at Dearborn because moral principles became educational essentials under his system,. Many wish that our present public education might be made the means of character formation that it was in McGuffey’s day....”

These remarks badly need turning inside out, apart from their almost unbearable tone.

So Henry Ford, richer than Croesus, was supposed to be living in a house near a public school, where Mrs. Ford could watch the children run by on the way home. Since Ford had been a very rich man for very many years, that sounds more like my neighborhood than the neighborhood around the Ford mansion.

So Mrs. Ford was supposed to have large numbers of her old schoolbooks. That would have been highly unusual. A stray schoolbook, usually a grammar book because it is a kind of reference book, does turn up in houses that had family members who went to school in Mrs. Ford’s day and for a generation or so after. If the family had to buy the child’s books instead of the school’s buying them, the family usually bought used copies from neighbors and then sold them later to other neighbors, until the books finally fell apart. If the school bought the books, the books were left at the school when the child was finished with them, unless the child had to buy them because he had damaged them wilfully. It is very unlikely that many people in those days kept a collection of school books.

Further, Mr. Ford made a short speech because he reportedly did not think much was accomplished by talk. What, then, were the McGuffey Readers if they were not “talk”?

Finally, W. J. Cameron said:

“Mr. Ford is probably prouder of his knowledge of the six McGuffey Readers...” etc.

If Henry Ford had been so proud of his reputed knowledge of the McGuffey Readers, why didn’t he say so himself? Why did Cameron have to surmise Ford’s feelings and then have to put those words, so to speak, into famous Henry Ford’s mouth on a coast-to-coast, prime-time, radio program in 1935?

McGuffey’s books did, it is true, contain much inspirational material, but so did almost all the hosts of reading series in his day and for almost a century afterwards until about 1927! Why, then, did W. J. Cameron emote about the inspirational content of the McGuffey Readers on a coast-to-coast radio network in prime-time and promote the incredible fiction that McGuffey “belongs in the calendar of our national prophets”? Did Cameron mean perhaps, something like this: February 12 is Lincoln’s birthday, and February 22 is Washington’s birthday, so we can average the two and make February 17 McGuffey’s Day?

From any angle, W. J. Cameron was obviously doing a first-class public-relations job promoting the McGuffey Myth, which was that there had once been a series of readers that blanketed the whole United States, and he was not only using famous Henry Ford’s name to do so but had Henry Ford paying for it in 1935. That was in the period when the deaf-mute-method Dick-and-Jane readers that had arrived in 1930 actually were blanketing all of America, as no series of readers had ever done before, and as McGuffey’s most emphatically had not done. Yet it was the McGuffey Myth, being brought into the public’s attention presumably solely because of the books’ moral excellence, that made the blanketing seem only “natural.” The 1935 coast-to-coast radio broadcast gave the McGuffey Myth that had been fully launched in 1927,

and then widely promoted afterwards, what was probably a much-needed booster shot. It is very possible that the majority of American adults were tuned into that 1935 broadcast.

The power of public relations in shaping American opinions had been well established before 1927, the year the McGuffey Myth was fully launched. Some time ago, a television documentary was made on the biography of an early public relations and advertising man, who had worked in the Woodrow Wilson administration during World War I. His name is lost to me, but a little library work could turn it up, if needed. A very old man at the time of the television interview, he told with amusement of an early public relations stunt about 1922. To show the power of carefully tailored propaganda, his group had some young debutantes (and debutantes were celebrities in those days) smoke cigarettes while taking part in Fifth Avenue's Easter Parade in New York City. Before that Easter Parade, the idea of American women smoking was almost totally rejected. Yet, after it, American women took up smoking in great numbers. The old man's "amusing" demonstration established that all that was necessary to move much of the public to accept the change-agents' will was properly tailored propaganda.

What is contemptible, of course, about such behavior is its deviousness, its trickery, and its disregard for obtaining the properly informed consent of others. However, it is obvious that it was well known by "experts" long before 1927 that public opinion could be shaped by such carefully tailored propaganda, and the existence of the McGuffey Myth appears to have been the result of just such propaganda.

The coast-to-coast radio broadcast in 1935, like the Saturday Evening Post article of November 16, 1927, and Ford's undoubtedly highly publicized reprint of the McGuffey Readers probably in 1927, and then in 1928 and 1932, and undoubtedly in between, was magnificent public relations. Do I sense the involvement of the psychologist/publisher, J. McKeen Cattell, Thorndike's and Gates' close friend, in using famous Henry Ford's name (and money) to promote the McGuffey Myth? Cattell was a kind of celebrity collector, as the Cattell manuscript files at the Library of Congress attest. Also, as documented elsewhere in this history, many years before, when foundation moneys had not been so readily available to people like Cattell to support their change-agent projects, Cattell had managed to wring money from famous Alexander Graham Bell for a presumed old but unknown publishing debt, and a very considerable amount of money from famous John D. Rockefeller, as discussed elsewhere in this history. Getting financial support from famous Henry Ford would only be a continuation of Cattell's old practices. As shown elsewhere in this history, even John Dewey thought many years before that Cattell was very good at getting financial support from foundations and therefore asked for Cattell's help in getting a grant! All that Henry Ford was actually required to do, of course, besides lending his name, was to sign the checks that paid for the 1927 (probable), 1928, 1932 and other McGuffey editions and that paid for the 1935 coast-to-coast radio program.

#### Concerning the Fictional Reports by Mark Sullivan, and in Particular the Fictional Reports of McGuffey Sales

In Volume 14 of the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963), pages 573 and 574, under "McGuffey, William Holmes (1800-1873)," the statement appeared that the McGuffey readers were almost universally used in the growing common schools of the Mississippi River and the South, going through many editions and selling 122,000,000 copies.

Although the article did to some extent limit the area for the use of the McGuffey readers, the article obviously drew on the ludicrous "estimate" made about 1927 by Dillman, president of American Book Company, which will be discussed. Nevertheless, while far better than Mark Sullivan's statement to be quoted shortly, the encyclopedia's comment is wrong concerning the area in which these readers were in dominant use. In his reliable history, Henry H. Vail made it clear that the readers had much competition from Morton's books in the general area of the Mississippi River and parts of the South, at least until the

Civil War. That Morton's books were influential in part of that area even longer is confirmed by the fact that they were still shown as in print in the 1928 United States Catalog. McGuffey's area of greatest use after the Civil War was in the Midwest, as Vail indicated. In addition, the first appearance of the McGuffey speller is wrongly given in the encyclopedia article as 1846, not 1838 which Mott Media found to be the copyright date when reissuing the materials. Eventually a fifth reader was issued, which the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) dated to 1844 (which was actually a revised version), and a sixth was dated to 1857.

As has been discussed, Mark Sullivan wrote *Our Times 1900-1925*, a series of nostalgic histories. Volume II, *America Finding Herelf*, was copyrighted in 1927 and published in 1928 by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. On pages 17 and 18, Sullivan reported receiving a letter from Alexander H. McGuffey's son, Reverend Edward M. McGuffey, Rector of St. James Church, Elmhurst, New York, which said the fourth reader was probably compiled by Alexander H. McGuffey and the fifth definitely was. Sullivan dated the fifth, McGuffey's *Rhetorical Guide*, to 1841. Since Sullivan was in contact with Alexander H. McGuffey's son, whose father wrote the fifth reader, the 1841 date is probably correct concerning the year it was written, although Vail dated its actual publication to 1842. (It should be mentioned, however, that Sullivan omitted the speller in his discussion of the McGuffey series.)

Sullivan depended on "experts" in writing his history, and the result was such material as this nonsense statement on page 8:

"It is possible to set down a rough statement of the order of succession in American school books. The New England Primer was the principal one, often the only one, until well toward the opening of the nineteenth century...."

This is, of course, flatly contradicted by Noah Webster's comments on the books used in his own schooldays in the 1760's, referred to elsewhere in this history. Webster completely omitted the New England Primer from the books used when he was a boy but included Dilworth's speller, first published in England in 1740. The statement is also most significantly contradicted by the many American editions of school books in the Alston bibliography, and by the records which survive of schoolbooks imported to America and printed in America in the eighteenth century.

Sullivan made another outlandish statement on page 8:

"Then came a comparatively brief supremacy of "Spellers," beginning with Noah Webster's in 1782 [sic]. These were more than spellers...."

Alston's bibliography of spelling books shows how wrong it is to date American spellers to a beginning period of 1782. Appendix B also demonstrates how wrong the statement was, and that spellers were in use in America from the 1600's. (Sullivan did show the correct date of 1783 for Webster's speller on page 126.)

Sullivan stated on page 8 and 9:

"About the 1820's came the Readers, which, accepting the general conception that schools were places for moral teaching, included the same kind of stories and maxims as the New England Primer, and more of them. About that time education became more general; a conception of schools arose containing the seed of what we now know as common schools. With that, the readers were much expanded in size, and began to include material less strictly confined to ethical teaching. The beginning of the Readers was more or less simultaneous with the beginning of

public education at the expense of the State. The Readers reflected, as this conception of education did, a liberalizing spirit, a tendency to teach more than religion and ethics...”

As this history demonstrates, and as is shown in Appendix B, Sullivan’s remarks on readers which have just been quoted are almost pure nonsense. Yet it is this kind of nonsense which has been permitted to pass for a very long time as the history of American education. However, it is not fair to blame Sullivan alone for the nonsense “history.” He had, as he made clear, “expert” help in writing his book.

Sullivan did have a fascinating tidbit of information, if true. He said that John Pierpont, who wrote the vastly used and famous Pierpont readers, dating from the early 1820’s, had a famous grandson, John Pierpont Morgan, Senior (1837-1913), and a famous great-grandson, J. P. Morgan, Junior (1867?). The J. P. Morgans were, of course, the renowned financiers. John Pierpont Morgan, Senior, made the acid comment that was quoted earlier:

“A man always has two reasons for doing anything - a good reason and the real reason,” (The Treasury of the Familiar by Ralph L. Woods, 1942, The Macmillan Company, New York: page 660.)

Morgan’s overly cynical remark is certainly not too cynical, however, when considering the “history” of the McGuffey Readers which has been fed into the literature ever since 1927.

However, Sullivan showed a footnote contradicting his statement that “about the 1820’s” marked the arrival of reading series. His footnote on page 10 said:

“The exact sequence of Readers was: Murray’s, 1799; Abner Allen’s, used about 1804-1810; Pierpont’s, about 1825; Samuel Wood’s, 1828, Warren Colburn’s, 1833. The Angell Readers were published in the early 1830’s, the Mount Vernon Readers in 1836, and “Peter Parley’s” in 1839. Then came McGuffey’s. (The information in this foot-note was given me by Albert Mordell, of Philadelphia, and George A. Plimpton, of the publishing firm of Ginn and Company, leading authority on American school books, and owner of a unique collection of them.)”

As Appendix B demonstrates, not only are most of the dates wrong, but those materials cited are only a very small portion of the number of American readers published before McGuffey’s appeared in 1836 (not after 1839, as he implied here, although he correctly gave the date as 1836 elsewhere). However, whatever the “Mount Vernon Readers” of 1836 were is unknown.

On page 10, Sullivan said:

“About this time [1839] the adoption, by the States, of the system of free and universal public schools, began to have momentum. With that came increased demand for Readers. To meet it came a new series, eclipsing all others, past or later - the Reader of Readers.”

Sullivan followed that ludicrous statement with more than fourteen pages eulogizing the McGuffey Readers.

Sullivan had obviously circularized well-known Midwesterners for their memories on the McGuffey Readers. He quoted the remarks of Governor Lowden of Illinois in 1927. In a footnote, he cited others who had responded to his apparent letter of request, saying “Among others who in letters to the author recalled McGuffey’s were....” They presumably all wrote about 1927, when he was writing Volume II, since one other letter besides Lowden’s did show a date, and it was 1927.

Sullivan cited a few locations for his correspondents: two were from Illinois, and one each were from Iowa, Nebraska, and Ohio. They were all from the Midwest that Vail had called the “West,” and McGuffey’s was the overwhelmingly dominant series in that section of the country for many years, as Vail made clear.

A footnote on page 14 said:

“The most tangible sign of the affection in which McGuffey’s was held came from Henry Ford, who, in 1925, had the entire series (the revised series used when Ford was a schoolboy) reproduced, and distributed them widely. It is an odd fact that Ford came into one kind of fame in 1919 by saying ‘history is bunk,’ meaning history as written; and a few years later became, in a true sense, the most authentic historian in America, and also the most effective. To this appellation he is entitled by his reproduction and circulation of McGuffey’s, his purchase and restoration of an old American inn, the ‘Wayside,’ made famous by Longfellow, and an old American one-room schoolhouse; his revival of old American dances and songs, and his effort to make them familiar to modern America, by dancing them himself and by giving painstaking public instruction in them through his weekly paper, the Dearborn Independent; his museum of old American implements of transportation and other utensils.....”

In 1919, Ford obviously must have been inundated with bad press (what Sullivan called “one kind of fame”) because of his remark, “History is bunk,” and it may well have resulted in some loss of confidence in the Ford company cars being so massively sold in those years. Sullivan confirmed that it was not until “a few years later” or well into the 1920’s that Ford became active in his “historical” activities. Ford was obviously well able to fund them because of his great wealth. However, there does seem to be a cause-effect relationship between Ford’s 1919 anti-“history” statement and Ford’s 1920’s pro-“history” activities. Whether Ford’s compensating activities in the 1920’s were all his own ideas or largely those of his advertising/public relations employees can only be surmised.

It is interesting that it was not until 1925 that Ford is claimed to have reissued the McGuffey Readers (but, as discussed, it was more probably 1927). In that same year of 1925, the Columbia University book appeared praising the readers. Almost every “footnote” on McGuffey’s since then has carried a date later than 1925. The few exceptions include Vail’s 1911 history and Reeder’s 1900 history, and some anecdotes from people who grew up on the Midwestern frontier, where the McGuffey Readers were in wide use in the late nineteenth century. However, it is abundantly clear that the McGuffey Myth began to sprout only in 1927, the Myth being ultimately defined as the delusion that the readers blanketed America in the nineteenth century. It is also abundantly clear that the Myth was a carefully planned public relations promotion, arriving in its ludicrous and full-blown form by late 1927 with the appearance of the infamous Saturday Evening Post article.

On page 15 of his book written in 1927 and published in 1928 came Sullivan’s most famous and most ludicrous quotation. It closely paralleled the 1927 Saturday Evening Post reference, but it increased the numbers of American children who were supposed to have used the McGuffey Readers from four-fifths to nine-tenths!

“To millions of others, to probably nine out of ten average Americans, what taste of literature they got from McGuffey’s was all they ever had; what literature the children brought into the home in McGuffey Readers was all that ever came. Broad classical reading was decidedly not general. McGuffey, in short, because of the leverage of his Readers, had a large part in forming the mind of America....”

Yet, elsewhere, Sullivan credited the McGuffey books with supplying only half of the children in America! Consistency was not the hallmark of Sullivan's book.

Sullivan said the following on page 18, thoroughly trashing the true history:

“One finds in the text-books used by American public schools two springs of influence: In New England, Noah Webster wrote a Dictionary, a Speller, and a History [sic]; and S. G. Goodrich, “Peter Parley” (nephew [sic] of Chauncey A. Goodrich who was a son-in-law of Webster), wrote a Geography, a Primer, Histories, and text-books on other subjects. That composed a New England dynasty in American text-book history More or less simultaneously, William and Alexander Hamilton McGuffey, brothers, wrote the series of Readers that became practically universal throughout America except New England\* and part of the Pacific Coast. This distinction between the New England dynasty and the McGuffey one is more geographical than spiritual. Spiritually, the origins of the two were no more different, than Puritan England (which settled New England and founded Harvard and Yale) differed from Presbyterian Scotland (which was a main stream in the settlement of the rest of the country....”

“In a rather painstaking survey to determine the area of McGuffey's influence, I found that apparently it had never reached any of New England except the one small southwestern corner close to New York City. Elsewhere, McGuffey's was almost universal.”

Most of this is simply flatly wrong. It is unparalleled nonsense, as can be seen from even the most casual review of Appendix B, which concretely lists published materials of the period. What is extraordinary is that, among all the vast numbers of materials that have been pouring from American publishing houses ever since 1928, apparently none of them except Dr. Cremin's of Columbia Teachers College has specifically and directly challenged this outrageous nonsense. Instead, Sullivan's text is still used to support the McGuffey Myth.

Sullivan said on pages 20 and 21:

“One feels justified in estimating that, taking into account all the editions, as many as seventy or eighty millions\* of McGuffey Readers must have been used by American school children. This should be qualified by remembering that some children used more than one Reader, depending on how long they remained at school. Taking everything into account, it would not be surprising if at least half the school children in America, from 1836, to 1900, drew inspiration from McGuffey Readers....”

Sullivan's footnote referred to a letter he had just received from Louis M. Dillman, greatly increasing that estimate to 122,000,000, which letter is quoted and discussed later.

Whatever Sullivan meant by the statement, “...some children used more than one Reader, depending on how long they remained at school....” can only be surmised. Did he mean, as the statement seems to imply, that after they finished all six of the McGuffey texts, only then did they start on other texts? If so, the statement is silly. Nevertheless, he cut his 80 to 90% estimate for McGuffey use given in one of his statements to 50% in this statement!

Lawrence A. Cremin stated in a footnote on page 70 of his book, *American Education, The National Experience, 1783-1876*, Harper & Row, New York: 1980, that the large sales of 122,000,000 quoted for McGuffey's to 1920 were estimates provided by Louis M. Dillman, president of American Book Company which had been publishing the McGuffey series since 1890. However, Cremin said that Dillman's estimate came from Harvey C. Minnich's book, *William Holmes McGuffey and the Peerless*



Pioneer McGuffey Readers published at Oxford, Ohio by Miami University. Cremin apparently did not know of Sullivan's footnote concerning his letter from Dillman with the same figures, which footnote is quoted later.

Cremin gave the publishing date of Minnich's book as 1929 when it actually was 1928, according to the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932. Yet Cremin's report of a 1929 edition of Minnich's book was seven years earlier than the edition reported by Westerhoff.

As previously mentioned, at the end of the section, "Readers," in the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932 appeared "About Readers." with this entry:

"Minnich, H. C. William Holmes McGuffey and the Peerless Pioneer McGuffey Readers. pa 25c '28 Miami University"

Most probably, Minnich got his estimate of McGuffey sales from Mark Sullivan's 1927 book, published in 1928. As quoted below, Sullivan said he had received that estimate directly from Dillman.

John H. Westerhoff, III, wrote McGuffey and His Readers, (Abingdon: 1978, Mott Media: 1982). He took portions of his book from his dissertation at Columbia Teachers College in 1975. Westerhoff thanked professors there for their help, one of whom was Lawrence Cremin, who had stated correctly in his own writings that the McGuffey Readers were popular largely only in the Midwest. However and unfortunately, Westerhoff did not emphasize that fact which Cremin clearly acknowledged but instead quoted the outlandish claims that have been made for McGuffey's. Westerhoff referred to Dillman's unsubstantiated "estimate" on page 14:

"It is estimated that at least 120 million copies of McGuffey Readers were sold between 1836 and 1920, placing their sales in a class with the Bible and Webster's Dictionary."

It is absolutely incredible that the president of American Book Company, only "estimating" and not having firm figures like Vail's, could have produced a figure of 122,000,000 McGuffey texts sold to 1920, when, as will be discussed, it is probable that the total to 1920 was, at most, less than half of that.

Westerhoff said (pages 23-24) that the original readers of 1836-1836 compiled by William Holmes McGuffey himself "sold only seven million copies in comparison to the more than sixty million sold of the 1879 edition." On page 15, he said that the seven million figure covered the period from 1836 up to 1850. Westerhoff apparently did not specify his source for the sixty million figure which appears greatly inflated (at the very least, doubled) compared to Vail's unquestionably reliable figures for the sales of book one and book six. As discussed elsewhere in this text, for the seven million figure, Westerhoff cited page 15 of a 1933 text by John L. Clifton, Ten Famous Americans, published by R. G. Adams and Company of Columbus, Georgia. Clifton's 1933 book discussed ten educators, of whom McGuffey was one. Yet where did that Clifton dig up that elusive figure of seven million readers sold before 1850, which was mentioned, so far as I know, no where else?

Mark Sullivan had said in a footnote on page 20 of Our Times, 1900-1925, Volume II, America Finding Herself, copyrighted by Charles Scribner's Sons in 1927, and apparently not published until 1928:

"After this was in type, a letter from Louis M. Dillman, President of the American Book Company, informed me the estimate (of seventy or eighty millions) is too low. Mr. Dillman estimates the combined sales of McGuffey Readers, Primers and Spelling-book, between 1836 and 1920, at 122,000,000. He has exact figures for two years in the late eighties:

1888.....2,082,624  
 1889.....2,172,413”

Possibly the reason Dillman claimed to have “exact figures for two years in the late eighties” for the readers and the speller is that those two years were the ones immediately before American Book Company was formed from four companies in 1890, the Van Antwerp company, the publisher of the McGuffey Readers, being one of those companies.

These McGuffey sales figures for 1888 and 1889 which Dillman found so conveniently so many years later might very well be valid. These sales figures might very well have been prepared by the Van Antwerp company prior to the 1890 merger, covering that part of their materials carrying the McGuffey name: the 1879 series, the two supplementary series, and the speller.

Therefore, despite the obvious unreliability of Dillman’s estimate of 1927 or so, the 1888 and 1889 figures he cited for McGuffey texts may very well be reliable. However, they can only be understood in light of several facts:

1. In 1888 and 1889, schools used supplementary reading series besides the regular series because of Colonel Parker’s promotion of “supplementary reading” after 1875. The Van Antwerp company itself published two such “supplementary” McGuffey series in addition to its regular 1879 McGuffey series, and they are discussed below. Yet all three McGuffey series may have been used only as supplementary readers in schools which were using a competing series as the principal one. Allowing for classrooms having at least two series, a main one and a supplementary, means each series’ “influence” is cut in half. A series could have wide sales without, in any sense, dominating the market.

2. As shown below, Webster’s speller was selling well over a million copies in the mid-1880’s, in part probably as a result of the swing back to spellers after the failures that resulted from following Colonel Parker’s 1875 lead of throwing out the speller. Dillman said part of his figures were for sales of McGuffey’s speller. Those sales may well have been comparable to Webster’s in the spelling-conscious years of 1888 and 1889 and may well have approached a million a year.

3. Vail cited total sales to 1911 for book 1 of the 1879 edition of 8,000,000 and book 6 of 1,000,000. That breaks down to an average annual sale for book 1 of 250,000 and book 6 of 31,250. (As noted below, the 1881 primer was an afterthought and was not meant originally to be part of the series. It was only intended as a “supplementary” book itself.) Adding the annual average for book 1 and book 6 gives a total of 281,250. That figure is, beyond any reasonable doubt, a thoroughly and properly documented average annual sales figure for 1/3 of the 1879 six-book McGuffey series, from its appearance in 1879 until 1911. Excluding the “supplementary” non-essential 1881 primer, it is possible to get a rough estimate of the average annual sales for the entire six-book 1879 series. The annual average sales which are definitely known for two books may be multiplied by three to produce a rough estimate of 843,750 for the average annual sales of the whole six-book 1879 McGuffey series. That resultant figure very possibly truly approximates the six-book 1879 McGuffey series’ annual sales, except for the non-essential primer, in 1888 and 1889. Yet, in the 1880’s, a single volume, Webster’s speller, was selling well over a million copies a year, which makes the McGuffey series’ total considerably less impressive.

4. Adding the approximate annual sales of its 1879 series to the possible McGuffey speller sales in 1888 or 1889, which speller sales may have equaled the reader sales, produces about 1,600,000 copies. The 500,000 or so remainder might well have been accounted for by the primer and the two recently published and probably popular supplementary McGuffey series, one of which had six and the other two texts,

5. Using Klass's figures, quoted later, on government school enrollment in 1890 of 12,700,000, excluding large numbers of students in private and Catholic schools, and recognizing the fact that a good proportion of the McGuffey sales were for supplementary and not primary use in classrooms, it is self-evident that an annual sale of 900,000 or so of the 1879 McGuffey's series could not supply all 12,700,000 government school students, even if the books had a life of approximately five years.

No one has ever said that Webster's monopolized the spelling book market in the late 1840's even though it was selling about a million copies a year (if that publisher's figures can be believed). In 1840, the American population was 17,069,453, and in 1850, it was 23,191,876. The claim for McGuffey's reader and speller sales in 1888 and 1889 can be compared to the population in 1880 of 50,155,783, and in 1890 of 62,947,714. On the face of it, therefore, the market shares for Webster's in 1847 and for McGuffey's in 1888 and 1889 appear to be fairly comparable. Figures are also available for those parts of the population which were in public schools in the years 1880 and 1890, possibly from either census figures or the Federal Government's education office. Lance Klass's 1981 book, *The Leipzig Connection*, written with Paolo Lionni, and published by Heron Books, Portland, Oregon, reported the figures and said the numbers were "continuing to rise rapidly thereafter":

1880.....	9,900,000 public school students
1890.....	12,700,000 public school students

This total does not, of course, include the parochial or private school students, who must have been numerous in those years. Furthermore, perhaps as many as half of all children never went beyond the fourth grade in 1890.

Vail did make what seems like an impressive claim for the 1879 McGuffey edition, but it becomes less impressive when analyzed (page 61):

"The revised edition of the McGuffey Readers... attained the largest sales that have as yet been accorded by the public to a single series of books. Of the Sixth Reader, which must have the least sale, over a million copies have been distributed, as shown by the edition number. Of the First Reader more than eight million copies have been used."

The 1879 edition was on the market, unrevised, for a period of twenty-two years. That 1879 edition was still on sale thirty-two years later at the time Vail wrote his 1911 book, even though the 1901 revision had come on the market and was obviously outselling the 1879 edition. Vail's total sales figure for the 1879 revision was for the thirty-two years up to the date of his 1911 book. Other popular series during that time were frequently revised. Vail was therefore comparing sales for thirty-two years, to 1911, to other popular series which may have only been on sale for five or ten years before they were revised. Naturally, the totals for the 1879 McGuffey's would be greater.

Note, however, the total sales for the first reader, which the McGuffey Myth claims was used by nine out of ten American children. Sales only totaled eight million copies for that thirty-two year period. It is ludicrous to claim that eight million copies over a thirty-two year period from 1879 to 1911, averaging 250,000 copies a year, could have supplied the reading books for 90% of American first-graders! Furthermore, that 1879 edition was the most successful of the McGuffey editions, so the earlier editions covered even a smaller proportion of the total American market!

The 1881 primer was not part of the original 1879 series, as can be seen from an old copy of McGuffey's Revised Primer, carrying the copyright dates of 1881 by Van Antwerp, Bragg Co., 1896 by American Book Company, and 1909 by Henry H. Vail. Its "Preface" reads in part:

“The flattering success of McGuffey’s Revised Readers, and the inquiry for more primary reading matter to be used in the first year of school work have induced the publishers to prepare a REVISED PRIMER, which may be used to precede the First Reader of any well arranged series. The method pursued is the same as that in McGuffey’s Revised Readers, and the greatest possible care has been taken to insure a gradation suited to the youngest children. Only about six new words are to be mastered in each lesson. These new words and the new elementary sounds are always to be found in the vocabulary of the lesson in which they are first used.

“The plan of the book enables the teacher to pursue the Phonic Method, the Word Method, the Alphabet Method, or any combination of these methods....”

The “Preface” makes it clear that the primer was never intended as part of the 1879 series, and was meant primarily as an adjunct to competitors’ series, or for “supplementary” reading with McGuffey’s series. The probability, therefore, is that its sales never approached the sales of the 1879 first reader.

Vail never claimed a monopoly for McGuffey’s. He actually added this remark to his boast about the great sales of the 1879 series:

“At no time in the history of these readers have they been without formidable competition....”

When considering sales about 1880 to the 9,900,000 public school students, it should be remembered that Vail said McGuffey’s publishers and the publishers of Appleton’s had been engaged in a textbook war at that time, and each withdrew without claiming victory. Therefore, it is certain from Vail’s own testimony that McGuffey’s could not have dominated the market in 1880. Vail did say that McGuffey’s had far the larger sales at the end of the textbook war (though he probably meant only in the McGuffey home territory, the Midwest), and that its sales later increased, which increase would have been towards the end of the 1880’s. This is the grain of truth in the McGuffey Myth: McGuffey’s was, at all periods, the best seller in the Midwest.

Obviously schools were not buying new books each year for each child, so a multiple must be used to arrive at the number of children who eventually used the books which were sold. Heavily used reading books might last, on the average, perhaps about five years. Dillman had said the 1888 and 1889 sales figures he gave included the McGuffey speller, and those were the years when a frantic new interest arose in spelling. Sales of the McGuffey speller must have been very large. They were possibly comparable to Webster’s which was selling well over a million copies a year in the late 1880’s.

Nevertheless, as discussed, these two possibly reliable figures which are available on total McGuffey annual sales in 1888 and 1889 do not confirm a near monopoly for the McGuffey Readers even in 1888 and 1889, the probable years of their greatest use. However, any figures coming from Dillman must be suspect.

The 1880’s was the period of the supplementary reading craze that had originated in Quincy, and also the “natural history” reading craze from the same source, although “natural history” had originally been popularized by Agassiz. Many supplementary reading materials and “natural history” reading materials were published after 1880. The 1885-1890 American Catalogue reported the publication of the following under the “McGuffey” title:

McGuffey, W. H. Alternate readers. [‘87]-‘88.  
6 v. Van Antwerp.  
Cont. First Reader, 15c. - Second reader. 25c. - Third

reader. 35c. - Fourth reader. 40c. - Fifth reader. 50c. -  
Sixth. reader. 60 c.  
- Natural history readers. '87-'88. 2 v. 58c; 50c.  
Van Antwerp.

In 1888 and 1889, just preceding the sale of most of Van Antwerp's assets to American Book Company, the McGuffey Readers had actually been not just one set of readers, but three sets, plus the speller. One reading series was the regular series, and two were meant to be used as supplementary series in the same classrooms as the regular series. Furthermore, the two supplementary series were very fresh, just-published materials and were likely to have been popular. Therefore, Dillman's "firm" figure of about two million for McGuffey sales in those years may have been divided among three separate series of readers meant to be used simultaneously in the same classrooms, as well as including the speller. The share of the principal McGuffey series may possibly have been considerably reduced. However, even if the figures were solely for the regular McGuffey series and the speller, that series itself was undoubtedly being used as "supplementary" reading material in many schools which were buying multiple reading series after the arrival of the "supplementary" reading craze. If half of such sales had been for "supplementary" readers instead of for principal readers, it would have reduced McGuffey's influence as the principal reading series by fifty per cent.

Yet, despite the highly impressive but questionable sales figures given by Dillman for the McGuffey Readers and spellers for 1888 and 1889, the total sales of book one and book six of the McGuffey Readers after 1879 prove that the series never could have had a monopoly of the American market. (Probably very few sales were made outside the United States.)

Vail's authoritative 1911 history is almost certainly the only reliable source for figures on McGuffey sales, unless Vail wrote other materials which are never cited. Library sources show that his 1911 history was first printed privately in 1910, but it was two pages shorter, not longer. Vail's history showed, internally on page 57, that he had left American Book Company in 1907, many years before Dillman's estimate of McGuffey sales to 1920. In Vail's book, he listed actual figures for sales in only two places. On page 45, he said:

"In a First Reader printed in the fall of 1841 there are two pages of advertising matter in which Truman & Smith claimed to have sold 700,000 of the Eclectic Series."

Those sales, apparently for a series of six books, were over a period five years, from 1836 to 1841, averaging 140,000 a year for all six books together. Yet shortly after, in 1847, the publishers of Webster's speller were claiming sales of 1,000,000 a year, more than five times as great, for only a single book.

The only other mention that Vail made of sales was on page 61. He said concerning the 1879 revised edition:

"Of the Sixth Reader, which must have the least sale, over a million copies have been distributed, as shown by the edition number. Of the First Reader more than eight million copies have been used."

Vail is probably the only one who could have produced such firm figures on sales, since he had been editor on that series from 1879 to 1907. Yet he must have had very few firm figures, or he would have used more of them. His above figures, of course, are firm. They indicate that books one and six sold nine million copies from 1879 to 1911. Books one and six were one-third of the whole six-book McGuffey series of 1879, not counting the primer or the speller. It is fairly reasonable, therefore, to multiply that nine million by a factor of three to get an approximate total sale for the total six-book reading series from

1879 to 1911 of 27,000,000 in that period of 32 years, plus the primer. Even if another 8,000,000 were included for the primer, since book one sold 8,000,000 copies, the total would be only 35,000,000, or a little over a million a year in the period of greatest sales. The total, obviously, is probably inflated.

Only 700,000 copies had been sold of all texts from 1836 to 1841. After that, from 1841 to 1879 was a period of 38 years, in which sales were lower, since Vail said the 1879 series sold the best of all editions. Even if the admittedly weak assumption were made that half as many were sold in the 38 years between 1841 and 1879 as in the 32 years between 1879 and 1911, total sales would equal 700,000 from 1836 to 1841, plus 17,500,000 from 1841 to 1879, plus 35,000,000 from 1879 to 1911, or 53,200,000. Since relatively few were sold afterwards, the total might have been 55,000,000 by 1920, but that is almost certainly an inflated total. Yet Dillman of American Book “estimated” McGuffey sales to 1920 at 122,000,000, or well over twice as much!

Yet any total sales figures, obviously, are largely unfounded “guesstimates,” which makes the “firm” figures which constantly turn up in the literature concerning McGuffey sales very puzzling indeed.

Westerhoff’s book, *McGuffey and His Readers*, cited such a figure on page 14, saying that over seven million McGuffey readers had been sold before 1850. As mentioned, he said that by 1890 they had become the basic school readers in thirty-seven states and cited as a reference, “John L. Clifton, *Ten Famous American Educators* (Columbus, Ga.: R. G. Adams & Co., 1933), p. 75.” Where Clifton got his figures is unknown, but the “seven million” turned up again in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, published by the Department of Education in Washington in 1985. On page xiii of the introduction, this appeared:

“Between 1836 and 1850, Smith sold seven million copies of the McGuffey Readers. From 1850 to 1890, sales averaged ten million copies each decade. Another fifteen million were sold between 1890 and 1920. This wonder of the publishing world has sold well over 122,000,000 copies.”

The professor of the history of education at a large university who contributed the introduction to *Early American Textbooks* was apparently drawing on the same source as Westerhoff for the 7,000,000 figure, and that source must also have yielded the figures for the various years the author quoted, but not the total that he gave. The author obviously also had another source which gave a “total” of 122,000,000, but he did not know that it was the total only to 1920, which had originated with Dillman of American Book. The author of the introduction must therefore have assumed the total was for a far more recent date. That is because his figures to 1920 (7,000,000, 40,000,000 and 15,000,000) only add up to 62,000,000, not 122,000,000! The author’s total on this major reference work, *Early American Textbooks*, published in 1985 by the Department of Education with all the authority that suggests, is therefore WRONG by 60,000,000, which is demonstrated by simple addition! That it involves a simple addition error is obvious, since the author clearly did not mean to imply that 60,000,000 McGuffey Readers were published between 1920 and 1985, particularly since his figures showed only 62,000,00 had been published from the time the readers first appeared in 1836 until 1920, and 1920 was long after their popularity had declined.

Whatever his source for the unsubstantiated figures he quoted which added up to 62,000,000, even these were inflated, when compared to the size of the only reliable figures available, those from Vail. However, the inflation of these figures only serves to make Dillman’s further inflation to 122,000,000 just that much more outrageous.

Vail based his history on his having been a part of the companies publishing McGuffey’s since the 1860’s, and on his having been the company’s editor from 1877 until 1907 when he must have resigned or retired (judging from an oblique remark on the bottom of page 57). Vail gave firm sales figures, not

“estimates,” for the total sales of book one and book six from 1879 to 1911. That 1879 revision had been prepared under Vail’s personal direction as editor, and Vail’s knowledge of its subsequent success was direct and personal. Vail gave sales figures for a period of 32 years, from the time the most popular 1879 edition was issued. Those sales break down to 250,000 a year to 1911 for book one for a school population which was increasing enormously every year. It is evident that figure could never have sufficed to reach almost all first graders in America in those years. This is obvious, even if each copy survived to reach five children in five years and even if book one had been used as the principal book in classrooms in those years when classrooms had multiple reading series.

For book six, average annual sales to 1911 would be 31,250. Even though far fewer children stayed in school through the upper grades in those years, (the sales suggest a ratio of eight beginners to one sixth-grader or above), it is evident that book six’s share of the total market was very small. Book one and book six sold only 9,000,000 copies in the years of greatest use, from 1879 to 1911. Vail’s firm figures for the sales of book one and book six, even taken alone, confirm that there was something very, very wrong with Dillman’s total “estimate” of McGuffey sales of 122,000,000 from 1836 to 1920. Dillman’s estimate was far larger even than Sullivan’s original estimate of 70 or 80 million. Sullivan’s original estimate was very like the total of 62,000,000 from the undocumented figures quoted in the contributed introduction to *Early American Textbooks*, which were, themselves, almost certainly inflated. Vail’s figures, therefore, clearly establish that Dillman’s estimate was very peculiar.

On Possible Connections between the “Experts” and Dillman’s  
Greatly Inflated Estimate of 122,000,000 McGuffey Readers  
Sold by 1920

Sullivan’s book, published in 1928, was in type when Dillman, the President of American Book Company, wrote Sullivan, and Sullivan’s book was copyrighted in 1927. Dillman’s letter to which Sullivan referred in his book was therefore probably written in 1927.

Dillman’s 1927 letter more than doubled the previous and very generous estimated McGuffey sales figures (62 million as effectively reported recently in *Early American Textbooks* from statistics they cited, and 70 to 80 million cited previously by Sullivan). Dillman’s 1927 letter instead enormously increased the estimated McGuffey sales up to 1920, reporting that they had reached a total of 122 million copies.

At the time that Dillman wrote his letter to Sullivan with his enormously increased estimated sales figures for McGuffey’s, he most probably knew Henry Suzzallo personally. Suzzallo had studied at Columbia Teachers College under Thorndike shortly after the turn of the century, as Suzzallo recounted in the February, 1926, honorary issue of *Teachers College Record* dedicated to Thorndike. Suzzallo had later been a professor at Columbia until 1915, before going to the University of Washington. While Suzzallo was at Columbia, three of his fellow professors were Edward Lee Thorndike, James McKeen Cattell, and John Dewey. All three were friends, and Suzzallo was a friend, at the very least, of Thorndike, and probably of the others as well. As mentioned elsewhere in this history, Suzzallo referred in an anecdote in that 1926 article to having met Thorndike at Thorndike’s office in New York, apparently in the recent past.

Suzzallo had been President of the University of Washington until 1926, when he was fired by the Governor of the state of Washington for cryptically expressed reasons, according to Ohles’ biographical entry, quoted later. As mentioned elsewhere in this history, after being fired by the Governor of Washington, Suzzallo worked for the Carnegie group. (They are still extremely active today in trying to shape American education, even though as a non-Governmental group they have no authority from the

American public to do so.) Suzzallo then served as President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching from 1930 till his death in 1933.

As discussed elsewhere, Suzzallo's speller published by American Book Company of which Dillman was President in 1927 had been involved in a textbook-bid scandal in Texas in December, 1925. That was only about a year before Dillman made his greatly inflated estimate of McGuffey sales. The Texas textbook scandal led to a call for the impeachment of the Governor of Texas, as reported in the New York Times on December 4, 1925. Therefore, by the beginning of 1926, an American Book Company text by Suzzallo, on which American Book Company had submitted bids to Texas and which it was still publishing, had created a major scandal for American Book Company. Under these circumstances, President Dillman of American Book Company may well have known Suzzallo personally. Suzzallo was a long-standing member of the "expert" group and a personal friend of Thorndike, at the same time that Dillman made that curiously inflated claim in 1927 concerning the sales of the McGuffey Readers.

It was the fiction on the McGuffey monopoly planted in American culture in 1927 through Sullivan's book quoting Dillman (not published until 1928), and through the 1927 Saturday Evening Post article, "That Guy McGuffey," that made the take-over of America by the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method series after 1930 seem to be only a continuation of an American tradition. Gates and Gray, of course, had been graduate students who had worked intimately with Thorndike (Gray in 1913-1914, and Gates probably since 1915). They remained Thorndike's friends, as Suzzallo also did. Gates had not only worked with Thorndike but with Cattell, Thorndike's very close friend, in 1917 and had even lived in Cattell's home at the time Cattell was fired from Columbia for opposing the draft in wartime. Gates temporarily lost his draft exemption, presumably because of the association with Cattell, but Thorndike had it reinstated, according to Geraldine Joncich's biography of Thorndike.

Thorndike and Gates were both still at Columbia Teachers College in 1925. Gates wrote an article in 1925 introducing his idea of "intrinsic" phonics (the deaf-mute-method visual approach), and his article is discussed elsewhere. Also discussed elsewhere is the fact that Gates' assistants at Columbia Teachers College worked with little deaf-mute children in the late 1920's, teaching them sight-words and analyzing the results, in comparison to teaching sight-words to retarded children and to children of average and above average intelligence. Gates wrote one of the first two deaf-mute-method readers for hearing children, published by Macmillan in 1930. The other and far more successful deaf-mute-method series for hearing children was the 1930 Scott, Foresman series. Yet Gates' and Gray' series were NOT, of course, identified as using Gallaudet's deaf-mute reading method! That Gates and Gray used Gallaudet's method is made even worse by the fact that Gallaudet's deaf-mute-method is an inferior method for teaching deaf children to read! The Scott, Foresman readers blanketed America in the 1930's and plunged it into the sea of functional illiteracy in which we still flounder. William Scott Gray of the University of Chicago was the author of that 1930 "Dick and Jane" deaf-mute-method Scott, Foresman series.

Gray had studied and worked closely under Thorndike in 1913-1914 at Columbia Teachers College, where he received his master's degree on oral reading tests prepared directly under Thorndike. Gray returned to get his doctorate in 1917 at the University of Chicago, where Charles Judd, Thorndike's old friend from college days, was located. Gates was not only Thorndike's ex-student but Thorndike's associate at Columbia Teachers College all through the 1920's. Both Gray and Gates, who had such long-standing and close ties to Thorndike of Columbia Teachers College, were highly active and highly visible in promoting the "meaning" method and downgrading phonics (the "sound" method) all through the 1920's. In the 1965 revision of her so-called "history" written for her doctorate at Columbia Teachers College in 1932, Nila Banton Smith referred to Gates and Gray as "giants," but made no mention of the fact that both had trained under Thorndike.



Thorndike himself had trained under the psychologists, Cattell and Cattell's close personal friend, William James. William James wrote in his 1890 psychology book about a deaf-mute man who remembered thinking very deep thoughts as a boy, before he had acquired any language at all. That was undoubtedly true, considering the nature of the human soul. However, James had used the anecdote to downgrade the value of spoken language ("sound"). James' ideas on the "stream of consciousness" apparently sparked the interest in the 1870's in using what was really the deaf-mute sight-word method for teaching beginning reading, in order to protect "meaning" and downgrade "sound." Cattell and Thorndike, at least initially, must have endorsed the deaf-mute-method approach. They most certainly knew of the deaf-mute-method approach to teaching beginning reading. After all, in his published work, Gates specifically referred to the deliberate use of it with unfortunate little deaf children in "reading research" in the 1920's.

Suzzallo, who was also Thorndike's friend at least as late as 1926 and who was also Thorndike's former associate at Columbia until 1915, was involved in a very disturbed business relationship with American Book Company in 1926 and may well have known the president of American Book Company, Dillman, personally. That was within a year of the time that Dillman made the curiously inflated claim for McGuffey sales.

The record shows some very interesting interlocking relationships surrounding those enormously inflated sales figures for McGuffey's which Dillman of American Book Company produced in 1927. Those inflated figures supported the fiction that a reading series, McGuffey's, had once blanketed America, coast to coast. Such a fiction very conveniently served the purposes of the change-agents in 1927, since they were planning to blanket the entire country after 1930 with their deaf-mute-method readers on which they were working in 1927.

The "experts" did blanket all of America after 1930 with their deaf-mute-method readers, the Scott, Foresman series and the Macmillan series, which were the products of Nila Banton Smith's "giants," Gray and Gates. The blanketing of America with the Gray and Gates deaf-mute-method readers was in the fake, invented "tradition" of the McGuffey Readers. Those "meaning"-method abominations then efficiently produced their legions of functional illiterates from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, thus most grievously and wrongfully wounding our country.

Additional information on the McGuffey series is given in the appendices.

## Chapter 27

### Sheldon's 1875 Testimony, Contrasted to Nila Banton Smith's "History"

Unimpeachable testimony on the practices in use in teaching beginning reading in 1875 came from E. A. Sheldon, Principal of Oswego State Normal and Training School at that time, who had previously been Superintendent of Schools in Oswego.

Yet Sheldon obviously had no knowledge of the fact that methods had been very different only fifty years earlier. In contrast to Sheldon's remarks, the remarks of Boston Superintendent of Schools John Dudley Philbrick in the 1874 Boston Annual School Report showed that Philbrick had a partial understanding that a major change had taken place years before 1875 in the teaching of beginning reading, when the syllable method had been dropped. It can be seen from Sheldon's remarks that he had no knowledge that the syllable method to teach beginning reading had been in use in schools before 1826.

The following are quotations from Sheldon's manual to Sheldon's Readers dated July, 1875:

"The Word method of teaching to read was exclusively employed in the public schools of the city of Oswego from the time of their first organization, in 1853, to the year 1860.

#### "Methods of Teaching Reading

Within the last twenty-five years, five methods of teaching reading have been prominent before the public, - the Alphabet, the Word, the Sentence, the Phonetic, and the Phonic methods

#### "The Alphabet Method

By this method, the children are first taught the names of the letters, and they begin, at once, to spell all new words by these names.

"Until within a comparatively few years, this was the method universally employed, and it is still much used.

"It is very faulty, in that the names of the letters do not guide to the pronunciation of the word. As an illustration, take the word log. The name of the first letter is el; of the second, the long sound of o, as heard in home; of the third, je. Now if we employ these names in the pronunciation of the word, we have el-o-je - and this comes very near to el-o-gy - a significant word with a very different meaning from log."

Concerning the spelling, Sheldon did not mention that two kinds existed then: "on the book," which just meant reciting the letters while looking at the word, and "off the book," which meant reciting the letters without looking at the word. "The Alphabet Method" usually only used spelling "on the book," so did not even require memorizing letter sequences on sight words. Dictated, written spelling tests as we know them were not normally what was meant by "spelling" in 1875. Sheldon continued:

#### "The Word Method

In this method, we begin by teaching words, which the children learn to recognize as wholes, and as the representations of ideas. This method is now extensively used; and, when others are employed, they can be considered as only accessory to this. It has ever been by learning to recognize words as wholes that children who have been taught the names of the letters have learned to read; for, when a child has spelled a word by naming all the letters that enter into it, he knows no more about its pronunciation than if he had not spelled it; the teacher must give him the

word, and, if he forgets it, she must give it again and again, until he learns to recognize it; and this is the Word method, with the useless appendage of learning the names of the letters.”

Note that Sheldon was saying, implicitly, that the child was only identifying letters in a “new” word by naming them, not memorizing the word’s spelling: “...when a child has spelled a word by naming all the letters that enter into it, he knows no more about its pronunciation than if he had not spelled it....”

#### “The Sentence Method

This consists simply in treating whole sentences as we treat words, in the Word method; the sentence bearing the same relation to the thought that the word does to the idea. The child being in possession of a thought, the sentence representing that thought is placed before him, and he learns to recognize it as a unit. It is claimed for this plan that it has decided advantages over any other, in teaching the children ease and naturalness of expression; and I think this much, at least, may be justly claimed for it.

“It is well to train the child to keep the eye in advance of the voice; and this method requires him to do this. I am satisfied, however, that after a few short simple sentences are taught in this way, the child begins to recognize the separate words in the sentence, and very soon comes to rely on his knowledge of words, rather than of sentences.”

Note that Sheldon in 1875 equated “word” with “idea,” and “sentence” with “thought,” the usage in Farnham’s 1873 paper. (As discussed elsewhere, that usage was later employed by Colonel Parker, by the Boston Schools in its reports, and by Johonnot, and that usage finally appeared in William James’ 1890 psychology text, after which it died out, except for a brief revival in Huey’s 1908 text). Sheldon obviously was acquainted in 1875 with Farnham’s 1873 arguments, and probably with Farnham’s 1873 paper.

Sheldon published his series in 1875, but the “sentence” method had apparently never been heard of until 1870 in Binghamton, only five years earlier. The sentence method had obviously been publicized with all the swift efficiency currently being used to publicize “whole language,” and it was akin to it in philosophy. It endorsed “meaning” for rank beginners and demoted “sound.” Both the sentence method and “whole language” when used to teach beginning reading produce permanently wrong conditioned reflexes in readers.

Sheldon went on to discuss “The Phonetic Method,” referring to the Pitman print and the Leigh print, and “The Phonic Method,” which he conceived of as phonics as used in his readers. Yet, despite his obvious good intentions, he used only partial and phony phonics, the sort of thing prevalent in England at that time, which is discussed in the section on English texts. Sheldon’s material was modeled on the word and phonic program that had been used in Oswego schools after their partial use of Pitman print. The phonics was initial consonants plus word endings and it was used along with sight words.

It should be emphasized, however, that Sheldon stated categorically that “Until within a comparatively few years, (the Alphabet Method) was the method universally employed...”, that it was truly a sight-word method, and that the pure sight-word method had been used in Oswego since the schools began in 1853. This is further proof that “phonics” was not the norm in the nineteenth century.

Sheldon had also unconsciously testified elsewhere concerning the enormous retardation in reading in 1875, although I cannot find the exact quotation in my photocopies. It was probably somewhere else in the preface to his readers than in the portion I photocopied. Sheldon said somewhere in his writings that he believed children could not really read until they reached fourth grade, and that is certainly testimony to an enormous degree of retardation.

It is certainly interesting that Sheldon had no knowledge of the fact that the alphabet “meaning” method he described (the spelling of words) was so vastly different from the pre-1826 “sound” method (the spelling of phonetically-read syllables in words), and that he did not even show any knowledge of the existence of that syllable method. The two approaches are as wide apart as are the Japanese Kanji characters and Japanese Kana characters which are dealt with by the brain in opposite ways. The evidence indicates that the spelling of meaning-bearing sight-words uses the “spatial” right side of the brain that processes pictures, but the spelling of meaningless syllable sounds uses the “sequential” left side of the brain that processes sound. The almost instant disabilities in reading which arrived in the English-speaking world after 1826 with the discarding of the “sound” syllable method and the arrival of the “meaning” word method can be explained by this organic difference. Yet the post-1826 “word” primers and the pre-1826 “syllable” spelling books may look very similar to the casual observer who does not know that “word” primers were taught by “meaning” but “syllable” spellers by “sound.”

What is clear from Sheldon’s comments, however, is that, although the activists of the 1826 period had succeeded in seriously damaging the teaching of reading, by the time Sheldon wrote in 1875 attempts were being made to repair the damage. Pitman phonetic print, of which he approved, had not been successful in America in the 1850’s, but the Leigh pronouncing print of 1864 and phonics in general were gaining ground in 1875 when Sheldon published his series. That was the same year that Colonel Parker arrived on the Quincy - and American - scene. It was the vast publicity all over America on Parker’s “meaning” approaches after 1875 which killed the 1860’s and 1870’s growing American revival of phonic “sound.”

Therefore, by the time of Nila Banton Smith’s quotation, given later, concerning the failure of primary grades (in 1889 or 1894), the situation had deteriorated again. It is obvious something had happened between 1875 and 1889. Is this why Nila Banton Smith only listed so few references in her bibliography for that period, as discussed elsewhere? Is this why did she not mention William James at all, or James McKeen Cattell, or G. Stanley Hall, or the Leigh print, or the once-famous Quincy, Massachusetts, teaching methods and experiments in her index? Is this why she only showed The Franklin Primer as being written by George Hillard in 1831, when it is clear he must not have written such a book in that year? She did not even mention The Franklin Primer, an edition of which was printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1877 and again in 1878, on which Hillard was the senior author. Yet The Franklin Primer, first published in 1873, was very widely used, as proven by a large advertisement in The School Bulletin in 1875:

“The Franklin Series of Readers. Though so recently issued, these books have already been introduced, wholly, or in part, into the Public Schools of the City of Washington, D. C., City of New York, City of Boston, City of Albany, City of Worcester, City of Newark, City of Lowell, City of Cambridge, City of Salem, City of Fall River, City of Manchester, (N.H.), City of Gloucester, City of Nashua, (N.H.), City of Newburyport, City of Dover, (N.H.), City of Somerville, City of Augusta, (Me.), City of Newton, and a very large number of important towns. Brewer & Tileston, Publishers, Boston.”

This 1875 advertisement listed Boston among those using the Franklin series. Yet Boston at that time was using Leigh-print beginning readers in almost all primary grades. Therefore, Boston must have had Leigh-print editions of the lower books of the Franklin series in 1875. Those Leigh-print Franklin readers possibly were part of the primary school properties that were anonymously removed along with the primary school record books the summer after Boston Superintendent of Schools John Dudley Philbrick was fired. The documentation for that exceedingly peculiar 1878 disappearance of school property has already been discussed.

It is curious that Smith did not even mention the anonymous Franklin Primer of 1826 attributed to Willard, but only an unlocatable Franklin Primer of 1831 by Hillard, who would then have been very young. She quoted as the content of this apparently imaginary 1831 primer by Hillard the content of Willard's anonymous 1802 Franklin Primer which was not reprinted after 1812. Furthermore, she never mentioned at all Hillard's non-Franklin but widely used series of the 1850's and 1860's, nor the obvious "sentence method" 1873 Franklin series with Hillard's name and his co-author's.

Farnham's 1881 book on the sentence method does appear in Smith's bibliography, but only with an 1895 publication date. In the body of her book, which is the only place a casual reader would consult, she dated Farnham's work to an incredibly late 1905 on page 122, 24 years after his book was first published, and 35 years after his Binghamton "experiments":

"George L. Farnham, author of one of the first teachers' manuals in reading (1905), expressed reading aims in this way:

"Reading Consists: first, in gaining the thoughts of an author from written or printed language; second, in giving oral expression to these thoughts, in the language of the author, so that the same thoughts are conveyed to the hearer. (58:11)"

The quotation she cited is actually on page 13 of the 1881 edition, not page 11. Smith's bibliographical entry "58" showed the publication date of Farnham's book as 1895, not the 1905 she indicated just before giving the above quotation, another curious "accident" that serves to move a reader's attention away from the 1870-1880 period when the sentence method actually arrived. Its existence in that period is confirmed beyond any doubt by Sheldon's 1875 comments which have been quoted.

Nila Banton Smith continued:

## "II. The New Reading Materials Professional Books

"This is the period in which professional books in reading first came into prominence. With the issuance of new materials and the formulation of new methods, it was natural that entire treatises should appear, devoted to the discussion of reading instruction.

"One of the first books of the period to exert any particular influence on the teaching of reading was Scudder's *Literature in the Schools*, published in 1888....

"Sarah Louise Arnold's *Reading: How to Teach It* (1899) was another important book of the period.... In 1899, Charles A. McMurry published his *Special Method in the Reading of Complete English Classics*.... It was during this period also that Edmund Burke Huey produced his famous book on *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. This book does not advocate any particular method or take sides on any issue.... This book was the first scientific contribution to reading instruction and is still considered a standard reference in this field."

To state that Huey did not "take sides," is mind-boggling!

What Nila Banton Smith omitted can be taken to be the kernel of the matter. She made no mention of the fact that Farnham had used the sentence method in 1870 and had written a book on it by 1881. Instead she claimed that an 1888 book was the first to exert any influence on teaching methods in reading. She made no mention of the critically important 1883 Boston schools guide on the teaching of reading. (Of

course, she had also completely left out of her history the change-agent writings concerning the teaching of reading which clustered around the other change-agent date of 1826.)

She continued the smokescreen on the bottom of page 123:

“Courses of Study

“Separate courses of study in reading appeared for the first time during this period. Until about 1890 the courses were but meager outlines in reports of a school board or a superintendent of schools.”

Yet the elaborate Boston schools’ guide to curriculum, including a section on reading, had appeared in 1878, and the elaborate Boston schools’ guide solely on the teaching of reading had appeared in 1883, and she never mentioned either of them! Furthermore, it should be remembered that at that time Boston was still the intellectual hub of America. Intellectually speaking, as Boston went, so went the nation.

On page 141, Smith quoted from Farnham’s book and said several reading systems appeared based on his sentence method. She mentioned two published in 1897 and 1899, and went on:

“It was not, however, until the years between 1909 and 1918 that the method enjoyed the height of its popularity.”

Smith omitted a very interesting sentence method reader which was published far earlier, in 1889. Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, Office of Education Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C. 1885, shows the following on page 98:

“The New Model First Reader Sentence Method. Chicago: Geo. Sherwood & Co., 1889. 96p.”

It seems highly appropriate that “Geo. Sherwood & Co.” of Chicago should have published what was probably the first pupil’s reader with “sentence method” actually in its title. Of course, there had been two earlier teacher’s guides for the sentence method, Farnham’s of 1881 and Johonnot’s of 1885. The reason that it seems highly appropriate is the fact that the Sherwood company is associated with the name of J. Russell Webb, the man who popularized the term, the “word-method,” starting with his first book of 1846. Webb’s Normal series which he began in 1846 was listed by Nila Banton Smith as one of the earliest word-method series.

Since at least 1866, the Sherwood company had been one of the major publishers of Richard Edwards’ and J. Russell Webb’s Analytical series. In 1873-1876, according to the 1876 American Catalogue, Sherwood published J. Russell Webb’s newest series, the Model Readers in four volumes. According to the 1885-1890 American Catalogue, Sherwood published in 1888 the New Model First Reader by “Webb,” apparently a revision of his 1873-1876 series. According to Early American Textbooks, Edwards had another series, called the Student’s Series, published by Sherwood from about 1877 to about 1881. Also according to Early American Textbooks, by 1897, Edwards’ Student’s Series was being published by Scott, Foresman & Co. of Chicago, “Rev. by Florence Holbrook.” Scott, Foresman & Co. bought out Sherwood in 1894, who had not only handled sight-word readers by Webb for a long time but who were also perhaps the very first to produce a reader openly labeled “sentence method.” The Student’s Series, which does not appear in the 1912 United States Catalog (nor for some reason not even in the earlier American Catalogues) may have been the predecessor to Scott, Foresman’s 1909 series by Elson.

Because of Sherwood's publishing Webb's "meaning" word-method texts and a text using the "meaning" sentence method, it may be appropriate that Scott, Foresman who bought out Sherwood was the publisher of one of the two earliest "meaning" deaf-mute series, W. S. Gray's 1930 "Dick and Jane" readers.

Sherwood's name appeared in 1862, in A. S. Welch's *Object Lessons for Teachers*, published by A. S. Barnes & Company, which book is discussed elsewhere in this history. On page 137, Welch referred to models in wood of solid geometrical shapes, and said, "A large assortment of such models can be obtained from Holbrook & Co., Hartford, Connecticut, or from Sherwood & Company, Chicago. These firms have agencies in all our large cities."

The Holbrook company was apparently founded by Josiah Holbrook, who worked so hard from 1826 on to establish government schools - and to foster "science," which object lessons and "solid geometrical shapes" obviously would do. The Holbrook firm and the Sherwood firm were in the same line of work in 1862, so it seems fitting and proper that there is possibly some kind of connection - however nebulous - between old Josiah Holbrook in 1826 and "Dick and Jane" of 1930. (The probability is that "Florence Holbrook" was no relative of old Josiah Holbrook.

She not only wrote the revision of Sherwood & Company's readers for Scott, Foresman, but other highly popular beginning readers of the period such as the famous *Hiawatha Primer*.)

Moving the period of the emphasis on the sentence method away from the 1870's was not all that Nila Banton Smith did in her "history." The Boston change-agents had endorsed the use of real "literature" instead of "scraps," as shown by Boston School Superintendent Eliot's comments in 1878, and by Lodge's folk-tale book compiled for the Boston schools about the same time. Yet Smith obscured the fact that the increased emphasis on "literature" in readers had begun in Boston in the 1870's. On page 143, she said:

"There can be no doubt that the pioneers in literary readers were... *Stepping Stones to Literature* (1897) and... *Graded Literature Readers* (1899)."

Concerning such "pioneers," Nila Banton Smith was wrong by at least twenty years, since at least two such "pioneers" in literary readers had appeared some twenty years earlier. One was Hurd and Houghton's *House That Jack Built*, part of their "Riverside Juveniles," published in 1876, according to Leypoldt's *American Catalog* of July, 1876, and undoubtedly other "literary" selections were among the *Riverside Juveniles*. A second "pioneer" was *Six Popular Tales, Authorized for Use in the Boston Public Schools*, "Selected and Arranged by Henry Cabot Lodge," August 12, 1879. (Lodge's book showed no publisher, but was copyrighted by him in 1879 and printed by the "Press of Brockwell and Churchill, Boston.") Change was brewing in Cambridge and Boston in 1876, and the change-agents had taken over the Boston schools by 1879, the date of Lodge's text "Authorized for Use in the Boston Public Schools," which fact is printed at the top of its title page.

In 1885, Ginn and Company of Boston published *Classics for Children - A Primer*, by Jennie H. Stickney, who had been the Principal in the Boston city normal school when John Dudley Philbrick was Superintendent. Stickney's book had a picture of the "House that Jack built" on its cover, parroting Hurd and Houghton's particular 1876 "literary" theme. By 1892, a new fifth reader in the Stickney series was published, according to the *American Catalogue*, and *Early American Textbooks* shows an 1892 Ginn copy of *Classic Series. Fifth Reader*, by R. I. Fulton and T. C. Trueblood, Eds. The Stickney series finished in 1892 and the "Classics" series published by Ginn by 1892 were possibly the same materials, sometimes called Stickney's series and sometimes called the Classics series. Whatever the distinctions, however, it is very clear that Ginn had a "classics" primer published in 1885, and a "classics" book five in

1892. In the intervening years from 1885 to 1892, Ginn had probably put out the rest of its “classics” literary series. Therefore, for Nila Banton Smith to claim that the first “literary” series appeared in 1897 is wrong by about thirteen years or so.

By 1883, Houghton, Mifflin (presumably the successors to “Hurd and Houghton”) had in print the Riverside Literature series with works by authors such as Longfellow. It should be remembered to which river that name, Riverside, referred. It was to the Cambridge River that flows between Harvard’s Cambridge on one of its riversides and Boston on its other riverside. By 1891, Houghton, Mifflin and Company had published *The Riverside Primer and Reader*, a literary primer, certainly suggesting that its previous “Riverside” material may well have been intended for school use. The *Riverside Primer and Reader* was of obvious interest to those at Harvard since Harvard’s copy has “Pres. C. W. Eliot” written in ink under its stamp, presumably because Eliot had owned the copy and then donated it to the library. The *Riverside* materials appeared at least six years before Nila Banton Smith’s “pioneer” date of 1897.

According to the American Book Publishing Record, the first copy of *The Heart of Oak Books* published by Heath appeared in 1893. The *Heart of Oak* literature series was by Charles Eliot Norton, a cousin of Harvard President Eliot. Norton was a close friend for 30 years of Henry James, William James’ brother. William James’ house, after his marriage, was built on a tract that was part of Norton’s woods, near his parents’ home. The *Heart of Oak Books*, apparently well known at the time, preceded Nila Banton Smith’s “pioneer” date of 1897 by four years (if 1893 is correct) or two years (if the 1895 date is correct.)

All of these “literary” materials before 1897 came from Boston publishers, even though at that time most publishers were located in New York. That certainly suggests the idea of “literary” readers was being promoted in Boston by determined people, besides President Charles William Elliot of Harvard, long, long before the 1897 date Nila Banton Smith gave for publication of the “pioneer” literary reader.

Concerning moving other dates about in her “history,” the earliest date Smith gave for Colonel Parker was 1894, on a book of his which she listed in her bibliography. That date was nineteen years after Parker’s 1875 arrival in Quincy. In her text proper, the only date she gave for Parker was a reference to the school he opened in Chicago in 1901, the year before he died. That was twenty-six years after Parker arrived in Quincy. Nila Banton Smith made no mention at all of Quincy or of Parker’s once-famous work there.

Concerning meaningful dates omitted by Nila Banton Smith in her so-called “history,” Leigh print started in 1864 and was in wide use by 1875. One of the earliest books on teaching reading was by G. Stanley Hall in 1874 (if Huey’s bibliography is correct, instead of the 1884 date given elsewhere). Hillard and Campbell’s *Franklin Primer* was first published in 1873. The sentence method was introduced in Binghamton in 1870 and was in wide use by 1875. Colonel Parker’s triumphant years at Quincy began in 1875. After a period in Boston, Parker left Massachusetts in 1883 for another “triumph” in Chicago. The Appleton readers were published in 1878. The *Heart of Oak* readers were published in 1893. The period which Smith is obscuring, therefore, concerns all of these developments and runs from about 1864 to 1893. She obscures the influential names of Cattell, James, Hall, and Leigh, among others. One of the more surprising names she omitted, of course, was Alexander Graham Bell and she also omitted mention of his father’s phonic method. In contrast to Smith’s ignoring Bell’s phonics, the senior Bell’s work on phonics managed to find its way into *My Fair Lady* on Broadway and in the movies, where Eliza was drilled on “Bell’s” charts to acquire correct pronunciation.

As mentioned earlier, at the beginning of this time segment, in Cambridge in 1864, William James and his brother Henry were sitting out the Civil War as students in Harvard. The rest of the James’ immediate family moved to Cambridge permanently the next year, to a house right across the street from



the home of the president of Harvard, Charles William Eliot, and very near the estate of Charles Eliot Norton, who was to become the close friend of Henry James, and on whose land William James was to build his later home.

Was anything in particular happening in Cambridge in 1864 that concerned reading? The answer has been shown to be a loud YES. The debate concerning the teaching of language to deaf-mutes surfaced into the public news that year of 1864. By about 1870, Agassiz was giving public lectures opposing the teaching of grammar and was acquiring a dedicated following of change-agents. The Quincy Adams brothers were almost certainly among Agassiz' followers. "Philosophers" were reported by Philbrick to be adamantly opposed to Leigh phonics by 1871, and William James was a contemporary "philosopher," as was William Torrey Harris in St. Louis. Yet by 1893, the immediate developments associated with the change-agents ended with the publication of Norton's Heart of Oak series teaching "literature" by pure "meaning," with no "sound" instruction at all, in which Norton thanked an anonymous someone for invaluable help. It is these years, 1864 to 1893, which Nila Banton Smith has most thoroughly erased from American reading instruction history, and, along with that erasure, the story concerning the change-agents of the 1870's who killed the burgeoning revival of "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading in America.

## Chapter 28

### The Testimony of the First of Three Disinterested Observers from 1873 to 1893

Probably the best sources for information on any period are the disinterested ones. With Reeder's probable ties to movers-and-shakers such as Cattell and Thorndike at Columbia, Reeder's history cannot be considered disinterested. Even Sheldon, because of his authorship of a reading series, cannot be considered totally disinterested.

Yet three disinterested reports concerning actual readers and practices in American schools during the period from 1873 to 1893 are available. Ferdinand Buisson of France reported on actual American readers exhibited in Vienna in 1873 in *Rapport sur L'Instruction Primaire a L'Exposition Universelle de Vienne en 1873*. Again, in *Rapport sur L'Instruction Primaire a L'Exposition Universelle de Philadelphie en 1876*, (Paris, Imprimerie Nationale: 1878) he reported not only on readers he saw exhibited at Philadelphia in 1876 but on those he saw in use during his visits to American schools in August and September, 1876. Benjamin Buisson (probably a relative of Ferdinand Buisson) visited the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 and made far briefer but meaningful testimony on American practices at that time. The last essentially disinterested report, at least concerning readers in use in American schools, although not concerning methods, is that of Dr. Joseph Mayer Rice. Rice's material on his visits to American schools in 1892 appeared in the magazine, *The Forum*, from October, 1892 to June, 1893, and in *The Public School System of the United States*, New York: Century Company, 1893. Rice listed current third-grade reading books he used in oral reading tests (on which he gave only generalized results, and no figures). Three years later, in 1895 and 1896, Rice gave widespread spelling tests which established that children could, indeed, once again spell well by the late 1890's. Rice reported those tests in the magazine, *The Forum*, in 1897, and in his 1913 book, *Scientific Management in Education*, Publishers Printing Company, New York.

Almost all of the readers mentioned by Ferdinand Buisson and Dr. Rice are in the Harvard collection of textbooks, the most extensive in America. It is reasonable to assume that F. Buisson and Rice listed those readers which were among the most dominant readers in America in the periods in which they were reported. Many other readers not mentioned by Rice and F. Buisson were also published in both periods and were probably also very popular, some of which will be covered. However, those listed by Rice and Buisson should reflect the dominant methods in the teaching of beginning reading for 1873, 1876, and 1893.

At Vienna in 1873, F. Buisson said Leigh had received a medal for his work on pronouncing print. According to OERI's *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, Leigh-print editions were prepared of beginning readers by Sanders; Hillard and Campbell; Sargent; Monroe; and McGuffey, as well as (page 91) the Hillard and Campbell Franklin books and the Analytical series by J. Russell Webb and Richard Edwards. There were others not listed in the OERI report, one of which was Barnes' National series of 1857-1866 by R. G. Parker and J. Madison Watson, which had a Leigh edition by the time the 1876 Leypoldt American Catalogue was published, as did Barnes' Independent series. Two others were listed in the American Catalogue of 1876 as having Leigh editions in the first book or books, which were not listed in the OERI report. One was Ivison's *New Graded Readers of 1873*, presumably the same as *The American Educational Readers of Ivison*, referred to later. Another was *Little Teacher, First Book in Reading, On the Word Method*, published in 1855 by Wilson, Hinkle and Company, the publishers of the McGuffey series. All of those listed were sight-word books, but in Leigh editions they were turned into

phonic texts. Nevertheless, F. Buisson said he sometimes saw books in Leigh print taught like sight-word texts, and even Edwin Leigh, in his 1873 NEA paper, thought that could be acceptable!

Two series produced new editions in Leigh print as well as standard print in 1873: the Franklin series, and the Ivison series. Shortly after that, Philbrick of Boston told of Leigh print almost taking over the Boston schools, where it was being adopted freely and almost unanimously by schools because of their satisfaction with it. Although most reading books in America in 1873 were still being sold in standard print and were sight-word readers, the spreading use of Leigh print in 1873 was on the way to changing this by becoming a landslide. Yet, when the Leypoldt American Catalogue was published for the years from 1876 to 1885 and told of six new major reading series starting in 1878, not a single one of those new series had an edition in Leigh print! The old series were still selling their Leigh editions after 1876, as shown by the covers of the Franklin texts which advertised their editions in Leigh print and also advertised Edwards and Webb's readers in Leigh print. Yet, none of the later American Catalogues ever reported the appearance of a single new or additional edition in Leigh print! The odor of activists wafts up from such a development.

The six new series between 1876 and 1885 were Appleton's in 1878, a phony phonics plus sight-words series; A. N. Raub's Normal Readers by Porter and Company of 1878, presumably using a normal-word phonic approach, though I have not seen it; McGuffey's Eclectic Readers, Revised Edition, of 1879, which was a truly phonic series but possibly not so effective as Leigh's approach, Barnes' New National Readers of 1882-1883, a sight-word approach, Butler's Series of 1883, another phony phonics plus sight words approach, and Swinton's Readers published by Ivison of 1882-1883, another phony phonics plus sight-words series. Swinton's appears to have been very popular, as, of course, were Appleton's and McGuffey's. Barnes' and Butler's also appear to have been widely used. Raub's appears to have been little used. However, Leigh HAD made a difference, just as Rudolf Flesch did later: the reading series now at least all pretended to be teaching phonics, even those which really rated Code 1.

Despite the spreading use of Leigh print in 1873, most reading books still had editions published in standard print, and most of these standard print editions still used the word method. In 1873, Ferdinand Buisson referred to "...charming elementary books for the study of reading" published by companies such as Barnes and Harper, which, instead of:

"...leaving the child to wait in the study of mechanical combinations of letters and sounds, put the child in the presence of real words which he knows and which interest him. The ideal that is followed and attained in part by the Readers like those of Marcius Willson, Parker, Madison Wattson (sic), etc., is to lead the child to read almost as naturally as he began to talk, not by a long series of laborious efforts and of mechanical repetitions but by the attraction of curiosity, by the pleasure of discovery, and by the interest without end which is reborn in the spirit, found in the exercise at the same time spontaneous and methodical of his senses, of his imagination, of his memory and of his judgment."

Buisson had apparently been reading the advertisements for these sight-word abominations. The National School Primer of Richard G. Parker and James Madison Watson, a sight-word book, was part of the series published between 1857 and 1866 by A. S. Barnes & Company, New York. The second edition of Marcius Willson's sight-word The Primer came out in 1860, part of Willson's School and Family Series published by Harper. Reading charts accompanied the series, written by both Willson and N. A. Calkins, who also wrote Calkins's Primary Object Lessons published by Harper. Calkins was with the New York City schools and later endorsed the teaching of sight words in first grades but using Leigh print! Calkins did not believe in beginning with phonics, even when using Leigh print. If other American publishers besides Barnes and Harper exhibited at Vienna, Buisson did not mention them by name.

As is apparent, Leigh's influence was great at the time and Barnes materials were also available in Leigh print, but whether the Harper sight-word materials were ever available in Leigh print is not known.

However, by 1875, A. S. Barnes and Company published an alternate first grade book for its Independent reading series by J. Madison Watson, which series had a Leigh edition. That alternate book, *The Independent Primary Reader*, was strongly phonic. The trend, therefore, before 1875 had been clearly away from "meaning" and towards "sound" for beginning readers, despite the awful comments by Ferdinand Buisson in 1873, which he was apparently just parroting. Yet, some eight years or so after publishing by 1875 a strongly phonic alternate for a first grade book, A. S. Barnes published its 1883 series, Barnes's *New National Readers*, by Charles J. Barnes and J. Marshall Hawkes, and that series had gone all the way back to a totally non-phonetic Code 1. The new 1883 readers of the Barnes company represented a complete about-face, apparently as a result of the fact that the "experts"-inspired emphasis in government schools had gone back to "meaning." The new Harper's Educational Series of 1888, on which Professor O. T. Bright, Superintendent of Schools, Englewood, Illinois, was the editor of the first book, and James Baldwin the principal editor, was a horrible, non-phonetic Code 3. (Baldwin later wrote two series for American Book Company, *The Baldwin Readers* and the 1901 sight-word McGuffey revision.)

At Vienna in 1873, Buisson had reported on exhibits by many countries, and in many subjects besides reading. Yet when he came to America as the representative from France to the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, his concentration was solely on American textbooks, and he devoted a good deal of his *Rapport sur L'Instruction Primaire a L'Exposition Universelle de Philadelphie en 1876*, (Paris, Imprimerie Nationale: 1878) to describing the American reading books he saw at the Exposition and when visiting schools in August and September. His listing of textbooks, therefore, can be seen as a valid indication of the books which were most popular in the United States in 1876. He said (page 252):

"The works of which we come to speak are those that we have seen the most often in the hands of pupils or at the Exposition and which struck us in our school visits in August and September 1876."

For beginning reading texts, he listed the following. I have added comments concerning the texts.

*The Phonic Reader No. 1*, by A. Knell & J. H. Jones, "Wilson Publishing Company" (actually, the publishers of McGuffey's, Wilson, Hinkle & Co. of Cincinnati, for which the OERI text shows a publishing date of 1868). Buisson said the reading was always in complete sentences. I have not seen this book, but it can be presumed to have been truly phonic.

*The American Educational Readers, First Reader*, publishers: Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York and Chicago: 1873. (This company was the successor to the companies which had published Sanders' readers since 1840.) Presumably this 1873 series was the *New Graded Readers* of Ivison reported in the 1876 American Catalogue of Leypoldt. Buisson said the beginning book taught 17 "normal" words as sight words, which contained all the letters of the alphabet. He called the series "eclectic." I have not seen this book, but Buisson reproduced considerable portions. It was their Leigh edition which appeared in the 1876 American Catalogue. Yet, by 1882, Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. responded to the trend back toward "meaning" by putting out a new series by William Swinton which used phony phonics plus sight words, and which was not in Leigh print.

*The Rational First Reader*, by Dr. Adolf Douai, published by E. Steiger, New York: 1872. It used a "normal words" approach to teach the letters - and sounds. This was a phonic text and apparently died out about the same time as the Leigh texts.

The Independent Primary Reader, by James Madison Watson, published by A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago and New Orleans in 1875. An earlier Independent primary book had been published in Leigh print about 1872. This phonic book was possibly Code 7. Barnes' Independent series was a companion series to their National series which Buisson saw in Vienna. As mentioned, the Barnes company replaced both the National and Independent series with a straight sight-word series in 1883.

The Primer and The First Reader of Lewis Baxter Monroe's Series, first published by Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia in 1864, and, if not, in 1871. This was a very poor series, partly sight-word and partly phonic, but it did include some real phonics. According to the OERI text, The First Reader was available in Leigh print by 1873. However, the pages of the Monroe text that Buisson reproduced were in standard print. Monroe's New Primer of 1882 by Monroe's widow, Mrs. Lewis B. Monroe was far more phonic. Some mentions of Monroe's material occur until about the 1890's, but then apparently it died out.

The New American First Reader, by Epes Sargent & Amasa May, published by J. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia: 1871. Sargent's Standard School Primer of 1856, from his earlier series published by Shorey of Boston, had been straight Code 1. Sargent's 1871 series still emphasized sight words but, by including some effective phonic analysis, was a sharp change. The publisher of Sargent's 1871 series, J. H. Butler, later put out an 1883 series, Butler's Series. It included The Chart-Primer, which was Code 4 phony phonics. No author was listed but the Butler series of 1883 was apparently by S. Mecutchen.

The Franklin Primer by Hillard & Campbell, published by Brewer & Tileston of Boston, and Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co., New York and William Ware, Boston. It used 21 "normal" words to teach the alphabet. It was, in practice, a sight-word series. However, The Franklin Primer (which was book one) and The Franklin Second Reader were available in Leigh print probably by 1873. Buisson listed Brewer & Tileston as the publisher of the 1876 copy he used, and reproduced pages from it in standard print, not Leigh print. The Franklin Primer was apparently overshadowed by Appleton's in the 1880's.

Union Sunday School - primer. From Buisson's description, it was a sight-word text. An 1853 edition of the Union Primer in the Harvard library, published by the American Sunday School Union at Philadelphia, may or may not have been the same book, and it was a sight-word text and obviously inexpensive. The materials of the American Sunday School Union are discussed in Appendix C.

McGuffey Readers, (Buisson presumably saw the primer), Wilson, Hinkle & Co. Cincinnati. The 1849 McGuffey's Primer was a straight sight-word text. However, the OERI text shows in 1868 that Wilson, Hinkle & Co. of Cincinnati published Leigh's McGuffey's New Primary Reader, and this may have been what Buisson saw. They also published Leigh-print editions of McGuffey's. By 1879, the truly phonic new McGuffey series was being published, but the primer did not come out until 1881. The primer was not meant originally as the beginning book, but was only an addition to the already existing series. The phonic book one had been the beginning book in the 1879 series.

The First Reader, Adapted to the Phonic, Word and Alphabet Modes of Teaching to Read, by E. A. Sheldon, New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1872. This was a sight-word series with analytic phonics, which its author wrongly considered phonic. Despite his obvious good intentions, it is best to describe it as phony phonics. The author was the famous E. A. Sheldon of

Oswego Normal School, who had done much to popularize object lessons in this country. Their failings are discussed elsewhere in this history.

“Webb” - Buisson said, “One should remark in the state of Michigan is an apparatus for teaching reading by Webb. It is very much used, we have been told, in that state. The Reader which accompanies it appears very well conceived for the word method. This is the only important example of an apparatus for collective teaching of reading.” Presumably Buisson did not mean Webb’s straight sight-word Normal Reader No. 1 published in 1846 which was still being published by Taintor in 1876 according to the 1876 American Catalogue, nor the Edwards and Webb Analytical series still being published by Taintor and Sherwood, nor Webb’s newest Model series being published by Sherwood. Buisson probably saw what Early American Textbooks lists as Webb’s Word-Method, by John Russell Webb, “Rev. ed. Detroit: E. B. Smith Co.; Boston: Nichols & Hall, 1868.” The 1876 American Catalogue listed the following in print in that year, which was obviously a new edition of that 1868 material published in Detroit, Michigan, in 1875: “Webb, J. R. Word Method: New Method of Teaching Reading. New Ed., 1875. 30 cents. E. B. Smith.”

What Buisson’s testimony establishes is that the teaching of phonics, which started to influence reading instruction about 1860, had been increasing in a flood tide in many places before 1876. Yet, less than ten years later, real phonics was effectively dead, and only the most ineffective of phony phonics could be found in the widely-used beginning reading texts. The record shows that it was the change-agents who killed the teaching of real phonics. To do so, they used the publicity on Farnham’s paper on the sentence method at the 1873 NEA convention, and the publicity on Parker’s fake “achievements” in Quincy after 1875. They also used their control of normal schools and educational journals (and very probably, through market pressure, their control of most publishers, McGuffey’s excepted). In Boston, however, the change-agents did not have to bother with using propaganda. They just fired Boston Schools Superintendent Philbrick in March, 1878, and took over the Boston schools..

The prefaces to reading instruction primers can indicate the dominant reading instruction methods in any period. Such prefaces, and the content of the primers themselves, establish that phonics was NOT the method being used to teach beginning reading in America after 1878 to 1893. The sight-word method, or the sight-word method plus phony phonics, was the method being used, particularly after Leigh-print editions of sight-word primers went out of general use before 1880.

The fact that “reading instruction” in the primary grades was largely an exercise in futility is shown, in part, by this statement in the Primary Teacher, Boston, Massachusetts: January, 1878 (page 92):

“They soon learn their little readers by heart.”

“Phonics” in America after 1826 until the aborted phonics revival of the 1860’s and 1870’s had always meant “elocution,” not decoding. “Elocution” was used in those “oral” exercises which resulted in children memorizing their “little readers.” As has been discussed, true phonics for teaching children to read had not been used again until the period between about 1860 and 1880 when it was employed in some places. The massive effect that the stress on elocution had on schools by 1876 is shown in Ferdinand Buisson’s Rapport sur L’Instruction Primaire a L’Exposition Universelle de Philadelphia en 1876, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale: 1878 page 235. Buisson had toured many American schools while attending the Exposition in 1876:

“Nothing is neglected to obtain from the pupils a correct pronunciation, not only in the elementary classes, but also in the more advanced. In any class whatever, the teacher reads, aloud and in an intelligible voice, a passage of the Reader corresponding to the degree of instruction of

the pupils. The children repeat it next in the same tone and with the same inflections of the voice. This is one of the most animated and the most curious exercises of the American schools: we have been witness to it many times with a keen interest.”

As can be seen from the summary of reading texts in Britain elsewhere in this history, the same kind of “elocution” was in use there in the 1870’s. Children in “reading” classes were not reading by themselves but were just parroting words pronounced first by their teachers. Obviously, this “curious exercise” assured that children who were unable to read by themselves would nevertheless be able to recite the passages in their readers.

Even those who were presumably endorsers of Leigh phonics sometimes were so in name only. The opinion of N. A. Calkins, an administrator of New York City, was covered in an 1879 issue of *Primary Teacher*, page 14, concerning the “work of more than 2,000 teachers during the past sixteen years” (presumably since 1863) in the teaching of beginning reading. Leigh print was endorsed, but not for beginners. Beginners were to learn by sight words. The likelihood is minimal that children would be able to make effective use later of Leigh phonics on new words once they had formed sight-word reflexes on other sight words in Leigh print. Calkins again clearly endorsed whole words for beginners in the November, 1879, issue, page 65. As the 1879 comment from *Primary Teacher* quoted previously makes clear, such children were not really reading, but only reciting memorized texts. Those “2,000 teachers” had spent “sixteen years” wasting time and tax money. The comment by Leigh, quoted by Ferdinand Buisson, and discussed elsewhere concerning reading failure in New York and other large cities before 1876, is additional proof that children in New York City primary grades were not really learning to read during those years when they were being taught to read by sight-words.

After 1880, phonics was disreputable except in the independent-minded Middle West. Harris had been a co-author on the Appleton series that came out in 1878; but he “resigned” from St. Louis in 1880, while St. Louis kept on teaching Leigh print for some years after that. St. Louis could not therefore have been using Harris’s Appleton series because it was not published in Leigh print. St. Louis was STILL teaching real phonics when Rice visited there in 1892-1893, though no longer using Leigh print. (The old Leigh-print textbooks must have been worn out by then.) An untold story appears to lie in the Harris-Appleton vs. Leigh-St. Louis relationships. The phonic McGuffey’s of 1879 was published in Midwestern Cincinnati and McGuffey’s great popularity was in the Midwest. (The sales-minded publishers of McGuffey’s covered all bases, however, by stating their books could be used by the phonic method or the “word” method.)

With appalling new texts like Appleton’s and the widely-used and equally appalling Franklin materials, the sight-word method in the primary grades was not seriously challenged again until the advent of Rebecca Pollard’s phonic method in the late 1880’s. By the 1880’s, reading failures which had been briefly banished by Leigh’s method were back in force, as a quotation from, amazingly, Nila Banton Smith makes clear.

My familiarity with the “reading expert” Nila Banton Smith’s history of American Reading Instruction has convinced me that it is classic Unthink: disinformation with a purpose. On page 131, she tried to show that the “word method” arrived in the late nineteenth century, but failed because it lacked Gates’ “intrinsic phonics.” Her purpose, of course, was to endorse Gates’ “intrinsic phonics.” Yet, typically, Nila Banton Smith obscured the source of the following quotation. Her reference implies, however, it is either from Rebecca Pollard (1889) or Edward G. Ward (1894), both of whom wrote highly effective phonic texts. The content, however, is what matters, because it is powerful evidence on the practices of the period:

“There is quite a general complaint among teachers, principals, and superintendents that pupils in the higher grades are not able to read with ease and expression; they have so little mastery over words that an exercise in reading becomes a laborious effort at word-calling. Pupils read usually very well through the first three readers, according to our present standard of reading in these grades. But the trouble begins in the fourth reader, and by the time the class is in the fifth, the reading recitation is torture to the teacher and a hateful task to the pupil. There can be no good reading without the ability to call words readily, and it may be well to consider whether the methods of teaching primary reading, which seem productive of such good results in the primary grades, are not at fault in preparing the pupil for the advanced reading.

“We are inclined to think the inability of pupils in the higher grades to call words is the legitimate outgrowth of the teaching of the word method. By this method the word is presented to the child as a whole, and the teacher either tells the child the word, or by skillful questioning leads him to use the word. Later, when phonics have been introduced, the teacher writes the new and difficult words on the blackboard and marks them. The general results of these methods on the mind of the pupil are about the same. He soon learns to think he can do nothing with a new word without the help of the teacher in some way.”

The reason for the remarks, “Pupils read usually very well through the first three readers, according to our present standard of reading in these grades,” becomes clear when “the present standard of reading” is explained. That explanation, surprisingly, comes from a statement of Colonel Parker. In Parker’s article in the *School Journal*, April 28, 1900, he spoke of the reading in Quincy, Massachusetts, when he arrived in April, 1875:

“It was the custom for pupils to read thru in a year one little book that a bright, well-taught child can read from end to end in a few hours.... They learned the book, often by heart from their older brothers and sisters; they could say every word, chant it, sing it, repeat it in their sleep, behold it in nightmares....”

They “read very well” because they were not really reading, but only reciting texts from memory. (As the school inspector in Wales about that time said, who is quoted in the section on British textbooks, children could go on “reading” fluently even if their textbooks had fallen on the floor.) Their reading failure did not show up till fourth grade, when they were asked to read difficult texts. By today’s readability levels, nineteenth century fourth and fifth grade texts are about at our high school level. Our “problem,” of course, is supposed to “develop” at the high school level but our “problem” is the same as the nineteenth century problem: the children cannot really read unfamiliar words.



## Chapter 29

### Pollard's Phonic Challenge, Its Failure to Effect a Change, and The Appalling Reading Texts Which Followed

Nila Banton Smith's quotation on reading failure in the late nineteenth century came either from Rebecca Pollard or Edward Ward, although Smith does not clarify the source. It was the kind of failure in the quotation from Nila Banton Smith's book which Rebecca Pollard was trying to wipe out, and it is very possible it was Pollard who made the remarks Smith quoted. Rebecca Pollard was an "elocutionist." Elocutionists at that time were entertainers and gave dramatic "readings" in front of audiences, sometimes traveling widely to do so. Pollard's interest in elocution obviously inspired her interest in phonics for beginning reading. She introduced a synthetic phonics system in her *Synthetic Primer* of 1887, based on her work started some time before 1885. Her results were as spectacular as Leigh's had been twenty years before, but almost immediately ran up against the same stone wall of "expert" opposition to which he had been exposed. Old Colonel Parker, who had brought his education ideas to lucky Chicago, was one of Pollard's opponents. If America had had private education instead of government education in the late 1880's, teacher and parent choice would have given Pollard a clear field, because it was from teachers and parents that she received her enormous support. But, by 1887, America's government schools and normal schools were all firmly under the centralizing influence of "experts," just as today. Therefore, Pollard's method never won over the city government schools as Leigh's had done. Instead, Pollard's "Synthetic Method" was belittled to death.

A long letter from O. E. Latham<sup>33</sup> of Kalamazoo, Michigan, appeared in the *Public School Journal* in December, 1892. Latham was disgusted with what he saw as stupid opposition to Pollard's highly successful phonic method. An excerpt from his letter follows:

"For some time THE PUBLIC-SCHOOL JOURNAL has been presenting thoughts on methods of teaching reading. The bone of contention seems to be the Synthetic Method. The last meeting of the Chicago Principal's Association was largely taken up by thoughts on the Synthetic. Colonel Parker there defined the Synthetic Method as the method full of sin, and gave his unqualified endorsement to the THOUGHT METHOD, even after speaking of a man with a perfect method as a quack.... There are now many schools and many manuals for teaching shorthand; all of these follow the Synthetic Method. No sane man would suggest the thought method of teaching stenography. The thought method of teaching children to read long hand is based on the assumption that children have no brains and by appealing as it does to mechanical memory it soon produces the condition assumed. The advocates of this method then point to this condition in justification of their method."

Comments on the cover of Pollard's 1887 text confirmed the enormous popularity of the method with parents and teachers, and, interestingly, that the Appleton series was a failure in comparison with Pollard's material. Pollard-trained children read the Appleton third-grade materials with ease before the end of first grade, and could even read the Appleton fourth grade materials.

"Testimonials

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<sup>33</sup> William H. Latham wrote *Primary Reader for Deaf Mutes*, published by the McGuffey firm, Wilson, Hinkle & Co., in 1876, which is listed on page 90 of *Early American Textbooks*, by OERI, Washington, D. C., 1985. One wonders if O.E. Latham had some family connection with the meaning vs. sound controversy.

“Miss Fanny Wells, who learned of Mrs. Pollard the Synthetic Sound Method of teaching reading, has had under her instruction the young pupils of my school who were learning to read this last school year. Her success has been remarkable and has given greater satisfaction than I have ever heard expressed before for any system. The pupils began to read in the Fall, read easily and intelligently in Appleton’s Third Reader before the close of the year and they could read at sight anything else equally difficult. I take very great pleasure in recommending the method to parents and teachers. The children who have been taught by it have been exceedingly happy in their work - it has interested them at every step. They read with great distinctness and accuracy. Very respectfully, Rebecca S. Rice, Principal of ‘Girls Higher School,’ 487 and 489 La Salle Avenue, Chicago. July 6, 1885.

“It gives me pleasure to recommend the Synthetic Sound Method which Mrs. Pollard introduces in teaching children to read. Our daughter, six years of age, entered her class last Fall knowing but a few words, and now, at the close of the school year, has completed Appleton’s Fourth Reader, besides being able to read almost perfectly in any book. Words which she has never seen before and of whose meaning she is ignorant, she is able to pronounce correctly by following the rules which she seems to understand thoroughly. I feel that this training has given her a foundation for the study of other languages. Mrs. H. M. Scott, 520 West Adams Street, Chicago, June 13, 1885.

“I most cheerfully give this testimonial of my daughter Bessie’s progress in reading during the past year. She is only eight years old. Last September she could not read a word; since that time she has read through Appleton’s First, Second and Third Readers, and has no difficulty whatever in reading Appleton’s Fourth. I am thoroughly convinced from her unusual progress that the Synthetic Sound System as taught by Mrs. R. S. Pollard in Miss Waller’s school, is the only method by which children may be taught to read with accuracy and precision in the short period of one school year. M. E. Wood.

“Mrs. R. S. Pollard: - Dear Madam - I take pleasure in adding my testimony to that of many others in praise of your success in teaching the elementary branches of education. Your Synthetic Sound System is an improvement over any plan I have heretofore known of, and the progress made by my daughter Jessie, aged six years and five months, during a term of nine months, her first and only experience, is remarkable; and it seems a marvel that she should read so well and pronounce words of three and four syllables, considering she did not know the alphabet when she started to Miss Waller’s school. I cannot speak of your success in too high terms. Sincerely, Mrs. M. O. Brown, 567 Adams Street.”

So Rebecca Pollard in Chicago was a 19th century Marva Collins, teaching true phonics and achieving the success that Marva Collins does in Chicago with true phonics in the 20th century. Pollard’s reading program was also like that of the ancient Greeks and like Sue Dickson’s highly successful Sing, Spell, Read and Write program of today, since like them Pollard used a great deal of music in teaching beginners to read.

Pollard’s remarkably successful program hung on for years and was still published after the turn of the century, at some point being taken over by American Book Company, but it never made any impact on the government schools. Nor did it make any impact on most of the private schools. As is still the case today, those in charge of most private schools were ingenuous enough to believe in the expertise of the “education experts” who were endorsing “meaning” to teach beginning reading. Instead of using Pollard’s successful program, beginning reading programs which guaranteed high failure rates were used since they were approved by the “best” people in “education.”

A description of some of these other first grade texts used in the 1890's, following the great popularity of Appleton's in the 1880's, shows that they were, at the best, sight-word texts with phony phonics, and were sometimes straight sight-word texts, unalleviated by any kind of phonics.

That sight-words for beginners were the norm in 1891 is proven by a quotation from *The New Script Primer* by Caroline A. Faber. That Code 1 text was published by Potter and Putnam in New York in 1891. It stated, "...all the best first readers of the day" had a core high-frequency word list of about 170 words - SIGHT words. Practice was at the board and in script for the first 6 months.

Quincy methods had obviously triumphed by 1891, but Quincy appears to have been totally forgotten as the source, only ten years after its fame. Instead, authors spoke of their own inspirations. For instance, the use solely of script instead of print for beginners seems to have originated at Quincy, yet Caroline A. Faber made no reference to Quincy in the "Introduction" to *The New Script Primer*:

"Introduction. This book is not a sudden inspiration, nor is it a mere formulated theory. It is the sifting and fitting for general use, the actual school-room work of the author.

"Modern methods in teaching the first steps in reading have found their best results in the development of a script vocabulary, so that the child can read and write from one to two hundred words before the transition is made to print, and the regular book taken up. Heretofore this has been accomplished by the laborious efforts of the teacher from the board, the child copying the words and sentences on his slate or paper.

"It is believed that this little book will not only relieve the teacher of much mechanical labor in the development of the vocabulary but by presenting a perfect copy to the child, it will tend to secure for him a better handwriting.

"It supplants no reader in use; but is preliminary to such reader, laying a good foundation for rapid and effective progress in the same.

"It is a book of practice, not of methods. It should go into the hands of the child as soon as the first word or sentence is developed on the board. How long the child should retain it is left to the discretion of the teacher. It is suggested, however, that the daily use of the books be limited to regular periods, at the close of which they should be collected by the teacher.

"Attention is here called to the following features of the book:

"1. One Vocabulary at a time and the Script one first.

This is the prominent feature of the book; but, in this respect, it is only the embodiment in practical form, of the best methods now in use.

"2. An easy and logical development of the Vocabulary.

The vocabulary developed consists of about one hundred and seventy words carefully selected, so as to be common to all the best first readers of the day. Thus all the words here learned will be words used in the regular book.

"The sentences are short, expressed in child language and in good English.

"3. Review Lessons.

The reviews of two full pages, facing, occur at short intervals for sight reading. In the latter part of the book, several little stories are given for sight reading and interesting language work....

“6. The transition to Print.

This is made in easy steps by the method here pursued. The script word and sentence are associated with the corresponding print word and sentence. Several pages in pure print are given so that when the child finishes the book, he can take up and continue in his regular reader with ease and profit.”

Note the reference in 1891 to “all the best first readers of the day.” That reference certainly does not support the McGuffey myth. What is abundantly evident is that this was a time when the sight-word “meaning” method was triumphant and generally unquestioned, despite the availability of the McGuffey and Pollard phonic “sound” materials.

The Children’s Primer, the first book of The Cyr Readers, by Miss Ellen M. Cyr was another Code 1 book. It was published by Ginn & Company of Boston in 1891, who noted on the copy that Cyr was the “Author of The Interstate Primer, Etc.” Cyr wrote:

“To the Teachers of the Children.... I have made my lessons as simple as possible; the average number of new words being about two and one-quarter to each page...

“The wise teacher will weave an interest about the earliest lessons, filling them with thought and meaning of which the printed text shall be but a suggestion....

“In connection with this book I have prepared a complete set of Practice Sentences. These consist of fifty envelopes, each containing twenty sentences, introducing and giving practice on the new words in each lesson. After the new words have been developed and taught from the blackboard, these sentences are distributed to the children, and are read in turn. Each child has his attention fixed upon his own individual sentence, and his mind is more concentrated than in the blackboard lessons. No time is lost in waiting, as the preparation can be made while the others are reading, and the lesson in the book is kept fresh for the final reading. I have made and used a similar set, during the past three years, and consider them almost indispensable.

“Read! read! read! is the cry of the times, and this set will double the reading-matter without increasing the vocabulary.”

The very first page of the primer had a picture of a mother rocking a baby, and, in print under the picture, the word “ba by” with an accent on “ba,” a long sign over the “a” and a short sign over the “y.” These elaborate, advanced, phonetic markings for total beginners in reading were continued on the second word, “Mam ma,” which was printed in separated syllables, with one dot over the first “a” and two over the second “a.” On these first two words, therefore, “baby” and “Mamma,” three separate sounds for “a” had been given and phonically marked. This guaranteed phonic indigestion for every child if a teacher sincerely tried to teach these phonic markings at the beginning along with the sight-words “baby” and “mama.” An accent mark was placed over the “Mam.” “See” was printed with a long mark over the first “e” and italics on the silent “e.” Under that, in lower case print, “See mamma.” Under that, “See baby.” As late as page 33, the “interesting” and “meaningful” vocabulary had only increased to, “See my kitty. I can see my kitty. Mamma can see my kitty. My kitty can see. My kitty can see baby.”

To introduce beginners on the very first three words, “Mamma, “baby,” and “see,” and on the very first page, with such a mixed-up, phonically-marked mess of seven different phonic markings does not even qualify as phony phonics, or Code 3. Cyr’s book was, in effect, a Code 1 book. Cyr produced this monstrous mess at the same time that Rebecca Pollard was efficiently teaching first-graders to read with ease with REAL synthetic-phonics teaching and marking. The heart of Pollard’s method was teaching

children how to mark words phonically by themselves so that they could sound out words by themselves. It is very hard to find any explanation for the insertion of such phony phonics as the Cyr primer used with its very first three words except that it was a deliberate attempt to placate ignorant textbook purchasers who had been gulled into believing a “little” phonics was a good thing and who already believed the avalanche of “expert” condemnations of Pollard’s methods. It should be noted that Cyr came from the Boston area, and may have had ties with “experts.” She had published *The Interstate Primer* by 1886, and, as noted on page 81 of *Early American Textbooks...*, “Literary selections in all Cyr’s readers were prominent.” Possibly *The Interstate Primer* of 1886 or earlier was included in that comment. Cyr’s “Preface” to her *Interstate Primer* was dated July, 1886, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her emphasis on literature and sight words, together with her origin at Cambridge certainly suggest that, like Stickney, she had ties to movers-and-shakers.

Although it does not appear to have been too popular, another reader copyrighted in 1890 which endorsed the current phony phonics was *The Continental First Reader* by William A. Campbell, published by Mutual Book Co., New York, New York. It was a Code 3 text. Campbell said, in his:

“Suggestions to the Teacher”

“How do children learn to read? Is there any fixed, absolute way along which they must travel day after day to learn their mother-tongue?”

“The capability of child-mind to receive impressions reduces any answer of the most experienced teacher to simply this: ‘I don’t know.’”

“In this day, when the discussion of ‘Methods’ extends almost to a ‘craze,’ there is danger that the freedom, power, and tact of young teachers will be lessened as they cling to this or that particular ‘Method.’ Experience clearly demonstrates that a child does not learn to read by either the ‘Sentence,’ the ‘Word,’ or the ‘Phonic Method,’ alone. Any one method pursued by itself, retards the progress, and distorts the development, of the child. No method is complete that does not include both

“ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

...Children must be trained to separate both the spoken-word, and the written-word into the sounds and letters of which they may be composed. But this alone is only half-teaching... for the process must be reversed to obtain the best results.... Though it is natural with young minds to proceed first from the whole to the parts, yet after a limited stock of words has been learned, the two methods should be used simultaneously.

“WORD METHOD

The first lessons in this book are presented according to the ‘Word Method,’ aided by pictures. The special reasons for adopting this method in the beginning, in preference to the others, are:

“1st. It is the natural method. Children use words in talking, not the individual sounds; hence, it is better to give the written-word as a picture of the sound-word.

“2nd. It enables the teacher to associate the names of objects, and their qualities, with the objects themselves, or their pictures.

“3d. It has more interest for the learner....

“4th. It furnishes the pupils a stock of words, by sound and form.

“PHONICS.

The diacritical marks are not used in marking the ‘New Words,’ for at this period the sound of each new word must be learned by imitation. The children must be made acquainted with the variety, form and use of this notation. To this end there are arranged=

“GROUPS OF WORDS FOR COMPARING SOUNDS.

These lists of words have been carefully selected from the number of words already learned. They will afford the pupil a key to the pronunciation of other words.”

Campbell’s “phonics” was the same as that on the Gates and Gray 1930 deaf-mute readers: comparison of memorized whole sight words to see like parts. His whole-word, two-step phony phonics rated Code 3 and was guaranteed to produce reading disabilities.

Harvard library has an 1893 copy of The Riverside Primer and Reader which was copyrighted in 1891 and published by Houghton, Mifflin and Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge. Harvard’s 1893 copy was, interestingly, Harvard President C. S. Eliot’s own copy, and it was given to the Harvard library on March 26, 1910, by which time it may be presumed Eliot had no further use for it. That he had a use for it earlier is probable: he was campaigning in the 1890’s, and presumably before, for children’s readers which contained real literature. As the following indicates, the purpose of The Riverside Primer and Reader was to train children to read real literature.

The “Introduction” read:

“This Primer and Reader is designed to serve as the sole text-book in reading required by a pupil. When he has mastered it he is ready to make the acquaintance of the world’s literature in the English tongue.

“The methods which prevail in our primary schools for familiarizing beginners with their letters, with the forms of words and with the structure of sentences, suppose not books but the blackboard, the slate, pencil and paper. It is in the oral communication of teacher with pupil by these means that the first steps are taken, and while this process is going on the book is in the hands of the teacher only and is used by her chiefly as a course of suggestion. (Footnote 1. There are several manuals designed to aid the teacher in this preliminary instruction: The Riverside Manual for Teachers, prepared by I. Freeman Hall, who has inspired and informed much of this book also, will be found especially serviceable by those who use this Primer and Reader. A further aid is offered by The Riverside Instruction Frame, which is equipped with twenty large outline pictures, twenty-five pictures of objects, and between one hundred and two hundred words and sentences in script and in print. For fuller notice see second and third over-pages of this book.) When the child thus has become able to combine letters into words and words into simple sentences, to read at sight these words and sentences as written or printed for him, and to express his ideas in fit language, he may, alone or in a class, begin the pleasant task of reading a book, and this Primer and Reader is planned so as to make the task a natural and progressive one.

“There are two principles which the compilers of this book have kept steadily in mind while preparing it, and they hold them to be fundamental in any well-considered system of teaching children to read. The first relates to the process of the child’s mind and may thus be formulated:-

“The child must think intelligently before he can read intelligibly.

“One of the most common difficulties to be overcome by the teacher is that which arises from a parrot-like repetition by the child of what it has been told, and by far the most important result to be attained is the habit of thinking accurately and clearly before answering a question or reading a sentence. This habit of thinking accurately and clearly is cultivated by the methods which now prevail in the preliminary work upon the blackboard and slate. It should continue to be cultivated when a book is placed in the hands of the child.

“The second lesson in this book illustrates one method by which the compilers have aimed to inculcate this habit, and the method employed is repeated with variations as long as it can well be pursued. The pupil is set at work reading to himself, a task which at once taxes his power of understanding more than the mere pronunciation of the words aloud. He cannot go through the sentence mechanically and repeat it by rote, for he is obliged to translate the thought of the sentence into action. If he reads to himself, I go to the door, the words cease to be a mere succession of sounds, for he suits the action to the word and shows that he reads both intelligently and attentively by going to the door.

“This exercise of Silent Reading is continued at intervals which grow somewhat less frequent as the exercise becomes familiar and loses some of its force, but the principle involved in it is (applied) by other means. Thus the old-fashioned rebus is used in Lesson 4 and elsewhere. A picture is intelligible to a child before a word is, and in writing out the word which stands for the picture he is following the logical order of proceeding from the known to the less known. Again, in Lesson 58 the exercise calls for a translation of the picture into a sentence, and here the child has to think, not only what the picture says but how he shall tell this story in his own language.

“Suggestions for carrying this process of thinking still farther lie in many of the lessons.... More than half the battle is won when the child’s interest is aroused, and formal difficulties disappear almost marvelously before the quick movement of the mind when its attention is concentrated by curiosity and a lively hunt for the end in view. The pupil, keenly alive to the matter in a story, his whole heart enlisted in it, will not need much formal instruction in emphasis, and words which by themselves might be stumbled over will often be taken easily when they lie in the direct course of an attractive narrative....”

This glorious enthusiasm remained unquenched by the hard reality that the method, for the great majority of children, the greatest part of the time, simply does not work. Its parallel to present-day “Whole Language” propaganda is also obvious. The “Introduction” continued:

“The end of learning to read is to read great books.....the work done by the teacher, before she places a book in his hands, is to accustom him to identify the words he knows how to use with the symbols of those words on the blackboard and the slate. She seeks for familiar objects and expressions and tries thus to vary and enlarge his working vocabulary. When the printed page is placed before him this same process is continued for a brief space until the child has been accustomed to a new medium. The transition from blackboard to book should be so easy that the child is not made aware of any notable change....

“The attempt has been made in this Primer and Reader to select from existing literature of the classic order such examples as come within the range of the mind at the age when the book would naturally be used. The very earliest are taken, in verse from the storehouse, Mother Goose’s Melodies, in prose from the uncounted collection of popular sayings and proverbs. Later, recourse has been had to Tennyson, Blake, Wordsworth, Stevenson, and others in verse, to versions of tales and world-renowned stories in prose.”

So the children were to be saturated with literature, but no mention was made of any selections from the Bible, which had been the primary reading matter in American schools before 1826! Nor is the “end of learning to read” only “to read great books.” Its everyday and functionally important “end” is to read things like road signs, labels on bottles, income tax forms, directions for assembling items ordered by mail, notes from a child’s teacher, selections on a restaurant menu, traffic tickets, etc., etc., etc., etc.

The Riverside collection of famous children’s books published about this time was indeed excellent, and was presumably meant to follow this primer. However, if the children were “taught” as outlined above, by pure “meaning,” almost none of them would have been able to read the Riverside collection. Perhaps by 1910 Harvard President Eliot realized he had been chasing a will-of-the-wisp with his emphasis on giving real literature to children, if they were to be taught to read only by “meaning” as in the 1891 Riverside Primer. Perhaps that is why Eliot turned his 1893 copy of this book over to the Harvard library in 1910, many years later.

Dr. Leigh’s “sound” materials of 1864 had apparently sparked the writing of the “meaning” sentence-method Franklin Primer of 1873, and of the Appleton “meaning” series in 1878 (both of which, however, were chockful of phony phonics). Pollard’s “sound” materials of 1887 apparently spurred the experts into similar efforts to produce something new and different, since a truly “expert” “meaning” series appeared in 1893, or possibly 1895<sup>34</sup>. Assuming two or three years at least to write it, it must have been started about the time Latham wrote his letter in response to the editorial campaign against the Pollard method in the *Public School Journal* in 1892. That new series of reading books was the Heart of Oak books which began to come out in 1893 or 1895.

Its editor, Charles Eliot Norton, was a cousin of the president of Harvard, Charles W. Eliot, and a close friend of Henry James, Jr.

Norton had helped Henry James, Jr., get his fiction published at the beginning of James’ career in the 1860’s, according to Leon Edel’s multi-volumed biography of Henry James. Norton, who lived close to the James family home in Cambridge, was apparently also a longstanding friend of the whole James family. For instance, William’s mother casually mentioned in a letter to his brother Henry in the spring of 1873 (Leon Edel, *Henry James - The Conquest of London: 1870-1881*, page 141) that William James had been late for dinner because he had been strolling with Sara in the Norton woods. Sara was Charles Eliot Norton’s daughter. After 1889 and some eleven years or so after his marriage to Alice Gibbons, Professor William James’ home was built on a subdivision of the Norton woods (page 409 and footnote, *The Letters of Josiah Royce*, “Edited and with an Introduction by John Clendenning,” The University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1970).

Yet the close association of William James and Henry James with Charles Eliot Norton went back far more years. In William James’ letter to Henry James of February 3, 1868(?), in the summary volume of James family correspondence in the Houghton Library at Harvard, it is recorded that William James wrote that he was enclosing a review on Darwin for Norton.

That shows a publishing tie between both of the James brothers, working together, and Norton about 1868. William James wrote at least one, and possibly more than one, article for Norton as early as about 1868 and sent it to Norton by way of his brother, Henry, who had become the older Norton’s close friend, after Norton got Henry’s fictional material published. Since both brothers were apparently writing material for Norton to publish as early as about 1868, that supports the idea that either of them could have

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34 American Book Publishing Record has Heart of Oak in 1893-4 by Norton with Kate Stephens, revised 1902-03. 1895-1900 American Catalogue has 1895. Harvard’s 1899 copy was copyrighted in 1895, without Stephens’ name. Possibly an 1893-1894 edition came out before the 1895 one.



been the person Norton was not permitted to name, as discussed below, who was primarily responsible for the Heart of Oak books. That seems particularly likely since Henry James was so queasy about publicity that he ultimately burned all his private papers, and by doing so demonstrated beyond any question his intense dislike for publicity. If the brothers were involved in preparing the Heart of Oak books for Charles Eliot Norton, any correspondence between Henry James and Norton on the books would probably have been after about 1889, and would have been among the personal papers of which Henry James later made a bonfire.

Therefore, both William and Henry James were closely associated with Norton, and, as will be shown, either one may have been the person referred to by Norton in his "Acknowledgments" to the Heart of Oak reading series which began to be published in 1893:

"I regret that I am not allowed to mention by name one without whose help the Books would not have been made, and to whose hand most of the Notes are due."

The series totally omitted any phonics or any instruction whatsoever in reading. Children were to learn to read through interest, and, to some extent, through seeing memorized poetry in print. It was one of the first of the "literature" series of readers, despite the fact Nila Banton Smith's history of American reading instruction totally omitted Norton's books and said instead that two later series were the first literature series. The 1891 Riverside Primer and the Riverside literature books which predated the 1891 primer by well over ten years were not really a reading series, although they were probably meant to be used that way. However, the similarity of the approach of the Riverside materials to the Heart of Oak books is obvious and the Riverside texts may be considered their predecessor. Norton's readers were obviously also "sentence method" readers. Norton said:

"'Mother Goose' is the best primer. No matter if the rhymes be nonsense verses;...the child in repeating them is acquiring the accent of emphasis and of rhythmical form. Moreover, the mere art of reading is the more readily learned, if the words first presented to the eye of the child are those which are already familiar to his ear.

"The next step is easy, to the short stories which have been told since the world was young; old fables in which the teachings of long experience are embodied.... To make good reading more attractive than bad,... the growing intelligence of the child should be nourished with selected portions of the best literature.... To provide this... is the chief end of the HEART OF OAK series of reading books."

A comment stating that "nonsense," obviously as in some of the Mother Goose rhymes, can mimic sentence structure "and the Unity of one Thought" occurs in James' 1890 psychology text, page 171:

"To sum up, certain kinds of verbal associate, certain grammatical expectations fulfilled, stand for a good part of our impression that a sentence has a meaning and is dominated by the Unity of one Thought. Nonsense in grammatical form sounds half rational; sense with grammatical sequence upset sounds nonsensical; e.g., Elba the Napoleon English Faith had banished broken to he Saint because Helena at...."

"Mother Goose" was ideal to arouse the kind of "grammatical expectations" which would be fully met when children passed on to more meaningful sentences in the "short stories told since the world was young." As discussed previously, an emphasis on "real" literature had been a prominent part of the program in Boston after Philbrick was fired, and Henry Cabot Lodge had compiled in 1879 a book of classic fairy tales for young children which were used in the Boston schools. Riverside began publishing their children's collection of literature about that time. Probably next came J. H. Stickney's Classics for

Children, A Primer, published in Boston in 1885 by Ginn & Co. On its cover was a picture of the house that was built by “Jack” of the nursery-rhyme. (Stickney later wrote a complete reading series for Ginn, which apparently was advertised as a “literary” series, as discussed elsewhere, and the materials by Cyr of Cambridge for Interstate and Ginn, mentioned previously, also had a “literary” emphasis.) The Heart of Oak readers were in a straight line of development from such “improvements” in the teaching of “real” literature which were instituted by the 1878 Boston change-agents.

Phonics had no place in Norton’s book, as the “Note to Book One” stated:

“A good teacher will point out to the child the fact that many a word which has a strange look to him on the page is not strange to him in his talk. He soon learns how it looks and how to spell it. With intelligent and constant assistance from the teacher the difficulties in learning to read will be much better mastered by this natural method than by the use of any artificial system.”

Norton, therefore, endorsed pure “look and say.”

It is worth while to quote at length from the “Note to Book One.” The Harvard 1899 copy of the First Book of the Heart of Oak Books, copyrighted in 1895 is stamped Experimental School of Teachers College, obviously a Columbia Teachers College copy which was traded to Harvard. That book was presumably a duplicate of one Columbia Teachers College should still have had when Nila Banton Smith wrote her “history” and omitted all mention of the Heart of Oak Books. The “Note to Book One” outlined the book’s purpose:

“...In schools this little book is to take the place of a primer, and it may be used with or without an independent spelling-book, according to the skill or the judgment of the teacher. The usual apparatus of a lesson-book has been discarded, and no attempt at what is technically known as ‘grading’ has been made. The system of grading adopted in most books for beginning in reading is largely artificial and mechanical, and is hurtful rather than helpful to progress. It does not conform to the natural method by which language is acquired, either by the ear or by the eye. The teaching of children to read by means of pieces which have been specially prepared for them, by the omission of all hard words and of all expressions supposed to be beyond their comprehension, is a thoroughly objectionable practice. Words of varying degrees of difficulty, as well in spelling as in meaning, are learned by the ear, and should be learned by the eye, at the same time. The talk of a child when he begins to learn to read does not consist of only words of one syllable. Many a hard word is familiar to him in use before he sees it in print. His ear may be made the helper of his eye. A good teacher will point out to the child the fact that many a word which has a strange look to him on the page is not strange to him in his talk. He soon learns how it looks and how to spell it. With intelligent and constant assistance from the teacher the difficulties in learning to read will be much better mastered by this natural method than by the use of any artificial system.

“Any child who can read the pieces in the First Book of the Heart of Oak series will find few difficulties in the Second....”

Who was the friend whom Norton was not permitted to mention by name in his “Acknowledgments”? Was it his close and highly literary friend for some thirty years, Henry James, or was it his thirty-year-long close neighbor and friend who was so enamoured of “grammatical expectations,” the psychologist William James? Or was it, to some degree, BOTH OF THEM? It should be mentioned that Norton was principally a magazine editor, so his concern with beginning reading and reading books was a new, rather surprising activity. The renewed push for literary readers at that time almost certainly came from his cousin, President Eliot of Harvard, who had been extremely interested in new, literary readers

for children, and had spoken publicly requesting such books for some years. Therefore, Eliot certainly would never have objected to the use of his name if he were the one “without whose help the Books would not have been made, and to whose hand most of the Notes are due.” It seems likely that Eliot asked his cousin, Norton, the editor, to publish such books and Eliot asked a nearby Mr. X to help Norton to compile them, or to help get someone else to compile them. Since William James was on Eliot’s faculty at Harvard, Eliot would not have had to look very far if he wanted to ask for help for Norton from William James, or through William James from Norton’s old friend Henry James who was living in England, but who was in Norton’s debt for old favors.

The natural history theme that had originated with Agassiz continued through the nineties. The back cover of Sarah Fuller’s *Illustrated Primer*, mentioned previously, advertised Badlam’s primer, in her series *Stepping Stones to Reading*, the derivation of which name is discussed elsewhere. Badlam’s material was rather phonic in its approach, which is surprising considering it was published by D. C. Heath which was publishing material such as Fuller’s primer and G. Stanley Hall’s book on the teaching of reading. Yet also advertised on the back of the *Illustrated Primer* were Wright’s *Nature Readers Sea-Side and Way-side*. The *First Reader* treated of crabs, wasps, spiders, bees and some mollusks. The *Second Reader* treated of ants, flies, earth-worms, beetles, barnacles, star-fish and dragon-flies. The *Third Reader* had lessons in plant life, grasshoppers, butterflies, and birds. The *Fourth Reader* treated of wildlife in its different aspects:

“Wright’s *Nature Readers: Sea-side and Way-side*.

“Designed for schools and families. Intended to awaken in children a taste for scientific study, to develop their powers of attention, and to encourage observation, by directing their minds to the living things that meet their eyes on the road-side, at the sea-shore, and about their homes.”

Obviously, Agassiz’s natural history was still being promoted by D. C. Heath with such material as Wright’s *Nature Readers*. However, to expect that little first-grade children would be more interested in the “natural history” of wasps, spiders, beetles and barnacles before covering the “natural history” of birds and bunnies shows a curious misunderstanding of little children’s minds. Perhaps it was not a misunderstanding, but a deliberate attempt to quell the natural sympathy little children feel for familiar animals and to replace it with “scientific objectivity” (i. e., callousness).

In summary, the record indicates, not only that Pollard failed to effect any widespread change, but that the readers published shortly after hers were, if anything, even worse than those that had been published before.

## Chapter 30

### Observers' Reports from the 1890's

More visits of French emissaries to American schools were made during the 1893 Chicago Exposition. The reports made by Benjamin Buisson (presumably some relative of F. Buisson) did not match the extensive reporting by F. Buisson on his 1876 visits, but are still of interest. They appear in Reports of the Delegation sent to the Columbian Exposition of Chicago by the Minister of Public Instruction - 1893 Primary Instruction (Enseignement Primaire) by Benjamin Buisson, Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1896 (pages 208-209):

“Reading. We point out the American word method, and also the method of the charts of sentences, containing at once little sentences, methods less analytical than our system of alphabetic spelling, and supported by pretty illustrated wall charts where one meets only those words and ideas already within reach of early childhood.” (Ed.: he also mentioned many supplementary reading books in use.)

“Spelling.... Employed are booklets containing graduated lists of ordinary words that the pupils learn page by page, and on which they are asked orally for the sense and the spelling. These books or spellers, aided by reading, appear to suffice to learn English spelling - difficult only because of the difference between the pronunciation and the figuration of the words, - not from the grammatical point of view. Certain educators seem to envy us the exercise of dictating a complete piece, which they preferred to spelling lists of unconnected words. But the spellers are again in vogue, and the pupils put much effort to spell well orally, or at the blackboard the words that one asks them. This is often under the form of a spelling bee, and of a fashion very lively and zestful, that this exercise is conducted in class.”

So Benjamin Buisson confirmed, by inference, that spelling had previously been dropped in American schools, but openly confirmed that it was heavily taught in American schools in 1893 by the use of spelling books.

The last essentially disinterested contemporary report on the teaching of reading, which can be cited as evidence on reading books and methods in general use in the early 1890's, was made by an American, Joseph Mayer Rice, M. D. Dr. Rice's first published material appeared in the early 1890's as a series of nine articles in the New York magazine, *The Forum*, from October, 1892, to June, 1893, reporting on his extensive visits to American schools in 1892, and another article in August of 1894. In 1893, he republished the 1892-1893 articles in book form under the title, *The Public School System of the United States*, Century Company, New York. Rice later wrote three more articles in *The Forum*, at least two and probably all three of which were on his later very extensive testing of school children. Rice's testing of spelling and arithmetic had covered a period of 16 months from February, 1895. The initial *Forum* article on his testing appeared in April, 1897, and the second was in June, 1897, entitled “The Futility of the Spelling Grind, II.” Presumably his last article reported on his testing of arithmetic and it appeared presumably later in 1897. Rice later reported on his 1895 and 1896 extensive testing, based on his *Forum* articles, in a 1913 book, *Scientific Management in Education*. Publishers Printing Company, New York, in which he said he had written a total of twelve articles for *Forum* over the years. However, like so much of education “history,” almost all of Rice's work has fallen into our education establishment's black hole.

Dr. Joseph Mayer Rice's 1893 book, based on his first nine *Forum* articles, *The Public School System of the United States*, reported on his visits from from January 7 to June 25, 1892, to the classrooms of 1,200 teachers in 36 American cities. Rice also visited 20 normal schools. For two years before that, Rice

had been visiting schools and studying in Europe. Rice was a devotee of the “new” education, and opposed children’s reciting lessons from text books. Rice was, for the most part, in agreement with the Quincy ideas. Yet the “born yesterday” syndrome in American education was working just fine back in the 1890’s, too. That is because, as far as I could see, Rice showed no sign of ever having heard of the Quincy movement, although he endorsed Parker’s Chicago school. Rice apparently also had no knowledge that “elocution” had been so important in American schools before 1878, as he was baffled by a ridiculous elocution exercise he witnessed, the purpose of which completely eluded him. Rice referred to the “laws of psychology” and endorsed instruction in accordance with the “nature of the mind.” “Experts” in their bustling materialistic ignorance were busy even then writing with assurance about the “nature of the mind,” even though it will forever defy any material explanation.

Four years later in 1895 and 1896, Rice again toured American schools, and gave extensive spelling and arithmetic tests, reported in three articles in *The Forum*, apparently all in 1897, and in his 1913 book mentioned above, *Scientific Management in Education*. As the title of two of his 1897 articles made clear, “The Futility of the Spelling Grind,” Rice complained about the great amount of time being spent on spelling in American schools in the 1890’s. After the catastrophic effects on spelling that had resulted when American schools aped Parker’s 1875 Quincy “methods” and threw out the speller, spelling failures had been enormous. Because of these spelling failures, a reaction had begun to set in by about 1885 and children were being given too much drill on spelling. Curiously, unlike Benjamin Buisson, Rice apparently did not know that spelling had been largely thrown out of American schools for a period of time, and that the spelling “grind” was the over-reaction to the spelling failures that had resulted. Rice published a short speller which he thought could provide all the practice that was needed.

Rice was obviously operating in an information vacuum, since he had no knowledge of the massive spelling failures of the previous decade which had been the result of throwing out spellers from the schools. Furthermore, in analyzing his scores from fourth and fifth grades in comparison to eighth grades, Rice showed a misunderstanding on the effect of failure on school enrollment. In 1896, most children were finished with school after graduating from eighth grade, but many did not reach that far. Rice did acknowledge that fact when he referred on page 78 to “the case of pupils who were likely to complete the grammar school course” in comparison to “those who cannot attend school longer than four or five years....” Yet what he seemed to ignore was that it was not only the children who had to leave school to go to work who dropped out after fifth grade, but it was the failing students, as well. Only the successful ones could reach grade eight. Rice’s spelling scores at grade eight were truly magnificent, but that told very little about “average” spelling scores, because the eighth graders were the academic survivors, the failures having all washed out. Therefore, it is only Rice’s fourth and fifth grade scores which are significant. He admitted that there was some wide variation in them. A large part of that variation could be explained by the presence of the failures.

Nevertheless, on the whole, Rice’s fourth and fifth grade scores in 1895 and 1896 proved that the return to the teaching of spelling had been successful for the great majority of students. For the purposes of this history, that also means that the great majority of students could once again read well in 1895 and 1896, since spelling is the best single indicator of reading competency. Rice’s tables, giving his tests results in extreme detail, are contained in his 1913 book, available at the Library of Congress and presumably elsewhere. Some of Rice’s comments culled from pages 78 to 80, and 88, are given below, to indicate his general results. His reference to A and B classes are to half-year grades, schools at that time having both September and February enrollment periods:

“...we are confronted by a number of interesting phenomena.... The most striking of these are: First, that in the vast majority of instances, the results are very close when the averages for entire buildings are compared. In fifteen of the twenty-one schools... the averages on the second test as the table shows run from 73.3 to 77.9. Second, while the results in the lower grades of different

schools show considerable variation, those in the eighth-year classes, which represent the end of the school course, are remarkably even. In twelve of the seventeen eighth-year grades, the averages are from 84 to 88, the A and B classes being taken together. And in fifteen of a total of twenty-one sets of eighth-grade compositions examined for spelling, the variations were only three-tenths of one per cent, the results lying between 99.1 and 99.4, the A's and B's being taken as one. These facts are doubly remarkable when we consider that the twenty-one schools not only represent institutions in many sections of the country, but that they are samples of schools conducted under all conceivable conditions. For example, No. 7 is a Western city of moderate size, while No. 15 is a large city in the East. Again, most of the children attending School A, No. 7, are of American parentage, and their home surroundings are particularly favorable; while the children attending School B, No. 7, represent the foreign laboring element. Further, from a pedagogical standpoint, all varieties of schools are included; some of them belonging to the most mechanical while others are among the most progressive in our country.

“...in a special test of twenty-five very simple words, I examined four eighth-year classes representing three different cities. The extremes did not vary more than two points; the results being respectively 92.0, 93.2, 93.6 and 94.4. In one school, the compositions were written from the picture alone so that the pupils were absolutely free in the selection of the story and the choice of words. The average was 99.3.

“...just as it is impossible by the results to distinguish the mechanical from the progressive schools, it is impossible to distinguish the schools attended by the children of cultured parents from those representing the foreign laboring element; the results from this standpoint also varying equally. Consequently, so far as spelling is concerned, the influence of environment appears to be insignificant.

“...the sight or flash method.... A word is written on the board... for a moment... then erased... and the pupils are called upon to reproduce it on the board from memory.... the results were particularly discouraging....

“...A very careful study was made as to whether there is any foundation for the theory that when children learn to read by the phonic method they fall into the habit of spelling phonetically, and therefore become poor spellers. The analysis showed that some of the best results had been obtained where the phonic method had been employed; that, in fact, the phonic method had long formed a feature in the cities where the highest averages were made. Another theory, that the best spelling is produced in schools where the most general reading is done, was proved unfounded. Nor did the schools where the most time was devoted to written language make the best showing....”

Those last comments, based on hard test data, certainly contradict the claims of our current “Whole Language” propagandists!

However, after producing his fascinating data, Rice then made the wrong conclusion on it, showing his total ignorance of the spelling disaster of the early 1880's, as well as his ignorance of the fact that “meaning” trained children need heavy doses of “spelling,” while “sound” or phonically-trained children usually need very, very little:

“Do not these results indicate that in learning to spell, maturity is the leading factor, while method plays only a subordinate part? And, if the superiority of the... spelling grind cannot be demonstrated, is it not our duty to save the child from the grind?”

The spelling failure had been acknowledged by J. H. Stickney in the "Preface" to her 1889 *Word by Word, an Illustrated Primary Spelling Book*, Ginn & Company:

"The action of the mind in learning to read and spell has been of late years a favorite study of educators. Theories have been advanced and experiments made which, though disastrous in certain lines, have been on the whole of great value.

"Reading had undoubtedly gained both fluency and expression; loss falling, if anywhere, on the strength of impression - a fault not wholly chargeable to the school. But in many quarters a generation of bad spellers are testifying to failure somewhere, and the most zealous advocates of incidental spelling recognize the need of specializing the work at that stage in a child's life when forms and images are most readily fixed....

"Since the agitation of the subject came through educators from whom have been derived some of the best fruits of educational progress, it will be useful to look closely into the grounds upon which the work of the spelling-book was first banished and is now being restored to the schools.

"It may be too soon to formulate these, but it will appear that it is not in all respects the old-time books or methods that are restored to favor. Good has come from the agitation, and the long columns of meaningless combinations will no longer bar the child's interest...."

J. H. Stickey's "Preface" is an historical document which establishes beyond any reasonable doubt that spelling was thrown out of American schools on the advice of the best "educators" and that the results were disastrous. As a result, the spelling book had been returning before 1889. Yet J. H. Stickney, who had written a sight-word series as well as the 1885 literature primer referred to earlier, was not recommending the spelling book for first grade, but only for second and third grades.

More testimony to the spelling failure from the Quincy/Boston influence appeared in Silver Burdett's 1894 *The Normal Course in Spelling - Primary Book* by Larkin Dunton, LL.D. Head Master of the Boston Normal School. It was a straight Code 10 speller. Dunton wrote in his "Preface":

"The recent reaction in favor of the spelling book has been so great as to create a demand for a book especially adapted to the needs of children in primary schools. This work is the result of an attempt to meet that demand.... Spelling does not come naturally to children; neither do they acquire it by absorption. It must be studied.... The book is always available for this purpose, while lists on the blackboard must be reproduced whenever used again.... It allows both teacher and pupils to breathe air free from the irritating and poisoning effects of clouds of chalk dust.... Pupils are helped much, in learning to spell, by making a close association between the different elementary sounds which compose the words and the forms and names of the letters representing these sounds.... The pupil is then prepared to study the lesson; that is, to look at the letters in order, while thinking of their names and of the sounds of the different syllables composing the words.... In oral spelling it is best for young pupils to pronounce each syllable as it is spelled. Older pupils may simply pause between the syllables."

It might be thought that Silver Burdett by publishing Dunton's *The Normal Course* speller in 1894 seemed to be returning to Noah Webster's 1783 approach. That illusion is shattered when their *Normal Course* reading series is examined, which is discussed elsewhere. It was generating the same "clouds of chalk dust" of which Dunton had disapproved.

After 1826, “reading” had been seen as something apart from “spelling.” (It is not. The most sensible description of what should be involved in learning to read is the title of the phonic Code 10 reading materials available today that were written by the first-grade teacher, Sue Dickson: Sing, Spell, Read and Write, International Learning Systems, St. Petersburg, Florida. Even the ancient Greeks used singing, spelling, and writing, to help children learn to read.) Yet “reading” books after 1826 confused beginners thoroughly about the nature of print, approaching it like Chinese meaning-bearing characters. The “spellers” then later tried to repair the damage that was caused by beginning by “meaning.” For instance, as late as 1894, although the “Normal” reading series published a speller with the phonic emphasis that had returned to spelling in the late 1880’s, the 1894 Normal Course in reading was still confusing beginners by giving them “meaning” at the very beginning instead of “sound.” (The Normal series will be discussed later.)

Accuracy in spelling had been exceedingly poor for those in America who had learned by the “meaning” method after 1826. The damage was controlled to some degree for those who remained in school long enough to have used a spelling book for many years, and who, in addition, had to spell the sight words in their beginning primers orally with the “ABC method.” Yet, starting in the early 1870’s, the ABC method for beginners, which was the oral spelling of the sight words the beginners were learning, was largely dropped, although the spelling book at upper grades continued to be used for a few more years until the Quincy approach largely banished it. When visiting America in 1876, F. Buisson found that the ABC method in reading for beginners was out of use except in some rural areas. (The use of Leigh print may have contributed to that change, since it was not necessary orally to spell words in Leigh print, but only to sound them out.) Therefore, the spelling damage that had resulted from teaching first graders solely by the “meaning” method without even the oral spelling of sight words was left completely unrepaired in most places after about 1878, since even the spelling book itself had been banished at upper grades because of the influence of Parker’s “Quincy methods.”

England had been teaching beginners by “meaning” since about 1830, and was producing its own crop of failures from “meaning.” Whether England also dropped the speller in the late 1870’s when America did so is unknown, but the spelling failures in England were also spectacular by the 1890’s, reported in the “Introduction” to *The New-Method Speller*, which was copyrighted in 1892 by Warren H. Sadler, and printed in Baltimore by the Sadler-Rowe Company in 1892.

“...In England it is reported that at a recent examination of candidates for Public Service, nineteen-twentieths of the class failed in spelling, and an Educational Report of that country says: ‘Spelling is not what it should be. What we want is to teach spelling, and not merely to practise spelling.’”

“Civil Service examination papers in this country also show a remarkable deficiency in this important study.”

An important speller was by H. F. Harrington, who was a superintendent of schools in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Copyrighted in 1880, the Harrington speller emphasized “meaning” and the use of sentences for spelling, not “sound.” As late as about 1917 or 1918 (the date on my photocopy unfortunately being missing), Harrington’s 1880 Graded Spelling Book was praised in an article in the *Elementary School Journal* (pages 465 and following in the section, “Educational Writings,” under the heading, “Current Tendencies in the Construction of Spelling Books for Elementary Schools”). It was praised because it attempted to emphasize the most commonly used (higher frequency) words.

The years 1882 and 1883 appear to have been a low point for spellers of any kind, since the Leypoldt list showed no new spellers published then. Some of the few new titles immediately before and after those years appear to have been like Farnham’s 1881 approach: words being taught by meaningful sentence



dictation, not phonics, and Harrington's was an extension of that idea. However, by 1889, as Stickney pointed out, a reaction had set in and spellers were in demand. It is most probable that Stickney's 1889 largely phonic speller and Dunton's 1894 highly phonic speller were only responding to a market demand for phonics in such spellers. As William Torrey Harris remarked in the late 1880's, Webster's speller by then was selling about a million and a half copies a year. Despite the fact that the last revision of Webster's speller had made it unsuitable for teaching beginning reading phonically, it was still heavily phonic as a spelling book. (As discussed earlier, Webster's was probably also coming back into schools at that time, besides maintaining its sales to the general public. The statement quoted previously by the Appleton company officer had made it clear that the major market for the Webster speller by 1880 had been the general public, not the schools.) Furthermore, the McGuffey spellers were also phonic spellers, so there was material already on the market to meet the increasing demand referred to by Stickney.

That it was a demand for phonics in spelling is implicitly admitted by the fact that both Stickney and Dunton wrote phonic spellers, obviously aimed at claiming a share of the increasing sales. If the demand in place before 1889 had not been for phonic spellers, it is highly unlikely that Stickney and Dunton would have written the phonic spellers that they did in 1889 and 1894, since their publishers were at that very time putting out straight sight-word primers for first grades (and Stickney, herself, had written a sight-word series).

As Rice's 1895 and 1896 spelling tests showed, some ten years after spelling had returned to the schools, most American school children at fourth grade and above could once more spell correctly. Some - and possibly most - of the spelling books which came into American schools after 1884 in response to the catastrophic failures were phonic spelling books. The increase in achievement was directly attributable to the heavy teaching of spelling, and most probably it was phonic spelling.

During Rice's earlier 1892 visits, he had tested oral reading in third grades, not spelling. His comments on reading achievement (which were only anecdotal, and not given as accuracy percentages) have to be considered in light of his opinions. Expressionless reading, to him, was bad reading, and "mechanical" schools did not encourage expressive reading as was done in the "broad" (progressive) schools he endorsed. Despite his inaccurate conception of reading ability (which is in reality the ability to decode, and not the ability to emote) Rice's comments do tell a great deal about relative oral reading accuracy at third grade in American schools in 1892, before the renewed heavy emphasis on phonic spelling in the upper grades could repair much of the damage that was done by teaching beginning reading by "meaning."

Rice tested the oral reading of third graders in many American cities with four reading texts. He reported on this work in his 1893 book, *The Public School System of the United States*, New York: Century Company. One of the texts he used was from Harper's Educational Series, presumably their 1888 edition whose editor on the first grade portion was O. T. Bright, Superintendent of Schools, Englewood, Illinois. The editor on Harper's higher levels was James Baldwin, who later wrote two series for American Book Company, the Baldwin series and the 1901 "meaning"-approach McGuffey revision. Another text was by Stickney, presumably J. H. Stickney, listed as (Mrs.) J(ennie) H. (Lansing) Stickney in OERI's *Early American Textbooks*. J. H. Stickney wrote Stickney's Reading Series published by Ginn & Company, Boston, from at least 1886, and also wrote the 1889 speller which has been discussed. The third was by Swinton, who would be William Swinton who wrote a reading series published by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. from at least 1882. I have seen an 1890 copy of Swinton's *Primer and First Reader* which was still being published by American Book Company in 1890. The fourth text was by Powell, presumably W. B. Powell who, with Emma J. Todd wrote the series called *The Normal Course in Reading*, published by Silver, Burdett & Co. of New York, Boston and Chicago starting from at least 1889. In his testing in schools, Rice said, if Harper's were in use, he used one of the others, and vice versa.

That these four reading series were among the most popular in America about 1890 tends to be confirmed by an entry in the Lyndhurst, New Jersey, Board of Education Minutes for August 30, 1889 (when the town was still called Union Township). Unlike most entries which simply showed a total paid to various companies for textbooks, this listed the actual book adoptions for 1889-1890. The two reading series ordered for 1889-1890 were two of the four series that Rice later used in 1892: Swinton's as the main series, and Harper's as supplementary.

What is particularly noticeable about the texts Rice chose in 1892, which were obviously all popular, is that NONE of them are among those which Ferdinand Buisson saw in use in 1876 or saw exhibited at the Centennial Exhibition, only 17 years before! Obviously, an almost complete turn-over had occurred in reading instruction materials. It should also be specifically noted that Rice did not use McGuffey's for his oral reading tests in the many cities in which he tested.

Nevertheless, some of the earlier series remained in print, presumably with small sales, for many years. American Book Company reprinted many such old series in the twentieth century, the copyrights of which they obviously had obtained, probably most through the 1890 merger.

Yet none of the reading series from which Rice used the third grade books (and some fourth grade books) to test oral reading had truly phonic books at first grade. Except for McGuffey's and Rebecca Pollard's, very few such first grade truly phonic texts were published in 1892. Nevertheless, according to Rice, phonics was taught in five of the eleven schools he described, as will be discussed. It obviously had to be supplemental phonics.

The third-grade Powell text Rice used was presumably The Normal Course material. Their first grade material was a ghastly Code 3 book, with partial phonics - phonograms and consonant substitution. It had been copyrighted in 1888 and 1890 and the text I saw was published in 1892 by Silver, Burdett & Co. of New York. It is obvious that by 1888 it was normal to teach words and sentences in script from the blackboard for "meaning," often with objects and as drill before moving into the book with the same words in print some five months later. This overuse of the blackboard was the source of the clouds of chalk dust to which Dunton referred. This massive use of the blackboard is also the obvious root of the experience chart approach which was used in Colonel Parker's Illinois school and which is STILL in use today. The Normal Course text also had a teacher's guide. Such teacher's guides were the norm by 1890, which fact has also fallen into education history's black hole.

The Normal series of 1890 had books for all grades up to and including the fifth grade. The first book was titled, The Normal Course in Reading, First Reader, First Steps in Reading by Emma J. Todd, Training Teacher in the Public Schools of Aurora, Ill., and W. B. Powell, A. M., Superintendent of Public Schools, Washington, D. C., Silver, Burdett & Co., New York - Boston - Chicago. The first grade book also had reading charts to go along with it. The "Publishers' Note" read:

"Probably no text-books in our schools both represent, on the whole, more effort and enterprise on the part of publisher and author than the school reading-books. This branch has constantly received the contributions of our most successful school-book makers - a fact which in itself abundantly attests the importance which attaches to the study in the public mind."

That publisher in 1890 would have been astonished by the "known fact" of today that McGuffey's was supposed to have supplied about ninety percent of the American reading textbook market in the nineteenth century, and that all the other publishers to whom he was referring, including himself, were supposed to have divided the remaining ten percent among themselves!

The Silver, Burdett & Co. "Publisher's Note" continued:

"That there yet remain possibilities for improvement in this direction cannot be doubted by those familiar with the progress recently made in the methods of teaching reading employed by our best educators. This progress has revealed and emphasized the need of improvements not hitherto attempted in the reading-books offered for school use, both in the plan of presentation and in the subject-matter presented."

Note the reference in 1890 to "the progress recently made in the methods of teaching reading employed by our best educators." As is obvious from the following, he was referring to the opponents of Leigh's and Pollard's "sound," who had instead promoted the sentence method and concentration on "thought," or "meaning."

The section, "Suggestions to Teachers" also clearly showed the roots of the experience-chart "meaning" approach:

"First Step: Talking Lessons. The work given in this little book suggests the objects which may be used in the talking lessons.

"The purpose of the talking lessons is: -

"(a) To secure the child's confidence and make him unconscious of his surroundings.

"(b) To train the child to see relations.

"(c) To train the child to express in definite, accurate language the relations which he sees.

"(d) To train him in the use of many idioms common to the English language.

"(e) To give him power to emphasize the word or words in a sentence necessary to express the meaning asked for....

"Actual training should result from this work. The child should acquire the habit of proceeding from the conscious thought to its exact expression.

"If the child holds the object as he talks, he becomes very familiar with the idioms This is, Is this, Here is, Here are, That is, There is, There are, O see, which you see, which is, by which, from which, etc. The power to emphasize any word in a given sentence is of value in expressing orally the thought given in a written or printed sentence...."

Do six-year-olds who are neither deaf nor retarded NEED to be taught how to say such phrases as "this is"? By contrast, no normal six-year-old uses - or should be forced to use - such complex syntax as the phrases, "by which" or "from which."

The "Suggestions" then stated:

"Continue the work of training the child to see and to tell in good language what he sees, until his vocabulary is enriched by many common English idioms, and until he can use his vocabulary for a definite purpose.

“It may require a few days or a few weeks to accomplish this, but the time and effort will be repaid by the natural expression which the child will be able to give when reading.

“The learning of words and sentences by sight is made easy to the child in proportion to the care and system given to the ‘Talking Lessons.’

“The words and sentences to be learned by sight are but the symbols of what the child has said. The child learns them as such. He thus learns words rapidly and with little effort.”

Paper never refuses ink, as his last statement demonstrates. Yet the failure of first-grade children to learn such sight-words “rapidly and with little effort” is attested to in a December, 1892, advertisement for Miss Ellen M. Cyr’s first-year reading materials in *The Public School Journal*, “A Complete Series, prepared expressly for the First Year.” Her straight sight-word materials stressing “literature” have already been discussed. That advertisement for Cyr’s texts, which advertisement will be quoted later, stated flatly that first graders could only handle the beginnings of other sight-word primers. HER materials, of course, were supposed to be different.

The ludicrous “Suggestions to Teachers” continued and concerned a rigidly controlled vocabulary:

“Second Step: Blackboard Lessons.

“A carefully selected vocabulary is given in this book. The words which are learned before taking books and those learned in connection with the first book should be a community of words, a symmetrical vocabulary in which the different parts of speech are found in proportion to their use in common speech. This vocabulary should consist of the words and the idioms which the child uses or may be trained to use in conversation about plants, animals, children’s toys, and other objects; in descriptions of familiar objects and of simple pictures, in comparing and contrasting simple objects, etc. The sentences which the child gives are those which he should be taught to recognize and read.”

The last sentence is a definition of experience charts. It is clear that experience charts, as they exist today, originated with “improvements” by Farnham. Farnham taught sight words silently in sentences which described objects the children had handled or motions the children had made. The children then silently “read” the sentences describing the activities that had been carried out, and then finally pronounced the sentences aloud. Such “improvements” found their way into the prefaces to later reading books such as this. The experience-chart approach was standard by 1890. The “Suggestions” continued:

“The child should learn to read as he has learned to talk. His attention should be given to the thought. Thought controls expression. He must be led to discover that oral reading is expressing thought. After learning three or four name-words the work may be almost wholly sentence work.”

Note the Agassiz influence in 1890: “led to discover...” Note the James influence in 1890: the concern with “thought” and the use almost solely of whole sentences.

The material continued:

“For example: the words my top, my cup, my mat, and my box have been taught. The pupils place the objects as directed, and give the following: ‘My top is on a box. My cup is on a mat. Is my mat on a box? Is my top on a box?’ etc. Each is written and read as it is given.

“After all are written, they are read and erased. The teacher may now write, ‘My mat is on the cup.’ A pupil places the mat on the cup and reads the sentence.

“Much good reading matter may be made with a few wisely selected words, by changing their positions in sentences....”

Phonic drill is falsely criticized as being boring to children. Was the foregoing sight-word sentence drill supposed to be INTERESTING? Notice the “improvement” in the above: little beginners were doing silent reading, by following the teacher’s silent, written instruction, placing the mat on the cup. Note also that the meaningful “thought” conveyed, the placing of the mat on the cup, is pointless and silly. That meaningless sentence forms quite a contrast to the meaningful first sentence in Noah Webster’s old speller on page 43, after his introductory word lists: “No man may put off the law of God,” or the first sentence in the old hornbooks, “Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.”

The “Suggestions” continued:

“Sentences written on slips of paper may be given him to read. The same sentences may be on the blackboard. He compares the sentences on paper with those on the blackboard. He discovers the sentence, points to it, and reads it. In this he compares and concludes.”

He “compares and concludes” in a “critical thinking” exercise worthy of the “critical thinking” curriculum which is inundating our ignorance factories today. (The term, “ignorance factories,” is someone else’s invention. I want to thank him/her for it.)

Of course, the ultimate purpose of today’s “critical thinking” curriculum is far weightier and might best have been described in the Pro Family Forum’s The Family Educator, P. O. Box 8907, Forth Worth, Texas 76124, for July/August, 1991, page 4, quoting from Lamplighter, June, 1991:

“Perhaps the most honest definition of ‘critical thinking’ or ‘Higher Order Thinking Skills’ to come from the social planners came from Professor Raymond English. At a meeting sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education, he exposed ‘critical thinking’ as code words for being critical of, or subverting, society’s and parental values.”

Todd’s and Powell’s suggestions continued:

“Third Step: From Script to Print.

“The Transition from script to print is easily made if it is not attempted too soon.”

The use of script for beginners, instead of print, made it extremely difficult for the children to distinguish separate letters. The children were not even taught the alphabet before being given these script words. Children were, indeed, dealing with whole words when the words were printed in script.

Phony phonics entered as the fourth step. The children were being taught enunciation, and consonant substitution on known sight-words, to work out new words. They were not being taught synthetic phonics, but its phony phonics brings this sight word book up from Code 1 to Code 3.

The “Suggestions” continued:

“Fourth Step: The Values of Letters.

“Phonic drill or work in slow pronunciation should be given. But this is blackboard work. The work in slow pronunciation should be begun the first day of school. At first the teacher pronounces the word; as “Find a d-o-l” “Take a c-a-p.” “Show me a m-a-t.” This work is continued until the child detects any word pronounced by the teacher, if the word is in his vocabulary. Then the teacher may pronounce and write words, as, mat, man, milk, mill, men, mow, mew, etc., having the children discover the first sound made. The letter is placed on the blackboard for further reference. This plan is continued until all the consonants are given. Now the work of word-building may be begun.”

Phonics concerns syllables, and every syllable must have a vowel. Note that the children have been taught no vowels, despite the beginning step of separating spoken words into their sounds. In written words, only consonants were taught, to help children in guessing whole words in context by their resemblance to parts of other known whole sight words. This book was teaching the purest of phony phonics. It continued:

“If the child knows the word at, with this knowledge of the power of letters, he will make bat, cat, fat, hat, mat, nat, pat, vat, sat, and vat. If he knows the word and, he will also know ...hand, land, and sand, etc. The work of changing the final letters of words may follow this changing of letters within words. This work in phonics aids distinct articulation. It should have a place in the day’s programme, but should not be a part of the reading lesson.”

The primer mixed script and print from the beginning, but, as the teacher’s guide made clear, the children were not given the primer until long after they had learned to read script sight words on the blackboard as “wholes.”

Mentioned earlier was the advertisement from The Public School Journal of December, 1892, which is historical proof of the failure of first-grade reading instruction at that time. The advertisement was for Miss Ellen M. Cyr’s first-year reading materials, “A Complete Series, prepared expressly for the First Year.” Cyr had previously written the 1886 Interstate Primer, dated July, 1886, Cambridge, Massachusetts, which suggested she had possible ties to people at Harvard. Cyr’s first-year reading materials included The Children’s Primer, The Children’s First Reader, and Cyr’s Reading Slips, “forty-eight manilla [sic] packages, each containing twenty sentences.” The advertisement stated:

“Without any doubt, teachers and superintendents find more difficulty with the first year’s work in reading than anywhere else in the course. To begin with, the difficulties of the first steps are not sufficiently provided for. Cyr’s Children’s Primer seems to meet the requirements at this point. New words are introduced very gradually and with great care, and yet, though the vocabulary is limited, the reading matter will be found fresh and entertaining from the very start. The book is pervaded with the spirit of child-life, and all the best devices and methods are made use of to render these first steps easy, interesting, and judicious.

“The Reading Slips furnish a large amount of supplementary work in the most convenient and the cheapest form.

“In one way, the second half-year usually gives even more trouble than the first half-year. Less attention has been given to its special requirements in the preparation of primers and first readers. The last parts of these books are almost invariably too hard, and so a number of different books are required to provide reading matter. The children have to begin different books with the simple, uninteresting lessons, read to the hard places, and then lay these books aside on the shelves for (a fresh) start in new ones. Cyr’s Children’s First Reader is so made as to give practice on what has been learned, and to maintain the children’s interest. It is a simple but steady

growth in the same line, and will make possible a real advance, in place of constant stopping and beginning over again.

“The Primer, Slips and First Reader make a complete course specially designed for the first year’s work in reading.”

The publishers followed this with the statement, “Stickney’s Readers preserve the child’s natural vivacity of thought, feeling, and expression. Ginn & Company, Publishers. Boston, Chicago, New York.” Ginn & Company were also apparently offering their Stickney sight-word series in 1892 to follow Cyr’s first-grade sight-word material. By 1894, however, Cyr’ series included the primer, and first through fifth readers.

This 1892 advertisement for sight-word “meaning” materials, which is actually an irrefutable historical document, should be placed alongside the fable that McGuffey’s books were used by ninety percent of American children in the nineteenth century, and that ninety percent of American children in the nineteenth century therefore learned by “phonics.” It shows instead that many reading texts were used in first grades, that they were sight-word texts, and that the failure rate from them was enormous. However, because of massive spelling failures, by about 1885 Webster’s kind of phonetic spelling had returned to most schools, but it was not taught until second grade. The failure at first grade from teaching beginning reading by “meaning” was largely repaired at second grade and above by teaching for “sound.” This is proven by the high scores Rice got in his 1896 spelling tests given to fourth through eighth grades, mentioned previously.

Ginn & Company continued to publish other beginning sight-word materials besides Cyr’s and Stickney’s. Ginn copyrighted in 1897 and published in 1897 The Finch Primer, the back cover of which advertised Stickney’s Readers. The Finch Primer, mentioned approvingly by Edmund Burke Huey in his 1908 text, was a Code 1 book, but the publisher nevertheless claimed it could be used with any method. It was written by Adelaide V. Finch. The title page referred to its “Three Hundred Words.” The author signed her preface and followed it with “Lewiston, Maine, March 4, 1897.” The title page showed she was “Principal of the Normal Training School, Lewiston, Maine, Formerly of the Minneapolis Public Schools.” She was obviously reflecting “expert” methods. Her preface read:

“There is need of a systematically constructed, carefully graded primer, based upon sound educational principles. Such a primer should consider the environment of the child at different seasons of the year; it should inculcate a love of home, of country, of nature, and kindness to animals; it should present simple lessons, which are outgrowths of conversational, objective, language work, as such lessons from their very nature appeal strongly and directly to the child; it should leave the teacher perfectly free to use her own method, or the best from all methods, although our best educators believe that blackboard and book work should go hand in hand....”

The first page had the words, “leaf, maple, This, a, is.” Almost every one of these words would have been introduced later in a true phonic program, but never at the very beginning. The isolated words were followed by a picture of a leaf, and the whole sentences, “This is a leaf. This is a maple leaf.” The primer went downhill from there. Script was used to page 87, and the book showed no phonic arrangement.

With the emphasis on blackboard work for beginners, however, it is obvious that some schools may have taught real phonics before giving children the primers. Rice recorded that phonics was taught effectively in five of the eleven cities and counties to which he specifically referred. The five he reported to be teaching phonics in 1892 were St. Louis, Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Boston and Cook County, but methods were mixed in Chicago in Cook County. Methods were also mixed in St. Paul. The word-method

or the word method with spelling (the ABC method) was used in Buffalo, Cincinnati, New York, and Baltimore.

Rice approved of Indianapolis schools in general, in addition to their teaching phonics, because they used a kind of open-classroom approach with interesting activities and an experience-chart approach in reading. However, concerning Rice's report of their high achievement in reading in 1892, it should be noted Indianapolis ALSO gave phonics drill. This could, of course, have been in connection with the first-grade experience charts or in connection with spelling drill at second grade and above. Rice did not specifically say the phonics he observed being taught was always first-grade phonics. The state of Indiana had endorsed the state-approved "meaning" series, as has been discussed, but Indianapolis apparently preceded it with experience charts which may have used a phonic approach.

In Minneapolis, Rice said reading seminars were held and no single method was used by the teachers, who employed the "Science" method (whatever that was), the sentence method and the word method. However, Rice ALSO said that much attention was given to phonics. This was the only common thread in their methods that would account for their high achievement. Rice said of the Minneapolis schools that the reading was "especially good - no where better."

Rice said, concerning both the Indianapolis and Minneapolis third-graders:

"All could read intelligently at sight in 3rd grade readers, some as well at 4th, the majority as fluently as might be expected anywhere."

Since Rice was testing third graders, it is entirely possible that the successful results in Indianapolis and Minnesota came from heavy phonic emphasis in spelling at second grade, rather than from phonic emphasis in beginning reading in first grade.

Rice said that Boston schools were using phonic drill in 1892 (suggesting a return to pre-1878 practices). He found the St. Louis schools to be doing a good job teaching phonics, but he mightily disapproved of their rigid, non-progressive curriculum. Concerning the effect of the good teaching of phonics in St. Louis, however, he said:

"The children certainly read as well at the end of four or five months as those attending many of the schools where no phonics are taught read at the end of two years."

That is the standard effect of teaching by phonics, as true today as when Leigh print had been used: children learn to read rapidly.

Rice found in Cook County that "in teaching children much attention is given to phonics." (Whether Rice meant the county public schools or the practice school attached to Cook County Normal School, of which Parker had become the principal in 1883, I do not know. Unfortunately, I have no photocopies on Rice's book, but only notes.) Concerning Rice's oral testing of the third graders there, he said that they "stood the test admirably,"

Concerning Chicago, Rice did not specifically report on test results (or so I believe) but said:

"Methods employed in teaching reading vary in the different schools - some word method, others sentence method, (and in) others (a) variety of methods including phonics and word building".

He said that in St. Paul there was a variation in methods, but in some instances the results were good.



Rice said that in Buffalo, which was not teaching phonics, classes were doing spelling exercises. Yet, one teacher said

“I do wish we would return to the alphabet method of teaching reading, because those children who know their alphabet progress most rapidly in spelling.”

To ask children to “spell” when they apparently did not fully know their alphabet was an extraordinarily stupid thing.

Some other schools he specifically mentioned visiting in 1893 did not teach phonics. Cincinnati was teaching spelling with reading, but not phonics. New York was using the word method, but without the sentence method, and Baltimore was using the word method. Presumably, from Rice’s remark contrasting the phonic St. Louis schools to non-phonetic schools, these were among the non-phonetic schools which were achieving poorly.

In summary, sources for the 1890’s demonstrate that first-grade reading in most places was not taught with true phonics. However, the emphasis in spelling with phonics at second grade and above repaired much of the first-grade damage. The enormous emphasis on spelling at second grade and above was the apparent cause of the very good spelling results Rice obtained at fourth grade and above when he carried out his testing in 1895 and 1896.

## Chapter 31

### The Turn of the Century Developments and The Beacon Phonic Series, One of the Few Really Successful Phonics Series

Most reading books produced about the turn of the century, except for Ward's from 1894, continued with the phony phonics or no-phonics approach. Yet the harm they were doing was progressively less, as "supplementary phonics" in first grade and above, the kind Rice had seen, became more and more the norm. Nevertheless, the readers themselves repeated or increased the "meaning" themes that had been emphasized ever since the "sentence" method arrived. The sentence method had begun to infect the schools starting in 1870, but became pandemic after 1880 (despite Nila Banton Smith's dating it primarily to the twentieth century).

One of these "meaning" texts at the turn of the century was Wheeler's Graded Readers. A Primer, by Gail Calmerton and William H. Wheeler, published by Wheeler Publishing Company, Chicago. A later edition was published on which Guy Buswell of the University of Chicago was an author, entitled Happy Days, The Silent Reading Hour (1929). A Catholic schools edition was published in 1923. The authors of the first edition of 1900 believed in a strictly controlled vocabulary, obviously differing from the Heart of Oak approach of 1893 and 1895. A split in the "meaning" camp existed in the 1890's between the promoters of the "natural" method and of "literature" and those who still used controlled vocabulary. Obviously, both methods were incompetent, but at least the latter could achieve some success by teaching high frequency sight words and context guessing, usually with phony phonics. Yet the "natural" method did not teach anything. The split exists today, between the "whole language" advocates which method teaches almost nothing, and the older sight-word basal readers which at least taught Code 3 phony phonics. The failures from the "whole language" method in comparison to the older sight-word basal readers are so pronounced they are producing parental rebellion, as shown in some fall, 1990, newspaper articles in the North Jersey Herald and News of Passaic, New Jersey..

Wheeler's 1900 material was a Code 1, and not a Code 3 text. It is curious that the statement was made that they thanked "Francis A. March of Lafayette" for some help. What his help was is unknown.

#### "PREFACE

... It is of the utmost importance that a child's first steps in reading should be taken in the right direction. A child does not learn to speak a word by hearing it once, and he will not learn to recognize the printed form of a word by seeing it once. He acquired his colloquial vocabulary slowly at first and by the aid of constant repetition. In this way, and in this way only, will he learn to recognize words in print. It should not be forgotten that in the early years of his training, the child is forming habits of reading and of thought by which he will be aided for the rest of his life, or of which he will by and by have to cure himself with painful effort.

"The end of learning to read is the ability to read great books, but what shall the child's first reading book be? Some of our educational wise men say that it should be filled with classic literature, and that it should contain nothing which is not strictly classic. This sounds well, but these wise men have failed to produce the strictly classic Primer.

"...These literary selections should be graded in such a way as to bring those containing the fewest words outside of the colloquial vocabulary into the lower books of the series, the difficulties being gradually increased as the child grows towards maturity....

“...There are too many children who never form reading habits because they never really learn how to read. All through life they take no interest in reading and get no enjoyment from it because of the stress of attention and expense of energy necessary to get at the thought....”

This sounds suspiciously like Cattell’s influence: “the stress of attention to get at the thought...” The evidence indicates that, based on his experiments, Cattell’s followers believed that, for those who learned to read by phonics, a separate, conscious step had to be taken to turn meaningless sounds into a message. Yet children who learned by sight-words were presumed to go immediately from print to “meaning.” The article on reading in the 1913 *Cyclopedia of Education* by Henry Suzzalo provides background on this particular confusion of the early psychologists, which I have discussed at length in my earlier papers and books. The preface continued:

“This little book is the first of a series of ‘Graded Readers.’ It is to be read by the children and not to them by the teacher. The authors believe that a Primer should be very simple indeed; that the vocabulary should be small, that each word should be repeated often; that the words used should be largely those which are already familiar to the child in conversation; that it is unwise to require the child to learn many new words at the same time that he is learning to recognize the printed forms of the words which are already near and dear to him; that the sentences should be short; that there should generally be but one sentence to a line; that there should be frequent reviews; ....and that the very first ‘Stepping Stone to Literature’ is to acquire some skill in reading.

“Grateful acknowledgements are due to all the Primary Teachers who have given helpful suggestions; to the critic, the eminent philologist, Dr. Francis A. March of Lafayette College; to Ella Wheeler Wilcox for permission to use the little gem, ‘Five Little Brothers’; and to the Berlin Photographic Company for permission to use copyright pictures.”

The preface used the phrase, “Stepping Stone to Literature.” I first saw the phrase “stepping stone” in relation to reading in Mrs. A. C. Martin’s paper, “What Shall We Attempt in Elementary Schools?” which was read before the “Elementary Department of the National Educational (sic) Association” in Detroit, August 5, 1874, and printed in *The Massachusetts Teacher*, from which it was reprinted by Alfred Mudge & Son, Boston: 1874. Her paper was obviously getting a lot of mileage, suggesting that it was being promoted. Some of her ideas were good, but she was opposed to most memory work and to most examinations. She said, on page 23:

“Once more I plead for Reading as a ‘stepping stone,’ not as the pursuit of an art.”

The phrase appeared again in the title to an 1893 copy of an 1887 book, *Stepping-Stones to Reading, A Primer and First Reader*, by Anna B. Badlam. Badlam was shown on the 1893 copy as Principal of Lewiston, Maine, Practice School, formerly of Rice Training School, Boston. (The Primary School Teacher, Boston, in the early 1880’s had a considerable number of articles contributed by Badlam.) In her book, Badlam used some of Leigh’s notations, with his permission, on a mixed sight-word, phonic and sentence approach to beginning reading, which ended as heavily phonic, and which was published by D. C. Heath & Co. in 1893.

The phrase appeared again on the sight-word “literature” text, *Stepping Stones to Literature, A First Reader*, by Sarah Louis Arnold and Charles B. Gilbert, published by Silver, Burdett and Company, New York - Boston - Chicago, in 1897. The last book appears to have been very successful.

The first page of Wheeler's primer had a picture of a mother with a baby, and the words, "baby," "loves," and "Mamma." Then came the sentences, "Mamma loves Baby. Baby loves Mamma." On later pages, the book was even worse as a beginning reading book. On page 23 appeared:

"Once more I plead for Reading as a "stepping stone," not as the pursuit of an art. It is an old-fashioned notion in these times, but I hold to it still, that a child should learn to read as soon as possible. There must be many who hear me who cannot remember when they could not read. I am sure I cannot...."

Despite such uncontrolled vocabulary materials as The Heart of Oak series, which was apparently never popular, the controlled vocabulary approach was common and popular at the turn of the century. On March 10, 1983, a fellow teacher showed me a copy of a primer given her by a family member who said it had been used in Passaic, New Jersey, many years before. This book has penciled on its inside cover, "Sandie Henderson, Feb. 16, 1910." It was entitled, The Sunbonnet Babies' Primer and was copyrighted in 1902 by Eulalie Osgood Grover and published by Rand McNally & Company, Chicago, New York, and London and illustrated with pastel-colored illustrations by Bertha L. Corbett, "The Mother of the Sunbonnet Babies." Excerpts are given below. Page 5 was the first page of text.

Page 5: "Who we are." (Three pictures of a Sunbonnet Baby, two pictures of a dog and a picture of a cat.)

Page 6: "How do you do? I am a baby. I am a Sunbonnet Baby. How do you do? How do you do?" (Picture of Baby) "How do you do?"

Page 7: "I see a baby. The baby is May. I am the baby. I am May. See May's Sunbonnet. It is my sunbonnet. Do you see May? Do you see the Sunbonnet Baby?" (Picture of baby at a dressing table mirror) "I see a baby."

Page 107: A Word List. "This list includes all the words used in The Sunbonnet Babies Primer. In order to make the list of greater value to the teacher, the words are arranged not alphabetically, but by pages in the order of their appearance." (329 different words averaging 3 new words to a page.)

The preface was signed Chicago, November, 1901. In it, Eulalie Osgood Grover thanked Miss Elizabeth Hall, who was then Principal of the Normal Training School, Lewiston, Maine for help. As previously mentioned, the Finch Primer of 1897, published by Ginn, had been written by Adelaide V. Finch, Principal of the Lewiston, Maine, Training School, who had formerly been with the Minneapolis schools. The pro-phonetic Anna C. Badlam who had been the principal of the Lewiston school had been replaced by the pro-"meaning" Finch some time after the publication of the 1893 copy of Badlam's book carrying the notation that she was Principal of the Lewiston school. Then Finch was apparently replaced by Elizabeth Hall. Obviously, the make-up of Finch's 1897 book reflected "respectable" reading theory, and Grover's 1901 book, written with the "help" of Elizabeth Hall, also was "respectable." It is therefore of interest that these two women endorsing "meaning" were chosen to replace the pro-phonics Badlam.

"Molly and May" were the Sunbonnet Babies. The publisher also advertised classics like Alice in Wonderland and Treasure Island "edited by" so and so, so they were also obviously watered-down books with controlled vocabulary. The publisher also advertised:

"New Supplementary Readers... and The Holton Primer Lights to Literature Series by M. Adelaide Holton, Supervisor of Primary Schools, Minn. The Sunbonnet Babies Primer, 110 pages

86 illustrations in color, Norse Stories, Eskimo stories, Viking Tales, King Arthur and His Knights, Japanese Fairy Tales.”

Early American Textbooks lists The Outdoor Primer which was also written by Eulalie Osgood Grover, Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London, and copyrighted in 1904 by The Rand-McNally Press, Chicago. I have photocopies of portions. The beginning of this material is as follows:

Page 1: A picture of a field and brook and in adult sized print under it, “The wonderful out-of-doors.”

Page 2 A boy and girl at a split log fence and under it were these isolated words in larger print suitable for a child: this is the bird a bird (printed as phrases). Under that, these sentences, each on a line: “This is a bird. Can the bird see you? The bird can see you. Can Baby see the bird? Baby can see the bird.”

Page 3 - Nest and eggs in hollow of trunk. Under that picture, but not in phrases: “four in nest blue eggs.” Under that appeared, “See this nest! See four eggs in this nest! Is the bird in this nest? Baby can see the nest. You can see four blue eggs.”

The approach from the outset obviously was strictly controlled vocabulary, used in “meaningful” sentences, with heavy repetition of the sight words. That was the norm for most series published about 1900.

Although the approaches of most of these first-grade books were manifestly based on sight-words and controlled vocabulary, phonics was well on its way back to first-grades through “supplementary phonics” by 1900. The Public School Journal editorials about 1892 opposing Rebecca Pollard’s synthetic phonics at first grade had given their blessing at least to the supplementary phonics that had been growing over the years since Leigh’s day. It did not take too long after the endorsement by the “experts” of supplementary phonics at first grade in the early 1890’s for a series to arrive using heavy amounts of such “respectable” phonics at first grade. Dr. Edward G. Ward’s very heavily phonic “sound” material for first graders of 1894 was probably the first to be widely used after Leigh’s defeat, but Ward’s material nevertheless began with all the mandatory ritualistic bows to “meaning.” However, it did incorporate phonics into the reading books themselves after beginning the first book only with sight-words.

Ward was Associate Superintendent of Public Instruction in Brooklyn, New York. In his “Preface” to The Rational Method in Reading - Manual of Instruction (Silver, Burdett & Company, New York - Boston - Chicago, 1894, 1895, 1896), Ward recorded his thoughts:

“The method of teaching reading embodied in this book is an outgrowth of the author’s profound dissatisfaction with the results of the word method.

“The latter method, while it possesses the undisputed merit of leading to facility in thought gathering during the first stage of the work, proves slow and cumbrous afterward, fails to excite the child to effort, furnishes him with but a scanty vocabulary, and finally sends him out of school unprovided with a key by means of which, without further assistance, he may gain access to the treasures of the language.”

Note Ward’s flat admission of 1894 that the New York City schools had not been teaching children really to read. When Dr. Rice visited New York City schools in his tour of American schools in 1892, he had been appalled at the results from New York City’s use of the word method. It should be remembered

that only some fifteen or so years before, New York City administrators like Kiddle and Calkins had been endorsing the word method for beginners, even though, as shown by Ferdinand Buisson's remarks quoted elsewhere in this text, Kiddle had also admitted children were leaving school after three years or so, unable really to read. Ward continued:

“The RATIONAL METHOD is a peculiar combination of the word and phonetic methods. It utilizes each for that part of the work to which it is especially adapted. The word method is used, first as principal, because of its value in developing a habit of reading thoughtfully, and afterward as auxiliary, to remedy the short-comings of the phonetic method, and increase the stock of word phonograms. The phonetic method, which is introduced by easy stages during the ascendancy of the word method, finally becomes the principal means of growth and progress. It imparts power, while it supplies the key which the word method is inadequate to give.”

In the Ward program, the first eight weeks were devoted to sight reading, after which phonics work began, with the use of diacritically marked letters, very like Leigh's. By beginning with an emphasis on “meaning,” it seemed to meet the “experts’ formula, now that they had let the nose of the phonics camel into their tent. Despite the use of “word phonograms,” the approach was not ultimately two-step phony phonics but became one-step synthetic phonics with its emphasis on diacritically marked letters.

By 1905, where Ward had first led in 1894, others followed. By 1905, the phonics camel was well inside the tent, with only his tail outside. The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York, began a series of articles in its December, 1905, issue (page 61), entitled “Suggestions on the Elementary Syllabus. I. Reading.” The articles are unsigned, but The School Bulletin was highly regarded, having won the prize for educational publications at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, so the 1905-1906 articles can be assumed to be “respectable.” According to the United States Catalog for 1912, Bardeen of Syracuse who published The School Bulletin also published a book in 1906 entitled Reading for Training Classes by R. M. Libby. The probability is that the book is a collection of the articles, and, if so, the author of the articles would have been R. M. Libby, whoever R. M. Libby was. The first article in December, 1905, stated:

“...The Education Department of New York has in its course of study and syllabus for elementary schools outlined a course in reading and offered valuable suggestions to teachers. Beginning on page four of the syllabus, they say first year, words, short sentences, simple paragraphs read from the blackboard, charts and readers, phonic exercises, etc.

“It is our purpose in this series of articles to expand the ideas here so briefly stated by showing how these topics should be presented to the class....

#### “FIRST GRADE, SYLLABUS

“The first work of the teacher with a class of beginners is to become acquainted with the pupils and make them feel that the school is not so radically different from the home life. To this end, the first lessons should be conversation lessons....In this manner, after a day or two the teacher selects the first sentence to be placed upon the board, using a large round hand with script letters. The teacher may say while writing ‘I am making the crayon say just what you said.’ This would be an introduction to the sentence method. Some may prefer to teach several words as wholes before making a sentence..... And now comes our first caution, do not allow the pupil to read the sentence one word at a time....

“The teacher should select seventy-five to one hundred words from the first pages of the primer or reader to be used by the class later. No book to be in the hands of the pupils until this

number of words is taught and can be recognized in all possible combinations of sentences, which can be done in four to six weeks....

“After a week have a separate period, or use the first part of the reading period, for a word drill.... Remember the reading period is for getting and expressing thought and should not be devoted to learning words.... Never allow any guessing, or a second’s hesitation on old words; prompt, vigorous, snappy work in this, the same as in number combinations, should be the watchwords. Drill daily upon the list of old words written in different orders. Scatter them over two or three boards, partly hide them in the corners and turn the whole class loose hunting for a certain word the teacher names. Put the words upon pieces of paper three or four inches long cut in the shape of fish. Put these in a box and with closed eyes have pupils draw a word and tell what fish they have caught. Daily arrange new sentences using new combinations of the old words introducing the new words after they are learned.

“Never allow a child to attempt to read a sentence until you are sure he knows all the words.... This leads us to the much mooted question how shall we teach new words? When shall we begin phones (sic)? We believe the first sixty or seventy words should be taught as wholes to be recognized at sight, the same as a child knows a dog or a horse. Of course, teachers trained in a definite system or using a series of readers like the Pollard, Ward, Gordon, or New Education or Blodgett will get good results by following these books without assistance, but for others the following suggestions are offered.”

According to the 1912 United States Catalog, the Blodgett readers by F. E. and A. B. Blodgett, primer to fifth, were published by Ginn in 1904, but I have not seen a copy. The New Education Readers, “A Synthetic and Phonic Word Method,” were written by A. J. Demarest and William M. Van Sickle. Harvard library has a copy of their Book One published by American Book Company with a 1900 date, but it is a meaning-method with only phony phonics. The Gordon Readers by Emma Gordon were published by Heath, and Harvard has Gordon’s First Book with dates of 1902 and 1910. Gordon’s was a phonics series with a beginning bow to “meaning.” The Harvard library also has Gordon’s A Manual for Teachers of Primary Reading, Revised, 1918, showing the date of the original version as 1910.

All these materials except Ward’s of 1894 which purported to promote or actually did promote heavy phonics dated from 1900 or after. Nevertheless, the flood of sight-word books for first grades also continued after 1900. Appendix C listing readers published after 1880 will make that clear. Ward’s appeared in 1894 and was apparently the first and one of the most successful of the relatively few heavily phonics series which made ritualistic bows to “meaning” at their beginnings. Fassett’s highly successful Beacon series of 1912 published by Ginn, discussed later, was another such phonic series, although Fassett continued to introduce some sight words all through first grade. As will become apparent, a heavily phonic method using supplemental phonics drill, preceded by a bow to “meaning,” was exactly the method being recommended by the author of the 1905-1906 series of articles in *The School Bulletin*. Yet her recommendations could have been used with any of the reading series then in print, even the ones most endorsing “meaning” for beginners. The 1905 article continued:

“At the end of six or eight weeks at most, sentences containing the seventy-five or one hundred words selected by the teacher from the reader should be read at sight. And now comes an important transition from the board to the reader. If the teacher can make the printed form of letters with ease and rapidity it is well for a few lessons to write sentences on the board in both forms, showing the children that there is not much difference between the script and the printed forms. Up to this time nothing has been said about letters.”

It is significant that the suggested method, as late as 1905, was to try to teach children to read seventy-five to one hundred words before they knew a single letter of the alphabet.

In her article, "Learning to Read," in the *Elementary School Teacher* for September, 1911, Josephine Horton Bowden told of her experimental work with several first graders with pure sight words. She said the sight-word vocabulary load being given to first graders at the time was far too heavy since she found children could learn very few words when no attention was drawn to letters. She also demonstrated that the few words the children did manage to learn were perceived as wholes, since three of the five children did not notice anything strange when she showed them the words upside down! Although she typed the words and did not use script, children at that time were generally given their first words in script, which means there was no separation between the letters. Children therefore perceived them as wholes since they had no knowledge of the alphabet. Yet, as Bowden demonstrated some time before 1911, without any knowledge of the letters, even with print instead of script, children could remember very few words as "wholes."

The article in the *School Bulletin* continued:

"Place along the top of the board the alphabet, the capitals above and the corresponding small letters below, written in a large round hand. Before the first grade is complete pupils should be able to recite the alphabet consecutively beginning with A, as this knowledge will aid them in the use of the dictionary later.

"First teach the long and short sounds of the vowels, making much use of the different families. Call one the 'at' family, marking the a short, prefix c, r, b, s, m, p, etc. Write these words in a column. Then the "ate" family, "ite" family, etc."

Note that though this resembles two-step phony phonics, it is critically different. The children have not learned whole meaning-bearing words in context and afterwards been taught to compare their parts to unknown whole words - the "meaning" approach. Instead, the children were learning isolated, meaningless printed sounds composed of single or multiple letters, and then were taught to use these meaningless letters to build words. That is one-step phonics, and the "sound" approach, very like some of the old, pre-1826, spellers. The article continued:

"Have daily drills upon the sounds of the consonants. After the long and short sounds of the vowels are mastered take up the two dots above, the one dot above and all others except the equivalents. Teach combinations like sh, ch, ou, ow. Call sh the sound mamma makes to quiet the baby, ch the engine sound, ou the sound the boy makes when he hurts his finger; use many other comparisons which will suggest themselves to the thoughtful and resourceful teacher. Use phonic charts or cards for drill. Too much cannot be made of this pedagogical aphorism, attach the unknown to the nearest relative known. Write "a" for example, several times on the board, then the teacher gives the different sounds and ask pupil to mark the letters. Continue these daily drills of phonics and building up families of words, together with lists of phonograms like ing, ble, and eight.

"Soon you can use this knowledge in teaching new words, instead of teaching them as wholes. For example, suppose the new word is batting, cross off one t, mark the a short, what does the b say? Pupil gives the sound of b. He knows the "at" and the "ing" if properly taught previously. In most new words, a pupil will recognize one or more parts.

"Cover the unknown part and have him give the known. By following this plan in its expanded form, after one year the child should pronounce any common word placed upon the



board with the silent letters crossed off and the letters properly marked. You need not call it accent but if he places accent on the wrong syllable, say make this part stronger; at the same time place the accent over the right syllable; thus the pupils will soon learn what the accent mark means.

“Never tell pupils how to pronounce a word but always place the word on the board properly divided into syllables with diacritical marks. Ask what does the first syllable say, the second, etc. This work presupposes a knowledge of the sounds of the consonants as well as the different sounds of the vowels indicated. Do not have pupils spell the words, calling the letters by their alphabet names, in their endeavor to pronounce them, because this method is often a positive hindrance in pronunciation.... First grade pupils should read four times per day... but no period should be longer than fifteen minutes.

“After the book is used continue the practice of reading each sentence silently, then looking off the book and telling someone the thought....”

So after fooling around with seventy-five or a hundred sight-words for six or eight weeks, they finally taught the class just like Rebecca Pollard. Of course, they got results.

The same approach appears in many European programs today, with teachers spending a month on a short list of sight words and then eventually teaching true phonics. One French teacher told me, when I visited their schools in 1977, that sometimes the children at fourth grade did not know some of the fifty words or so they began with as sight words in first grade, but they learned how to read afterwards. Very probably the first month or so of “meaning” instruction had blocked their ability ever to recognize these words correctly, but fifty words or so that might cause trouble occasionally do not spell real difficulty. The diluted phonics method at first grade in America after about 1900 worked, and was usually taught “supplementally.” America received real - even if diluted - phonics in its first grades until about 1930, when the baleful deaf-mute method descended on the schools again, and almost overnight wiped out the success that phonics had finally achieved.

#### The Famous Beacon “Phonic” Series

Among the diluted phonics programs available after 1900 was the famous 1912 Beacon series. The first book was *The Beacon Primer*, by James Hiram Fassett, Ginn and Company, Boston, New York (etc.) The following comment is from its revised 1921 edition:

“Preface... The teaching of words by sight as well as by sound is made necessary by the fact that nearly fourteen per cent of the child’s vocabulary is unphonetic and must be taught through visual memory.”

The number of unphonetic English words is far fewer than fourteen percent, although different figures are usually given. Even so, normally only one letter on such words is non-phonetic, the rest of the letters in the word being phonically perfectly regular. Even irregular spellings usually occur in easily taught groups, such as in find, mind, kind, wind, bind, where the “i” which should give a short sound as in “bit” instead gives a long sound as in “bite.” The child’s attention should be focused on the sounds of the regular letters, and then his attention should be drawn to the fact that one of the letters is irregular in sound. Therefore, it is staggering to hear that the author of the famous phonic Beacon readers thought that “nearly fourteen percent of a child’s vocabulary... must be taught through visual memory” or as pure sight words without the use of sound, and even thought this as late as 1921. Both editions of the *Beacon Primer*, the 1912 and 1921, make heavy (and inexcusable) use of sight words. That is only one more

confirmation of the fact that the phonics teaching of the early twentieth century was defective, but at least it was heavily phonic so that the great majority of children learned to spell and read by “sound.”

Fassett’s faulty ideas about “reading instruction history” are evident in his first comment below from the 1921 edition. His following remarks are also of interest.

“The power derived from a knowledge of phonics has always been admitted by educators, but the stilted and mechanical readers of the past did much to throw discredit upon any strictly phonetic system. The author of the ‘New Beacon Primer’ has avoided expressions that are obviously dragged in for their phonetic value, and while he has provided constant opportunities for practice in the text, there is no sacrifice of unity or of dramatic interest. This is made possible by his method of organization....The Beacon system follows the deductions of those who have made a special study of the science of speech and the practice of our great English dictionaries.... in a comparatively short time... the pupil should become independent and able to interpret any printed page through his grasp of phonetic principles....”

The New Beacon Primer began with a sight word selection on the first few pages for what Fassett called “dramatic interest,” which read:

“See me, mamma. Can you see me? I can see you. I can see kitty. Can you see Rover? Can you see Rover’s cap? Can kitty see me? Can kitty see Rover? Can Kitty see Rover’s cap?”

It passes understanding that anyone could think that children could read these skinny sentences and sight words over and over and find them dramatically interesting. Fassett added this note concerning the first sixteen sight-word pages in the 1921 edition:

“Note: while the class are reading pp. 1-16 they should have a daily drill on pp. 128-131. This phonetic work must be completed before going on with p. 17. The use of the charts will greatly simplify these first lessons in reading. If fourteen pages of the Reading Charts are studied before the Primer is taken up, only nine sight words need to be taught in the first nine lessons, - an average of one new word a day.”

Concerning these sight words, page 2 had the sight-words “baby” and “says” on the top of the page. No sight-words were on top of page 3, but the text on both pages included the sight-words “ball,” “play,” “the,” “likes,” and “little.” Yet pages 128-131 and the first fourteen pages of the phonic charts which Fassett recommended teaching first could not have covered the phonic irregularities in these few words which were not even marked as sight-words on the top of the page.

On page 121-122 were “Directions to Teachers,” with the footnote, “See also directions found on the first page of each Chart.”

“It should be clearly understood that at first there must be two distinct lines of teaching carried on side by side: (1) the drill upon phonetic lists for the purpose of developing phonetic power in the child; (2) the reading of simple lessons, mainly by the word-and-sentence method, until the child’s power in phonetics is far enough advanced to enable him to apply it in his reading. The application of this phonetic power to reading will vary with the class.

“Before the teacher can use any system of phonetics she must have a clear conception of the sounds of the individual letters. This can best be obtained by selecting a few simple words and slowly speaking them aloud, carefully analyzing the sound of each letter as it issues from the mouth. Note accurately the position of tongue, lips, and teeth. Take, for instance, the word fan: by

dwelling on the first letter f, it will be noticed that the underlip is brought back until it comes in contact with the upper teeth, thus producing the correct sound of the letter f. Then the lower jaw is dropped slightly, and the short sound of a follows. Finally, to produce the n the tip of the tongue is brought to the roof of the mouth just behind the upper teeth.... (the teacher) can indicate to her pupils the correct position of the lips, tongue, and teeth in forming all letters.

- “1. For the first few weeks keep the drill upon the Letter Cards and the phonetic tables of the Chart and of the Primer entirely distinct from the reading lesson.
- “2. The use of the Letter Cards and the Phonetic Chart may be supplemented by blackboard exercises.
- “3. Insist on the proper position of lips, tongue, and teeth in sounding the letters.
- “4. Work for rapidity, and review frequently.
- “5. Work for the individual; concert work is of secondary value.
- “6. Do not dwell too long upon the first list of letters, for the drill is reviewed on succeeding pages.
- “7. Work for recognition of words as wholes. It will be readily seen that until this point is reached, the phonetic knowledge of the child is practically useless in reading; hence the desirability of keeping the drill and the reading separate until some degree of phonetic power has been acquired.”

Note that Fassett’s insistence on reading whole words for “meaning” at the beginning was because he was totally unaware of the existence of the syllable as the proper reading unit, instead of the “whole word.” This mindlessness was, of course, fostered by the fact that in Germanic languages such as English closed syllables commonly are also meaning-bearing words (dog, hund, etc.)

Note also the probably harmful discussion with little children of mouth positions in uttering sounds. Such positioning is normally done automatically. Focusing conscious attention on such positions should probably be done only as necessary by a properly trained speech therapist.

“8. Before beginning the reading lessons in the Primer make sure that the pupil can recognize at once any word in the tables on pages 123-127 inclusive. The preliminary training may be given on the blackboard, but the Charts will make the work easier for both teacher and pupil.

“9. It is important that the work in phonics keep pace with the reading. This means that for the first few weeks, at least, twice as much time should be devoted to the phonetic tables as to the reading. The daily drill should be given in several short periods.”

Page 123 carried these notes:

“Phonetic Tables This book is planned to be used in connection with the Phonetic Chart. The following tables and exercises should not be taught until the Phonetic Chart is completed.”  
Fassett gave a footnote at this point:

“If it is impossible to use the Phonetic Chart, teach the sounds of letters found above (s f h t b r n m c g d l p a) also ba ha la ma na pa sa ra ta ca ga fa.”

Fassett did not mean that these should be taught as classic open syllables with long vowels, but as short vowels, as is obvious from the rest of the footnote. "When the child has mastered these, build groups upon the blackboard as follows: ra-n, ra-p, ra-t, ha-d, ha-m, ha-t, la-d, la-g, la-p."

Continuing after the footnote, Fassett said:

"After finishing the tables found in the chart, the child should come to this work with considerable phonetic power. The following words should be given at the rate of thirty a minute. Before beginning the reading lessons in this book, study pp. 123-127, and review the Reading Chart. For application of these tables see pp. 1-16."

Page 123 had three letter words with the short "a" vowel: "ma-d, ma-n, ma-t, ta-g, ta-n, ta-p, ga-p, na-g, ga-g..."

On page 124, Fassett said:

"The following tables have been planned to supplement the Phonetic Chart, which should be studied before these exercises are begun."

"Footnote I: If it is impossible to use the Phonetic Chart, teach the sounds of k, w, j, and c, short i. Also develop bi di fi, etc., and form groups wi - ll, wi -g, ro - b, ro - d;, ro - t, etc."

This page had short "i" words of three or four letters, some with double terminal consonants.

This note was on page 125:

"There are many difficulties which the teacher will encounter in teaching phonetics, such as the confusion of b, d, and p, the rapid blending of letters, etc. These are all carefully met on the Phonetic Chart."

The top of page 125 had three-letter short "o" words except for "doll." The group of words in the middle contained the short vowels "a," "i," and "o."

On the bottom third of page 125 this appeared:

"If it is impossible to use the phonetic Chart, teach the short sound of u and form groups as before: ru-n, ru-b, ru-g, etc."

This was followed by a group of three-letter short "u" words.

Fassett was certainly not teaching syllables, but words, as shown by the following note on page 128 concerning the way in which he taught children to work out words of more than three letters. The initial consonant and vowel were called "the helper":

"The children should recognize the helper, then the first three letters, and finally the entire word, as mi s t. for application, see pp. 18 ff. mist, milk etc."

On page 129, he said:

"Develop the consonant digraphs sh, nk, ng, ck, ch, and tch, ...for application see pp. 20 ff."

On page 130, he said:

“...in the following words, a blend of two consonants precedes the following. Always sound the vowel with these two consonants, thus sta-b, pla-n, sla-p.”

That is not using Pascal sounding-and-blending phonics, nor was his “helper” the use of sounding-and-blending phonics.

On page 131, Fassett covered “wh” and “th,” to be taught as “helpers.” On page 132, he covered long vowels, but only as formed by a silent “e” at the end of the word (as in “cane,) and then five or six letter words with short and long vowels (only the silent “e” form). At the bottom of page 134, he covered long vowels from digraphs (as in meat) and said:

“The following arrangement will be of assistance in teaching the equivalents of the long sounds of the vowels. Notice that the sound of the first vowel usually governs. The same table will be found on page 19 of the Phonetic Chart. Do not use this table from the book, but print the digraphs on the blackboard. Teach all ten, and review daily. Use flash cards and keep well ahead of the phonetic tables found on pages 136-140.”

The vowels he gave were: ee (meet), ea (meat), ai (pain), ay (pay) oa (road), oe (hoe) ie (tied), y (by), ue (cue), ew (new). His was an exceedingly awkward and messy approach for the teaching of long vowels. These tables were to be covered immediately before stories containing practice words on these phonic elements. For instance, on the vowel digraphs ai and ay, he said, “for application see pp. 53 ff.”

He followed this with teaching “oo,” long, “a” and “o” modified by “r,” “er ir ur,” and two syllable words divided between syllables: such as “bet ter,” “hunt ing,” and “run ner.” Obviously, he was not teaching syllabication. He then covered a terminal “le” as in table, the diphthongs “au aw ou ow oi oy,” and the endings “ce” and “dge.”

Fassett said he had patterned his phonic readers on Webster’s speller, although it is clear he did not effectively do so. Fassett’s 1921 material was anything but ideal but it nevertheless contained much real phonics. However, his original 1912 Beacon materials, although they were also weak, were superior to and more strongly phonic than his 1921 materials (both published by Ginn). That deterioration suggests someone gave Fassett “help,” the same kind of help Dr. Charles C. Walcutt received as his and Glenn McCracken’s 1963 Lippincott series deteriorated with each revision after its original publication. (Apparently, only Walcutt was the author of the subsequent Lippincott revisions.) The revised editions by the new publisher, Scribner’s, after Walcutt’s death no longer qualify as truly phonic materials but are meaning-oriented. It should be noted however, that part of the defects in Fassett’s original material, like the defects in Walcutt’s material, came from the fact that the series was written by someone who could only deal with theory and not practice, since Fassett, like Walcutt, was not a teacher of beginning readers or of adult illiterates as Noah Webster, Rebecca Pollard, Rudolph Flesch, Sue Dickson, Sister Monica Folzer and Samuel Blumenfeld had been. Instead, Fassett was a superintendent of schools and his failings came because he wrote his material in the rarified atmosphere of theory, not practice.

Fassett’s “Preface” to his 1912 edition read:

“The object of this primer is to offer a set of easy reading lessons worked out in connection with a series of graded exercises in phonetic drill for the purpose of assisting the child in the easiest and most direct way to acquire the power of word getting, of word mastery, and of reading.

“The idea of the author can best be explained by stating that he has endeavored to carry out in this phonetic primer the exact principles which Noah Webster embodied in his so-called Spelling Book, a book which in reality was not a speller, but a primer, or a first book for teaching reading.

“If the reader will carefully examine a copy of Noah Webster’s Spelling Book, he will become convinced that Webster’s idea of teaching reading consisted of two distinct parts, namely: (1) tables of words carefully arranged according to their difficulty; (2) reading exercises based upon the words found in these tables. Thus Webster developed a method which long usage proved logical and sound.

“Besides the consonants and the short sounds of the vowels, there are but few phonetic rules which the pupil needs to learn before recognizing the majority of English words. These rules, when brought to his understanding through practice on long lists of selected words where only one difficulty is presented at a time, quickly and surely develop the reading power.

“It is found in practice that with proper development of the principles underlying the phonetic part of the English language, the use of diacritical marks is unnecessary; in fact they are worse than useless, for they present to the eye not the true form of the letter or word, but an artificial and arbitrary form which the child must soon learn to discard.

“In preparing the phonetic tables, only those words have been used which are easily within the comprehension of the child, except in those cases where not enough common words could be found for the necessary drill.

“The short sounds of the vowels are presented first because the words containing short vowels are far in excess of those containing long vowels; moreover, from the very structure of the English language, vowels are short unless modified by position, or by the addition of final e.”

Fassett was wrong on several statements: Emphatically, Webster had relied on phonetic marks and they emphatically did work, and Fassett was misleading about short vowels and structure, because he apparently had no knowledge of open and closed syllables. He said further:

“Directions to Teachers - General Plan. Do not confuse the directions found on this and on the following pages, which relate entirely to the development of the phonetic power, with the directions which relate solely to the development of the reading lessons by the word and sentence method. It should be clearly understood that at first there must be two distinct lines of teaching carried on side by side, namely: (1) the drill upon phonetic lists for the purpose of developing phonetic power in the child; (2) the reading of simple stories by the word and sentence method until the child’s power in phonetics is far enough advanced to enable him to apply it in his reading lessons.”

On page vi, Fassett used as “Aids to Memory” stories about each letter for the teacher to tell to the students. That approach was stolen from Rebecca Pollard with no credit given her:

“Here is a picture of what the watch said - t t t t. (Give the sound, not the alphabet name.”

Yet Fassett did not even teach the letters “x,” “y,” “z,” and “q” until the end of Part I.

In the 1912 version, the phonic tables preceded the text, obviously giving phonics primary importance. It does not seem accidental that in the 1921 version the tables were inserted at the end of the

book, even though they were intended to be used at the beginning. That placement downgraded their importance and increased the importance of the half-witted sight-word “stories” with which the book began. Furthermore, the lists of words in the tables for phonic practice were markedly shorter in the 1921 version.

The child’s personal sounding out of lists of words which contain particular phonic elements is the necessary practice with which the child forms firm conditioned reflexes on those elements. The sounding-out of unknown words is precisely analogous to typing practice or to piano keyboard practice. Yet the shortening and almost removing of these lists of words for phonic practice has been characteristic of “revised” and “improved” editions of phonic programs for many years. Despite the shortening of phonic practice lessons, however, Fasset’s general approach in 1912 and 1921 was the same.

The “script” approach for teaching beginning reading in which letters are joined and not separated seems to have originated in 1875 in Parker’s Quincy, apparently so that words would be perceived more readily by beginners as wholes instead of as composed of separate letters. Script for beginners was apparently still lingering in 1912, though it is doubtful that anyone knew the Quincy source by 1912 or suspected what was probably its real purpose: the perception of all words as “wholes.” Fasset wrote the following:

“The Reading Chart. The Reading Chart, with its accompanying Perception Cards, will be found an invaluable aid in the development of this part of the Primer. Through their application the teacher may avoid entirely the use of script forms upon the blackboard, which, if introduced at this point, tend to confuse the mind of the child. The desirability of having the child master the Roman forms before learning their script equivalents is perfectly apparent to the skilled teacher.

“If, however, The Reading Chart and the Perception Cards can not be used, the teacher will find herself well repaid if she will take time to print the stories upon the blackboard; she will thus obtain much better results. Script forms of course may be used in the development of the word-and-sentence part of this Primer as they have been used in the development of other Primers based upon the word-and-sentence method.”

A startling and unmentioned difference appeared in the handling of sight-words in the 1912 and 1921 primers. In the 1912 version, a total of nine words were shown on the first three pages at the head of the stories, which sight-words were obviously taught in order to read the stories. In contrast, only two sight words were shown at the top of the first three pages in the 1921 version, but 26 DIFFERENT words were used on those first three pages! In no way had enough phonics been taught so that beginning children could have sounded out the remaining 24 words!

The following appeared on page 34, Part I, of the 1912 version:

“Suggestions to Teachers. The stories immediately following introduce a very important step in the teaching of phonetics. Up to this point the child, in all probability, has not applied his phonetic power in the slightest degree to his reading, but, from now on, a number of easy phonetic words will be interwoven with the words which he has been taught as sight words.

“This step is a difficult one for the child. The teacher will be surprised and disappointed at the pupil’s lack of power in sounding in his reading lesson the same words which he can give without hesitation from the tables. Care, time, and patience will be necessary to assist the child over this difficulty.”

Fassett had created an enormous problem by teaching beginners to read by “meaning” with sight-words in their so-called “stories,” at the same time that he had drilled them to read simple word lists for “sound.” On the first, the children had developed a Kanji-type reflex, and on the other a Kana-type reflex. Now Fassett was counseling teachers to try to undo the damage he had caused, by coaxing children to read “stories” with a Kana-type reflex. I have worked with little beginning readers and have marveled at the intensity of these reflexes, once formed, and how difficult and sometimes impossible it is to try to reverse them, even with beginners. Yet, having created an enormous problem with his teaching of sight-words, Fassett continued to introduce pure sight-words all through his books, so that no matter what the teachers did, the children would probably end up with mixed reflexes. The Beacon readers, which have been praised for years by phonics advocates, when examined closely turn out to have been very poor phonic books indeed, but at least they did teach real phonics eventually.

Fassett wrote at the beginning of Part II, page 47:

“Part II is intended to be read by the child after he has finished the phonetic work on the Phonetic Chart and has reviewed for quick recognition the phonetic lists on pages 1 to 15 of this Primer.

“The following reading exercises are so arranged as to call still further upon the child’s power of sounding. Throughout the remainder of the book, only such words as the child is unable to sound will be found at the head of the lesson.

“One of the great obstacles encountered in teaching phonetics is to find reading matter which does not present too many phonetic difficulties at one time. In the following exercises the phonetic facts are introduced into the reading only after they have been taught in table form and thoroughly developed. For instance, no story is given with a word containing the sound of oa or oe until the table containing these sounds (see p. 66) has been mastered by the child.”

In the 1912 version, “oa” and “oe” were taught on page 66, and the “r” controlled vowels on page 48:

“The following table contains words with the vowels e i and u when modified by r - er ir ur like sound of ur in urn.”

On page 49:

“The following table contains common two syllable words. Teach sound of y when like short i.”

The two-syllable words were separated in this material. With the stories on the page 56, these sight-words were used: “eyes,” “pulls,” “blind.” Page 57 used the sight-words “would” and “ears,” even though page 58 introduced the sound of “ee” and “ea,” so that “ears” could have been taught phonetically on the very next page!

Page 61 had these five sight words over a story: “two other they grandpa are.” The next page had these sight words over a story: “cents money next page walk try house.” Page 64 had as a sight-word the word “pony,” which is a ridiculous thing to do in a program which is supposed to be teaching phonics, just as with so many of the previous so-called sight words like “try, cents, next, page,” and “ears,” all of which are phonically perfectly regular. Page 65 had “one old very.” Page 68 taught the “le” ending on such words as table as a phonic element. Incredibly, page 69 had a story with perfectly phonetic “bow-wow” as a sight-word! Many sight-words were presented all through the stories, often several for each story, and a great many of them were perfectly regular phonically.



Overall, the 1912 Beacon might rate a Code 6 and the 1921 a weak code 6. Beacon had a controlled vocabulary, controlled by sight in part I, and by BOTH sight and sound in Part II. Because of its heavy “emphasis” on meaning, it undoubtedly created some severe reading problems with those children who could not switch gears from reading Kanji-style to Kana-style.

Why did the 1921 Beacon primer water down some of the phonic emphasis, listing, for instance, fewer words for the absolutely essential phonic practice? This paralleled the watering down of the heavily phonic Alpha One Letter People material about 1980 which watering-down was, however, far worse. The lengthy word lists for practice in reading newly taught phonemes in the Alpha One Chatterbook workbook were enormously shortened in the revised workbook, and “meaning” reading practice was greatly increased. I did not distribute the worthless revised workbooks to my first grade class. (Their use was optional. I was required, however, to give the children the far worse Houghton, Mifflin workbooks and readers, and the time-consuming “tests” accompanying them geared to so-called “skills” in the workbooks. The tests had to be filed in the school’s office.)

Dr. Walcutt’s Lippincott series, first published in 1963 with Glenn McCracken, met the same watering-down fate as the Alpha One program. About 1984, I purchased Lippincott duplicating “dittos” for supplemental phonic practice with my first grade to replace school-purchased 1963 Lippincott “dittos” bought many years before which had worn out. Those I bought about 1984 were from the last Lippincott revision and overwhelmingly emphasized “meaning,” not “sound.” I was told by someone who had spoken with Dr. Walcutt about that time that he was a very saddened man, as, I assume, had been Fassett in 1921.

If Dr. Walcutt had still been living, he would have been considerably more saddened at the revision made to his series after it was bought by Scribner’s. One of the principal authors on the 1987 and 1989 revisions was Dr. Jack Cassidy, a former president of the International Reading Association, who gave a talk at the New Jersey Education Association Convention in Atlantic City in 1979 in which he belittled Dr. Rudolf Flesch’s opinions. (By contrast and not surprisingly, Dr. Walcutt was apparently a friend of Dr. Flesch.) The emphasis in the Scribner’s 1989 and later series at first grade is overwhelmingly on meaning, not phonics. Despite copious window dressing, the “phonics” when analysed is two-step phony phonics, and there is a great increase in “necessary” sight words. For instance, “it” is presented as a “sight word” in the fall of first grade, not phonically! That is despite the fact that the short vowels had been taught in kindergarten.

Fassett’s phonic program in its highly popular (and obviously highly profitable) 1912 and 1921 versions was not even in print by Ginn by 1928, according to the 1928 United States Catalog. Yet Ginn continued to print in 1928 old sight-word (and undoubtedly far less profitable) materials that had been in print from as long ago as the 1890’s!

From long, long before 1921 when Fassett’s 1912 material was weakened in its revised edition, which weak edition was not even in print by 1928, the history demonstrates the effective squelching of such phonics programs as Fassett’s by wielders of influence. It is those same wielders of influence who have shaped and continue to shape the “educational environment” of most school administrators. Most school administrators took and continue to take their cues from such people, who are embedded as recognized “experts” at the “best” universities, foundations, and the like. Almost nothing ever gets published in educational journals which contradicts the official “wisdom” of such “establishment experts.” A researcher will look almost in vain for writings supporting phonics in education journals since about 1892 (and there were precious few even then). In English-speaking North America, Great Britain, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, “meaning” programs have consistently produced terrible failures for many, many years, starting in the 1820’s. They have remained in place despite the fact that “meaning” programs

required an inordinate amount of time to “teach” and money to fund. They eventually even had to resort to phony “silent” tests instead of oral tests so that they could cover up the damage they were causing.

Schools in English-speaking countries are at present being afflicted with academic rubbish called “whole language,” which proposes that phonics be taught only incidentally - if at all. In order to sell any kind of propaganda, the propaganda should be inserted in a package which is 98% truth. The unwary see only the 98% of “truth” in the so-called “whole language” method. Who can object to giving children attractive stories to read, and who can object to encouraging their writing of stories themselves, as the “whole language” method proposes? However, here is the 2% propaganda inserted in the so-called “whole language” package. It states that to attempt to teach children systematically the phonemic structure of alphabetic print is futile because it is BORING. (It is not boring. When children are first being taught to read, they love good, thorough, sequentially structured phonics programs. They particularly delight in the power it gives them. However, those children who have already learned to read by using a “meaning” reflex, do find it very difficult to learn and to use the opposite method, phonics.) Since children might not LIKE being taught phonics, they might not read or write stories. Instead, have children read and write stories FIRST and THEN teach them phonics, but only if and when they need it. (However, when phonics is finally introduced to children who have already been taught to read by sight word “meaning,” the “sound” usually IS boring to them because of the conflict in the approaches.)

Because only 300 words cover three-quarters of simple compositions, the brighter children by second grade, who were taught by the “meaning” method in first grade, learn these high-frequency words. That is because their teachers write these words for the children as the children ask for them while composing their “whole language” stories all through first grade. Once the children have learned the high-frequency words by what amounts to heavy drill in writing their whole-language compositions, and once the children have gained some vague ideas on consonant sounds (the kind of phonics they are taught “if and when they need it,”) the children can give the illusion that they know how to read by stumbling and guessing their way through the little stories that they are handed, which usually have constantly repeated phrases and lots of pictures to assist in guessing. Their brain-washed teachers then think the children do not “need” phonics. By third grade, such children have joined the armies of functional illiterates that “meaning” has been turning out in the English language since the early nineteenth century.

The story of “whole language” is presumed to have begun in New Zealand. A cloying movie which appeared in theaters about ten years ago told of a soulful, poetic teacher who understood the emotional needs of her Maori students and so began teaching reading with REAL stories that the students wrote themselves.

Now, it is remarkable how the world does beat its way to the manufacturers of better mousetraps. Sure enough, this obscure teacher from out in the countryside swayed the whole education department of New Zealand to her “new” way of teaching reading simply by going to the city to tell them about it. Of course, the government education department of New Zealand must have been open to other thoughtful input besides hers, like that of Frank Smith and Kenneth Goodman, whose “theories” supported her “discovery.” Her child-loving improvement, “whole language,” soon flowered also in the understanding soils of Australia, Canada, England and the United States, where it tied right in with the language theories of “experts” like Kenneth Goodman and Frank Smith. Whole-language “story-books” were published instead of reading series, in which the child is supposed to be able to read for “interest.”

In essence, the elaborately illustrated little “whole-language” books are like the Heart of Oak book one of 1893 and 1895, which had nursery rhymes or fairy tales with constantly repeated phrases and sentences. They are also like The Passaic Primer of 1903 which had sentences built from the same constantly repeated sight words. The authors of The Passaic Primer, Spaulding and Bryce, produced in 1907 the Aldine readers which used the approach of their 1903 Passaic Primer. The Aldine series was

massively successful (undoubtedly because the series must have been massively promoted, just as “whole language” has been). The Aldine readers were only displaced by the arrival of the also-massively-promoted “Dick-and-Jane” and Macmillan deaf-mute-method readers after 1930.

Yet all of those materials, just like the so-called “new” “whole language” method, provided drill on the reading of whole sight words by presenting those sight-words only in “meaningful” sentences. The sight words are obviously guessed by their “meaning” through the massive use of context guessing. The true nature of the so-called “whole language” method is very simple. It is nothing more nor less than the use of context guessing to read whole sight words. That is the same pedagogically-bad approach for teaching the deaf that the Abbe de l’Epee’s used with his unfortunate students back in the eighteenth century.

At a workshop in Lyndhurst, New Jersey, in 1990, I was presented with a folder of material, much of which had originated in New Zealand, and listened to a first-grade teacher from Maine explaining how HAPPY her children were with the approach. The Lyndhurst grade-school teachers took great exception to the Maine first-grade teacher’s downgrading of phonics, but the Lyndhurst High School woman administrator who had arranged the workshop (and who had apparently never taught first grade) found the Maine first-grade teacher’s lecture VERY convincing.

What is noticeable about the “whole language” promotion elsewhere, however, is that, instead of being promoted by the major publishers, it is commonly being promoted by “mom-and-pop” types in workshops. These “mom-and-pop” operations have “spontaneously” arisen like the spring grass all over America.

Beacon was an example of the two-headed reading programs like Ward’s in use from about 1900 to about 1925, one part teaching students to read by sound and the other part teaching students to read by meaning. Such programs must have caused great difficulties initially for most children and ultimately produced many of the few “reading disability” cases that Gates and others worked with in the 1920’s. However, as Arthur I. Gates stated in March, 1925, in his article, “Problems in Beginning Reading - An Analysis of 21 Courses” in the Teachers College Record, virtually all programs by 1925, including the “meaning” programs like Aldine, made heavy use of supplemental phonics, so most American children did learn to read.

## **Chapter 32**

### **Anti-Phonic Activists Return As the “Meaning” Aldine Readers Spread Across America, Their Effect Minimized by the Almost Universal Use After 1900 of Supplemental Phonics.**

The Elson Readers of Scott, Foresman, in the Preface to the 1915 second edition, made a long complaint about the heavy use of phonics in beginning reading in 1915. The Preface included the following remark:

“The stress is placed upon mechanical memory, to the neglect of the development of thought power....”

Yet the opposition to the rapidly developing phonics emphasis in some reading programs after 1900 and in teachers’ heavy use of “supplemental phonics” was apparent long before that 1915 arrival of the second edition of the Elson readers, published by Scott, Foresman Company of Chicago and New York, the first edition of which had been in 1909.

The opposition had been evident in the Aldine readers of 1907 that had preceded even the 1909 edition of the Elson readers, and in the Horace Mann readers, among others. A copy of the Primer of The Horace Mann Readers which had been copyrighted in 1908 and 1912 showed its authors as Walter L. Hervey, Ph. D., “Member of the Board of Examiners, Department of Education, New York City, Formerly President of Teachers College,” and Melvin Hix, B. S., “Principal of Public School No. 9, Astoria, New York City.” The edition is marked, “Revised,” and was published by Longmans, Green, and Co., New York. In its “Foreword,” it said:

“The Horace Mann Primer is intended as a basal first book in reading. It has been subjected to the test of actual use in the schoolroom... Some of the distinctive features of (its) method, particularly as applied to the Primer, are briefly as follows:

1. “Let thought lead,” a basal principle of very wide application, is held to be particularly important at the beginning... The sentences in the Primer lessons form a thought sequence...the Primer as a whole is definitely designed to promote constructive thinking, and the interest, attention, and growth in power that always accompany such thinking.

2. A method of teaching beginners to read may fairly be judged by its treatment of the vital question of phonics. If it neglects phonics, it fails to develop independence in reading; if it abuses phonics, - e. g. if it lets phonics lead, - it results in word calling; if it wisely uses phonics, while letting thought lead, it will result in independent and thoughtful reading....”

This 1908 or 1912 comment from the ex-president of Teachers College, Columbia, (and presumably from his co-author Hix) can be stripped to its essential thought. In essence, it said that children should learn to read by “meaning.” That meant that children should first learn a small collection of whole words from “meaningful” stories, and then use only two-step phony phonics, which is the jigsaw-puzzle approach of pulling apart and then putting together pieces of those whole words that the children had learned by their “meaning.” Children were not supposed to learn to read by pure “sound,” using Blaise Pascal’s one-step synthetic phonics method of reading unknown words, which is simply to pronounce sequentially the sounds (not names) of the letters, which isolated sounds then suggest the words..

Harvard has a 1914 copy of the Primer, *The Horace Mann Readers*. I made the following note concerning it on my photocopy of the back cover on July 14, 1986. That photocopy shows that most of the center, which was presumably the printed portion, of the back cover had been cut away, apparently with a razor, leaving a margin of fabric of about an inch on the top and bottom and a half inch on each side. My 1996 notes read:

“Guttman Library, Harvard, Cambridge, Massachusetts. This hard-bound copy, covered in a coated fabric had this much of the back cover fabric cut out, showing underneath cardboard, which was apparently done with a razor. Note two deliberate cuts - top part and then a lower second part. Underneath cardboard looks somewhat soiled and worn, so this was apparently done many years ago, considering the low usage of such primers in the stacks. This is a September, 1914, reprint.”

I had marked with an arrow where the first razor line ended, far down on the cover, and where the second razor line was, an inch below it, although both lines are very visible on the photocopy. Other Horace Mann readers of earlier dates were in the Harvard library, but I saw no others with such razor work.

The intriguing questions, of course, are, “What was on that razor-removed section? Why did the wielder of the razor then have second thoughts and decide to extend the cut an inch further? What was on that bottom part?” It is possible the Horace Mann Primer was a state-adopted copy, like the Suzzallo speller involved in the Texas, 1925, textbook scandal. If it were a state adopted copy, what might the removed portion have said concerning that adoption or the copy’s state-mandated use?

The razor work on that Harvard copy, leaving curious margins all around the razor-removed section instead of removing all the fabric on the back cover, which would have been a more natural thing to do, may well have been done by the same person who removed parts of pages 10-11 and 13-14 in the 1870-1871 Quincy annual school report in the Harvard library, leaving part of the margin and part of the rest of the pages. (It is unfortunate that the Harvard library lacks the whole 1874-1875 Quincy annual report, covering the year Quincy hired Colonel Parker.) I contacted the Boston library for copies of the mutilated pages from the 1870-1871 Quincy annual report, but the photocopied pages they sent me did not match the mutilated pages from the Harvard library of which I had photocopies, even though they were supposed to be the same pages from the 1870-1871 Quincy annual report.

Both the 1914 book cover and the 1870-1871 Quincy annual report show razor-removal of only printed parts, leaving the blank margins on the book cover and parts of the printed pages and the inside margin in the Quincy report. That curious and unnatural pattern of removing “middles” instead of whole sheets might be seen as a kind of personal signature. If so, that suggests that the same person may have made both deletions.

These deletions may be considered when remembering the theft of some unidentifiable and therefore irreplaceable portion of William James’ personal collection of his own writings in the early 1930’s, which collection had been donated to Harvard and kept in a faculty room there. That theft has been discussed elsewhere, as well as Heartman’s reference to the crime wave that had broken out in American libraries in the early 1930’s. (Also as cited elsewhere, *Bride of the Revolution*, the biography of Krupskaya, Lenin’s widow, by Robert H. McNeal (1972) refers to the systematic “sweeps” of libraries in the Soviet Union in the 1920’s which were carried out at Krupskaya’s behest to remove “objectionable” books. Such activities were not considered a crime in the Soviet Union.)

Since the curious theft of an unknown portion of William James’ personal collection of his own writings took place in late 1930 or very early January, 1931, it is not altogether unreasonable to speculate

that both the theft of James' books at Harvard and the mutilations of these two Harvard library texts (and possibly the Harvard library's loss of the 1874-1875 Quincy report) may have been the work of the same person. It is probably significant that Nila Banton Smith's 1934 "history" totally omitted any reference to the once nation-wide famous Quincy history. That strongly suggests that at least the importance of the once-famous Quincy movement to reading instruction history was being buried by Nila Banton Smith. Correspondingly, the theft of some unknown part of William James' writings from a private faculty room (possibly over the 1930 Christmas holidays?) at Harvard suggests that someone was very possibly trying to bury whatever the content was in those writings of William James. That person would probably not have bothered to steal those writings unless their content was generally unknown but also for some reason important. After all, by 1930, copies of William James' formally published work should have been neatly filed and readily available to anyone, and probably in multiple copies, not only in the Harvard libraries but in the Boston libraries and in any other large libraries in the United States.

If an unmutated copy of that 1914 reprint of the Horace Mann readers could be found (and it was very possibly a state-adopted reprint), it would be interesting to see what was on that missing portion. Very possibly it had something to do with the conflict on the teaching of beginning reading which was so pronounced in the beginning decades of this century.

The Elson readers published by Scott, Foresman of Chicago in 1909 and 1915 were the immediate forerunners of William Scott Gray's "Dick and Jane" deaf-mute-method series in 1930 published by the same company. (As discussed elsewhere, Scott, Foresman bought out the Sherwood Company of Chicago which had published J. Russell Webb's sight-word materials since the 1860's.) The 1915 Manual for the Elson-Runkel Primer was written by William H. Elson (1856-1935), "Author Elson Readers" and Lura E. Runkel, "Principal Howe School, Superior, Wisconsin." Yet the fourth grade level of the 1915 Elson readers showed only William H. Elson as author. Lura Runkel apparently did the hard work at the lowest levels on vocabulary control and phony phonics so that all Elson had to do at the higher levels was to collect an anthology of attractive stories.

Lura Runkel was apparently one of the many female drudges who "assisted" such "experts" any time any real work was involved. Yet an actual copy of the earlier Elson Grammar School Reader, Book Four, copyrighted in 1909 does not show Elson as the sole author of the 1909 series, as had been implied on the title page of the 1915 series. The 1909 title page read, "By William H. Elson, Superintendent of Schools, Cleveland, Ohio, and Christine Keck, Principal of Sigsbee School, Grand Rapids, Michigan." Apparently by the time the 1915 series arrived, Elson could afford to resign as Superintendent of Schools in Cleveland and live off the royalties from the two series. Christine Keck, his 1909 drudge, faded into oblivion by 1915 so was presumably still working away in Grand Rapids instead of living off royalties.

The "Preface" to the 1915 Primer read in part:

"...In recent years, however, experimental psychology has been throwing new light on the reading process. After a careful study of public school practice, Dr. Edmund Burke Huey, Dr. John Dewey, Dr. G. Stanley Hall, and other scientific investigators have pointed out vital defects in the prevailing systems, and have urged a reconstruction of teaching methods, in harmony with the new psychology of reading. They call attention to two special faults in present-day methods:

"(1) The stress is placed upon mechanical memory, to the neglect of the development of thought power. In the words of Dr. Huey, 'The actual aim that has guided in the selection and arrangement of most of the early reading-matter has been the development of the power to recognize and call words, making reading a matter of word-pronouncing, mainly.' Indeed, by making word-mastery the end, these methods produce readers of words rather than of thoughts.

“(2) The child’s interest - his only motive for learning - is ignored, since no vital content is provided for him. Dr. Dewey, in speaking of what he terms the ‘utter triviality of the contents of our school primers and first readers,’ says they ‘lack the essential of any well-grounded method, viz.: relevancy to the child’s mental needs.’ It is to be remembered that a method which ignores interest is extremely wasteful of energy. For interest is the most powerful impelling force; when it is lacking, its place must be taken by external compulsion, resulting in laborious drill.

“The Natural Method of Teaching Reading

“In the light of the new psychology of reading, it would appear that the natural method of teaching the child to read provides him with material (stories) of such nature as will grip his interest and constantly develop his power for connected thinking, by means of incident and plot structure. Through the use of this vital content, the natural method develops the various phonetic elements of our language, one by one, as they are encountered in the story. A content of simple but vivid stories, expressed in a typical child vocabulary, will inevitably contain these phonetic elements, and will bring them to the child in the course of his reading needs quite as rapidly as he is capable of mastering them. Moreover, the type words selected from such material for drill purposes will come to him in interesting associations, as integral parts of real stories. Contrast the type words found in many primers, doled out to the child in stiff, unnatural sentences, built up merely because some particular page is designed to exhibit, let us say the ‘in’ family and therefore weaves an inane sentence to contain the word ‘pin.’”

Jean Chall very nicely handled this kind of objection to real phonics at the beginning of reading instruction, in her book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967). W. S. Gray had paraphrased the ideas just given, and complained that phonic materials would sound just as effective if they were read from the bottom of the page to the top, and gave a page from the Beacon 1912 primer to make his point. Dr. Chall reproduced a page from Gray’s 1956 primer and placed it right next to a reproduction of the page Gray cited from the 1912 phonic primer. She said both sounded better when read from the bottom to the top, but added that a considerable argument could be carried on concerning which was more boring.

If the Scottish Schoolmaster from 1829 read those 1915 comments, he might well say again that it was a great deal of fuss over the ABC’s since reading can be taught so quickly if only it is taught properly. In phonically “sound” trained classes like those using Sue Dickson’s *Sing, Spell, Read and Write*, children can pick up and read any book with fair success, by themselves, by spring of first grade (including the whole-language story-books currently being churned out). Yet children taught the Elson “meaning” way could read only the Elson first grade material. Furthermore, concerning “interest,” the children using *Sing, Spell Read and Write* take a great deal of pleasure in learning how to read, as any visitor to first grades using Sue Dickson’s material can see for himself. The same child-delight was found in Pollard phonic classrooms about 1890, and in Leigh phonic classrooms about 1870, as previous quotations have shown, and is found today in any classroom teaching phonics competently by any good “sound” method such as Sister Monica Folzer’s, Sam Blumenfeld’s, *Open Court* and a very few others.

The opposition to true synthetic phonics was apparent but veiled in the 1921 revision of the 1916 Aldine speller, which was a “meaning” speller masquerading as a “sound” speller. The speller accompanied the strongly “meaning” 1907 Aldine reading series using the sentence method. The Aldine reading series, written by Catherine Turner Bryce and Frank E. Spaulding (1866-1960) was enormously popular until 1930. However, Spaulding did not work on the Aldine speller of 1916-1921, which was written by Catherine Turner Bryce, who was by then Assistant Professor of Elementary Education at Yale University, and by Frank J. Sherman.

As discussed later in this history and in Appendix C, Spaulding was a dollar-a-year man in connection with foundation work for the Government dating from 1914. The influence of foundations on education aroused powerful opposition in the United States Senate in the spring of 1917, but the investigation foundered because of the advent of World War I.

According to Samuel Blumenfeld in *The Blumenfeld Education Letter*, February, 1994, Spaulding was:

“...a Wundtian PhD who organized Yale’s department of education and wrote numerous textbooks, was a member of the Rockefeller funded General Education Board from 1917 to 1920.”

Bryce’s later position at Yale, mentioned again below, was presumably because of her connection with Spaulding of Yale.

Bryce had written the sentence-method Passaic Primer with F. E. Spaulding in 1903, which suggests they must both have been in Passaic, New Jersey, in 1903. From Passaic, it was only about a twenty-five minute train-ride on the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad to the railroad’s terminal in Hoboken, New Jersey, which had ferries available to go over the Hudson River to Christopher Street or, possibly as early as 1903, a tube train to go under the Hudson River to 33rd Street in Manhattan. Columbia Teachers College was conveniently located towards the upper end of Manhattan about 120th Street, so it is not unlikely that Spaulding and Bryce may have had some contact with “experts” there.

What Spaulding’s and Bryce’s actual positions were in Passaic is unknown, but presumably they were employed by the Passaic school system. The *School Journal* of May 13, 1899, reproduced an address by Frank E. Spaulding, Ph. D., given before the New Jersey Childhood Association, so Spaulding was well established by 1899. The Passaic Primer was published by A. L. Freeman Printing Co., Passaic, and it used the sentence-method approach. So did the Aldine readers that Bryce and Spaulding wrote in 1907, and so did the speller written by Bryce and Sherman in 1916 which was revised in 1921, all of which were published by Newson and Company of New York.

The Passaic Primer of 1903 was a terrible thing. Beginning sections were to be memorized. It began with these “meaningful” sentences, which had the same unnatural repetition as the famous prose that starts “Look, Spot, look.” In no sense can such rubbish be compared to poetically repetitive material like the Mother Goose rhymes:



“Fly, little bird, to the tall tree.  
Fly to your nest.  
Fly, little birds.  
Fly to your nest.  
Fly to the tall tree, little birds.  
Fly to your little birds.  
Fly to your three little birds.”

The repetitive sight words in *The Passaic Primer* were also printed separately: “little fly the your tall tree next” (etc.) On page 3, two-step, whole-word, jigsaw-puzzle phony phonics began, with a word repeated but separated into two parts,; “t - all.” By page 23 words were printed which used the same word parts, obviously meant as material for future use in two-step whole-word phony phonics: “tall” was followed by “called,” and also shown were “last fast past,” etc.

The source for the title, *Aldine*, on the 1907 reading series written by Bryce and Spaulding was pretentious. It had been the name of a famous Italian press which printed classical works in the sixteenth century. It had been used earlier on the *Riverside Aldine Series*, according to the *American Catalogue of 1885-1890*. The *Riverside Press of Cambridge, Massachusetts*, was owned by Houghton, Mifflin Company, but whether there was any connection between them and Newson and Company of New York who published the *Aldine* readers is not known.

Frank E. Spaulding became Superintendent of Schools in Newton, Massachusetts, and Catherine T. Bryce became Supervisor of Primary Schools in Newton before she moved on to Yale, presumably with Spaulding. Nila Banton Smith said the 1927 *Newson Readers* were written by Catherine T. Bryce and Rose L. Hardy, and they were presumably meant to replace the 1907 *Aldine* readers published by Newson which had been written by Bryce and Spaulding. Bryce also wrote *Playtime Primer* in 1915, published by Newson, and other material. After she wrote the enormously successful sentence-method *Aldine* readers with Spaulding in 1907, Bryce had obviously prospered, ending up at Yale. Yet the 1927 *Newson Readers* showed on its title page the information that Catherine T. Bryce was by 1927 “formerly Assistant Professor of Elementary Education” at Yale. Their other author, Rose Lees Hardy, was Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Washington, D. C., and the second year level of *Newson Readers* (of which I have a copy) carefully explained how its vocabulary compared to Thorndike’s and Gates’ high frequency word lists (and so presumably did the first-year texts).

As mentioned, Spaulding was not the other author with Bryce on the 1916-1921 spellers, as he had been on the readers. That other author on the speller was Frank J. Sherman, formerly superintendent of schools in Danvers, Massachusetts. An associate in the 1921 revision of the speller was Arthur W. Kallom, Assistant Director of Educational Investigation and Measurements, Boston, Massachusetts. As will be evident from quoted portions, the 1921 speller is very like the 1903 *Passaic Primer*.

The following comments were at the beginning of the 1921 speller. When reading them, the scientifically obtained scores on the 1915 Ayres’ spelling scale should be kept in mind. The Ayres’ scale showed almost unbelievably high spelling scores for American elementary school children in 1914 and 1915, enormously higher than those recorded by the Iowa spelling scale of the 1950’s. Therefore, in reading the following, it should be remembered that a favorite ploy of change-agents is to invent fake crises, and then to offer to “solve” the “problems” themselves, resulting in the “fox in the henhouse” syndrome.

“To teachers and the public alike, probably no subject taught in the public schools has been more disappointing than spelling.... (A speller) must contain an adequate and simple system of phonics in the primary grades, since a large percentage of the words in common use are purely

phonetic and present no spelling difficulties once a sane and practical phonetic foundation is fixed.”

Yet the material itself was rank fakery. It used the sentence method and phony phonics while pretending to teach phonically, so it certainly was not “fixing” a “practical phonetic foundation.” It was published in two parts, and Part One was for grades one and two. It taught high frequency words, as it said its choice of words was:

“...thought to represent the real writing vocabulary of the average child of the grade in which it is taught....as every error creates a tendency, and if repeated quickly establishes a habit, it is important that the correct spelling of words be taught before children have occasion to write them....”

Page 7 was the first page for the children’s use, and it had the alphabet in small letters. The very next page had whole rhyming words, sight words, and “meaningful” material.

1. sun fun bun gun nun
2. be he we see she
3. run to me tree the
4. Run to me. Run to the tree.”

Even the quality of Newson’s publication, as well as its content, left something to be desired. A picture appeared underneath the meaningful sentence, “Run to the tree,” but the picture had no tree.

Concerning the “practical phonetic foundation” which the speller was “fixing,” note that on the very first page for first-graders, in the first phonetic material under “1.” and “2.” a group of short “u” words was followed by a group of long “e” words. This obviously has nothing to do with teaching long and short vowels sequentially, but has everything to do with whole-word, two-step phony phonics using word parts to build new words, the sort of thing Suzzallo endorsed in spelling, as discussed later. This speller would presumably have met with Suzzallo’s approval.

Note also the use of capital letters on “run,” although the alphabet of capital letters has not been given, but only lower case letters. Note the consonant digraph “tr” before even single consonant sounds have been covered. Note the use of “th” and “sh” on the first page, in the first fifteen words. These difficult paired letters do not represent blends of letter sounds, as “tr” does, but stand for the sounds of letters which are missing in our alphabet. They can therefore give beginning readers who are learning phonically a great deal of trouble, and have to be taught with care, not bundled in with other sounds in the very first lesson and with no comment at all on their peculiar use.

The Icelandic expanded alphabet has two separate letters for the two different sounds of “th” as in “then” and “thin.” Long ago, English used one of these Icelandic-style letters, but then attempted for a while to show the first “th” sound with the letter “y” as in “ye olde inne” before switching to “th” to show both sounds. Obviously, the correct sounds for “t” and “h” when said sequentially have nothing at all to do with the sounds represented by “th,” and neither do “s” and “h” have anything to do with the sound represented by “sh.”

The make-shift replacements for letters missing in our alphabet (th, sh, ch) are not taught in phonic programs until all regular consonants have been taught, but, in the Aldine speller, “th” and “sh” were introduced with the first fifteen words!

Note also the phonically irregular sight word “to” on the very first page of words. If it were phonetic, it would rhyme with “so” and “go.” Truly, the Aldine speller was a prize example of the fake, “But-We-Do-Teach Phonics” syndrome.

That the intent was clearly not to teach long and short vowels in a logical fashion was confirmed by the third instructional page (page 9), when a variant spelling for long “a” appeared with short “a”:

“5 ....hay may say  
6 band hand land sand stand  
7 play and with girls”

This was followed by pictures, and then:

“8 Run and play. Play with me.”

Note the two-step, whole-word phony phonics on this page (and all pages). The “meaningful” sentence included the sight words “and” and “play.” Two words from that sentence were used to construct the “phonic” word lists on the page, with phony, whole-word, substitution “phonics”: -and, b-and, h-and, etc., and pl-ay, h-ay, m-ay, etc.

The sentence and picture “meaning” approach was carried throughout the book. The words on the following pages are good examples of two-step whole-word phony phonics, but the pages also included plain sight-words, as well as “meaning-bearing” sentences and illustrative pictures. Following are some excerpts:

Page 10 “by my try cry dry sky why  
bold cold gold sold told hold fold  
fly birds lit tle old  
(picture of birds)  
The little birds fly. Fly to the old tree.”

Page 11 (On bottom by picture of nest in tree)  
“best rest west test vest chest pest  
all ball call fall hall wall small  
pin spin tin chin win skin thin  
nest is in on top of each other tall”

Page 12 (On bottom)  
“ear dear fear year near tear  
low row grow show low snow  
it bit hit sit fit wit  
Fly to the nest. The nest is in the tall tree.  
Review:  
run me play fly and bold  
all best in dear snow hit”

This 1921 speller’s debt to The Passaic Primer of 1903 is obvious!

Page 13 “hear wind blow trees on  
(Picture next to it of girl and blowing branch)  
Hear the wind blow. It blows the tall trees.

bill fill hill mill still ill  
ring bring wing king thing spring  
bad had lad mad sad glad”

Page 14 “book hook took brook cook shook  
bat cat hat that sat fat  
wade fade grade shade spade made  
will sing they  
(Picture of birds with song sheets)  
The birds sing in the tree. Will they fall?”

Page 15 “look who at  
(Picture of birds in nest.)  
Look at the little nest. Who made it?  
(Picture with mother in nest)  
fan man pan ran  
song long strong gong”

Page 22 completed the first grade material, with a review of the presumably “phonetic” words covered, all of which had been taught as rhyming whole words (which emphasizes parts of whole words), and page 23 reviewed the sight words. The numbers of sight words were approximately the same as the number of phonetic words in this “phonetic” speller! Furthermore, being taught as sight words were such phonetically regular words as “dog,” “yes,” “six,” “on,” and “from”! Since these words (except for dog) produce few rhyming common words, they were apparently not suitable to teach two-step phony phonics in rhyming lists of whole meaning-bearing words. The Aldine speller’s phonics which taught such phonic words as “sight words” calls to mind the Scribner’s “phonic” reading series, which are the rewritten Walcutt-Lippincott materials. Scribner’s series teaches “it” as a sight word in the first half of first grade!

The Aldine speller material for second grade was more of the same kind of thing. In no sense could this Aldine speller be called a phonic spelling book, but it certainly used “phony phonics.” So, presumably, did the Aldine readers. Yet Gates stated, as cited elsewhere, that a great amount of class time was spent until 1930 on supplementary phonics drill, so the effect of the phony phonics in the Aldine materials was undoubtedly largely cushioned.

## Chapter 33

### The Howell “Sound” Material, and its Possible Relationships

Like the Beacon series, the Howell material was an example of the two-headed reading programs after 1900, one part of which emphasized phonics and the other part of which emphasized sight-words. The Howell program, however, did not introduce numbers of pure sight words but instead drilled on phonically taught words for instant recognition, just as if they had been learned as sight words. That approach is very faulty. As Quintilian correctly said almost two thousand years ago, reading speed should come only after and as a result of slow and careful reading.

The superintendent of schools in Raleigh, North Carolina, Logan Douglass Howell, wrote the Howell reading series which began publication in 1910 and which was revised in 1917. It bears an uncanny resemblance to the original Basic Reading series of 1963, the J. B. Lippincott Co. readers by Dr. Charles C. Walcutt and Glenn McCracken (which were revised by Scribner’s in 1987, after several revisions by Lippincott). The resemblance of the 1963 Walcutt/McCracken materials to the Howell materials even concerns the kind of type employed. The Howell series may possibly have provided the model on which Walcutt and McCracken wrote the Lippincott readers.

The Walcutt/McCracken materials also drilled on phonically taught words for instant recognition. However, while the Walcutt/McCracken series introduced only one vowel and two or three consonants on its first pages, immediately using them in words, Howell’s primer taught twelve letters before beginning words, but then followed the Walcutt/McCracken pattern of introducing phonic elements only when they were going to be immediately used in words. The whole words were then practiced to build up speed of word recognition. Such an approach, despite its initial use of phonics, is word “meaning”-oriented, not “sound”-oriented.

Despite the late Dr. Walcutt’s devotion to phonics, he specifically rejected sounding-and-blending phonics. I heard him do so in a lecture at the Reading Reform Foundation meeting in Princeton in 1979. The Walcutt/McCracken analytic phonics series taught sounds only in whole words, never in isolation. It took longer to teach and it produced inferior results compared to synthetic phonics programs such as Sue Dickson’s Sing, Spell, Read and Write, Samuel Blumenfeld’s, Sister Monica Folzer’s, Char Lockhart’s, Phyllis Schlafly’s, Mona McNee’s in England, and the very few others like them on the market today.

The reason that Howell and Walcutt produced inferior phonic materials is not difficult to fathom. Neither Howell nor Walcutt, despite their good intentions, were teachers of beginning readers or of functional illiterates. (McCracken, who wrote other books on the reading problem, was apparently a co-author with Walcutt only on the original 1963 Lippincott reading series and possibly on its early revisions up to at least 1974. When Macmillan published Teaching Reading, a Phonic/Linguistic Approach to Developmental Reading in 1974, showing Walcutt, Joan Lamport, and McCracken as its authors, the title page listed McCracken only as “Reading Consultant, New Castle, Pennsylvania. In all probability, therefore, McCracken had never taught first grade, either.) Yet the other authors mentioned above, all of whom produced superior phonics materials, had all been, at some time, either teachers of beginning readers or of functional illiterates.

Excerpts from Howell’s 1910 materials follow.

“The Howell Primer by Logan Douglass Howell, Howell and Company, New York. Copyright 1910 by Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, Entered at Stationers’ Hall. All Rights Reserved. Copyright 1910 by Logan Douglass Howell.”

“Announcement. The other books of the Howell Series of Readers are in preparation. These books will consist of literary selections suitable to the age of the children, arranged on the same phonic principle as this Primer. The grading, therefore, will be the same as in the first book; and the step from one book to another will be no greater than from one lesson to the following lesson of THE HOWELL PRIMER.

“A Note to the Teacher (page 3) A child’s book is not the place for a pedagogical treatise on the teaching of reading. The author would only say that this primer may be used by the followers of any method.

“The book is constructed on a phonic principle, which makes it particularly easy for that method or for the alphabetic method. At first only one sound of any letter is used, and sufficient drill is given for the pupil to learn that sound before any other is taken. After the first twelve letters only one new thing is taught at a time; this makes the grading of the book uniform and easy.

“The word lists are intended to be read, not to be memorized for spelling lessons - at least not when they are first reached, though they will serve that purpose excellently well as a review.

“Teachers who prefer the word method or the sentence method will find this book, from the interest and action in its stories, equally well adapted to their wants. Such teachers may omit the first pages and begin with the reading lesson on page 14.

“Whatever method a teacher may begin with, phonics must be taught sooner or later, if the child is to become an independent reader. Therefore, whatever method the teacher uses, a primer presenting words spelled regularly, and easily graded, will be easier to teach than a book that makes no pretension to order or system in introducing new words.

“The alphabet of animals, beginning on page 113, is designed to teach the names of the letters, and the song on page 127, to teach their order in the alphabet. These pages give also a review of the whole book; they contain no new sounds.”

The alphabet was not learned as a whole, therefore, until the end of the primer on page 127, by the use of a song attributed to Mozart.

“The method of teaching that the author would recommend is the phonic. A manual on the teaching of phonics, with special application to THE HOWELL PRIMER is in preparation.”

The 1910 Howell primer, taken as a whole, was poor, but its 1917 revision was considerably better. The publisher’s name was dropped which suggests Howell may have published it himself in 1917. On the revision, however, he had the help of a primary teacher, which probably accounted for its improved quality, though it remained a word- and not sound- oriented work, despite its phonics.

“The New Howell Primer by Logan Douglass Howell, Former Superintendent of Schools, Raleigh, N. C. and Frances S. Williams, Primary Teacher, Lynchburg, Va., Schools, Howell & Company, New York. Copyright 1910, 1917 by Logan Douglass Howell”

(Back of title page) “The Howell Readers Primer, First Reader, Second Reader, Other volumes in Preparation.”

“Helps for Teachers and Pupils

“How to Teach Reading, a Manual for Teachers.

“Howell Illustrated Perception Phonic Cards - for teacher’s use in rapid phonic drills, 72 cards.

“Howell Perception Word Cards. 54 cards containing 109 words, including all in the first eleven stories in The New Howell Primer.

“Seat Work Letter Cards. 480 cards about one inch square, each containing one letter for use of pupils at their desks.

“Seat Work Word Cards. 9 cards, containing all the words in the first ten stories in the New Howell Primer, each card containing all the words for one story to be cut out and given pupils.

(Page 3) “A note to the teacher. The purpose of this book is to teach children to read by acquainting them with the elements of written English, and the method is by presenting only one new element at a time, and giving sufficient drill in it for the pupil to learn it.

“The Logical Steps in Teaching Reading

“The letters of our alphabet stand for elementary sounds of speech, and they should be taught as such. It is irrational to teach the sign of a thing before teaching the thing itself. Therefore, before teaching single letters or entire written or printed words, teach the things that letters stand for. Begin with spoken words; separate these words into their elementary sounds. Train the child to recognize these elements, and when that is done, teach him the letters that represent the elementary sounds. Then by combining letters, teach him to recognize written and printed words. These are the logical and correct steps in teaching beginners in reading.

“The Book Itself Provides The Method

“It would take too much space to go here into the details of teaching reading. Suffice it to say that any one, by merely following the steps as presented in this primer, can teach children to read in a few months, by any method he pleases; for the grading of the book provides that beginners shall acquire the phonic values of the letters, no matter what the teacher’s method.”

To believe that children could learn phonics simply by exposure to regularly spelled words and that they could do so in a few months was a major error, and showed Howell’s reliance on teaching whole words in 1917 instead of teaching isolated phonic elements. This is what the various linguistic series attempted to do in the 1960’s, and it is no accident that Dr. Walcutt used the word, “linguistic,” on his series which appeared in 1963. When the USOE first-grade studies were done in 1967, the scores for the purely linguistic programs, with their heavy emphasis on meaning, were about as poor as for the basal reader sight-word programs with phony phonics. Dr. Walcutt’s program, however, scored very well on the USOE first-grade studies, probably because of the use by classroom teachers of something of which he disapproved. In the workshop at which Walcutt spoke at the 1979 Reading Reform Foundation meeting at Princeton University, the first-grade teachers who were using his program openly disagreed with him. They stated they used sounding-and-blending phonics with his materials. This is a very easy thing to do because of his program’s arrangement and presumably would not have been so easy on purely linguistic programs. Therefore, these teachers of Dr. Walcutt’s program, and probably many like them in

the USOE studies with Walcutt's program, were focusing the attention of their beginning readers on separate sounds, not whole words. Such classes produced better results.

Howell wrote in 1917:

(Page 4) "The use of the word lists. Pupils should be able to read readily each page of word drills before proceeding to the following story or verses. And not only this; the word drills should be frequently reviewed; the mastery of them will give pupils power to read not only this book, but any other book of similar grade, and hundreds of other words not herein given...."

As mentioned, Walcutt's Lippincott reader also had such word drills. The emphasis is again on whole words, and reading them rapidly, rather than on drill in applying phonemes to work out unfamiliar words. Howell and Walcutt were therefore clearly disagreeing with Quintilian, who had said that reading must first be slow at the syllable (which means "sound") stage.

Howell continued:

"Where a new element is introduced, a diacritical mark is used to indicate the sound for the teacher's guidance....Diacritical marks (are) a hindrance... (and) would only add to the difficulty of teaching...."

In Howell's rejection of the utility of diacritical marks, he showed a complete ignorance of the successful work of Pollard and Leigh, not to mention Webster! Of course, this is implicitly a rejection of sounding-and-blending phonics, which sequentially recites the parts of a word to discover the whole, and an endorsement of analytic phonics, which works instead only with the word as a whole, analyzing the sounds of its parts. But, unlike Pollard and Webster, Howell had been a superintendent of schools and not a teacher of beginners.

Howell wrote:

"The manual - Teachers are referred to the manual, How to Teach Reading, for fuller suggestions for teaching the mechanics and the thought side of reading, including oral expression, language training, acting the stories, songs, games, story telling, writing, the use of the illustrations, and seat work."

As the above shows, the supplemental activities in the sight-word manuals after 1930 were anything but new.

The 1910 Howell edition had given only twelve letters at its beginning (and so apparently had the 1917 edition). Dr. Walcutt's gave even fewer letters at its beginning and the letters were used immediately in words. The difference in the initial number of letters used is the major difference between poorer phonic programs like Howell's and Walcutt's, and better phonic programs. In better phonic programs, all the letters and almost all their phonic powers are taught first. It is only afterwards that words are given in which to sound out these letters. Clearly, better phonic programs promote more synthetic phonics, and poorer phonic programs promote analytic phonics.

Children should be taught almost all the sounds of the letters first before they are given any "stories" to read. Otherwise, children who are weak on letter sounds will fall back on context-guessing to "read," instead of reading by sound. It is very worth while to play classroom games such as Bingo to practice the sounds. When a child is finally given "stories" to read, the stories should at first be rigidly controlled by phonic elements, from the simplest phonic elements first to the next simplest, and so on to the most



difficult. The 17 little phonic story books of the Sing, Spell, Read and Write program by Sue Dickson, St. Petersburg, Florida, are almost ideal for this purpose (although Book 7 does introduce a few too many irregular sight words). Sight words (except for a very gradually introduced very few, such as the and you) should be totally avoided until children are reading well by “sound.” Children should be given almost all the phonic keys to reading before about Christmas of first grade. In the remainder of the year, the children should practice using these phonic keys, one after the other, from the simplest to the most difficult, in little readers which gradually introduce practice on these phonic elements in a carefully planned order. Slower students need a heavy phonics review at second grade, but it is only a review - not new teaching. After about Christmas of first grade, children properly trained in phonics will almost never again meet a word in which the letter sounds are totally unfamiliar, even though they may not yet have achieved any speed in decoding. The purpose of little sequential phonic story books like Sue Dickson’s seventeen little story books is only to bring the children’s slow phonic recognition to the level of automaticity. The use of phonic readers exactly parallels sheet music practice on the piano for children who have already learned where all the notes are.

Yet, in the 1917 Howell primer, the fact that “c” has an alternate sound to “k”, that of “s,” was not taught until page 93 toward the end of the primer, which would be about half way through first grade. Nor was the “ow” sound in owl taught until page 100 of the primer. The fact that “g” has an alternate sound of “j” was not taught until the First Reader, which would not be covered until the spring term of first grade. Therefore, children would meet many new words after Christmas of first grade outside their school readers and even in other school textbooks containing phonemes they had not yet been taught. They would be forced to decode these new words by context and guessing.

In the second book of the series, The New Howell First Reader, Howell and Company, New York, copyright 1910 and 1917, the following appeared on page 3:

“A Note to the Teacher. The main purpose of the Howell elementary series is to teach children to read by acquainting them with the elements of written English.

“How to Teach New Elements. The method of this book is the same as that of the Howell Primer, and it should be taught after the same manner; the only difference being that by now pupils will learn more rapidly. Since the book is based on the sounds of speech, the teaching should be based on sounds of speech. Each new element, when it is first presented, is printed in small Italics. Before teaching the new written element give the class a phonic drill on words containing the new element. This is ear training entirely without reading either in the book or on the blackboard. For example, the first element taught in this book is *g* for the sound of *j* when it comes before *e* or *i*. Have the pupils ‘sound’ the words in that drill, *gin*, *gill*, etc., the teacher giving out the words to the pupils, with their books closed. Then tell them that in these words the *j* sound is written with *g* not *j*. Write a few words on the board; call attention to the fact that *g* here stands for the sound *j*, not for the sound *g*, and have the class read the words. Then let the pupils open their books and read all the words in the list.”

Shown on page 17 at the bottom in italics was “*g = j ge = j.*” Yet no mention was made that it is the presence of “*e*” or “*i*” following “*g*” which usually produces the “*j*” sound. On page 19 were the words, “feather” and “weathercock,” which have the letters “*ea*” producing an irregular short “*e*” sound instead of the normal long “*e*” sound. (When two vowels are together as in “*ea*,” the first is usually long and the second is usually silent.) The fact that “*ea*” in some words like “feather” is a short “*e*” and therefore an exception to the phonic rule just cited is taught in good phonic programs.

This program apparently did not teach such phonic rules, but simply word patterns (“linguistically”). It simply presented such variant spelling patterns for absorption, without explanation. The word,

“weathercock,” also contained “ck,” a special spelling. Short vowels in English such as the “o” in “cock” are always followed by “ck,” not just “c” or “k” (cock, duck, pick, etc.). This fact is taught in thorough phonic programs. The Howell material obviously did not teach any such phonic rules as the fact that short vowels are followed by “ck” and not just “c” or “k,” and that “g” followed by “e” or “i” usually takes the sound of “j.”

Despite the fact that most American adults are not consciously aware of such rules and only learned them through years of exposure to print (“linguistically”), such phonic rules are very few and are easily covered in first grade. The Alpha One “Letter People” series of cartoon filmstrips manages to cover every important rule in the reading of English in a delightful, playful, story-book fashion, easily understood by little six-year-olds.

Concerning one of the more obscure rules, most adults are not consciously aware that English words never end with “v” but with “ve.” Omitting the “e” on words like “love” simply looks wrong to most adults. Yet my first-graders knew better. The Letter People consonants were “boys” and the vowels were “girls.” One of the filmstrip stories concerned the fact that Mr. Velvet Vest (V) had his vest torn on the left, so Miss E now always stands next to him to cover up the rips whenever “v” ends a word (“love,” “strive,” “glove,” etc.). The first-graders knew better than to leave the “e” off words ending with “v,” and they found that “rule” not at all difficult. These excellent Alpha One “Letter People” filmstrips can be used in tandem with any good phonic program to reinforce the teaching of rules.

In addition to the fact that there are relatively few rules that it is necessary to teach in beginning reading, there are very few special vowel sounds that it is necessary to teach apart from the long and short vowels. The short vowel sounds are those vowels heard in the sentence, “Nat gets his hot bun,” and the long vowels are the names of the vowels themselves: a, e, i, o, and u. The few special vowel sounds it is necessary to learn are au-aw as in “law,” ou-ow as in “now,” oi-oy as in “boy,” eu-ew as in “few” (sometimes as in “blew”) and the two sounds of oo as in “moon” or “book.” (For the record, the first part of the paired vowels, au, ou, oi, and eu, is used in closed syllables which end in consonants: “haul,” “loud,” “soil,” and “feud”; the second part is used in open syllables which end in vowels: “law,” “now,” “boy,” “few.”)

However, to teach such material, Howell’s book covered only spelling patterns, the “linguistic” approach. It was not until page 29 of this second book that the second sound of double oo in “book hook foot” was introduced. To wait until the spring of first grade to teach the second sound of the double “o” diphthong is incompetent phonics, at best. (The first sound is that of “moon,” and competent phonic programs teach the “moon” sound and the “book” sound together so that children can easily distinguish them.) That kind of foot-dragging delay in teaching phonics was true also of Walcutt’s Lippincott series.

Howell, superintendent of schools in Raleigh sometime before 1917, wrote the phonic texts just described between 1910 and 1917. Although they were not ideal, they were still heavily phonic, and children using them would eventually have learned to read largely by “sound” and not largely by “meaning,” (Code 7 or 8). The 1910, 1917 Howell books were used for years and were still in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published. Yet when Donald C. Agnew tested oral reading in Raleigh in 1935 or shortly before, where Howell had once been superintendent of schools, he found appalling disabilities because a sight-word series had been in use there. The sight-word “improvement” probably came down the controlling pipeline from the state department of education in North Carolina for use in Raleigh.

Nila Banton Smith listed (pages 206-207) “Courses of Study” in various cities and states which makes it obvious that change was forced in the 1920’s and after through these state departments of education and through the influence of large city school systems. Both were frequently staffed with the

high-powered graduates of “expert”-ridden places like Columbia Teachers College. For instance, Smith showed that Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1930 had an official city course of study in elementary reading, which presumably would have endorsed sight-word materials instead of phonic materials like those of Howell, who had once been superintendent in Raleigh.

Jean Chall in her 1967 book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*, gave the date of the unpublished thesis of Agnew as 1935, and his published one as 1939, entitled *Duke University Research Studies in Education*, No. 5, Duke University Press. Rudolph Flesch said in his 1955 book, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*, that Donald C. Agnew wrote his doctoral dissertation at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, unpublished, entitled, *The Effect of Varied Amounts of Phonetic Training on Primary Reading*.

Agnew compared third-grade children in Raleigh, North Carolina, which had a sight-word program with intrinsic phonics, to third-grade children in Durham, North Carolina, which had a systematic phonics program.

Dr. Flesch said Dr. Agnew gave the Gray Oral Reading Check Test, Set II and III. On Set II, Durham’s phonic group had an averaged score of 2.35 errors while Raleigh’s sight-word group had an averaged score of 8.79. On Set III, Durham had 7.02 average errors and Raleigh 17.50. Concerning speed, the Durham group took a little over a minute for each set but the Raleigh group considerably less than a minute. As Dr. Flesch put it:

“...the little Raleigh word guessers took considerably less than one minute to make two to four times as many errors.”

Agnew was apparently using Gray’s Oral Reading Check Test of 1923, which I have not seen, not Gray’s Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs in their commercially published version dated to 1915. However, the paragraphs in Gray’s 1923 test were probably modeled on those oral reading test paragraphs in Gray’s three finished versions of 1914, 1915 and 1917. Gray had orally tested an enormous number of children from 1913 to 1918 with versions of these paragraphs, which versions were essentially the same except for refinements in some paragraphs and substitution of a few different paragraphs. The 1917 version which I have seen differed very little from the 1914 version which I have seen, and presumably the original 1915 version, which I have not seen, also differed very little. It was the preparation and testing of these paragraphs, begun in 1913 under E. L. Thorndike, which was the basis for Gray’s 1914 master’s degree at Columbia Teachers College and his 1917 doctorate at the University of Chicago. Therefore, it may be useful to refer to those earlier paragraphs from 1914 to 1917 as they are probably suggestive of Gray’s 1923 material which Agnew used for his tests.

In Judd’s 1918 *Studies of Elementary School Reading*, on page 65, William Scott Gray gave the paragraphs on his oral reading test, as revised in 1917. As mentioned, earlier versions of these paragraphs had been those of 1914 prepared directly under E. L. Thorndike and those of 1915. The 1915 paragraphs were apparently the finalized version of his Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs, as that date was given for them in Buros’ 1975 reference work on tests in print at that date. Therefore, the 1915 version apparently became the basis for the final version which was sold nationwide, rather than the 1917 one. (However, I do not believe the version I saw in 1976, presumably that listed by Buros with the 1915 date, could have been that original 1915 version, as it was so markedly different from those of 1914 and 1917.) However, the approximately 60-word length of the paragraphs for all these versions suggest that they are probably not too much shorter than Gray’s later Oral Reading Check Test of 1923.

Yet, according to the 1928 United States Catalog, Gray’s Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs were not in print in 1928, in the original 1915 version or in any other one. They came back in print sometime before the publication of Buros’ 1975 volume which listed all tests in print in 1975. The version I was

given in a teacher's graduate course in 1976 of Gray's Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs (which must have been the paragraphs dated to 1915 by Buros) was not exactly the same as the 1914 or 1917 material. (I saw the 1914 version on a photocopy of Gray's master's thesis which I obtained from Columbia Teachers College Library, and I saw the 1917 version reproduced in Judd's 1918 report.)

Although the version I was given in 1976 had far fewer total paragraphs than the 1914 and 1917 versions, the original first paragraph had nevertheless been replaced by three far simpler paragraphs, which greatly expanded the beginning portion and made it much easier. As a result, much less was being asked of beginners in that newer material than in earlier material. The original second paragraph became the fourth paragraph in the newer material. In addition, the syntax and vocabulary had been simplified somewhat in some paragraphs.

What was most noticeable about the material I was given in 1976, however, was that the method for scoring which had been very clear in 1914, and which had been very clear in the original, but not refined, method in 1917, had been made impossibly complicated and obscure and was almost meaningless. It would have produced little usable data on a child's actual standing on oral reading accuracy.

Reading Tests and Reviews, II, 1975, published by The Institute of Mental Measurements, edited by Oscar Krisen Buros, has a section, "TIP II Tests: Reading - Readiness (Tests in Print)." One of two W. S. Gray oral tests in print in 1975 was item 1689:

"Standardized Reading Check Tests - Grades 1-2, 2-4, 4-6, 6-8, 1923-55, two scores - rate, accuracy, William S. Gray, Bobbs Merrill, Co., Inc."

The other was item 1690:

"Standardized Reading Paragraphs. Grades 1-8, 1915, William S. Gray, Bobbs Merrill Company, Inc."

Yet neither of Gray's tests were in print in the far-earlier United States Catalog of 1928 or The Cumulative Catalog, 1928-1932. Therefore, they did not come back in print until some time after the 1930 switch to the deaf-mute-method readers. When they finally did come back in print, the 1915 material had been simplified, and so, in all probability, had the 1923 material. Yet these oral tests had obviously been buried during the critical period of change: from 1928 to some time after 1932.

The only other oral tests Buros showed as in print in 1975 besides Gray's (and Gates' word lists which were only a small part of the Gates-McKillop individual tests) were an Australian one from 1969, an American one from 1961, Helen M. Robinson's American one of 1963-67, the American Gilmore's of 1951, and the revised forms of Burt's test in England from 1921 to 1967.

No information is available on the Australian test of 1969 or the American one of 1961.

Helen M. Robinson, the author of the 1963-67 test, was an author on editions of the Scott, Foresman readers, the first edition of which in 1930 was the original deaf-mute-method reading series of W. S. Gray.

Gilmore's oral reading test is very worthwhile. and was used in the USOE 1967 first-grade studies. However, Gilmore's norming scores for all his grade levels from his 1951 test population produced bell curves when graphed, instead of skewed curves. Those bell curves on oral reading are very interesting artifacts concerning the way American children could read in 1951: Bell curves are the result of testing inborn abilities in a population. By contrast, skewed curves, piling up at either end of a graph, are

produced when learned skills are graphed. Therefore, Gilmore's bell curves proved that our betrayed American children were not able to read by the use of automatic skills in 1951, but instead had been forced to use their intelligence to guess their stumbling way through the forest of print.

The author of the English oral reading test was Sir Cyril Burt, the English psychologist who falsified vast amounts of research data in other areas. His fraudulent work was uncovered by 1978, but that was only after Burt's work had been accepted for about fifty years as the most highly respected research.

An article describing Burt as a fraud, "Further Proof that I.Q. Data Were Fraudulent" appeared in the New York Times on January 30, 1979. Fred Hechinger, who wrote the article, said that when Burt died in 1971 at 88 years of age, The Times of London eulogized Burt as:

"the leading figure in Britain in the application of psychology to education and the development of children and the assessment of mental qualities."

Hechinger said that the fact that Burt's work was fraudulent had originally been uncovered because of two Americans who doubted Burt's conclusions, Prof. D. D. Dorfman of the University of Iowa and Prof. Leon Kamin of Princeton. More recent proof had been given by Oliver Gillie in The New Statesman, reprinted in Atlas World Press Review.

Burt's life was called a "case study of a social science charlatan," apparently by Gillie. Burt pretended to have proven that heredity always triumphed over environment, but, to do so, among other things, he invented 53 pairs of identical twins, most of whom he reported had been raised separately. Yet the "twins" were pure fiction, and so was most of the rest of Burt's "research" which presumed to show that it was heredity, not environment, which shaped children.

Sir Cyril Burt's oral test which had appeared as early as 1921 remained in print at least to 1967, and almost certainly for some time afterwards. However, since the psychologist, Burt, is known to have falsified so much of his data, then his oral test norms which were in use over all those years very possibly were also pure fiction.

Therefore, of the very, very few oral tests that Buros reported to be in print in 1975, most showed ties to the early psychologists: Gray's and Gates', because of their ties to Thorndike and Judd, Helen M. Robinson's (because of her ties to Gray's reading series), and the revised forms of the psychologist Burt's test in England from 1921 to 1967. Concerning the Australian test from 1969 and the American test from 1961, I have no information, and they may or may not have shown ties to the early psychologists or to their proteges, who were the early promoters of the deaf-mute "meaning" reading method.

However, in contrast, the Gilmore oral test is very worthwhile (although implicitly accepting the vocabulary control of the basal readers as a fact of life). The size of Buros' book on mental tests in print rivals the size of an unabridged dictionary. Yet only one test of oral reading was available in 1975, Gilmore's (and possibly the unknown 1961 and 1969 ones above) that did not have clear ties to the early psychologists or to their proteges.

The paucity of worthwhile oral reading tests and of valid oral accuracy testing statistics on American children are silent scandals.

Since Agnew tested with "Set II" and "Set III," he was apparently using the tests for Grades 2-4 and Grades 4-6, which seems a reasonable thing to do to test third-grade abilities. Gray had published these Check Tests in 1923 when almost all children learned with phonics. As a result of validating his tests which he had to do before publishing them, Gray obviously found average third graders in 1923 who had

been taught with phonics could score well on Set II for grades 2-4, but scored less well on Set III aimed at grades 4-6.

Concerning Agnew's results in North Carolina on these oral reading paragraphs, it is not surprising that the phonics-trained readers read more slowly than the sight-word trained readers, because children reading phonically slow down to work out difficult words. Sight-word guessers who had been drilled in guessing for three years scored higher on speed because they did not pause to work out difficult words but just guessed or skipped them.

Gray's 1923 paragraphs are not available to me. Yet, before 1935, Agnew undoubtedly used the original 1923 paragraphs. Presumably, the 1923 material now on sale has been simplified just as Gray's 1915 material now on sale has been. However, to show the effect on oral accuracy of material which is phonically difficult for learners, it is worthwhile to compare Gray's paragraph 2 to his paragraph 3 from his 1917 tests. Both of these paragraphs would presumably be at the Set I level, since the 1917 paragraphs totaled 20 and there were four "Sets" in 1923, suggesting each "Set" might match five paragraphs from 1917. Note that, at the concept level, paragraph two is not much more difficult than paragraph 3.

"2.

Once there lived a king and queen in a large palace. But the king and queen were not happy. There were no little children in the house or garden. One day they found a poor little boy and girl at their door. They took them into the palace and made them their own. The king and queen were then happy."

"3.

Once a green little leaf was heard to sigh and cry, as leaves often do when a gentle wind blows. 'What is the matter, Little Leaf?' said the twig. The little leaf replied, 'The wind just told me that one day it would pull me off and throw me down to the ground to die. That is why I am so sad.'"

This last paragraph appeared only in the 1917 Gray list and is ugly in its content from the point of a view of a child. Such material does unnecessarily upset little children. Why should such dreary material ever be given to children? Thornton Burgess, the author of the delightful (and highly scientific!) nature stories for children, said he avoided all such ugly elements. Burgess had a far clearer understanding of children's minds than the authors of such material as Paragraph 3.

Paragraph 3 shows obvious tampering with phonic elements because of its unnatural piling up of certain irregular phonic types which in natural prose occur with far less frequency. It is sharply more difficult phonically than paragraph 2, even though it would not appear so to most adults. Yet Gray's scores showed it was so for sixth graders in 1917, and it is not surprising that it was apparently omitted from the final published form of the test, which carried the 1915 date, and not the 1917 date.

Using his Standard I of scoring, which was his most lenient and which was apparently simple oral accuracy, Gray reported that 100% of sixth graders could read paragraphs 1 and 2 at a passing level. Apparently in order to pass, they had to read it at 90% accuracy or better, the Standard I method Gray had used on his 1914 paragraphs, but the probability is that the vast majority read these first two paragraphs with 100% accuracy. Yet a relatively sharp drop appeared on paragraph 3. The probability is still, of course, that most read even paragraph 3 with no errors at all, but 1.4% did fail to read it even at the 90% accuracy level. (Below 90% accuracy is usually the "frustration" level even today on oral accuracy tests). Those who scored with more than six errors of some kind would have failed, dropping below the 90% passing score, since paragraph 3 had 62 words.

The reason the short 62-word Paragraph 3 was more difficult can be seen by its exceedingly complex phonic content in comparison to the 60-word Paragraph 2. Here is a list of the extraordinarily irregular phonic elements it used: Paragraph 3 contains one of the more difficult phonic elements: a terminal long “i” sound on some words: “sigh, cry, why, die, replied.” Children would be more likely to read the “ied” ending from “replied” not with a long “i” but as pronounced in most two-syllable words such as “carried.” The paragraph also included the difficult spelling “ow,” which can sound like long “o” as in “crow” or “ou” as in “crown.” It mixed this with a variant spelling for long “o”: “told,” and then mixed it with the “ou” diphthong spellings: “down, ground.” Besides this, it included “ea” as short “e”: “heard,” short “u” as short “oo”: “pull,” and “g” pronounced as “j”: “gentle” It included “wind,” which has two pronunciations: “wind the clock,” or “blowing wind.” The phonogram “ind” should be a short sound from its spelling but more commonly rhymes with “mind, find, bind, blind, kind,” etc. That one paragraph should be so chock-full of phonic anomalies was no accident.

Neither was it any accident that sixth-grade children in the early twentieth century when Gray tested them should have had some slight difficulty with such irregular spellings. When children were taught phonics as in the Beacon and Howell readers, it was usually done too slowly, too late, and mixed in with heavy helpings of sight-words. The thoroughness of the purely “sound” Webster speller, and the early exposure and drill on irregular spellings which it gave to beginning readers, was just a memory by the early twentieth century. Leigh’s and Pollard’s programs which had brought such thoroughness back to the first grades in schools in the nineteenth century had been quickly drummed out of them by the pestilential “experts.”

Happily, that thoroughness has returned in the 1990’s in the few first-grade programs containing such thorough teaching, such as Sue Dickson’s Sing, Spell, Read and Write, Samuel Blumenfeld’s, Sister Monica Folzer’s, and a few others. Yet our tax dollars in America’s government schools are almost never spent today for such worthwhile programs but only for “expert” trash. Nevertheless, in comparison to the inexcusably bad programs for which our tax money is being spent, the defective Beacon and Howell readers which dragged out phonic teaching too long would appear to be almost perfect.

It is possible, even probable, that the phonic program used in North Carolina by the group tested by Agnew was by Howell of North Carolina. Like all phonic programs of the early twentieth century, it gave too little drill, too late, and mixed it with sight words.

As shown, the Howell phonic reading series did not teach “g” as “j” until the beginning of the second book, the first reader, and did not teach short “oo” until far later. It did not teach “ea” as short “e” until well into the second book, nor “ow” as long “o.” At what point it taught terminal “y” as long “i” as in “cry” instead of long “e” (or short “i”) as in “funny,” I do not know. However, Howell’s program was not providing that early and thorough practice on such elements, and neither were the other phonic programs of the period.

To cram eleven phonically difficult words into one 62 word paragraph as Gray did on his 1917 paragraph 3 was certain to cause problems in the early twentieth century, even with children who were presumed (wrongly) to have been taught thorough phonics. That accounts for lowering the score Gray recorded at sixth grade from 100% passing on Paragraph 2 to 98.6 percent passing on Paragraph 3. The drop in scores such material would cause at third grade, where Agnew tested with children three years younger, would be even greater, and so would the resultant reduction of speed. It was the Set III material which caused a drop in scores for the phonically trained third graders, and that had been aimed at grades 4 to 6 and would have contained more phonically difficult material, like Paragraph 3 of the 1917 test.

However, on Agnew’s test on word accuracy, the huge difference between the phonically trained and the non-phonically trained is astonishing. The 1923 paragraphs were certainly longer than the 1917

paragraphs of about sixty words as shown by the time it took to read them (about a minute). All the phonically-trained third graders passed Set II above the frustration cut-off point of 90% since they had an average score of only 2.35 errors. Most of them passed Set III too at or above the frustration rate of 90% since they had an average score of 7.01 errors. Six errors on a short, 60-word paragraph would be a passing score. Set III was undoubtedly longer than 60 words.

Unfortunately, such scores showing an averaged number of errors hide individual achievement which ranked scores do not. Ranked scores tell instead the percentage of children who actually pass a test, instead of the averaged score for a group. The two results can be startlingly different.

However, with the sight-word score on Set III of 17.50 average errors, if the paragraphs had been about sixty words in length (although they were certainly considerably longer), the sight-word trained children would have averaged only a miserable 70 percent passing, not 89% like the phonically trained children. If the paragraphs were longer than sixty words, as seems certain, all scores would have been higher, which would mean ALL the phonically trained third graders had passed, at scores over 90 per cent accuracy! Yet the paragraphs would have had to average over 175 words in length instead of 60 words for all the sight-word trained children to have passed at 90% accuracy!



## Chapter 34

### **The Activists By the Turn of the Century Worked to Promote the Teaching of Spelling By “Meaning” Instead of By “Sound,” Reversing the Move Back to Phonic Spellers Like Webster’s and McGuffey’s in the Late 1880’s.**

While beginning reading had been moving toward “sound” after 1900, primarily by the use of supplemental phonics, spelling had been moving away from “sound.” In that move away from “sound” in spelling is another story.

As has been discussed, terrible spelling failures in the 1880’s had brought phonic spelling into the second grade and grades above it by the late 1880’s, so that, by the time Dr. Joseph M. Rice gave his massive spelling tests in 1895 and 1896, upper grade children could spell (and therefore read) very well indeed. However, as has been demonstrated by the texts which have been described, first grade reading generally remained a wasteland full of “teaching for meaning” without teaching how to read, until about the turn of the century when supplemental phonics charts became the norm to teach beginners to read.

Also as discussed, this was through the influence of such people as Edward G. Ward who wrote *The Rational Method in Reading* in 1894 and who gave at least lip-service to all of the “meaning” ideas which had plagued American reading since 1826. By sounding psychologically orthodox, such methods finally managed to bring phonics back to first-grade classrooms, most commonly as supplemental phonics. The Ward (1894), Beacon (1912) and Howell (1910, 1917) readers and some others like them introduced real phonics in the reading books themselves, not just the supplemental charts used with most other reading series. Yet even the Ward and Beacon series began the teaching of reading with sight words, and the famous Beacon phonic series continued to introduce some sight words all through first grade. The Howell materials gave massive sight-word drill on words that had been introduced phonically.

Nevertheless, by 1911, when the psychologists resumed their heavy meddling in primary reading, true literacy had been restored to almost all grades in American schools except perhaps in the unfortunate laboratory schools attached to those universities which contained “experts.” Myrtle Sholty’s work with three second graders at the University of Chicago laboratory school about 1911, discussed later, certainly showed that those poor little girls had reading disabilities because of inadequate phonic training.

The movement back to phonics in reading at the turn of the century, primarily by the route of supplemental phonics charts, apparently occurred without too much opposition from the “experts” because during that time the “experts” had been preoccupied in meddling with spelling instruction instead of reading instruction. Although “sound” had returned to spelling by the late 1880’s, hard work by the “experts” had finally succeeded in replacing “sound” in spelling with “meaning” not long after the turn of the century. Professor Henry Suzzallo of Columbia Teachers College, Thorndike’s student in 1902, made a very illuminating comment in his 1911 article in the *Columbia Teachers College Record*. It confirmed that the “experts” had been successful in spoiling spelling instruction by 1911. Suzzallo’s reference to the “phonogram” meant a visual portion of a whole sight-word, not a sound-unit. Note his reference to its “sudden and large growth” in spelling instruction, which growth was obviously not accidental:

“A detailed analysis of the claims made for the superiority of the phonogram as a mechanical unit in phonetic translations explains its sudden and large growth in educational practice.... it is far superior to alphabetic and phonetic letter (study)...”

That Suzzallo meant parts of whole sight words when he used the term, “phonograms,” is made clear in his article, “Spelling, Teaching of” in the 1913 Cyclopaedia of Education. That article further described the take-over of spelling by whole-word “meaning” methods:

“Now spelling words are drawn from a context and spelled in a context, paragraph and sentence dictation sharing the spelling period with word lists. Even the word lists are based upon a careful classification which focuses attention on the meaning of words....”

Note the focusing of “attention on the meaning of words” instead of on “sound” when learning to spell. Benjamin Buisson’s 1893 comment, when he came from France to visit the Chicago Exposition, showed that even by that date American “experts” wanted children to take dictation of whole sentences instead of spelling lists of words, which change would obviously emphasize “meaning” and demote “sound” in learning to spell. The “experts” obviously largely succeeded before 1911 in promoting that change.

Suzzallo continued:

“...under such a changed status, it is to be expected that the present-day methods and devices for teaching spelling would be different from those that were traditional with the nineteenth century. Such is the case. The methods of the best current practice are more diversified and refined.... Growth toward naturalism is clearly indicated by the growth in favor of the phonogrammic method over all other means of phonetic translation. The advantages claimed for the phonogram in teaching pronunciation and spelling are: (1) It provides larger units for the subdivision and recognition of new words, thus reducing the quantity of artificial handling of a word. This method may divide words of one syllable (r-un, fun, h-ide, side) but practically everywhere else it suggests larger sound units than the method of syllabication (dem-ocracy; aut-ocracy)....

“The memorization of long authoritative lists of prefixes, stems, suffixes, derivatives, and definitions, which might or might not be applied to real words, has passed.... The same thing may be said with reference to learning and applying spelling rules. Only a very small number of spelling rules of greatest utility are now taught. These also are presented in the inductive spirit.”

By the “inductive spirit,” Suzzallo meant comparing sight-words to one another to demonstrate a few “rules,” which, if the child did not discover for himself, he might never know. I speak from experience, having had to use such spelling workbooks in my classroom in the 1960’s and 1970’s which used the “inductive” approach, not spelling out the rules the spelling workbooks were presumably leading the children to see. Most children rarely saw the point of these exercises and were simply confused unless the teacher taught the rule directly from the blackboard. However, Suzzallo’s “inductive spirit” was obviously also the whole-word, “meaning” approach.

In his 1913 article, Suzzallo listed as references Rice’s work in the 1890’s; Henry C. Pearson’s, “The Scientific Study of the Teaching of Spelling”, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. II, No. 5, May, 1911, pages 241-252; his own *The Teaching of Spelling*, Boston: 1912; Pearson’s and his “Comparative Experimental Teaching in Spelling,” *Teachers College Record*, January, 1912, Vol. XIII, No. 1.; and J. C. W. Wallin’s *Spelling Efficiency in Relation to Age, Grade and Sex, and the Question of Transfer*, Baltimore: 1911.

The enormous emphasis on the teaching of spelling which took up a large amount of school time had come back into American schools after the mid-1880’s as a result of massive spelling failures from the sight-word method. That this failure existed, and that its cause was the sight-word method, is flatly

admitted in the 1889 phonic speller for second and third grade, *Word by Word*, by J. H. Stickney, the author of a well-known sight-word series. Spelling failure is also alluded to elsewhere and is very evident when reading handwritten school board reports before 1900. (Sometimes the bad spelling is downright spectacular!)

Yet Joseph Meyer Rice (1857-1934), who visited American schools in the 1890's after the teaching of spelling had returned, obviously had no knowledge of the recent and massive spelling problems. Instead, in his comments in 1897 in *Forum* magazine, he objected mightily to what he considered the unnecessary spelling "grind," because by that time children had scored very well indeed all over America in the spelling tests which he had given them. The indications are that the spelling lessons to which he objected in the 1890's (which were almost certainly the cause for the high scores on his tests) stressed "sound" more than "meaning." Yet hard data on this fact is lacking, except for some available spelling texts from the late 1880's and early 1890's which stress phonics very heavily, as well as the very large sales in that period of the strongly phonic Webster speller, and probably very large sales of the phonic McGuffey speller.

Rice wrote *Scientific Management in Education* in 1913, repeating his test data from *Forum* in 1897. His 1913 book endorsed rigid control from the top by "experts," bypassing curriculum control by local boards of education, which he called "scientific management." As we all know too well, such "scientific management" in American education has been increasing ever since 1913 and American academic achievement has been plummeting ever since 1913, in an almost mathematically pure inverse ratio. (Concerning the "inverse ratio" mathematics of failure in education, Charles M. Richardson, the Long Island engineer/educator of The Literacy Council, Huntington Station, New York, constructed a highly illuminating graph which demonstrated the inverse relationship over a period of years between tax money spent on education and academic achievement.) Achievement has been continuing to drop further every time we permit more "scientific" controls from the top, particularly when they are Federally-funded ones.

However, the fact that spelling drill must have stressed "sound" more than "meaning" by the late 1880's is shown most clearly by the fact that by the turn of the century the "experts" had become so concerned about spelling that they were trying to reform it. Thorndike wrote on the subject very early, in his article, "Spelling," in *Teachers College Record*, about 1901. Referring to Rice's work, which was presumed to have shown that accuracy in spelling was not related to the amount of time spent in teaching spelling, Thorndike said, "Miss E. K. Carmen, at my suggestion," tested the hypothesis that:

"...bad spelling was due to comparative failure to observe and attend to the spelling of words, to the habit of reading without really seeing words in detail. From the report of her study, I will quote a part. It appeared in the *Journal of Pedagogy* for October, 1900."

The article by E. Kate Carmen had been titled, "The Cause of Chronic Bad Spelling," and had been published in the *Journal of Pedagogy of Ypsilanti* in 1900, Volume 13, pages 86-91. It establishes that the "experts" had started to work on spelling by 1900, since Miss E. K. Carmen, at Thorndike's "suggestion," had done that "study" on spelling which was published by October, 1900. (Note the "experts'" use of female drudges, who were probably satisfyingly cheap. Gates used them in quantity.)

Thorndike also quoted from an article by Miss A. E. Wyckoff, *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. II, page 450 (1893, according to Jean Chall's bibliography in *Learning to Read*). *Pedagogical Seminary* was published at Clark University where G. Stanley Hall was President. Thorndike quoted Miss Wyckoff and then commented on her remarks:

"'Constitutional bad spelling may, in part be the result of a strong natural bent toward selective attention.' Her data were observations of two bad spellers, of whom she said,

‘Conspicuous as thinkers, they were comparatively slow readers, having the habit of reading one word at a time. Almost all their mistakes in spelling occurred in the latter half of the words.... Further tests made it clear that attention was habitually directed to the beginning of the words....’“

What “Miss Wyckoff” actually turned up in testing adults before 1893 were subjective readers who read meaning-bearing words with the right half of their brains and therefore had to read such whole words “all at once.” When these adults had first learned to read as children before the 1890’s, they could only see half a word at a time (as shown by eye-span research on beginning readers quoted elsewhere in this history.) As a result, they formed the lifelong habit of reading with only the first half of words. Furthermore, the fact that they read “one word at a time,” showed they were hung up on reading “meaningful words,” instead of syllable sounds. Thorndike, of course, interpreted the results differently. They were presumed to have paid insufficient attention to whole words.

As previously discussed, Suzzallo wrote an article, “Spelling, Teaching of,” in the 1913 volume of *A Cyclopedia of Education*. The bibliography Suzzallo gave at the end outlined some of the hard work of the “experts” after 1900. Although J. M. Rice was in sympathy with the “experts,” he was not one of them, but his data was very useful to the “experts” who were infesting the universities. Burnham was at Clark University, where G. Stanley Hall was president.

“Wm. H. Burnham, “The Hygiene and Psychology of Spelling,” *Pedagogical Seminary*, Volume XIII, 1906, 474-501.

“O. P. Cornman, *Spelling in the Elementary School*, Boston, 1902.

“J. M. Rice, “The Futility of the Spelling Grind,” *Forum*, April and June, 1897, Volume XXIII, p. 163-172, 409-419.”

Both Suzzallo and Pearson were working hard to displace “sound” in spelling with “meaning” by 1911, the year that Suzzallo’s first article referred to here was published, and they jointly wrote a spelling series.

Henry Suzzallo (1875-1933) received an A. B. in 1899 and an A. M. in 1902 from Stanford in California and then worked there from 1902 until 1903, after which he became a lecturer at Columbia, earning his Ph. D. at Columbia in 1905. Suzzallo then went back to Stanford in 1905 as an assistant professor of education. John F. Ohles’ entry for Suzzallo in his *Biographical Dictionary of American Educators*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1978, stated that Suzzallo then became adjunct professor of elementary education from 1907 to 1909 and was a professor of the philosophy of education from 1909 to 1915. Curiously, the entry did not say where Suzzallo taught during the years from 1907 to 1915 but implied it was at Stanford where he had been a lecturer since 1905. Yet the listing of departmental editors’ credits in the 1913 volume of *A Cyclopedia of Education* showed that Suzzallo was a professor at Columbia by 1913. Therefore, it appears reasonably certain that Suzzallo was teaching at Columbia at least from 1909 and possibly from 1907.

The *Cyclopedia* (1911-1913) was edited by Paul Monroe (1869-?) of Columbia and had articles by about 1,000 contributors. Its departmental editors were almost all “experts” in good standing, like Suzzallo himself. They included, among others:

1. William H. Burnham of Clark University.
2. E. P. Cubberley, the “historian” of education from Stanford.
3. John Dewey of Columbia who needs no comment.
4. Charles H. Judd of the University of Chicago who was Thorndike’s and Cattell’s close friend.

5. Arthur F. Leach, the English historian of education who, despite enormous amounts of excellent original research, was wildly bigoted, and, in addition, was given to other distortions.
6. David Snedden who was still one of the “Education Mafia” as late as the 1930’s, as shown by the letter quoted later which was written in opposition to Frank Vizetelly.
7. Elmer E. Brown, the U. S. Commissioner of Education.
8. Foster Watson of England who was truly an excellent historian of education.
9. Gabriel Compayre of France, who had received a denunciation from Brother Azarius in 1896<sup>35</sup> for his historical distortions.

Those two promoters of “meaning” in spelling, Suzzallo and Pearson, jointly wrote spellers which had, to say the least, an unusual history as demonstrated by an article in the New York Times, on December 4, 1925. So far as I know, however, Suzzallo and Pearson were not personally involved in the scandal.

The front page article was headed, “Fergusons Accused in Textbook Deal.” Continued on the second page, the article told of the possible impeachment of Governor Miriam A. Ferguson, because of her conduct as Chairman of the State Textbook Commission. She had signed a contract for almost all elementary spelling books in the Texas schools for six years, beginning September 1, 1926, awarding the business to American Book Company, even though it had been the highest bidder of fifty or twenty publishers who had given bids. The spelling books were the two-book series by Pearson and Suzzallo, Essentials of Spelling. Her husband, James E. Ferguson, had been impeached as Governor eight years before, and yet he was the clerk of the textbook commission, opening bids and sitting with the commission when it discussed the awarding of contracts. Mrs. Ferguson had actually signed the contract awarding the business to American Book Company after the Attorney General Dan Moody had already ruled that the contract was invalid.

As has been commented even today, as Texas (and California) textbook adoptions go, so, very often, goes the nation. Once the Pearson-Suzzallo spellers were adopted in Texas, they would be assured of an excellent sale in the rest of the United States. (These statewide textbook adoptions are, of course, an unconscionable abomination.)

Pearson and Suzzallo were very “scientific” and according to Rice’s theory should have been well qualified to “manage” education. Suzzallo had excellent credentials. As he commented in the article he contributed to the 1926 honorary issue of Teachers College Record devoted to Thorndike on his 25th anniversary at Teachers College, Suzzallo had been E. L. Thorndike’s graduate student about 1902. Suzzallo was later a Professor of Education at Columbia Teachers College from about 1909 to 1915, his name being listed in the credits in the Cyclopedia of Education of 1913. He then became President of the University of Washington until he was fired by the Governor of Washington in 1926, reportedly for too

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<sup>35</sup> Essays Educational, by Brother Azarius (P. J. Mullany), D. H. McBride & Co., Chicago: 1896, p. 263 to 277, “M. Gabriel Compayre as an Historian of Pedagogy.” Brother Azarius, an historian of pedagogy, faulted Compayre on many points in a 20-page chapter, and gave an amusing response to Compayre’s disapproval of the silence and order in Christian Brothers’ schools. Brother Azarius said, “Suppose for an instant, that, instead of the order and silence now maintained in the Brothers’ schools, there were disorder in every class, no regular plan of studies, no text-books; that the Brother spoke loud and indistinctly, and did not wait for an answer; that he boxed the boys’ ears right and left; that he ran about the class like a madman, with no necktie, without a coat, and his long shirtsleeves hanging down over his loosely waving arms and hands. Suppose this picture given of La Salle or any of his disciples, would M. Compayre find in it aught to admire? Would he have words of commendation for the Brothers? Well, the picture we have drawn is no caricature; it is the faithful description of a loving disciple. It is the portrait that Ramsauer has left of his master, Pestalozzi.# And yet M. Compayre finds in Pestalozzi the alpha and omega of educational perfection.” The footnote read, “#See Oscar Browning, “Educational Theories,” pp. 156, 157”.

aggressive fund-raising activities (an enigmatic charge). Ohles' biographical entry concerning his firing is cryptic:

“His aggressive efforts to improve financial support led to the dismissal by the Governor of Washington in 1926.”

The entry continued:

“Suzzallo lectured in Europe on American education for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (1927-29). He was a specialist in higher education for the Foundation (1927-29), Director of the National Advisory Committee on Education (1929-30) and President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching from 1930 to his death.... He was a trustee of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching 1919, the National Council of Education 1926-33....”

If the “National Council of Education” had elected positions, and if the people of the United States had been familiar with Suzzallo's educational theories in 1926, including his ideas on spelling, would they have elected him to such a position of probably heavy influence?

Concerning Suzzallo's long-standing association with the Carnegie foundation, we are very familiar today with the private, non-governmental Carnegie foundation because of its work on national teacher tests and other activities concerning the standardization of American public education. This private, non-governmental, unelected body is doing much at present to shape the future of American education without having received any authority whatsoever from the American voting public to do so. Neither did Suzzallo ever receive any such authority from the parents of the American children with whose education he meddled for so very many years. Yet it was Suzzallo's and Pearson's expensive American Book Company “meaning” speller which was being foisted on Texas in 1925 by Governor “Ma” Ferguson and her entourage.

## Chapter 35

### Who Was Truly “Expert,” Vizetelly of Funk & Wagnall’s or His Opponents, Who Were, Unasked, “Scientifically” Managing Education?

Suzzallo obviously kept in contact with Thorndike before 1926, judging from a comment in the article he contributed to the Thorndike honorary issue of *Teachers College Record* in February, 1926. Suzzallo spoke of the accidental eavesdropper, waiting his turn outside Thorndike’s office, who might be annoyed or amused by the conversations he overheard. He said Thorndike was always patient with such callers, whether it was the silly questions of a beginning student or the twisted convictions of a rigid mind. Suzzallo spoke of the sick nature of set ideas saturated with emotion. But he said Thorndike was always sympathetic with all men, as they were “respected embodiments of experience.” That anyone could speak of other human beings as “respected embodiments of experience” makes it questionable who it was who had the twisted convictions. It is also abundantly clear that Thorndike’s ideas were enormously offensive to some of his fellow men, those with the “rigid” minds, since very few visitors outside very few offices ever hear conversations which are “saturated with emotion.” (I worked as a secretary outside oil company executive offices for 18 years and never heard a single such conversation.)

A letter of August 4, 1931, to the *New York Times*, published on August 7, by William V. Saunders, New York, responded to a letter by Frank Vizetelly. It sounded as though Vizetelly might have qualified as one of those “rigid” minds “saturated with emotion,” to Vizetelly’s credit:

“Educators and Publicity. Vizetelly Comment Evokes Observation on Educational Methods.

“To the Editor of The *New York Times*.

I read with some dismay Frank Vizetelly’s defense of radio announcers which appeared in THE *NEW YORK TIMES*, as a part of which he included an unfair attack on teachers. I’ll grant Mr. Vizetelly accord with his words on English pronunciation, because he has established his authority, as he says, by devoting “four years to compiling a book on words that are frequently mispronounced.” May I request the honor of authority in my special interest likewise - viz., education? I have had the privilege of spending five years under the direct guidance of such men as Kilpatrick, Thorndike, Bagley and Snedden, and of coming to primary acquaintance with the principles and philosophies of Butler, Dewey, Strayer and Cubberley.

“I am not going to present an attack on several different institutions of our life, as Mr. Vizetelly has done. I am only going to attack his advertising of his interpretation of the propaganda which our leading (sometimes misleading, too, I must admit) educators must get published continually to force change which is essential to growth, which in turn is often used as a definition of life itself...”

The “leading educators” were primarily at Columbia University and Columbia Teachers College in New York and the University of Chicago, and they had philosophies which were alien to the vast majority of Americans. Who elected them as “leading educators” of other Americans’ children? Almost none of them had ever taught below the college level and had absolutely no experience teaching children, so their presumption that they knew how to teach children is intolerable. At the very best, their pronouncements were only the opinions of busybodies.

These “leading educators” did have regiments of “graduate students” at their disposal to do academic chores for them, such as counting the number of different words in reading texts, and these “graduate

students” often were also teachers of children. Yet, if such graduate students who were also teachers wished to earn degrees, it would have been unwise to argue with the “leading educators” about anything.

The “leading educators” have been called the “Education Mafia” for very good reason. For instance, Mae Carden argued with the “leading educators” about the teaching of beginning reading in the early 1930’s and found it necessary to leave Columbia Teachers College without taking her doctorate. Miss Carden founded a highly successful phonic system for the teaching of reading which the “leading educators” have opposed ever since. Where was it written that the judgment of such men on the subject of education was to be held in respect by the vast majority of Americans?

Furthermore, where was it written that, in education, “change... is essential to growth”? Why should change be necessary in education any more than in religion? Both deal with truth, and truth is unchanging. Saunders was preaching the “progress” fallacy in its most virulent form.

Saunders’ next comment was about “democracy” - but the experts’ version, in which the public is misled into doing the propagandists’ will:

“We are a democracy, and a democracy means that more than one person must believe in a thing in order that it may be made a part of the lives of all. Thus it is that Congress makes our laws and not the President.

“Thus it is that educators, who must depend upon public opinion for the financial strength necessary to make any change, or in other words, for progress, must first convince groups of people of the need and benefit of such change....”

Of course, Saunders thought Vizetelly had no right to object to what the “experts” were up to, because Vizetelly was not an “educational expert,” but only a brilliant and public-spirited citizen who had not docilely submitted to brain-washing in an “expert”-ridden teachers’ college. Vizetelly, unfortunately, was right to object to the “experts” in education in 1931. The educational shambles we have in America in today amply justifies his opposition, and it exists because the recipes of the “experts” have been followed slavishly in the government schools since the 1920’s. “Experts” recipes are still being slavishly followed in the 1990’s as the government schools sink America ever deeper into a cultural twilight. When large numbers of our enormously expensively educated high school students do not even know when the Civil War took place, cannot spell properly, have almost no knowledge of geography, literature, or grammar, and cannot do simple arithmetic, and when half of them are borderline or outright functional illiterates as well, we are most certainly in a cultural twilight.

Saunders spoke of “educators” obtaining “the financial strength necessary to make vital changes” “by drawing the attention of the public to essential public benefits, and what better way is there to get this attention than by glaring headlines such as will be given educators whenever they attack educational methods and procedures?....”

Most of these advanced thinkers like Dewey and Cattell were socialists, which makes it very amusing that they were truly “expert” at one thing: gaining what Saunders called “financial strength” or the piling up of money capital for their projects. The “leading educators” had taken over the vast financial resources of many foundations long before 1931. (See Lance J. Klass’s *The Leipzig Connection*, written with Paolo Lionni.) By 1931, the “leading educators” were aiming at tax money as well, and it certainly must be admitted that they have done very well at legally raiding the government coffers ever since. Even the U. S. Department of Education which they fought so hard but unsuccessfully to found in the 1920’s finally became a reality under President Carter in the 1970’s. It has served as a very fine money cow ever since for “experts” to milk, to say nothing of its harmful intrusion into local control.



It is abundantly clear that such “leading educators” were simply unelected, unasked for, and usually unsuspected change-agents. The major “educational method” they were attacking in 1931 was the teaching of reading by “sound.”

Dr. Francis (Frank) Horace Vizetelly (1864-1938) was by 1921 or before “Managing Editor of The Funk & Wagnall New Standard Dictionary and its Abridgments,” according to the title page of *Punctuation & Capitalization - How to Make Use of Them*, a book he wrote which was published by Funk & Wagnall in 1921. In his “Introduction,” he said:

“The subject of punctuation is sadly neglected in colleges and schools...”

Vizetelly referred to the fact that fifty years previously the United States Treasury Department lost tariff due it for one year on two million dollars worth of fruit that were admitted free of duty because of a misplaced comma in a tariff bill. An advertisement in the back of the book concerned *A Desk-Book of 25,000 Words Frequently Mispronounced* by Vizetelly, and said:

“...the volume, containing the recommendations of the leading lexicographers of three centuries, presents the most complete consensus of English pronunciation that has ever been compiled...”

According to the *American Book Publishing Record*, R. Bowker Co., 1980, Vizetelly also wrote *How to Speak English Effectively. Guide to the Art of Correct Enunciation*, Funk & Wagnall’s Company, New York and London: 1933. Among the books Vizetelly wrote was one entitled *Words We Misspell in Business, 10,000 Terms*, a curious kind of parallel to Thorndike’s book listing the 10,000 commonest words in reading.

So Vizetelly joined Thomas Sheridan and Noah Webster in promoting proper pronunciation, and his interest in pronunciation was the apparent reason for his remarks on radio announcers in his letter to the *New York Times*, although I have not seen that letter which prompted Saunders’ 1931 letter. It is curious that some of the most noted defenders of “sound” have been those who were most intimately concerned with REAL “meaning,” the writers of our dictionaries. Not only did Thomas Sheridan introduce Pascal’s synthetic phonics in the eighteenth century, but Webster improved on Sheridan’s notation in 1783. In 1866, Reverend J. C. Zachos’ phonic method was used by William A. Wheeler and Richard Soule, who were editors of Webster’s and Worcester’s dictionaries. Wheeler and Soule wrote a primer, *First Lessons in Reading: A New Method*, which was published in 1866 by Lee & Shepard of Boston, who were the publishers of the highly successful *Oliver Optic* novels for children. Like Sheridan, Webster, Soule, Wheeler, and Vizetelly, Mitford Mathews was also a philologist, and he vehemently promoted “sound” in his book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*. These men, whose lives were spent refining the meanings of words but who nevertheless promoted “sound,” were all real scholars.

Not surprisingly, one such scholarly philologist promoting an emphasis on “sound” was the partner in Funk & Wagnall, Isaac Kaufman Funk, who died in 1912. (My notes are not clear but his birth date was apparently 1830.) Funk was Editor in Chief on the 1910 and 1912 revised editions of Funk & Wagnall’s *Standard Dictionary of the English Language*, and the philologist F. A. March was a consulting editor. (According to Sokal, March was Cattell’s favorite professor at Lafayette College before Cattell’s graduation in 1880.) One of many associate editors at the company (apparently since at least 1904) was Frank H. Vizetelly. At that time, Funk & Wagnall employed some 200 specialists.

Isaac Kaufman Funk and Moses J. Montrose wrote the *Standard Reading Series* which used the “Scientific Alphabet,” a kind of pronouncing print, which was presumably their own invention. Nila

Banton Smith referred to its First Reader as having been published in 1902 (pages 127 and 429 of her “history.”). The First Reader was still in print when the United States Catalog was published in 1912. The series consisted of a first and second reader and a teacher’s manual. Smith also referred to the fact that the Funk & Wagnall Company, New York, printed a revised edition using the “Scientific Alphabet” in the 1960’s, presumably at the height of the enthusiasm over the English Pitman Company’s ITA (Initial Teaching Alphabet) print used by Downing of England and Mazurkiewicz of the United States. The Funk & Wagnall material was apparently largely unsuccessful both about 1902 and in the 1960’s. However, that dictionary-maker Isaac Kaufman Funk should have gone to such trouble to teach beginners to read phonically was in a straight line of development from dictionary-maker Noah Webster in the eighteenth century.

The scholar Vizetelly had been among the staff of scholars who had worked on the Funk & Wagnall dictionaries, including their New Standard Edition with 450,000 entries, published after Funk’s death. Another one of the Funk & Wagnall publications was an abridged edition of that newer dictionary, The Concise Standard Dictionary with 38,000 entries. The Concise Standard Dictionary “had been widely adopted for use in schools,” according to its advertisement in the back of A Dictionary of Simplified Spelling of 1921 by Frank H. Vizetelly. That publication gave the spellings which had been adopted by the group working for simplified spelling which included F. A. March but the work was almost completely unsuccessful, even by 1921. However, the school dictionary in regular spellings being advertised must have been a very worthwhile book, since it was compiled by such a group of scholars from their newer unabridged dictionary. According to another advertisement in A Dictionary of Simplified Spelling, Funk & Wagnall’s unabridged New Standard Dictionary of 1915 had been completed “after nearly four years of time and more than a million and a half of dollars had been spent in its production. The work of over 380 Editors and Specialists....” The staff had almost doubled since the days of the earlier editions. The new dictionary was revised in 1919.

Yet the dictionaries used in elementary school classrooms when I taught from 1963 until 1986 were not updated versions of the scholarly works of Funk & Wagnall. They instead carried Thorndike’s name as one of the two main editors. How could Thorndike really compete in writing a dictionary with the staff of Funk & Wagnall which had personnel like Vizetelly? Should any dictionary written in part by Thorndike, whose expertise was at best only the ten thousand highest frequency words, or any dictionary written in part by other “leading educators,” have been permitted to replace school dictionaries written by expert philologists like Vizetelly? What effect did the probable drop in the academic quality of an important reference book like the dictionary have on American students?

It has become very clear to me that those who promoted “meaning” but downgraded “sound” in education in general over the past 170 years (in the manner of Agassiz, and, earlier, John Wood, et al) have usually not only been lacking in scholarship but have had limited intelligence. Yet they could exert massive influence because they acted in organized phalanxes. The arrival of government schools in the nineteenth century created a power vacuum which was just waiting to be filled by such organized activists with agendas.

These activists have always robed themselves with “scientific” mantles, even as long ago as the 1820’s. It was just such “scientific” people engaged in grinding out propaganda whom Rice endorsed to “manage” education. They did, indeed, manage it. It is generally acknowledged that education in America after the 1920’s was shaped by such men as those Saunders mentioned in his 1931 letter to the New York Times which complained about Vizetelly. Saunders stated, from his own personal knowledge, that the men whose names he listed found it necessary and acceptable to publish “misleading” propaganda to force their wills on their fellow citizens. Many saw their fellow human beings only as “embodiments of experience,” purely material objects. Yet these materialists were permitted, using their “scientific

management,” to shape the education of America’s children who were, overwhelmingly, from religious families.

Vizetelly was in apparent opposition to Rice’s 1913 endorsement of education’s being “scientifically controlled” from the top, which the “experts” like those at Columbia Teachers College were doing by 1931.

What is fundamentally wrong with Rice’s idea of “scientific management,” of course, is that it ignores the fact that the “management” of the education of children is their parents’ responsibility. No one, neither a “scientist” nor anyone else, has any moral authority to interfere between parents and children unless the parents specifically authorize it (“in loco parentis”), or unless the parents can be proven to be incompetent. Therefore, the ultimate “experts” on the education of children are the children’s own parents.



**PART 6**  
**The Close Parallels to American Developments in the  
History of Beginning Reading Instruction in Great Britain**



## Chapter 36

### The Deterioration of Beginning Reading Instruction In Great Britain: From “Sound” to “Meaning”

In the English-speaking world of the British Isles, North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, “meaning” programs in the teaching of beginning reading have consistently produced terrible failures for many, many years, starting in the 1820’s. They have remained in place despite the fact that “meaning” programs required an inordinate amount of time to “teach” and money to fund. Their greatest protection has always been the ignorance of the public concerning their nature. It is the purpose of this section concerning Great Britain, as it is the purpose of the other sections of this history of beginning reading instruction, to shed historical light on the “meaning” method in the teaching of beginning reading. It is hoped that will lead to its eradication and therefore to the eradication of its cruel and vicious effects.

In the eighteenth century, spellers were used to teach beginning reading by the “sound” approach in America, Great Britain and elsewhere in the English-speaking world, sometimes after and sometimes instead of the “sound” approach horn book. American and British spelling texts were very similar, and the hornbooks in both places were usually virtually identical. Yet, in the early part of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, a move from “sound” closer to “meaning” appeared in a few texts in the United States, and the same thing happened in Great Britain.

In Great Britain, Mavor’s 1802 speller published by Longwood achieved a large success in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, although it was only one of many spellers in print which were also successful. Yet it was sharply less phonic in its 1823 edition (the earliest one I have been able to find) than eighteenth century spellers, and than other contemporary English spellers such as Lindley Murray’s or even Dorothy Kilner’s. However, Kilner’s also veered closer to “meaning.” Whether Mavor’s was the same in its original 1802 edition as its weak 1823 edition is unknown. It should be noted, however, that a move somewhat closer to “meaning” first showed up in America in 1802 with the publications of Kneeland, Willard, and the anonymous author of *The Child’s First Book, Being an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading*. Both Murray’s and Kilner’s spellers were reprinted in the United States, as Mavor’s does not appear to have been. Mavor’s speller also included a great many more little reading selections than earlier spellers did, which obviously was a greater emphasis on “meaning.”

In the previous century, Newbery had been perhaps the first to introduce reading books in English tailored for little children which were not spellers and which were not meant to teach beginning reading, but which used unnaturally simple vocabulary and syntax. This was shortly before Diderot’s *Encyclopedie* article, “Syllabaire,” recommended that such simple little books be prepared for little children. (Contrary to the general impression, Mother Goose is not composed of such simple syntax and vocabulary, and, emphatically, neither are fairy tales.)

In 1744, John Newbery printed *A Little Pretty Pocket-book*, a pleasant little work meant for little children, in very simple vocabulary. He was also printing his “battledore,” a pictured version of the hornbook, about the same time which was meant as the first step in reading instruction, and *The Royal Primer* for the second step. Therefore, it was certainly not Newbery’s intent that *A Little Pretty Pocket-book* was to be used as a beginning sight-word reader, moving from “sound” to “meaning” for rank beginners. Yet, by using an unnaturally sparse vocabulary and too-simple syntax (as certainly is not done, for instance, in *Winnie the Pooh*, in fairy tales, or in *Mother Goose*), Newbery was laying the groundwork for what followed.

It was Anna Laetitia (Aikin) Barbauld who followed through on Newbery's approach of impoverished vocabulary and syntax, in 1778-1779, with her book, "Lessons for children, in four parts." Part 1 was "For children from two to three years old." Parts 2 and 3 were "For children of three years old." Part 4 was "For children from three to four years old." Little two- and three-year old children at the time were being given the horn-book, (a "sound" approach), and pestered to learn to read, three and four years too soon. Mrs. Barbauld tried to write reading materials to match that presumed stage of development, even though it is probable that most children at those very young ages could not really read. As Mary F. Thwaite pointed out in *From Primer to Pleasure*, (page 189), Mrs. Barbauld's probable intent was to have an adult read the stories to a child. Nevertheless, it is evident Mrs. Barbauld wanted the child at least to notice some of the simple words in large print as they were read.

Mrs. Barbauld's work produced a rash of books written for such toddlers. Yet none of them appeared to be meant as sight-word "meaning" readers for beginners, but only to follow a little child's too-early introduction to the "sound"-approach horn book and speller. In addition, probably all were meant to be read aloud by an adult.

Mary F. Thwaite wrote (page 71):

"Another active publisher of moral tales was John Marshall, of Aldermary Churchyard, who issued most of the works of Lady Eleanor Fenn and Dorothy and Mary Kilner, all popular authors of their time... ..Lady Fenn, who specialized in simple works to lighten the path to reading, wrote as 'Mrs. Teachwell,' 'Mrs. Lovechild,' or 'Solomon Lovechild.' She invented many of her little aids for her nieces and nephews. One of the most well-known was a two-volume composition with the inviting title - *Cobwebs to catch Flies* (1783). A system of graded reading 'in short sentences adapted to children from three to eight years', it offers advice about behavior as it progresses....

(Page 190): "The first volume consisted of 'easy lessons in words of three letters up to six letters' for children of three to five years old.... Mrs. Barbauld had used no pictures in her little book, only large type, but Lady Fenn's had the attraction of cuts... William Godwin and his wife brought out several books of easy stories for infants, including his own *Fables, ancient and modern* (1805) intended for children from three to eight years. Other examples of the Godwin firm's productions for this age are *Six Stories for the Nursery in Words of one or two Syllables* (1824)... and *Stories for little Boys and Girls in Words of one Syllable* (ca. 1820)...."

All of this represents a move from "sound" towards "meaning" for rank beginners, even though the "sound-approach" horn book and speller were not dropped. Children had previously been exposed to complex syntax and vocabulary in the stories read aloud to them. By "teething" on such stories, part of the meaning of which they undoubtedly missed, they nevertheless expanded their growth in syntax and vocabulary, just as they did by listening to adult conversations which they did not completely understand. Exposure to this natural language complexity is the means by which children's language can grow. Yet natural language complexity was being removed from children's literature by the end of the eighteenth century so that the children would get more of a story's "meaning."

Alexander Graham Bell may never have heard of Mrs. Barbauld, but he opposed her methods. He said in his paper, "On Reading, As a Means of Teaching Language to the Deaf," an address at the Gallaudet Meeting at Jackson, Mississippi April 14-17, 1888 (pages 5 and 6):

"If the (deaf) pupil is to make progress in his knowledge of ordinary language, the language must be above him, and not degraded to an unnatural level. Teachers may say, Why use idiomatic phrases that cannot possibly be explained to the deaf child? But he never can come to understand



them until he has seen them, any more than the hearing child can understand them until he has heard them. The hearing child learns to understand by hearing, and the deaf child will come to know by seeing. Frequency of repetition will impress the idiomatic phrases on his mind, and much reading will bring about this frequent repetition in ever-varying contexts.... I would have a deaf child read books in order to learn the language, instead of learning the language in order to read books....”

Bell believed syntax and vocabulary were best learned by immersion in a language, not only for deaf children but for hearing children, as well. Yet the Barbould degraded-language approach is one that arrests language development.

Spellers for many years had been arranged in tables first of one-syllable words, then two-syllable words, and so forth. Yet the idea of breaking the one-syllable word tables down into separate categories based on the number of letters in the words had come from Thomas Dilworth’s 1740 speller. Dilworth invented the approach of breaking down the beginning tables of one-syllable words in spellers into lists of words of two letters, three letters, four letters, etc. Yet nothing could be more unnatural and alien to real language learning for a child than this choppy kind of speech based on limiting speech to one syllable words, and to the numbers of letters in those one-syllable words.

However, the “sound-approach” spelling books were not dispensed with by authors of children’s literature before the nineteenth century, even though widely known authors limited the words used in their stories, based on the number of letters in the words. Dorothy Kilner (1755-1836), mentioned above, wrote a speller which was in use for many years, not just in England but in America. The rare-books room of the New York Public Library has Dorothy Kilner’s speller in American editions of 1823 and 1830. Her speller rates a Code 7 because of its heavy analytic phonics, despite its somewhat abbreviated syllabary. The 1823 copy is entitled, *The Primer: or Mother’s Spelling Book for Children at a very early Age*. “By M. Pelham” (“pseud. of D. Kilner”), “Author of the *Mother’s First Catechism*. Second American Edition from the Ninety Seventh London Edition. New York. Published by G. C. Morgan, Pearl Street, Franklin Square, Gray and Bunce, Printers, 1823.” Pearl Street was obviously the publishing heart of New York, where Samuel Wood at that time and Coolidge by 1839 were also located.

The Kilner speller was not a simple chapbook, and the advertisement at the end showed its publisher was handling a far more elegant line of texts than chapbooks. Its back cover read:

“A General Assortment of Books in Every Department of reading for sale by George C. Morgan, 353 Pearl Street, Franklin Square.

“Just published.

“Picket’s Grammar of the English language, comprising its Principles and Rules; adapted to the business of instruction in primary schools. Price 37 1/2 cents.

“A Beautiful edition of Robinson Crusoe embellished with 18 drawings, price 75 cents.

“Watts’s Divine Songs - with Cuts.

“The Ploughboy, an interesting tale - this tract is well calculated for Sunday School rewards, both from its cheapness and the interesting matter it contains.

“Sunday Scholars Magazine - Popular Monthly. This little Magazine has been seven months before the public, and from the reception it has met with, the editor is flattered with the hope that

it will be useful.... The price for any number less than six is one cent and a half.... making it at the end of a year a volume of 192 pages for the small price of 15 cents.”

The Picket who wrote the grammar which Morgan listed is probably the same Picket who wrote the spellers and readers discussed elsewhere in this history.

Since the 1823 New York second edition of Kilner’s speller by George C. Morgan said that there had been ninety-seven editions in London before that date, Kilner’s speller must have been extremely popular in England. With its abbreviated syllabary, it did represent a move away from the ancient approach. Her speller is not on Alston’s list of spellers published before 1800, which does include *The Infant’s Friend*, Part I. A Spelling Book of 1797 by Mrs. Lovechild (Lady Eleanor Fenn) and a 1798 fourth edition of Sarah Trimmer’s *The Charity School Spelling Book*, Part II. Kilner’s popular speller therefore most probably was first published after 1800.

Dorothy Kilner’s move away from the syllabary may have been influenced by the famous and influential 1798 *Essays on Practical Education* by Richard and Maria Edgeworth, discussed elsewhere, in which Richard Edgeworth claimed that the syllabary was of little value in learning to read English.

Sarah Trimmer, mentioned above, was another of the late-18th-century British authors for children. Mary F. Thwaite said (page 59):

“One of the earliest and most notable writers of children’s books to be inspired by the needs of the newer Sunday Schools, was Mrs. Trimmer. Sarah Trimmer, born Kirby (1741-1810) began her writings with *An Easy Introduction to the Knowledge of Nature* (1780) prompted by Mrs. Barbauld’s *Lessons for Children* (1778-1779), and the needs of her own children. In it she had outlined a slight sketch of Scripture history...

“Her publications for Christian education and Sunday Schools were soon to be taken up by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, an Anglican institution founded in 1699 to promote the Charity Schools, and now to be revived to help Sunday Schools....

(Page 60): “On their approved list of publications published at the end of *Some Account of the Life and Writings of Mrs. Trimmer* (1814) were included the author’s manual of Sunday School organization and management, *The Oeconomy of Charity* (1786),... spelling books and other works helpful to the Sunday school teacher or scholar.

“A firm supporter of the Church of England, she was a stalwart opponent of Rousseauist ideas, and she became increasingly alarmed about the rising number of ‘unsound books’ being published for children about the turn of the century. It was to counteract this mischief that she founded her second periodical, *The Guardian of Education* (1802-6). She firmly set before her public orthodox judgments on contemporary books intended for children and young people.... Mrs. Trimmer is best remarked, however,, for *The Fabulous Histories*, (1786) later known.. as *The History of the Robins*.”

Hannah More (1743-1833) was another highly successful writer of the period. On page 61, Thwaite said Hannah More wrote to Zachary Macaulay in 1796, saying:

““Vulgar and indecent penny books were always common, but speculative infidelity, brought down to the pockets and capacities of the poor, forms a new era in our history’.... it was chiefly due to her that the series of *Cheap Repository Tracts* was launched. These productions imitated the chapbooks in appearance and price (necessary features if they were to rival them on the

market),... The project, launched in March 1795, was amazingly successful, 300 000 copies of the tracts being sold within the first six weeks, and two million within a year.... over a hundred were published by 1798, when the series came to an end. But the venture had paved the way for the formation of the Religious Tract Society in 1799, and henceforth a steady supply of suitable and cheap little books... was assured.

“The ‘Cheap Repository Tracts,’ especially the more popular titles, were reprinted many times in the nineteenth century. They were not addressed to children, but to the poorer classes generally... Hannah More (who wrote many of the tracts herself under the pseudonym ‘Z’) and her collaborators did something to expose to the world the misery of the labouring classes... One of the earliest and most famous of the tracts, *The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain* (1795) page 61 depicts the efforts of an honest labourer to maintain his family on a wage of ten shillings a week... There was no intention of educating poor people or their children beyond their station.”

Extraordinary information is contained in this excerpt. Certainly, not all the lower classes and poor for whom the government schools were founded in the next century were literate in Great Britain in the eighteenth century. Yet such large numbers of the lower classes and the poor were literate in the eighteenth century that they comprised a vast market for chapbooks. The Cheap Repository Tracts, only meant to “rival” the chapbooks on the market, sold two million between 1795 and 1797, when the population was far smaller than the next century and when the chapbooks were still holding a good part of the market. Even allowing for the fact that *Alice in Wonderland* was a hard-cover book and not a chapbook, it sold only 180,000 copies between its publication date by Macmillan in 1865 and the author’s death in 1898. (That number is cited by Alec Ellis in *A History of Children’s Reading and Literature*, Pergamon Press, Oxford: 1968. page 66.) How can 180,000 sold over 33 years even be compared to 2,000,000 sold over two years? Yet the fable has it that literacy “increased” in the next century, because of the spread of government schools.

As mentioned elsewhere, in his book, *American Education - The National Experience - 1783 - 1876*, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York: 1980, Dr. Lawrence A. Cremin showed that a vast market existed for printed materials on the other side of the Atlantic as well before “meaning” took over beginning reading instruction. Cremin stated that in 1817 the American Sunday-School Union put out its first book, Mary Butt Sherwood’s *Little Henry and His Bearer*. That was a sad story about an English orphan who taught the Bible to another child in India, which story had originally been published in England. An astonishing total of over 6 million copies of similar stories had been printed for American Sunday school students by 1830. Cremin said that another organization which had been founded in 1825, the American Tract Society, put out 3 million such works in the following five years, and by 1865 had published 20 million bound books, each of which included 12 or more such tracts, and it also had put out about 250 million single pamphlets.

Cheap chapbooks had been enormously successful in the eighteenth century. More expensive literature meant for children also came out at the same time. Ellis said (page 5):

“Newbery’s did not maintain their supremacy in children’s book publishing but were superseded by John Marshall of Aldermay Churchyard, who had on his list approximately 70 children’s books between 1780 and 1790. Marshall was antagonistic to books of fantasy, and among his authors were Dorothy and Mary Jane Kilner and Lady Eleanor Fenn. ...In the years between 1780 and 1800 an increasing number of publishers interested themselves in books for the young.”

The sequence of some major authors and one publisher who reduced vocabulary and syntax in materials for children was: Thomas Dilworth, 1740; John Newbery, 1744; Anna Laetitia (Aikin)

Barbauld, 1778; Sarah Trimmer, c. 1780; Lady Eleanor Fenn, c. 1783; Hannah More, c. 1795; and Mary Kilner, c. 1800. Yet there were others who did not, such as Oliver Goldsmith who wrote *Goody Two-Shoes* for the London publisher, John Newbery, in 1765, and William Roscoe, a member of Parliament and Liverpool banker, who wrote *The Butterfly's Ball* and *the Grasshopper's Feast* for his little son, first published in 1807, with delightful engravings by William Mulready (1786-1863). These last two books, true classics, would promote a child's mental growth.

Note, however, that the first two of those listed, the author Dilworth and the publisher Newbery, sharply reduced vocabulary before the publication of Diderot's *Encyclopedie* article, "Syllabaire," which suggested such vocabulary simplification for children. Therefore, it is probable that the idea of vocabulary simplification for children had originated in Dilworth's and Newbery's England, before 1740, and not in Diderot's France around the 1760's. Yet, in contrast, as discussed in the section of this history on developments in France, the invention of two-step, whole-word phony phonics can be traced to France, where it first appeared in a recognizable form after some years of development as Abbe Bertaud's *Quadrille Des Enfants*, 1744.

Therefore, before 1744, the foundations for the harmful "meaning" beginning reading approaches of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were already in place: two-step, whole-word phony phonics (from France), and strictly controlled, over-simplified vocabulary (from England). Both were totally alien to normal language development, and both were unprecedented in history. It should be mentioned again that even the Abbe de l'Epee's Code 1 sight-word method for the deaf after about 1760 was very probably inspired by Abbe Bertaud's 1744 (possibly Code 3) *Quadrille Des Enfants* which taught whole sight words to illustrate letter sounds.

Eighteenth-century children's books were being published for children who had learned how to read with the horn book and/or the spelling book and so had learned to read by "sound." However, the impoverished vocabulary of many of those books after 1740 was undoubtedly stunting the children's intellectual growth.

As mentioned, a move towards "meaning" for beginners began to show up in a few spelling books after the turn of the nineteenth century, not just in the reading books for children past the beginning stage. Mavor's 1823 speller was one of those spellers moving towards "meaning." An 1826 edition is in the British Library (Call number 12982 aa59), and its full title is *The English Spelling-Book, Accompanied by a Progressive Series of Easy and Familiar Lessons and Intended as an Introduction to the Reading and Spelling of the English Language, by "William Mavor, LL. D., Lecturer of Woodstock, &c, &c., 322nd edition, Revised and Improved. London: Printed for Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, Paternoster Row, and To Be Had of all Booksellers in Town and Country, with a Full and Liberal Allowance to Schools. Price, 18 Pence... 1826."*

That Mavor's speller, originally published in 1802, had a revised edition in 1823 is shown by the date on the preface Mavor wrote, which reads:

"Preface - Notwithstanding the vast number of initiatory books for young children which have been written within these few years by persons of distinguished ability and sanctioned with their names, it must still be allowed that there has not appeared a single Introduction to reading for the general use of Schools, that rises above the level of the vulgar, though popular, compilations of Dyche, Dilworth, and Fenning. For the neglect of what we have alluded to, it would be impossible to produce any consistent reason. Perhaps the writers of acknowledged literature could not stoop to an occupation reputed so mean, as that of compiling a SPELLING BOOK. Yet to lay the stone of a noble edifice has ever been a task delegated to honorable hands;

and to sow the first seeds of useful learning in the nascent mind, is an employment that can reflect no discredit on the most illustrious talents.”

With these comments, Mavor confirmed that in 1823 the speller was normally the first book English children used in learning to read.

“...The Appendix may be learned, in part or wholly, at the discretion of the master.”

The content of that appendix on page 142 was similar to the beginning material in Noah Webster’s speller, much of which was routinely memorized by older students in American schools in the early nineteenth century. However, the Mavor material was not so good as Webster’s parallel material. Mavor’s appendix included:

“Section 1 - Of letters and syllables.  
Section 2 - General rules for spelling.  
Section 3 - Parts of speech.  
Section 4 - Syntax” (etc.)

This note appeared at the bottom of Mavor’s preface:

“Advertisement - The sale of two millions of copies within the last 21 years is the most flattering proof of the (approval) of the public....”

To sell two million copies in 21 years was “flattering,” but it should be remembered, as mentioned earlier, that two million of the Cheap Repository tracts had been sold in ONE YEAR, between 1795 and 1796.

Reverend Mavor showed, at the end of his preface, his address and date:

“Rectory, Woodstock, August, 1823”

His 1823 version began with a picture alphabet followed with letter alphabets and a complete syllabary. This, however, was followed by short two letter sentences. Spelling lists after this included some spelling by analogy, which is, of course, a kind of analytic phonics, but there were too many reading inserts, and far too soon. Although the 1823 Mavor speller overall rates a Code 6, it was nevertheless a pronounced shift away from “sound” and toward “meaning.” Whether the earlier editions being published ever since 1802 had also rated only a Code 6 is unknown.

A reference to Mavor’s speller turned up on an American source, in A Report of the Committee on the Subject of Spelling Books, The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, January, 1843, New York: Hopkins and Jennings, Printers (page 6):

“The following is a list of Foreign Spelling Books before the Committee:

“Mavor’s Spelling Book  
Carpenter’s Spelling Book  
Fenning’s Spelling Book  
Vyse’s Spelling Book  
Cobbins Spelling Book  
Williams’ Spelling Book  
Porney’s French Spelling Book.

“The first of these (Mavor’s) in 1835, had passed through 420 editions in England, and it has been stated, that for many years, the profits on the publication were sufficient to meet all the expenses of the publishing house of Longman & Co., Paternoster Row.”

Fenning’s had been in print since 1756 and Dyche’s, mentioned by Mavor, had been in print since 1707. However, the sales of such spellers as beginning reading books had sharply declined long before 1843. By 1843, they were usually meant only for older students.

The first deliberate and announced change in beginning reading methods that had produced the high literacy of the eighteenth century showed up in Andrew Bell’s monitorial schools. These schools had been founded both in Great Britain and America by the early nineteenth century. Initially, Bell threw out the ancient procedure for spelling multi-syllable words, which will be discussed. More importantly, although Bell had been using Mrs. Trimmer’s little spellers in 1808, as shown by one of his published works, he inexplicably threw out spellers for beginning readers some time before 1823. That a seventh edition appeared in 1823 of his newer approach of dropping spelling books for beginners suggests his first edition appeared considerably earlier than 1823 and possibly not too long after 1808.

A folktale from the state of Maryland in the United States, in which a magical goose comes alive again after being shot and cooked, includes a magical chant which sounds suspiciously as though it were derived from the initial step of Andrew Bell’s newer version of the syllabary, given in the 1823 text, which began, “La, le, li, lo, lu.” Andrew Bell’s version of the monitorial schools, in which older children drilled younger children in the lessons to be memorized, was used by the Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge. That was a Church of England organization, and the Anglican church was prominent in the Maryland area, from which area the folktale came. Also, a Bell monitorial school is recorded elsewhere in this paper as in operation in Philadelphia, close to Maryland, before 1817. (However, that one did not use Bell’s beginning reading materials.) The story, “The Singing Geese,” is from Folklore from Maryland, collected by Annie Weston Whitney and Caroline Canfield Bullock, copyrighted in 1929 by the American Folklore Society, and reproduced in *More Stories*, James Moffett, Senior Editor, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston: 1973, from a version in *With a Wig and a Wag* by Jean Cochran, copyright 1954, David McKay, Inc., publisher. It began:

“A man went out one day to shoot something for dinner. And as he was going along, he heard a sound in the air above him, and looking up, saw a great flock of geese, and they were all singing:

“La-lee-lu, come quilla, come quilla, bung, bung, bung, quilla bung.”

The story went on to say that the man shot a goose, and it sang the same song as it fell. When the man’s wife plucked the goose to cook it for dinner, each feather flew out the window, and while the goose was cooking she could hear the muffled tones of the “La-lee-lu” song from the stove. When her husband went to carve the cooked goose, it sang again, and the story related that finally:

“When he was about to stick the fork in the goose, there came a tremendous noise, and a whole flock of geese flew through the window singing:

“La-lee-lu, come quilla, come quilla, bung, bung, bung, quilla bung.

“And each one stuck a feather in the goose. Then they picked it up off the dish and all flew out of the window singing:

“La-lee-lu, come quilla, come quilla, bung, bung, bung, quilla bung!”

Whoever concocted this Maryland story used a repetitious sing-song verse as its theme: “La-lee-lu.” It is curious how closely that sing-song verse matches the repetitious first sequence chanted over and over by little beginners to their slightly older monitors in Bell’s schools some time after 1808 but before 1823. As the initial step, the slightly older monitors were charged with drilling the youngest ones to read: “la, le, li, lo, lu,” and later the same syllables in mixed order. As the very first step, it would have made a powerful impression on both monitors and beginners, and might well have surfaced in later play and story telling, eventually turning up as the tale, “The Singing Geese.”

In *Mutual Tuition and Moral Discipline, or Manual of Instructions for Conducting Schools Through the Agency of the Scholars Themselves*, Seventh Edition, by the Rev. Andrew Bell, London: 1823, he wrote on pages 89-91 about teaching the alphabet simultaneously with learning the syllabary.

“3. The first three pages of the script cards, or book, No. 1, contains the letters i, l, t, o (with which it begins, on account of the simplicity of these characters, consisting of straight lines and a curve, which comprise the elementary forms of most of the alphabet), the vowels, a, e, i, o, u, y; a series formed by the combination of every consonant, in order, with every vowel, beginning with ba, be, bi, bo, bu, and ending with za, ze, zi, zo, zu; and again, of every vowel with every consonant, from ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, to az, ez, iz, oz, uz.

“The course of instruction commences... with the appointment of an able, active, expert, and trusty teacher and assistant to the class of beginners, and a tutor from a higher class to each child, or perhaps better, by uniting this class to that which has just learned the initiatory lessons....

“All being seated at the desk, or on the bench, but the teacher and assistant who overlook and direct them, the tutors instruct their pupils to trace, and, as they trace, pronounce the letters i, l, t, o, one by one, over the script primer, and then to copy them on their slates.”

Bell’s use of script instead of print in his primer was a major innovation, and, so far as I know, previously unheard of. Yet it made the task of learning to read far more difficult for beginners, since joined letters are far harder for them to distinguish than unjoined letters. The use of script for rank beginners turned up in America over fifty years later as one of Parker’s 1875 Quincy “improvements,” with teachers writing whole script sentences on the blackboard for children to “read,” even though they had not been taught a single letter of the alphabet. The use of blackboard script sentences for such rank beginners to “read” then took over most American schools from about 1880 to 1900, because of the vast, ballyhooed publicity from 1875 to 1883 on Parker’s child-loving “improvements” Yet it is a curious fact that every one of the “improvements” in teaching beginning reading which were introduced by Bell, and later by Parker, were in fact stumbling blocks that promoted reading disabilities. Bell wrote:

“The tutors next teach their pupils to write and name the vowels, one by one, annexing each, as soon as they can make it, to the letter l, as in the card before them, - pointing with the pencil, and pronouncing, by previous spelling, or spelling on book, as they proceed, l,a, la, l,e, le, l,i, li, l,o, lo, l,u, lu; then reading la, le, &c.; y is omitted for the present, to prevent the confusion of li and ly, and to shorten the first lessons.

“When the pupil can execute this task with ease and readiness, his tutor calls upon him to spell and write, on the reverse or back of the slate, each syllable (or word) promiscuously, or in any order that he dictates. The tutor says le, pupil repeats le, then writes and pronounces l, e, le, and so on with the rest, la, lo, lu, li. He then reads them on the slate, as thus written - a practice which ascertains that the lesson has not been said by rote, but is actually known and understood.”

Bell said they then practiced with the teachers.

“Here let the master observe, that it behoves him to exercise his utmost energy and ingenuity in contriving to instruct his pupils in the most expeditious, for that is the best way, to write, spell, and read, in any order, and with perfect readiness, this primary and model lesson, la, le, li, lo, lu, for this is the key to the subsequent lessons of -

“4. The series formed by the union of consonants and vowels in order.

The key, of which the child has just been put in possession, enables him, by the exercise of his little mind, in which he delights, to dictate for himself the series of consonants and vowels, beginning with ba, be, bi, bo, bu, and ending with za, ze, zi, zo, zu. All that is here requisite is, to instruct him to write and name each consonant in order, and to annex to it the vowels, as was done with l, proceeding with every successive line, at the desks or seats, and on the floor, as with the sample which has been given.”

\*“The lines beginning with c and g, may, on account of the hard and soft sounds of these letters, be deferred to the end of the series, when a few examples with the letter y may be introduced, as ca, ce, go, gi, ly, by, cy, dy, gy, fy.]

Note that the supervised learning ended with la, le, li, lo, lu The child was expected to construct the rest of the open syllabary for himself from the “script card.” Of course, the use of confusing script letters instead of clear printed letters was itself an extraordinary and apparently unprecedented change.

Note from the comment below that the child had been expected to begin work on the syllabary before he knew the whole alphabet, only learning each consonant as he reached it in the syllabary. Presumably the child was given the name of each new consonant and its sounds with “a” before he had to work out for himself the syllables the new consonant made in combination with the rest of the vowels. However, that Bell did not make the procedure clear is anything but reassuring. He wrote:

“Arrived at the end of this first series, ba to zu, the scholar, being now acquainted with all the small alphabet, may learn the capital alphabet, either as the letters occur in his lessons, or by copying one every morning and evening, in order. The class now proceed to -

“5. A second series of the union of the vowels and consonants in order.

“This series of lessons commences with a,b, ab, e,b, eb, i,b, ib, o,b, ob, u,b, ub, and ends with az, ez, iz, oz, uz.

“The only difficulty here lies (as all the letters are now familiar) in distinguishing the short sound of the vowels, particularly e and i. Especial pains must, therefore, be taken with the first line, the key to the rest, which should be dwelt upon till the learner can perfectly distinguish these sounds; after which, he has a pleasure in dictating for himself, according to the example which has been given, the rest of the series, ac, ec, ic, oc, uc, to az, ez, iz, oz, uz, \* with which these lessons terminate.”

\*“In teaching the alphabet, as commonly practised at home, with counters, the vowels and consonants being kept apart, the children, who do not write, may be taught to pick them up, and place them by the side of one another, so as to form, spell, and read every syllable of two letters in the order and manner above described, writing only excepted.”



Note that the only instruction on the critical and difficult short vowels is on ab, eb, ib, ob, ub!

Bell continued:

“Before concluding this chapter, it may be important to draw the particular attention of the master to these combinations of vowels and consonants, by remarking, that one or more of them occurs in every word, except those of one letter, viz. a, i, o....”

Bell ignored the existence of vowel diphthongs (oi, ou, etc.), silent vowels (lain, lane, etc.) and silent consonants (lamb, etc.), just as he ignored the existence of consonant blends (string, etc.) and consonant digraphs (th, sh, ch). It would be extremely difficult to teach children to read English by “sound” using only his bare-bones Latin-style syllabary. Furthermore, it is obvious the children were to stumble through most of the syllabary, particularly the critical short-vowel closed syllabary (ab, eb, ib, ob, ub) without real teaching and without careful supervision. Nevertheless, by 1823, Bell was at least still endorsing in principal the basic “sound” syllabary, even though he omitted so much that is necessary in teaching children to read in English by “sound.”

This Seventh Edition of Bell’s Manual of Instructions published in London in 1823 at least described and endorsed the syllable method of teaching reading that is known to have been used by the Etruscans about 600 B. C., and that probably dates back to the invention of the vowels in Greece about 800 B. C. Yet only five years later, in 1828, Bell’s Manual of Instructions and its syllabary (inadequate as it was for teaching reading in English) would be hopelessly out of date after the publication of John Wood’s material at the Edinburgh Sessional School which abandoned both the ancient syllabary and “sound” totally, for a total emphasis on meaning.

However, note a significant change had already been made by Bell by 1823: the alphabet was not learned first in sequence. All consonants except “l” were learned only when used to make syllables with the already learned vowels. No indication is given that alphabetical order was EVER learned, except that the option was given that the children might use it to learn capital letters. For the most of the children, therefore, the use of dictionaries, etc., was out of the question. The children started on script, not print: that was certain to cause confusion, but he had made no mention of using script instead of print when he wrote earlier in 1808 about children practicing letters on sand trays. Instead, his 1808 text said children should learn the printed alphabet first. In it, Bell said he regretted that hornbooks were no longer used, and then said (page 57):

“In the absence of a hornbook, these alphabets may be readily and cheaply obtained, by cutting out of the spelling books the first and second leaves, and pasting down the alternate pages on strong brown paper or pasteboard, that they may endure the thumbing to which they are subjected, and save the remainder of the spelling-books, which is sometimes worn out in common schools before the child has learnt his A, B, C.”

Bell’s 1808 students obviously were practicing print, not script and were using it to learn the alphabet, in order, as the first step. (However, in his 1808 instructions, he said he wanted children to learn capitals before lower case letters, which is highly undesirable, but he reversed this undesirable method by 1823.) He claimed he brought the sand-tray method back with him from India and it was much ballyhooed. Yet he specifically rejected the sand-tray in his 1823 book. An astonishing difference in methods recommended by Bell developed between the date of his 1808 book and the 1823 book in its “Seventh Edition,” (the “First Edition” of which must have been published before 1823).

Rev. Dr. Andrew Bell, along with Joseph Lancaster, as mentioned elsewhere, was credited with founding the cheap monitorial schools for the poor, where older children taught younger children, and

teachers were largely dispensed with. Bell claimed to have perfected his methods when in charge of a school in Madras, India.

Just before going to India from his home in Scotland, he had been a tutor in the American South, but left America to return to Scotland almost immediately after the Revolution. Apparently no mention is made in his biography, referred to elsewhere, of what Bell's activities may have been in America during the Revolution, other than the fact he was a tutor and somehow made a fortune in tobacco. (Many native-born Americans were losing their fortunes during the Revolution!) Both Bell's and Lancaster's monitorial schools had been popular in America. Lancaster had arrived in America in 1818, where his schools like Bell's were already in operation, and Lancaster promoted his schools openly and widely until he was killed by a horsecar in Manhattan in the early 1830's.

As the history makes clear, after returning to Great Britain from India, Bell had been essentially a promoter. It is tempting to conclude that what Bell was best at promoting was himself, since his teaching methods were appalling, as well as being astonishingly and incomprehensibly inconsistent.

Despite Comenius' suggestion on syllabication, mentioned elsewhere, and despite some eighteenth-century French materials, it was Bell who made the first pronounced move away from syllables to whole words for teaching spelling and reading. He did that in his Madras School material, in which he recommended that children only slowly recite the syllables in a word, afterwards naming all its letters at once. Bell therefore abandoned the ancient method, in which children carefully recited the letters in each carefully separated syllable of multi-syllable words. In the old method, children spelled the letters in the first syllable and then named the syllable. They then spelled the second syllable and named it, and then repeated the names of the first and second syllable. They then spelled the third syllable and named it, and then repeated the names of the first, second and third syllable. They worked their way through all multisyllable words in that fashion. Bell discussed this first "improvement" of his in *The Madras School, or Elements of Tuition*, London: 1808 (pages 64-77), which was the 1808 text referred to above. I suspect Bell's "improvement" in spelling methods was invented as a means to ease his lot as a teacher in India. His "improvement" concerned that repetitive (but useful) spelling drill which undoubtedly had been very boring for Bell.

Nevertheless, Bell's "improvement" was not original. It had been suggested by Comenius in the seventeenth century, with the use of pictures as an aid to learning multi-syllable words. As has been discussed, dropping the "spelling" or reciting of letters in syllables was apparently first in use in France. Py-Poulain Delaunay in 1719 claimed that some people by that time wanted to renounce spelling in the learning of syllables. But it was not until 1755 that Cherrier produced a specific method which dropped spelling. So did some others in later years: Viard in 1759 and Luneau de Boisjerman in 1778 and the Year VI of the French Revolution.

Children had apparently always been asked to spell words in English in that fashion. First the word was visually broken apart by the children into syllables. In order to know how to do this, children were obviously taught the rule that a single consonant after a vowel was part of the next syllable, but if two consonants followed a vowel, one remained in the first syllable. Furthermore, if two vowels came together, the second was supposed to form a new syllable. These rules for separating syllables apparently only work consistently in the spelling of Latin. Yet they were followed in English spelling until Noah Webster dropped them, which can be demonstrated by the faulty syllabication in the *New England Primer* of the eighteenth century. The faulty effect was most noticeable when it produced open syllables with long vowels where the vowels should be short. However, by Bell's time, spelling books commonly printed multisyllable words with the syllables already separated correctly instead of incorrectly as in the *New England Primer*. Yet children had no such convenient syllable separation in most of their reading books.

Bell was not finding fault with the ancient but inadequate method to break words apart into syllables. Nor is there any indication he taught that or any other method to children for words which had not already been separated. Since spelling words were commonly already separated in children's spelling books of the period, they probably were also separated in Bell's materials.

Breaking words apart into syllables by the ancient method produced the following separations for a regular word like "pandemonium:" "pan - de - mo - ni - um." As mentioned, children had always "spelled" which meant reciting orally, in a cumulative fashion, collecting syllables as they worked their way through the word: p a n - pan, d e - de, pan-de; m o - mo, pan-de-mo; n i - ni, pan-de-mo-ni; u m - um, pan-de-mo-ni-um. The original purpose of this "spelling," until about the seventeenth century in English, was not spelling as we know it, but only pronunciation. The children were actually working out the sound of an unknown word from the sounds of the syllabary they had previously memorized. In English, the memorized "working" syllabary was effectively extended by the end of the sixteenth century by memorizing irregular syllable patterns: eight, freight, weight; night, light, fright. Once children knew the syllabary and the irregular syllable patterns, they could pronounce anything in English.

Bell retained the naming of letters for words of only one syllable, and that was also the first step in the spelling books of the period. Yet Bell threw out naming the letters for each syllable in multi-syllable words, the next step in spellers of the period. Bell called his "improvement" "unreiterated spelling." He only asked that children pronounce each syllable separately, and then name the letters afterwards all at once: pan-de-mo-ni-um, p-a-n-d-e-m-o-n-i-u-m. Yet, how could children separate any unknown long words into syllables (like the words they would see in the Bible) if they had not been taught how to syllabicate? How could children pronounce unknown irregular words (lightweight, breathable, cushioned) by their irregular syllables like "weight" if they had learned only the inadequate bare-bones Latin syllabary? The teacher would have to tell children most new words, as sight words, even one-syllable words like "night," since the Latin syllabary was of no help on that irregular one-syllable word. It is obvious the child's grasp on "sound" and on the syllable itself began to slip very badly under Bell, who was widely imitated and who was a major influence on education. Bell's students, unlike earlier English-speaking children, were no longer being taught how to pronounce aloud anything printed in English (such as the Bible).

The full title of the 1808 book was *The Madras School, or Elements of Tuition: Comprising the Analysis of an Experiment in Education, Made at the Male Asylum, Madras, with its Facts, Proofs, and Illustrations, To Which are Added, Extracts of Sermons Preached at Lambeth; A Sketch of a National Institution for Training up the Children of the Poor*, by the Rev. Dr. Andrew Bell, London: printed by T. Bensley, for J. Murray, - Cadell and Davies; Rivingtons; and Hatchard, (all of London) and Archibald Constable and Co. Edinburgh. On page 346 of this 1808 book, Bell gave a "List of Elementary Books Used in the Madras Schools:"

"1. A Card of the Alphabets, Vowels, Digits; to which may be subjoined a few easy monosyllables of two letters. This in room of horn-book of old. 2. Mrs. Trimmer's Charity School Spelling Book, Part First; one set for boys, another for girls. 3. Mrs. Trimmer's Monosyllabic Spelling Book. 4. Child's Book, Part First. 5. Ditto, Part Second, to be studied by every child. 6. Mrs. Trimmer's Charity School Spelling Book, Part Second. 7. Psalters, with Communion Service, Collects, &c. This also serves for a prayer book to children. 8. Mrs. Trimmer's Abridgment of New Testament. 9. Ditto of Old. 10. Prayer Book; and II. Bible

"With these are to be read, as most convenient,

“12. Church Catechism, broken into short questions. No young child should be without this cheap tract. 13. Osterwald’s Abridgment of the Bible. 14. Chief Truths of Religion. 15. Order of Confirmation. 16. Trimmer’s Teacher’s Assistant, &c.

“All these books are in the list of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, except No. 1 and 3.”

No copy of Mrs. Trimmer’s spellers has been available, nor No. 1 above, the “Card,” but Bell discussed some of its content, as mentioned. His “Card” appears to have given adequate practice to the basic syllabary. Bell spoke of Mrs. Trimmer’s beginning book on page 60:

“The fittest book for a beginner, as consisting solely of monosyllables and easy stories (one edition for boys, another for girls) of words of one syllable, is Mrs. Trimmer’s Charity-school Spelling-book, Part First.

“In perusing this initiatory book, the scholar spells the syllables on and off book: thus on book, b-l-u-n-t, blunt; off book, blunt, b-l-u-n-t.”

In 1808, Bell considered that learning the alphabet was the fundamentally important first step, as is obvious in the following quotation from page 58-60. Contrast it to his 1823 comments given later:

“When familiar with his alphabet, and able, without the smallest hesitation, both to tell every letter in any book, and write it on sand, then, and not before, he proceeds to his next stage. It is proper here to observe, that whenever I use the word spell by itself, I always mean spelling off book after the lesson has been said and the book is shut.... When, on the other hand, I speak of spelling (in the spelling-book), previous to the reading of the word, as is usually practiced throughout long spelling-books, &c., and termed simply spelling, as when it is said, ‘the scholar is in spelling,’ this I always denominate previous spelling, or spelling on book; and, in the Madras school, monosyllables only are taught in this way....”

The purpose of what Andrew Bell called “previous spelling” of polysyllables in spelling books was NOT “spelling” at all in the sense we know it: memorizing a sequence of letters. By naming the letters in these broken-apart syllables, children resurrected their memories of like syllable sounds and used them to work out related syllable sounds. Bell totally ignored the need children had for a method to decode new multisyllable words.

Despite this, it is beyond question that Andrew Bell in 1808 saw “spelling books” as the route to reading. That the fourth and fifth books in his list, Child’s Book, Part First, and Child’s Book, Part Second, were also spelling books is shown by his remark from page 79:

“The five spelling books I have named do not exceed in price a large spelling book, and one is not worn while the other is used; whereas it is not uncommon for a large spelling book to be worn out before the alphabet is yet learnt.”

That spelling books were “fundamental” in Bell’s 1808 philosophy is shown further by this quotation from page 62:

“In order that this fundamental branch of tuition may receive that attention which its essential importance requires, Mrs. Trimmer has prepared a spelling-book contrived to instruct, rivet, and confirm the scholar in this elementary process, which I have said is not only the groundwork, but the actual anticipation of all that follows.

“This ‘Monosyllabic Spelling-book’ consists of all the syllables which most usually occur in the English language, in a regulated succession from short and simple to long and difficult. It contains no reading which the child can either comprehend or readily learn by memory, or repeat by rote. While children are thought to be engaged in learning to read, they are often merely exercising their memories. This second book is taught by spelling on and off book, and afterward reading on book without previous spelling; and spelling off book in the same precise and perfect manner as the Charity-school Spelling book. And here, in reality, ends the chief labour in teaching and learning to read, for by the devices which follow it is contrived that little more remains to be done, and what does remain, consists almost solely in repeating and practicing what has been already taught and learnt.

“Observe, that from this time forward there is no more previous spelling, in which so much time is wasted, except indeed the scholar happens to meet with a syllable which, after all has been done, puzzles him, when he resolves that syllable, and that only, into letters by previous spelling, to enable him to read it.”

Andrew Bell was meddling with the spelling book after the monosyllable step, but he certainly was not throwing out spelling books in 1808 which he did by 1823. The only teaching on “sound” he gave children by 1823 was the basic Latin syllabary, and even most of that the children may have done without adequate supervision, to judge from his description. Furthermore, he had taught the alphabet first in 1808, and yet by 1823 Bell’s students were to learn the alphabet only incidentally as they learned the syllabary, not by itself.

Notice the comment concerning the old methods, “in which so much time is wasted.” As was stated in Part 4, “constantly occupied” was a theme which was promoted over and over as a presumed virtue of the monitorial schools.

Andrew Bell’s 1808 book included a copy of a letter he wrote to Richard Edgeworth in Ireland in 1806, and it contained his 1806 views on the first steps in teaching reading:

“Mrs. Trimmer’s Spelling Book, first part, is brief. Her books are sterling. Let the alphabet be made in sand (or on a slate, or with chalk), before the scholar proceed to spell or read. Let the progress be secure in every step, and you will be astonished at its flight....”

Included at the end of Andrew Bell’s 1808 book was, “A Sketch of a National Institution for Training up the Children of the Poor.” His interest in centralized control of the education of the poor was shared by Richard Edgeworth in Ireland, who had already been approached about helping to set up such national schools in Ireland, as indicated below. Like all good movers-and-shakers, Richard Edgeworth with his 1798 book, *Essays on Practical Education*, was famous, as was his novelist daughter, Maria, who had collaborated on the book. In their enormously influential book, Edgeworth endorsed his own phonic system, which he claimed he developed before he ever saw Sheridan’s. What appears probable is that Edgeworth had read *The Irish Spelling Book of 1740*, discussed elsewhere, which introduced Pascal phonics wholesale into Ireland and into the English language. However, while endorsing Pascal phonics, Edgeworth belittled the ancient syllabary and recommended its abolition. As discussed in Appendix B in the entry for Bumstead, Edgeworth also made the astonishing remark, presumably in his 1798 book, that learning to read is “the most difficult of all human attainments.” Yet, in 1798, as established by testimony of the general period, children learned to read easily and quickly by the very syllable method that Edgeworth was denigrating. Edgeworth’s remark is redolent of insincerity. It is interesting, therefore, that an early tie appears between Andrew Bell, who was apparently the first to throw out syllabating in spelling and later the first to throw out the spelling book, and Richard Edgeworth, who apparently was the

first to throw out the basic syllabary itself. In different ways, both had moved from the syllable (“sound”) toward the whole word (“meaning”).

On page 304 of Bell’s work appeared, “Copy of a Letter from Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Esq., dated Edgeworthstown, Ireland, Oct. ??, 1806.

“As we have ventured not only to use your name, but to introduce you as a character in one of our “Popular Tales” (by we I mean Miss Edgeworth and myself), I presume still further on your goodness, and request you to send me any loose hints that your observations, since you came from the East, may have furnished relative to the education of the poor.

“I have been lately appointed, under an act of parliament, one of a commission to inquire into the funds that exist, and into the probable means which may be employed to extend the benefits of education among the lower orders of people in Ireland. To whom can I apply for instruction with more propriety than to Dr. Bell; from whom \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, have borrowed their most useful ideas?

“Have you seen Barruel sur l’Instruction publique, Chaptal, or Sicard, or a valuable little pamphlet by Christison of Edinburgh? Can you have the goodness to point out to me any new course of information?”

Why was Edgeworth reading Sicard, the Abbe de l’Epee’s successor? Note also that three of the four “authorities” that Edgeworth cited in 1806 were French, and the fourth was from Brougham’s Edinburgh!

Extracts from Andrew Bell’s reply to Edgeworth appeared on page 305:

“I have long wished to make my bow in person to Miss Edgeworth and yourself; and am happy in the occasion which you have now given me....”

Andrew Bell made it clear in his answer to Edgeworth that he endorsed government control of education (page 312):

“A single inspector general, with his secretary, both nominated by government, and removable at pleasure, will suffice to new-model the school, receive reports, visit them, detect deficiencies, point out the cause of failure, and see that they are conducted according to the system chalked out for them, and the principles of the institution. In their various progress, in their subsidiary and subordinate improvements, and the additions to our present practices, which will occur, a wide field of practical knowledge will be opened.

“Of the new creation which it will raise to religion, to society, and to the state, I shall say nothing.”

That last remark may have been innocent, but it does reverberate with “new age” overtones. It would be of interest, however, to learn who “Christison of Edinburgh” was to whom Edgeworth referred. According to Edgeworth, “Christison of Edinburgh” sometime before 1806 wrote what Edgeworth considered a “valuable little pamphlet,” and it presumably was, like Barruel’s (of France?), on “l’Instruction publique,” probably meaning government schools, and not just education outside the home, which the term “public school” usually meant in the eighteenth century. . Did “Christison of Edinburgh” know Dugald Stewart, Brougham, Birkbeck, et al, also of Edinburgh?

Starting on page 315, Andrew Bell outlined his “Sketch of a National Institution for Training Up the Children of the Poor,” which eventually resulted in the National schools in England and Wales. Although they started out only under the supervision of the Church of England, state supervision had begun to a small degree by 1833, and it constantly increased in the years that followed.

“The expediency and utility of educating the lower orders of the people I have already argued... The only question then, which remains, is whether, the moral and religious education of those children, who are destitute of other means of instruction, shall be left dependent on the fortuitous bounty and direction of individuals, societies, and parishes; or be placed under legislative provision and control....

“But should it be thought expedient to place the education of the poor under legislative authority, little more remains to be done than what the law exacts, which requires that the parochial ministers “examine and instruct the young and ignorant persons of their parish; and that schoolmasters...be licensed by their bishop....

“...it may suffice for the present to begin with putting Sunday... and other charity and free schools for the poor under existing and appropriate authorities....”

Andrew Bell was endorsing centralized control, and it is only through centralized control that activists can make efficient changes.

The “achievements” of government education in Ireland which almost wiped out the Gaelic language and Gaelic literature that went back to at least the fifth century are discussed elsewhere. However, it is startling that both government schools and the whole-word method (but one that used phonics) were associated with Edgeworth in Ireland as early as 1806. Note also that before 1806 Edgeworth had been reading material by Sicard, who had taken over the work of the Abbe de l’Epee in teaching the deaf, and under whom Gallaudet had studied in Paris. That is where Gallaudet learned how to teach reading for “meaning” instead of for “sound,” and Gallaudet was also one of the principal promoters of government schools in America.

For whatever cultural reasons, it becomes apparent in the history of reading instruction from about the time of the French Revolution until today that there has consistently been in America and the British Isles an “in” group concerned with education, consisting of highly publicized and influential people like Edgeworth, Gallaudet and Andrew Bell, who are always presented to the public as dedicated friends of mankind. That “in” group, right up to the present day, has worked very hard to put education increasingly under the control of the central governments, and at the same time the same group has consistently promoted whole word “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading instead of syllable “sound.” The “out” group, which has consistently received very little, if any, publicity, often opposed both practices (government-controlled education and “meaning” instead of “sound” to teach beginning reading). Yet the “out” group has been like a voice crying in the wilderness, since few people have ever known of its arguments or even of its existence.

For example, the “in” group in the early nineteenth century which was receiving massive publicity included Bell and Lancaster, whose organized, publicized schools prepared the ground for later government interference with education. It included Richard Edgeworth who promoted the government schools in Ireland that eventually almost destroyed the Irish language and Irish-language literature. It included the women writing the vapid, low-readability-level stories in English that were meant to replace the massively sold high-readability-level chapbooks, the women that the famous author Lamb called that “cursed Barbauld crew.” They were in practice hobbling children’s language development. Finally by the

mid-1820's, the "in" group included John Wood of Edinburgh with his reading method which finally totally replaced "sound" with "meaning" in the teaching of beginning reading.

Yet both the people and the materials in opposition to the work of the "in" group faded into oblivion, such as the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster quoted elsewhere, the elegant Goldsmith story of Goody Two-shoes, the once omnipresent and highly profitable high-readability-level chapbooks (in English and apparently in Gaelic), and spelling books for beginners with syllable tables. As they faded into oblivion, so did the former high level of literacy that had been associated with them. That former high level of literacy was widely replaced by that brand-new disease which had its origin in eighteenth-century France and that was acquired by teaching beginning reading by "meaning" instead of by "sound:" the disease of functional illiteracy.

In 1808, Andrew Bell had loudly endorsed spelling books for children who were beginning to learn to read, as well as endorsing the need for learning the alphabet first. Yet, the following astonishing about-face statement from Andrew Bell appeared in Chapter IV, page 92, of his 1823 text. This was a seventh edition (London: G. Roake, C. & J. Rivington, Hatchard and Sons; W. Blackwood, Edinburgh; and J. Cumming, Dublin). The first edition should have predated 1823. Bell had completely changed his tune in less than fifteen years, which, of course, raises the intriguing question, "Why?" (In 1823, Bell was still teaching the basic syllabary but using it to teach the letters, since the alphabet was not learned first.) Note Bell's reference to the rank beginner "exercising his mind" by working out most of the syllabary for himself, and then, by immediately afterwards reading a meaningful story, insuring that the child's "higher faculties are called into immediate and perpetual activity." It sounds as if the Scot, Andrew Bell, were trying to avoid that atrophy of the brain which the famous Scot, Dugald Stewart (like the famous Scot, John Wood) claimed came from reading mindlessly.

"On monosyllabic Reading. 1. On the reason of omitting spelling lessons composed of unconnected monosyllables and polysyllables.

"Hitherto the child has had the satisfaction of exercising his mind in forming regular series of all the syllables of two letters in the English Language; and has thereby acquired the first rudiments of spelling and reading. On this foundation he has now to rear the fabric of his future studies. From this time his higher faculties are called into immediate and perpetual activity. The tables of monosyllables and polysyllables, with which spelling-books were wont to abound - tables composed of words increasing in difficulty, and like the letters of the Alphabet, having no connexion, and conveying no instruction or amusement, to excite interest, keep up attention, or assist the memory; all such unmeaning and tiresome tasks - are discarded, and the scholar's future exercises in writing, spelling, and reading, are composed of a progressive course of lessons, moral, religious, instructive, and entertaining, all of them, except a few stories in the first part of the second book, extracted or abridged from the Bible.. Besides the useful knowledge with which these lessons are fitted to store the mind, they are much easier to be learned and remembered, from the frequent recurrence of the same words, and from the sense of the text and context. ...These lessons are taught by writing, by spelling on and off book, by reading by pauses and clauses, and by an examination on the meaning of what is read...."

After an inadequate syllabary, the children were immediately moved into reading connected text, which, as Andrew Bell apparently recognized, gave them "context" help to guess unknown words. (No one can guess words in a spelling book column!) Furthermore, the tiny amount of reading matter was drilled on, over and over and over again. First they read it in script on the cards, and then (page 96):

"On teaching the printed characters.



“The script cards finished, the class proceed to the second book, from the beginning of which the lessons, they have just learned, were transcribed. They now read the same lessons in this printed book. From their previous knowledge of them, and the similarity of the printed and written characters, they insensibly acquire the former, while they still further perfect themselves in these initiatory lessons. These lessons are best learned, by transcribing the printed into written characters...

“Having revised [i.e., reviewed] these lessons, till they can readily read them in the printed book, they go through the remainder of the monosyllabic part of this book, writing, reading, and spelling, &c., as before.

“Finally, they may once more revise the whole thirteen pages, in a single lesson.”

Note that: the WHOLE thirteen pages! It was an extraordinarily emaciated introduction to reading. Yet, Andrew Bell said, concerning the time it took to cover this slender material that was replacing the beginning part of the older, very, very long spellers:

“In concluding this chapter, it may not be quite useless again to notice, that these thirteen pages can be read, distinctly and deliberately, in thirteen minutes, or about a quarter of an hour; and that they can be transcribed, by a fast writer, in an hour. It seldom, however, happens that the scholars spend less than three or four months, and frequently three or four times as long, in solely learning to read them. Such is the consequence, when the master, forgetful of his duty, does not take the trouble to direct and superintend his ministers in such a manner, that every day, and every hour, may be marked by a competent share of progress.”

So it took from THREE TO SIXTEEN MONTHS to cover these thirteen “meaningful” pages of sight-word context reading after the children had finished the inadequate Bell version of the syllabary. Yet, at the end of all that time, the children would STILL be unable to read other material! Therefore, before 1823, sight-word reading books had, indeed, arrived in the English language in the form of Bell’s material, and before 1823, the sight-word method was, indeed, already producing MASSIVE failures in Bell’s schools, AS BELL HIMSELF CONFIRMED! (Bell made no reference, of course, to the torture the little children were being forced to endure for three to sixteen months as they read, over and over and over, his ghastly thirteen pages.) Furthermore, these very first sight-word reading books produced the familiar “excuse” by their basal reader author/expert, Bell, that their failure was not caused by the horrible inadequacy of his material but instead was solely due to “the master, forgetful of his duty,” who “does not take the trouble” to teach properly.

Note that two of the buzz words (“useful knowledge”) widely known by 1825 had already worked their way into Andrew Bell’s explanation some time after 1808 but before 1823 for his about face from “sound” to “meaning”: “the useful knowledge with which these lessons are fitted....” One wonders how much contact the Scot, Andrew Bell, had with the movers-and-shakers using this phrase (the Scots, Brougham and Birkbeck, Stewart’s former students in Scotland), and if Bell’s idea of throwing out the spelling book came from that source. Stewart was apparently hostile to spelling books, according to Dr. Keagy’s American interpretation, cited elsewhere. In addition, Stewart’s remarks, quoted elsewhere, certainly indicated that Stewart endorsed only USEFUL knowledge, and that Stewart believed that stuffing a brain with too many unused facts resulted in an atrophy of that brain.

The following “improvements” in the teaching of beginning reading in the English language had already appeared at some unknown date before 1823 in Andrew Bell’s highly publicized work. That second work of Bell’s on the teaching of beginning reading had originally been published before 1823 but

after the 1808 date of the publication of Bell's first book, which 1808 book was actually in contradiction to Bell's later "improvements":

1. Abandoning the teaching of the alphabet as the first step, and naming the letters only as they were read in the syllabary (which was in a mixed-up, not alphabetic order: la, le, li, lo, lu, etc..

In America, Gallaudet in 1835 also abandoned the alphabet as the first step, instead teaching a collection of sight words, from which the alphabet was then taught. Edward Hazen also recommended the same kind of thing in his 1829 Symbolical Primer. Less extreme were Oliver Angell, in his 1830 reading series, and Samuel W. Seton (in his 1830 book, The Abecedarian) who recommended that children learn the alphabet simultaneously with their first sight words, as Bell had them learn it with his alphabetically mixed-up syllabary..

2. Abandoning the "sound" spelling book for beginners, although Bell focused no attention on the fact he had abandoned it, when he recommended that children begin by reading his "meaningful" material.

In America, Dr. Keagy in 1826 (and apparently in 1819), and William Russell in 1826 had openly recommended the abandonment of the spelling book for beginners and the use instead of "meaningful" material. Keagy cited Stewart's philosophy as the reason for his own recommendation.

Apparently, the drive which had been initiated in 1826 to abandon the use of the spelling book for American beginners had achieved great success by some appreciable time before 1832. That is the year that Webster published his new, pathetic primer which was meant to be used before Webster's own speller for beginners, even though Webster's speller had been massively used for beginners from 1783 until 1826. The fact that Webster published such a whole-word primer (but with true phonics) for beginners in 1832 is virtual proof that spelling books must have gone out of use for American beginners some appreciable time before that primer of Webster's came off the presses in 1832.

3. Introducing children to reading through script, not print, which became the norm in America from 1875 until 1912, but is no longer in use.

The use of such connected script for rank beginners causes them to see words as unbroken wholes, and assures that the words will be read for whole-word "meaning" instead of sequential "sound." Josephine Horton Bowden wrote in her article, Learning to Read, in the Elementary School Teacher, University of Chicago, September, 1911, about work done with beginners who were given sight words in script and in print:

“...words were shown to the children right side up, and after five or ten minutes they were shown again, upside down....”

Bowden said that only two of the five children noticed that the words were upside down. Bowden commented:

“It would seem that the child sees the word as a whole and recognizes it upside down, just as he would recognize a toy upside down.”

Obviously, that would be true only for “meaning-”trained beginners who perceive words “all at once, and not for “sound”-trained beginners.. “Sound”-trained beginners read letters sequentially in a forward direction, and get a very different result if letter sounds are read in a backward direction.

4. Controlling the amount of reading matter given to little children so that they have very little new material on which to practice decoding skills.

This results in the memorization of the little snippets on which they are constantly drilled and a virtual inability to read any “new” material unless the teacher reads it to them first..

5. Most importantly, teaching the beginning reading of “sound”-bearing alphabetic print with a massive emphasis on its “meaning” and a de-emphasis on its “sound.”

In modern terms, this must result in the formation of the wrong conditioned reflex for the reading of “sound”-bearing alphabetic print (presumably to the right angular gyrus on the right, “all at once” side of the brain, instead of to the left angular gyrus area on the left, sequential, side of the brain, or to mixed and conflicting reflexes).

The thirteen “meaningful” pages which appeared as script in Bell’s book one were repeated in the first part of Bell’s 1823 book two, but as printed material, not script.

The second part of the second book suggests one of the sources that Bell was using for his new ideas. Bell, or someone writing the book for him, had been reading Diderot’s Encyclopedie from the previous century very carefully - specifically, the article, “Syllabaire” (page 713 in the “S” volume). That article had said:

“Reading Lessons. When the children are firm on their letters and on their syllables, it is necessary to give them something to read, but this must be prepared.”

The Encyclopedie article then suggested printing one page with syllables divided and the same material on the opposite page with the syllables not divided. It stated:

“One begins by having the child read the left side; this is easy for him, he finds there in a different order the same syllables that he has seen before...one can, after two trials, hide the left from him and have him repeat the same reading on the right.

“But what material shall one offer for his first efforts? It seems to me that until now scarce discernment or attention has been brought to the choice that has been made....”

The author of the article (possibly Diderot, himself) felt that histories were good material for children, but only if they were written in short and uncomplicated sentences, in this anticipating Mrs. Barbauld! The author said:

“The story of Joseph, the most interesting and the most instructive of all for children, the most favorable to the development of the first germs of virtue which are in their hearts, and the most proper to put in their souls the happy idea and the useful conviction of perpetual attention of providence on men, seems to me to merit by all these titles, the preference on all other history (to be) the first under the eyes of childhood.”

Turning from Diderot's *Encyclopedie* to page 98 and 99 of the 1823 Bell manual, concerning what polysyllabic text should follow the marvelous first thirteen pages of monosyllabic "meaningful" text, this appears:

"Thus prepared, the scholar enters on the reading lessons, consisting of monosyllables and polysyllables indiscriminately.

"This branch of the course commences with the interesting History of Joseph and His Brethren, in four parts, which together form the second part of the second book.'

The source for Bell's choice of the "Joseph" story appears probable. It was probably Diderot's *Encyclopedie*. Bell continued:

"The manner of reading this history, and every subsequent book, differs in nothing from what has already been described ...here the polysyllables are, in the first instance, read on book by syllabic reading, and spelt off book, after the lesson has been read, by unreiterated spelling. An example will suffice to illustrate what is meant."

Bell's numbers, given below, stand for children: first child "1" reads, then child "2", then child "3" and so on. When Bell placed words in parentheses, he was attempting to show that these words were to be read with a pronounced wait between syllables. What he called a "pause" was a portion of a sentence, a few words or sometimes only one word that contained a single "meaning":

"This history begins at p. 14, which is written on the corner of the slate, as before directed. The first lesson is the argument or contents, which the children read in order, each taking a pause.

"1 The (His-tory) History - 2 of (Jo-seph) Joseph - 3 and - 4 his (Bre-thren) Brethren.

"The lesson once read over by syllabic reading, may be read again in the same manner, but no oftener that is requisite to learn to pronounce the poly-syllables at once, without resolving them into (mono) syllables; after which it is revised without syllabic reading, till it is duly learned, thus:-

"1. The History - 2 of Joseph - 3 and - 4 his Brethren.

"After this lesson follows

"Part I- which is written by itself, as the number of the page was. The next and following lessons go on, as just described, thus:

"1. Now - 2 (Ja-cob) Jacob - 3 (lov-ed) loved - 4 (Jo-seph) Joseph - 5 more than all his (child-ren;) children, and so on.

"In like manner, the class proceed throughout the whole of this history, resolving such words, and such only, into syllables, as they cannot otherwise read, - the lessons daily growing in length.

"Sometimes the polysyllabic words are written and learned before the class begin to read the lesson. But the best way is to write the whole of this book, which brings the scholar fast forward with his reading as well as writing, and may be done in far less time than is generally imagined. All along, after a lesson has been learned and said, the teacher examines the class, or, which is preferable, the scholars are taught to examine one another, on the meaning of every word and

member of a sentence, at first with the books open, and afterwards with them shut, each in turn putting the question to the scholar opposite to him; after which the hard words are spelt off book, - the polysyllables by unreiterated spelling.

“Next they revise this part of the history, reading it by clauses. They then go through the three other parts in the same manner; and lastly, they once more revise the whole four Parts, which, if before perfectly taught, may be done in four lessons.”

Note the exquisitely agonizing boredom of Bell’s unspeakably incompetent “lessons.” To torture little children with such exercises is a monstrosity that outrages sensibility. At the best, the children were obviously only memorizing the short little text, with the help of context. They still had been taught nothing of the sounds of many letters (ph in Joseph, etc.) so they were learning much of the spelling by rote, but the vast emphasis on “meaning” had fully arrived, as confirmed by the following dreadful statement:

“...the scholars are taught to examine one another, on the meaning of every word and member of a sentence, at first with the books open, and afterwards with them shut, each in turn putting the question to the scholar opposite to him.”

This Bell “meaning” text was the source and the jumping-off place for Wood’s slightly later utterly silly (and actually vicious) “meaning” work. That these foot-dragging, dreary exercises must have been painfully boring for little children should also be noticed. Trying to teach little children to read by “meaning” instead of “sound” has always been painfully boring and unbearably slow - and has always produced enormous numbers of failures.

Bell then listed (pages 99-101) the books in the 1823 series. ALL of Mrs. Trimmer’s books had been dropped! What is astonishing is that, not only were all spellers dropped, but so were the Psalter and catechism! Bell referred on page 101 to practicing a selection from the catechism, but, since the catechism was not on his list of books for the schools, it is difficult to see how its use could be guaranteed.

“3. On the perusal of the subsequent Tracts in the Course of instruction in the National Schools.

These are - 1. Our Saviour’s Sermon on the Mount - 2. Parables - 3. Miracles - 4. Discourses - 5. History - and 6. Ostervald’s Abridgment of the Bible.

“Having now briefly propounded the processes, or methods of instruction in all the branches of the art of reading, it will be observed, that the uniform aim has been simplification - the resolution of every thing that is complex, into its elementary parts - monosyllables into the letters, and polysyllables into the syllables, of which they are composed - sentences into the pauses, or the smallest members which contain a distinct idea - and lessons into clauses, or larger portions of the discourse, according to the breaks in the sense, the progress and size of the class, - shorter in the beginner, and longer as the class and lessons advance.

“Of these practices, previous spelling ceases, when the scholars can read monosyllables without resolving them into letters: and syllabic-reading, when they can read the polysyllables, without resolving them into (mono) syllables. In the perusal, therefore, of the subsequent tracts, there is no more previous spelling, or syllabic reading, except when words occur which the scholar cannot otherwise read. But the reading by clauses, so important to the understanding, as well as to the circulation of the lessons, and unreiterated spelling (off book), so material to the saving of time, are continued throughout the whole course of study. Nor should pause-reading be

rashly abandoned, till the scholar is perfectly familiar with this practice, which is the best preparative for reading by clauses, and is attended with peculiar distinctness, and a brisk circulation of the lesson. Previously, therefore, to conning each of the subsequent lessons by clauses, it may be once, or oftener, if requisite, rehearsed by pauses. Nor need this practice terminate, but with the above mentioned tracts, by which time the scholar ought to be well versed in the art of reading, and duly prepared for the perusal of larger treatises and the study of the Bible....

“4. A few examples with remarks, on reading by pauses, and by clauses. The following examples are so marked, that they serve, at once, as specimens of reading by pauses and by clauses. A Pause is a given quantity, being invariably limited to the minutest portion of a sentence, which contains a meaning.... They are generally short in the elementary books, for the sake of a quick circulation, where the lessons are brief, and lengthened in the revisals... but so that a portion may fall to each member of the class, without repeating it oftener than is necessary to learn it. Thus, when the monosyllabic book, of thirteen pages, is revised by a class of thirty-six scholars at one reading, a clause may, on an average, be about one-third or one-sixth of a page, that each scholar may have one or two clauses and so in other cases.

“The following examples are taken, 1, from the 2nd Book, 2, the Sermon on the Mountain, and 3. the Catechism.

“1. The 2d Book.

The way - of God - is - a good way. Bad men - are foes - to God. Again - There is not - a thought - in our hearts - but - God.-“

Therefore, the ultimate source for the switch from “sound” to “meaning” in beginning reading in the English language appears to have been the books approved by Bell some time before 1823, which represented a complete about-face from Bell’s 1808 selections. What caused Bell to switch from “sound” to “meaning” some time between 1808 and 1823 is unknown. However, his use of a phrase like “useful knowledge,” his ideas that sound like Stewart’s, and his origin in Scotland certainly suggest he had some kind of connection with the Scottish Stewart/Brougham movers-and-shakers. Furthermore, his apparent use of a suggestion from Diderot’s *Encyclopedie* for a beginning reading book suggests he or someone influencing him had a liking for the *Encyclopedie* even though it was in great disrepute among many religious conservatives at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

## **Chapter 37**

### **The Move Slowly Began Towards Government-Controlled Schools Bringing with It the Change from “Sound” Spelling Books to “Meaning” Primers**

Concerning the religious element in the Lancastrian schools as opposed to the Bell schools which were sponsored by the Church of England, Alec Ellis said the Bible was to be presented in Lancastrian schools “without note or comment,” as the intent was to enroll children from all denominations. (Ellis wrote *A History of Children’s Reading and Literature*, Pergamon Press, Oxford: 1968.) The Lancastrian schools had, however, from their beginning, a religious emphasis, as is obvious from the remark about the Bible. Lancaster, himself, was a Quaker.

According to Mary F. Thwaite in *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, The Horn Book, Inc., 1972 (page 96):

“In 1833 the Government made the first state grant for education by voting a sum of L20,000 in aid of private subscriptions for the erection of school houses. The grants were administered through the two School Societies which had been formed to promote the Bell and Lancaster systems (virtually the same in their methods of rote-learning and use of older pupils as teachers but different in religious belief) - The National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales (1811) and the unsectarian Royal Lancastrian Association (1810), soon to be renamed The British and Foreign Schools Society.”

Thwaite was wrong that Bell and Lancaster were virtually the same in their methods. Bell had adopted the “meaning” approach in his reading materials and in addition had thrown out the “sound” spelling book for beginners some appreciable time before 1823, which Lancaster certainly had not done. It might be noted in passing that Lancaster had apparently lost the support of influential people in Great Britain by the time he emigrated to America in 1818.

Lancaster’s failure to drop “sound” as the method to teach beginning reading, and his failure to replace the “sound” method with the “meaning” method as Andrew Bell had done, may well have caused Lancaster’s loss of such support.

A book by James Kelly was published in Philadelphia in 1817 carrying the title, *An Improved Method of Education Instituted by Dr. Bell... Also Joseph Lancaster’s Method of Teaching*. The book was a teacher’s guide, and it described the Lancaster methods Kelly had previously used in Ireland with Lancaster’s personal approval. The Lancaster material that Kelly described consisted of “boards” on the first of which were the alphabet and two and three-letter “words.” These first “words” were obviously only syllables. In discussing his present version of the Bell method that he was using in America, for which he actually used Comly’s American spelling book and not Bell’s English materials, Kelly consistently referred to ba, da, be, de, and other particles as “words.” Therefore, Kelly probably also sometimes meant syllables instead of “words” when he used “words” in discussing Bell’s material.

According to Kelly’s 1817 description, Lancaster classes learned in the pattern of the old spelling books: alphabet, syllables, and then real words, the “boards” covering word lists after the syllables. The fourth Lancaster class was:

“To spell and read the boards appointed for the class, which are from table the seventh to the twentieth inclusive... which will prepare them for the fifth, or first reading class.”

Therefore, the children did not begin to read connected text until they had passed the fourth class and had learned how to spell words, obviously by sound and not by meaning.

Kelly described the same alphabet and syllable steps in his version of the Bell school in Philadelphia where he taught after leaving Ireland. However, the children were using Comly’s spelling book immediately after having learned how to form their letters in sand, and the syllabary was taught in Comly’s peculiar sequence. Comly’s was far more heavily a “meaning” text than Webster’s and rates only a Code 7. It is one of the few spelling texts which succeeded in straddling the critical 1826 change-date in America, being published for years before 1826 and many, many years afterwards, undoubtedly because of its bias towards “meaning.” However, in 1817, Kelly was using Bell’s “unreiterated spelling” for multisyllable words, so he was familiar with Bell’s original philosophy.

Both Bell and Lancaster appear to have been opportunists, although highly successful ones. Their “monitorial system” faded because of its failures, but the thrust to form religious schools for the poor was permanent and met with permanent success. In the meantime, Brougham was pushing for the establishment of government schools for the poor, but failed in his attempt. Yet, by 1830, successful religious charity schools were in operation: the National schools of the Church of England, the British and Foreign School Society schools, and the Sessional Schools of Scotland. After Brougham’s failure, it was these charitable religious schools that the record indicates the activists sought to “improve” by taking over the authority for running them. However it would be another forty years, in 1870, before purely government schools would come into being in England. Activists were then able to use superior financial resources (the public’s tax dollars) to push these religious schools for the poor, which for much of their existence had been dominated by government agencies anyway and not by the churches, from the center of the stage into a minority, underfunded position.

Ellis also wrote of the 1833 grant, and the laws passed about that time on education, as follows: (pages 14 and 15):

“In 1833 the House of Commons voted a sum of L20,000 ‘for the purposes of education’, an action which attracted very little attention at the time. The British and National Societies shared the grant and used it in the building of schools.... In 1839 a Committee of Council on Education was appointed by Order in Council ‘to superintend the application of any sums voted by Parliament for the purpose of promoting public education.’ Engels commented in 1844 that a mere L40,000 was devoted to public education in a budget of L55 million.”

Even though not much government money was going towards education by 1844, the critical date for government control was 1839, when the Committee of Council on Education was formed. After 1839, the Committee of Council on Education held the purse-strings and therefore had the potential power to control any religious schools in England and Wales which accepted any government money. In due course, as might have been anticipated, it exercised that power.

Concerning other legislation on education, Ellis wrote:

“(By the Factory Act of 1833) at the conclusion of their 8 hours of work, those between 9 and 13 were to attend schools provided by the employers....

“The Poor Law Reform Act of 1834 stipulated that children in workhouses should receive 3 hours’ instruction each day.... The Ragged School Union was founded in 1844 “to promote the



education of the waifs and strays of great cities...” Sunday schools continued to provide facilities... The average length of school life on a national level rose from approximately 1 year in 1835 to 2 years in 1851.”

Ellis confirmed that little effective governmental interference in education had occurred before 1851, despite the laudable efforts to lessen child labor. Before 1851, little time was spent in school: on the average, for the whole nation, only two years in 1851. Most of the adult population at that time, therefore, and for some years afterwards, had not learned to read in government-controlled schools. Furthermore, many religious schools were commonly refusing government grants before mid-century in order to maintain their independence.

In *The Victorian Country Child*, The Roundwood Press, Kington, England, 1974, by Pamela Horn, now published by Sutton Publishing, Stroud, Gloucestershire, England, she wrote:

“In its early days, state aid was confined to the two voluntary societies which had done the most to build schools and bring education within the reach of the underprivileged. These were the Church of England National Society, founded in 1811, and the British and Foreign School Society, set up shortly afterwards on the basis of non-sectarian education - but having, in practice, a close association with Nonconformity....” (page 40)

“State inspection of elementary schools began with the recruitment of the first two H.M.I.s in December, 1839. Their appointment followed approximately six years after the first Government grants had been made towards the education of the poor, and from 1839 acceptance of a grant automatically gave the right of official inspection. Dislike of inspection, however, often made school authorities unwilling to take advantage of the financial help available, and in 1847 there were, for example, in Lincolnshire only forty-three Church Schools under government inspection; ten years later the figure has risen to 124, but even then the local H.M.I., the Rev. J. J. Blandford, was lamenting that ‘the managers of the schools connected with the Church at Louth have not put them under inspection in order to avail themselves of the pecuniary assistance afforded... At Grimsby there are no schools under inspection...’ In other counties the position was similar, but as time passed, and as changes were made in the grants available... this reluctance was slowly broken down....” (pages 39-49)

Ellis felt the short time spent in school must have been harmful for basic literacy, writing:

“During the decade following the distribution to the religious societies of the first parliamentary grant, the standard of literacy remained low. The situation in the north-west was perhaps typical of the national level, in that a fair proportion of working-class children read with fluency but very few demonstrated by their expression that they understood what they read.”

Yet his own citations on pages 47-48 disprove that statement. (As will be discussed, “reading with expression” is a fake issue and has nothing to do with the fundamental ability to read.)

“In the later 1850’s it was not uncommon in British and Wesleyan schools in the north for at least 75% of the children to read books of general interest with fluency, but even in the highest standards there was an almost complete absence of expression.”

Most children in these schools were very young since most stayed in school only a few years. Yet, of the total number of school children in the British and Wesleyan schools, which included rank beginners, three out of four could read books that were not their school books, but “books of general interest,” which they read “with fluency.” Note, however, that these children were not in the Church of England schools

that had been adversely influenced almost from their beginning by Bell's ideas on teaching beginning reading for "meaning." By the late 1850's, Ellis cited statistics from the Church of England schools which were almost the precise reverse of the British and Wesleyan schools, which will be discussed later.

Before the late 1850's, what were the conditions for the learning of basic literacy in those other available schools, the "dame schools," which were a major influence on much of the lower-class population until after that date?

English lower-class children had read far more competently, as the 18th century chapbook sales prove, when their education was limited to the much-maligned dame schools and they learned to read by simple "sound" instead of convoluted "meaning." The motive of the poor in the eighteenth century for buying chapbooks had been the same as the motive today to buy television sets: simple enjoyment. Those children who learned, casually, to read in the informal dame schools needed no government-funded committee with a slogan like, "Read, read read!" in order to read and enjoy chapbooks, any more than children would need a slogan today like "Look, look, look!" to make them watch television.

Ellis wrote:

"There were in 1851, 13,879 'dames' schools' in England and Wales, the majority of which functioned for the supervision of children whilst their parents were at work, but could not be regarded as places of instruction. In the Census of 1851, more than 700 heads of such schools certified their returns with a mark...."

Dame schools were dying out by 1851. A number like 13,179 could only handle a portion of the population at infant-school age. It is unfortunate that 700 "heads of such schools certified their returns with a mark." This means, however, that 13,179 "heads of such schools" did NOT "certify their returns with a mark," or 95% of the "heads of such schools"!

The ability to sign one's name is a standard test for literacy. These poor women, members of the underprivileged underclass in England, had a far, far higher literacy rate (95%) in 1851 than the general population in almost any country in Europe, including England, and certainly higher than the female population in almost any country in Europe, as shown by the statistics in *Literacy and Development in the West* by Carlo M. Cipolla (Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland: 1969). In his own text, Ellis reported on page 46 that the illiteracy rate in England in 1851 for men was 30.7% and for women 34.7%, citing "Cole" as his source. Yet the illiteracy rate for the dame school heads in England was only 5% in 1851! If they had been employed mainly as baby-sitters, their illiteracy rate would have exceeded the English average for women in 1852 of 34.7%, since they were members of the poorer classes in which illiteracy was far more common. Yet their illiteracy rate was not only not higher than the average of 34.7% for English women, but far lower: 5%. It is statistically obvious that the vast majority of these poor women were chosen by the parents of poor children for their ability to teach simple reading, not for their baby-sitting talents.

These dame school heads, commonly referred to as old women, were certainly over 25 years of age on the average. Therefore, they probably learned to read by the syllable method before the critical change-over period about 1830 in methods for teaching beginning reading. If these old women had any text at all for their dame-school charges, it was probably either a spelling book or the folded sheet of cardboard called the battledore. The battledore commonly included the syllabary and did not die out until after 1851.

Tuer had said in his book (page 414):

“A paper on the horn-book in Willis’s Current Notes for October 1855 thus opens: ‘Horn-Books are now so completely superseded by the Battledore and the various forms of Reading Made Easy that they are rarely met with, and few persons believe that such was formerly the means adopted to teach the infantine idea how to shoot.’

“The Battledore began to fail in popularity between the thirties and forties, but it lingered on until about the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851 or a little later.”

There is, of course, no guarantee these mid-century battledores which certainly included the alphabet still included the syllabary, but some may have, and certainly old ones still in use did. Old women who had learned by the syllabary knew the function of the syllabary, however. They did not even need a text to teach it, even the cheap cardboard battledores, which were still in print in 1851.

Some other simple, cheap material with the syllabary must also have hung on to mid-century and may have been used in dame-schools along with the horn books, battledores and spellers. In his book first published in 1897, Tuer stated (page 398):

“Among the last wooden tablets used in English schools was the small handleless deal slab with alphabet and figures on one side and syllabarium on reverse, also published by the Sunday School Union, and known as Freeman’s Lesson Board, which sold for a penny. It appears in a catalogue dated 1835, and only a couple of years ago the dustman cleared away the discarded stock.”

The battledores and simple material like Freeman’s Lesson Board probably died out after the mid-century BECAUSE dame schools were largely replaced by government-authorized schools by that time. Government reading textbook grants were given to such schools only for reading books published in series, or for the phony phonics charts, Reading Disentangled, which are discussed elsewhere. Like Goody Two-Shoes, therefore, the despised dame schools in 1851 could probably still turn out little children who could read because they were teaching with the “sound” method with their simple materials like the battledore and old spellers. Yet the schools taking government textbook grants demonstrated shortly afterwards they could NOT teach reading to the majority of children even up to the age of twelve. This is proven beyond any possible doubt by the enormous oral reading failure rates above the beginning levels on the graded tests known as the Standards, to be cited later. Yet for children to pass at the beginning levels was largely meaningless, as they were tested on reading books which they had memorized. As quoted later, one inspector said they could go on “reading” aloud even if their reading textbook fell on the floor. The oral reading failures occurred because the schools taking government textbook grants purchased reading books in “meaningful” reading series, and were therefore using the “meaning” method instead of the “sound” method for teaching beginning reading which was still being used in the dame schools.

Tuer quoted a reference to a vast quantity of a simple version of the horn book which had been printed only to end up as an inventory-glut. This would obviously have happened suddenly and unexpectedly. The glut suggests the market for this variation of the old horn book had suddenly dried up, to the presumed surprise of its unfortunate printer. A sudden drying up of the market for hornbook-like materials about 1823 would have been the case in schools influenced by Bell, and by about 1830 in the Sessional Schools in Scotland, the government schools in Ireland and the more “modern” Sunday Schools. On pages 269 and 270, Tuer quoted from “Notes Towards the History of the Horn-Book by Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie, Esq., F.S.A., Read 7th May 1863. (Society of Antiquaries)”:

“Passing from the Horn-book proper, covered with horn, we next come in point of date to those Horn-books merely covered with varnish or mucilage. These are probably of more recent

origin, and date from the beginning of this century only. The price of these varied from one penny to twopence each, and the chief printers of those were a firm in Long Lane, Smithfield. Mr. Ofor told me that on the introduction of the spelling-book to a greater extent these objects became obsolete, and upwards of a Million and a half of these common Horn-books were destroyed, on account of there being no longer any demand for them, on clearing out the warehouse of his brother and himself. Still they seem to have lingered on in use down in country villages till about 1820, many persons with whom I have conversed having been taught their letters from them. The central northern and western counties abounded in them until the spelling-book became more common. In Scotch parlance they were called Ah Bay Broads or A B Boards, and traces of their use are still recoverable in various districts of the Scottish Lowlands and Border counties. Between the introduction of the spelling-book generally, however, there was a transition period in which folding cards called Battledores specially were used. Of these I beg to exhibit several specimens. They contained more than the ordinary Horn-book, as may be seen, and were adorned with rude woodcuts. But they in turn have passed away and are no longer in use. The copies on the table were mostly printed in the Midland Counties, and bore prices varying from twopence to fourpence.”

When Mackenzie was writing in 1863, more than thirty years after the switch from “sound” to “meaning” in schools influenced by the activists, Mr. Ofor and he could only have been guessing on the cause of the hornbook and battledore’s demise. The hornbook, the battledore, and the spelling-book-for-beginners had all been wiped out by the arrival of the “meaningful” primers for beginners. It should be pointed out that the battledore with its pictures and folding pages was considerably more expensive than the simple pasteboard hornbook. The hornbook and battledore were not competitors, but were meant for different markets. The true battledore did not replace the hornbook, but the market for both disappeared, the pretty pictures on the battledore probably making it linger a little longer for use as an ABC picture book.

Government schools enforcing mandatory attendance laws and controlling the content of what is taught to the children of the people are a fact of life today in most of the Western world, including the United States and Great Britain. Such government schools were virtually unknown before 1817 except in militaristic Prussia and in France where they were one of the first fruits of the French Revolution. Yet most people have been conditioned to regard these dictatorial institutions, which run roughshod over the rights of parents, as one of the most notable “achievements” of “progress.” In her 1974 book, *The Victorian Country Child*, now published by Sutton Publishing, Gloucestershire, Pamela Horn was giving the standard, accepted interpretation of English educational history when she wrote the following concerning the “appalling” educational facilities which such government-subsidized schools removed from the English landscape. She based her comments in part on quotations from nineteenth century government school inspectors, who must logically, of course, be considered vested interests.

The nineteenth century dame schools which the government school inspectors belittled in their remarks had been in existence since at least about the mid-seventeenth century, and curiously had met not only with little opposition such as theirs but instead had met with tacit approval until Brougham’s day about 1817. That is a period of about two hundred years! It was only when activists mounted their campaign for government-controlled schools starting about 1817 that the private dame schools began to be described as appalling. It is therefore only logical to consider carefully the fact that the two opponents to the dame schools whom Horn quoted were both government school inspectors with a vested interest in government-subsidized schools. They had no authority whatsoever over the dame schools. The first comments Pamela Horn quoted were from “the Rev. W. Warburton,” Her Majesty’s Inspector in 1858. Horn said (page 26):

“Perhaps the worst offenders in this respect were the ‘dame schools’ which still survived in many localities, where mothers sent their youngsters for a penny or two per week and which were little more than child-minding institutions. In 1858 the Rev. W. Warburton, H.M.I. for the Berkshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Isle of Wight area, condemned these schools in no uncertain terms: ‘The greater part of the private dames’ schools are held in dwelling rooms... It is one of the many ways of making their bread adopted by people scrambling for a livelihood in no certain or definite calling. The children in such schools frequently spend a great part of the school hours sitting on forms round the kitchen, with dog-eared pages of spelling-books in their hands, from which they are supposed to be learning, while the “schoolmistress” is engaged in sewing, washing or cooking..’ He thought that their only merit was that they habituated the children ‘to some little restraint for certain hours every day...’”

The inspector’s comments were meant to be a total condemnation, but buried in their venom, by his very own testimony, can be found certain facts about most 1858 dame schools of which he knew: “The children... spend a great part of the school hours... with... spelling-books in their hands, from which they are supposed to be learning...” The children were therefore not using the first books of the sight-word reading series in use in the government-subsidized schools (the “meaning” approach), but instead were following the old-fashioned method of using spellers to learn to read (the “sound” approach).

The “Payment by Results” tests came out in the government’s Revised Code of 1862, only four years after the inspector’s acid remarks. Standards I and II in the government-subsidized schools concerned children of approximately seven or eight years of age, or older children who had failed Standard III. This group of children, apparently the majority of children in the government-subsidized schools at that time, were not required to spell ANYTHING in 1862, other than to write the letters of the alphabet from dictation. Even in Standard II, the only spelling (“Writing”) required was the following:

“Copy in manuscript character a line of print.”

At Standard III in the 1862 regulations (for children of about nine years of age who had passed Standards I and II), some spelling finally entered the “thorough and efficient” government-sponsored “tests”:

“Standard III

“Reading: A short paragraph from an elementary reading book used in the school.

“Writing: A sentence from the same paragraph slowly read once, and then dictated in single words.”

As described elsewhere, the children memorized their readers and, as one inspector said, could go on “reading” even if the books fell on the floor. However, the children could not memorize the spellings of all those words, so the spelling in Standard III was very demanding for such badly taught children, but the children did have the crutch of something like “short term memory” to help them, since they had recently looked at the short paragraph concerned.

Even as late as 1871, little spelling was required of seven year old children (and none, of course, of younger children). The New Code of Regulations in 1871 read for Standard I:

“Writing: Copy in manuscript character a line of print and write from dictation a few common words.”

As discussed elsewhere, very few lower class children went any higher in school than Standard III. The dame schools using “sound” spellers to teach reading, therefore, were far more demanding in 1858 than the government-subsidized schools using “meaning” readers were for years after 1871!

The inspector had said in 1858:

“The children in such schools frequently spend a great part of the school hours sitting... with dog-eared pages of spelling-books in their hands... while the ‘schoolmistress’ is (otherwise) engaged....”

That means, of course, that at OTHER times than “frequently,” the children did NOT sit while the schoolmistress was otherwise engaged. No matter how his statement is rearranged, the inspector has tacitly admitted that the dame schoolmistresses DID work with the children, and did not just “baby-sit” them, and what she was teaching them was how to spell and read!

Two other facts emerged: These were children of the poor, and yet their parents chose to spend their little money for a “private” education and even obtained the “dog-eared spelling books” without the government subsidy available in the government-subsidized schools. That some parents still chose to pass up the free schools and possibly free books or at least partly subsidized books is an intriguing fact. (Pamela Horn mentioned government- subsidized schools did sometimes have a charge for school “pence.”)

The last fact concerns what we call today, “individualized instruction.” In the crowded government-subsidized schools, little personal attention was possible, despite the good intentions of the schoolmasters. Yet in the relative quiet of a poor woman’s kitchen, sitting on a little bench, personal attention was not only possible but probable, and so were kindness and affection for the relatively few little children under the poor woman’s charge, whose parents she probably knew fairly intimately.

The contempt and lack of sympathy for the poor women running these little dame schools and the contempt for the problems of the poor in general are glaringly obvious in this inspector’s remarks. As Pamela Horn pointed out, these “inspectors” were almost uniformly upper-class men with little understanding of the lower-class teachers and students in the government- subsidized schools over whom they had dictatorial authority. After 1862, when government grants were awarded only on the basis of how many children passed the inspectors’ tests, the inspectors terrified teachers and students and were almost uniformly regarded as ogres.

It should never be forgotten that the abridgment of parental rights and of academic freedom in the nineteenth century was the government’s gift to the poor of freedom-loving England. Yet because of the admitted failure of government schools, both England and America are presently engaged in writing testing “standards” once again. Tests did not improve the English schools in the late nineteenth century, nor will they improve schools today. However, they will achieve something: a centralized control over the “truths” that are fed into children’s minds.

Pamela Horn stated (page 26):

“Particularly from the 1870’s, however, only a small minority of children attended dame schools. The vast majority in the country areas were educated at schools run in accordance with the principles of the National Society, a Church of England organization.”

Pamela Horn made it clear, however, that control over the schools was not exerted by the church, but by the state, in the person of “Her Majesty’s Inspectors,” who controlled the purse strings with their tests.

Government grants to schools were made only on the basis of “results” after 1862. She quoted the comments of another “H.M.I.” concerning the dame schools, eighteen years after Rev. Warburton’s comments, or in 1876. She said that inspector, who was working in the Chester district:

“...likewise condemned [the dame schools] as places ‘where a number of children are huddled together, learning almost absolutely nothing except perhaps knitting...’ Nevertheless, in view of what has been said about the low temperatures in the ordinary day schools, it is perhaps worth noting that this H.M.I. considered one of the reasons for the survival of the dame schools was that parents believed them ‘warmer than the school.’“

Score another one for parental choice among the poor! They freely chose to pay out some of the very little money they had to improve their children’s circumstances! The inspector admitted the parents were protecting their children’s health which was endangered in the government- subsidized icy schoolrooms. (However, as mentioned, in the government-subsidized schools, school “pence” was often collected, so it may not have been a greatly increased expense in some cases.)

Turning this inspector’s 1876 statement inside out, as was done with the 1858 statement, also reveals an unwilling admission from him that the women in these warm kitchens were also teaching something besides knitting: “learning almost absolutely nothing” is NOT “learning absolutely nothing.” Therefore, even according to his exceedingly hostile comment, something besides knitting WAS being taught, and part of that something WAS being learned.

The private dame schools that had been everywhere before 1817 and had produced a large degree of literacy among the poor were essentially gone, however, fifty years later, by 1867. To follow the changes in reading instruction in Great Britain and Ireland after 1817, it is necessary to follow the history of such organized charitable schools as those founded by Bell and Lancaster, and the history of the government schools for the poor in England and Wales after their founding in 1870. Reading texts apparently were often edited to fit the requirements of these tax-subsidized schools. The private schools for the children of richer families, still very much in existence, do not appear to have been a determining factor in the make-up of texts for instruction in reading. Presumably, they used the same reading series as the government-subsidized schools. However, until about 1860, the charitable schools, despite partial government subsidies, often could not afford to buy these reading series, but, as will be mentioned, depended largely on the Bible as a textbook.

The dame schools had represented “control from the bottom.” Teaching methods that had worked in these little schools had persisted, but methods that did not work died a natural death. Government-controlled schools represented “control from the top” by “experts.” What “works” in government-controlled schools is not objective success, but conformity to regulations framed by “experts.” When government regulations do not concern the actual operation of the school itself (as when fake “local control” is permitted) the same end has always been achieved through the government’s requirement that all teachers be “properly licensed” or that their teaching “results” should be “tested.” “Properly licensed” teachers are only those who have been subjected to brainwashing in teachers’ colleges, the curriculum of which always conforms to “expert” opinion. As a result of de facto control by “experts,” virtually all teachers colleges, everywhere, have always endorsed teaching reading by “meaning” and an enormous amount of other harmful nonsense.

When teachers and administrators later read “professional” educational journals, they only get more of the same brainwashing from “experts,” but wrapped in the vocabulary of whatever is the current worthless enthusiasm, such as “whole language” at present.

Even though fake “local control” may be permitted, “control from the top” by “experts” is therefore maintained through influencing the teaching methods and philosophies of “properly licensed teachers,” and through government “testing” of their teaching “results.”

On page 45 of *A History of Children’s Reading and Literature*, Pergamon Press, Oxford: 1968, Alec Ellis wrote concerning the growth of such regulations and requirements in England and Wales:

“Educational development in the elementary sector between 1833 and 1870 was implemented virtually without legislation, but through the agency of departmental Minutes. Numerous attempts were made in 1843, 1853, 1855, 1867, and 1868, to improve the facilities which were available, but in each case they proved abortive in the face of opposition from religious organizations. It may be inferred from the regularity with which the topic was raised, that there was a growing movement favourable to popular education.”

The above is one of the most frightening of the developments. Parental authority and school autonomy were taken away from the poor in England and Wales, not by a properly elected legislative body, but by the dictatorial actions of bureaucrats. This is clear from the statement by Ellis quoted previously:

“Educational development in the elementary sector between 1833 and 1870 was implemented virtually without legislation, but through the agency of departmental Minutes.”

The bureaucrats achieved their planned and effectively PRIVATE “development” despite “opposition from religious organizations” which had apparently successfully opposed their necessarily PUBLIC legislative “attempts” of 1843, 1853, 1855, 1867 and 1868. “..(T)he regularity with which the topic was raised... favourable to popular education” shows that two groups had developed: the “religious organizations” working in opposition to government schools, and “a growing movement” of non-religious organizations promoting government schools. Yet the power was on the side of the government-school “movement” which had captured dictatorial powers through “departmental Minutes.” Furthermore, this was in Edmund Burke’s England which has always quite properly boasted of its liberty. Yet the dictatorial bureaucrats continue today on both sides of the ocean, acting as if they own the children of the public.

Ellis wrote on page 46:

“In many of the manufacturing towns, only a minority of children obtained education of any kind, and in 1852 extremely few aged 12 or more would be found at school.”

The false assumption is made that a person must attend a formal school past the age of 12 to be educated, and therefore those who did not in 1852 were uneducated. Among those in 1852 who had not attended school past the age of 12 was Father Isaac Hecker, since “12” was a normal school-leaving age when he was a boy in America in the early nineteenth century. Without any further education, Hecker at about age 20 fitted right in with the Transcendentalist philosophers in New England, studying Hegel, et al, which required a vast amount of “reading comprehension.” Eventually Hecker threw it all up and became a Roman Catholic convert and founder of the Paulist Fathers. Yet no one ever raised the suggestion that Hecker might have been uneducated because he left school at 12.

Of course, some of Hecker’s contemporaries did not attend school more than a year or two: Abraham Lincoln had only about a year’s attendance. In the previous century, Benjamin Franklin had only about two years. I never heard anyone say that Benjamin Franklin was uneducated. At that, the under-educated Lincoln and Franklin did better than some underprivileged women who almost never attended school, like



the Bronte sisters in England, for instance, from whom came such works as *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*.

With America's mandatory school attendance laws, we have solved the "education problem" of people like Hecker, Lincoln, Franklin and the Bronte sisters. Now most American children must attend school to age 16. Isn't it consoling to know that most native-born American functional illiterates attended school EIGHT YEARS LONGER than Abraham Lincoln and SEVEN YEARS LONGER than Benjamin Franklin? Hecker, Lincoln, Franklin and the Bronte sisters learned to read when the only method used was "sound," but our functional illiterates were taught how to be functional illiterates by the "meaning" method which does take years to "teach." As a result, they cannot even read a paragraph in a newspaper out loud without missing those low frequency words that they cannot "meaningfully" guess from the context.

In *The Victorian Country Child* by Pamela Horn, The Roundwood Press, Kineton: 1974, now published by Sutton Publishing, Gloucestershire, she reproduced literacy data on convicts under sixteen years of age, all apparently among the poorest classes. The data concerned Oxfordshire County and certain of its court Sessions between 1851 and 1853, and between 1861 and 1864. Children in the former period ranged in age from 12 to 15, and would have been five-year-olds of school age between 1841 and 1845. Children in the latter period ranged in age between 10 and 15 and would have been five-year-olds of school age between 1852 and 1859.

That the spread of formal education had made some difference was shown by the fact that, of the former group of 14 children, 6 were illiterate, and, of the latter group of 10 children, only one was illiterate. Of the former group who learned to read before the widespread existence of schools and schoolbooks for the poor, and when AVERAGE school attendance in England was only about one year, 8 of 14, or 57%, received the comment, "Reads and writes imperfectly." Of the group in school between 1852 and 1859, when average school attendance was about two years but when government-approved reading series were still not widely used in schools for the poor and the poor learned to read by "sound" in spelling books, 9 of 10, or 90%, received the comment, "Reads and writes imperfectly."

Yet, as will be shown, when the government-subsidized schools had really spread, and children learned uniformly from "reading series," which taught by "meaning," instead of "sound," which books the children had to use to pass reading "standards," the statement was made that 80% left school without having obtained any permanent benefit. Even though the children had used these "meaning" reading series for five years or so (which, as will be shown, they usually did not read independently but instead memorized by chanting them aloud in chorus), it was acknowledged that eighty per cent could not even "read and write imperfectly" when they left school! This is further proof that with the increase in school attendance and the use of the "meaning" reading series and the demise of the "sound" speller, literacy had decreased, not increased.

Similarly, it is a notorious fact today that in American prisons the majority are illiterate, even though they attended government schools using "meaning" reading series for many years. Present-day illiterate convicts, who have served many years of mandatory attendance in government schools before serving their time in prison, make a sad comparison to the majority of the little Oxfordshire "convicts" between 1851 and 1864, who may have had only one year in school but who were not illiterate, probably because they learned to read by "sound" and not by "meaning." Furthermore, as Pamela Horn's pathetic tabulation indicates, these very poor children were often imprisoned for minor offenses such as stealing a cotton handkerchief, or fifteen ounces of bacon, or a cotton dress.

One of the reasons these poor children had been able to learn to read with only a year or so of school is that they were shielded from exposure to the new "meaning" texts appearing after 1826, since their

schools were too poor to buy them. Ellis showed that many schools for the poor, the kind of schools in which the little “convicts” would have learned to read, had no school books other than Bibles until after the mid-century (page 16-19):

“It was the normal practice where books were provided in schools for the Bible to be used as the textbook for instruction in reading, a feature which was continuously criticized by inspectors after 1839. In the diocese of Winchester, the schools were simply extensions of Sunday schools, and an adequate education for working-class children was thought to comprise an ability to recite the Church catechism and to master the mechanics of reading from the Bible. Children memorized the contents of the Bible so that it was impossible to test their reading ability unless they were presented with the same words in a different context.”

This is obviously ridiculous. Anyone who could memorize the Bible would be a genius. These children, who had not learned to read in “meaning” primers, could really read!

Ellis continued:

“In 69 Midlands schools out of 103 for which returns were compiled in 1844, Bibles or extracts therefrom were the only form of reading material, but in most schools throughout England and Wales no attempt was made to provide books of any kind....

“A further difficulty was the price of secular books in relation to that for Bibles and Testaments. In 1844, a well bound and printed new Testament could be obtained from the S.P.C.K. for 6d, whilst its 4th Reader cost 1s. 6d.... As long as this situation persisted it was unlikely that secular books would be introduced into schools in large numbers.”

Ellis referred on page 16 to:

“...a report in 1847 for the southern counties of Berkshire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire... of a population of 6213, 17% could read the Bible fluently, 50% could read simple passages from the Gospels, while the remaining 33% were learning letters and monosyllables.”

This was obviously an 1847 school “population” of young children, one-third of whom were beginners. The rest must also have been very young and under 12 years old, since, as Ellis said later concerning 1852, very few over 12 years of age were in school. Yet, two-thirds of this very young population could read very well. Since they had only the Bible, and no “books of any kind” provided by the school, they were all obviously shielded from Andrew Bell’s appalling reading materials.

The Bible, which had been the mainstay of the schools for the poor, including the Church of England schools using S.P.C.K. (Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge) materials, began to be thoroughly displaced by “meaning” reading series by 1860. Ellis wrote of conditions in the schools of the British and Foreign School Society, which were probably representative of most schools (pages 53-54):

“An inspector of British schools contrasted the situation at mid-century, when in most schools the Bible was the only reading book, with 1860 when books written in a readable style, upon the subjects of everyday life, were easily accessible.”

Therefore, by 1860, the “meaning” reading series, which had displaced the “sound” spellers after about 1826 as the correct beginning material, had finally taken over virtually all the schools, including the schools for the poor. The 1862 government reading standards were set up to test achievement only in such “meaning” reading series. The spelling book which had taught beginning reading by “sound” was

implicitly outlawed for beginners since the first book of the government-approved “meaning”-method reading series was the only one that was subsidized for beginners with government money.

The Bible was no longer considered to be a suitable test of reading ability, but only books in the “meaning”-method reading series were. Nor, of course, was any mention made in the “standards” of ability to read the catechism! Schools predictably taught reading with the government-subsidized reading books so that children could pass the government-required reading tests. The Bible was pushed out of the schools as a reading text, along with the catechism that had been part of English elementary education for three hundred years. For those who recall Orestes Brownson’s testimony quoted elsewhere in this history concerning the education activists’ aims in America about 1830 to remove religion from education, but without making a direct attack on religion, the developments in Great Britain by 1860 will hardly seem accidental.

## **Chapter 38**

### **Beginning Reading Materials Published After 1826 in the British Isles Shifted to “Meaning.”**

Those school reading books which were published after about 1826, even though schools for the poor usually could not buy them until about 1860, had shifted from “sound” to “meaning” very suddenly. School books available in Great Britain not long after 1830 show that by then “meaning” had almost buried “sound” for beginning reading in publishing. The victory for “meaning” can best be shown by the list of “approved” books listed by the British government in 1848, the only books on which government subsidies were to be available. (For the government to issue any such list of “approved” books was blatant censorship, of course.) Ellis stated (pages 20-21):

“In 1847 the Committee of Council agreed to reverse its decision regarding grants for books in schools, and resolved that it was expedient to encourage the introduction of ‘the most approved lesson books.’ Schedules of these books were prepared for the approbation of the Committee, and all books, for the purchase of which grants were made, were to be selected by school managers from the Schedules (figs. 8-14).”

This material which Ellis included was titled, “Schedule of Lesson Books for the Scholars, Reproduced from the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, Vol. I, 1847/48) p. 22-28.” Ellis stated (page 18):

“Among the publishers who produced books for elementary school children in the 1840’s were the British and Foreign School Society, the Irish Commissioners of Education, the Edinburgh Sessional School, Messrs. Chambers, and the S.P.C.K. In 1844 the latter body issued its first Educational Series and selections from Lady Eleanor Fenn’s series of graded reading primers, Cobwebs to Catch Flies (1783?). Kay Shuttleworth compiled The First Phonic Reading Book (1843) which was approved by the Committee of Council on Education, but was subjected to scathing criticism in The Quarterly Review.”

Kay Shuttleworth was intimately concerned with the founding of normal schools in England to train teachers. As will be shown in a later reference, the “phonics” in such normal schools was phony phonics, the two-step comparison of an unknown whole word to a memorized sight-word previously learned for “meaning.” The claim was actually made that the use of “phonics” was possible on only about 50% of English words! Kay Shuttleworth’s 1843 text cannot be located, but presumably was two-step phony phonics, or Code 3.

Note that the S.P.C.K. (the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge) which was preparing the material for the Church of England schools was still following the Bell “meaning” approach to beginning reading. It was using the impoverished vocabulary and syntax of Cobwebs to Catch Flies in place of the speller, although its author, Lady Eleanor Fenn, had obviously not abandoned the speller. Lady Fenn had written A Spelling Book, Designed to Render the Acquisition of the Rudiments of Our Native Language Easy and Pleasant....

Ellis said (page 21):

“Two schedules were prepared in 1848, one of books and maps for the use of scholars and the other for teachers and pupil-teachers. It was intended to amend the Schedules, as particular books

either ceased to be used or were introduced into schools. The publishing house of Longmans was appointed as agent of the Committee for the distribution of books to schools... Listed in the Schedules for the use of pupils were 83 books, 43 of which were reading books... The prerogative of rejection was exercised on two groups:

“(1) the unsuitability of a work for elementary education; and

“(2) the book belonging to a category of literature too numerous to be contained in a list.

“The principal classes excluded were ..languages, biography.... reading lesson books not forming part of a series...

“The schools of the National and British Societies were not the sole beneficiaries of the new grants as they had been in 1833.”

The table did not name the publisher, William Chambers, whose company Ellis had implied published some of the 1848 materials listed. Presumably, that company published one of the series named on the table only by its author. On page 51 of his book, Ellis implied that it was during the 1850's that Chambers published a series called the Educational Course, and then referred to Chambers publishing two reading series after the 1870's, Educational Course and English Readers. Ellis said Chambers also published the subject-matter texts, Historical Readers, apparently in the 1880's, and Elementary Science Manuals, apparently in the 1890's, thereby following the publishing trends. In an appendix to Pamela Horn's 1974 book, *The Victorian Country Child*, she published an excerpt from the Standard IV level of W. & R. Chambers' 1863 series, Chambers's Narrative Series of Standard Reading Books, so Chambers was publishing that reading series in 1863, very possibly also called Educational Course. On page 77, Ellis said Chambers' Sixpenny Books for the Young were part of the juvenile fiction being published in the 1880's largely for sale as school prizes. Therefore, Chambers was one of many British publishers of school texts during the nineteenth century, and the materials Ellis described suggest Chambers was fairly typical of commercial British publishers at that time, as opposed to government or charitable publishers such as S.P.C.K.

The table showed S.P.C.K. published two reading series in the 1840's. (It made no mention of the fact that S.P.C.K. also published the Bible at a huge discount for schools. Nor were purchases of the Bible to be eligible for any government grant money in church schools!) The table stated, “These books are in use chiefly in Church of England Schools connected with the National Society.” Both S.P.C.K. reading series lacked a speller. Since one was the purely sight-word “Cobwebs” approach, so, presumably, was the other, carrying on the Andrew Bell “meaning” approach that had been used by the National schools since before 1823, at which time Bell had thrown out the speller for beginners.

No information is available on the books used by the British and Foreign School Society, of which the schedule said, “These books are in general use in schools of the British and Foreign School Society.” The fact that no speller was listed, and that the books were a “reading series,” suggests a move towards “meaning” and away from “sound” for beginners.

The British and Foreign School Society schools in 1848 when this government schedule was published had been almost uniformly using the Bible as a textbook, as stated earlier. Yet in their schools, as in the National schools, no government grant money was to be available to purchase new copies of the Bible or portions of the Bible, such as the Psalms that had been used in the Western World for beginning readers for two millenia. In effect, by holding the carrot of government money in front of the noses of the church school managers in 1848, the government schedules were encouraging the church school managers to remove the Bible as a basic reading text and to replace it with the “meaning” reading series.

Only twelve years later, by 1860, the testimony given previously indicates the Bible was gone as a basic reading text even in religious schools which were accepting government grants, and the “meaning” series were firmly in place.

The third series listed was a blatant sight-word “meaning” series about which the 1848 “schedule” wrote:

“Compiled and published under the authority of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland. These Reading Lesson Books were compiled for the National School established under the Board of Education in Ireland, but they are also extensively in use among all classes of schools in England, Wales, and Scotland.”

This “meaning” series in print by 1836 (and possibly earlier) was not a product of the competitive market place, but was a government series written under the control of the movers-and-shakers. Yet the series was the most widely used of ANY on the 1848 list and was still being printed in 1869! Note that this defective series prospered in the climate of “control from the top” that is the hallmark of government-sponsored schools. It will be discussed later, because its method was the classic Code 3 sight-word “phony phonics” that became dominant later, instead of the John Wood pure Code 1 sight-word approach based on word length. Yet the Irish National Schools “meaning” reading series superficially appeared to follow the phonic sequence of the old “sound” spelling books. The seemingly standard “spelling book” sequence of the new Irish Readers probably tended to deflect criticism.

The fourth set of approved reading texts on the government list were by Rev. J. M. M’Culloch. The British Library has filed under T. 975\* (5) a collection of “tracts,” one of which is A First Reading-Book for the Use of Schools; Containing the Alphabet, and Progressive Lessons in the Long and Short Sounds of the Vowels, by the Rev. J. M. M’Culloch, A.M., “Minister of Kelso, formerly Head-Master of Circus Place School, Edinburgh; Author of “A Manual of English Grammar, Philosophical and Practical, &c., Edinburgh: Published by Oliver & Boyd, Tweeddale Court; and Simpkin, Marshall & Co., London. 1837.” This First Reading Book is apparently the first book in M’Culloch’s reading series which was approved for government subsidy in 1848.

I did not have an opportunity to analyze the reading books themselves, the first two of which were in the binding, except to scan them, so cannot affix a firm Code number, but the philosophy, as expressed in the preface before the First Reading Book indicates that M’Culloch was producing a sight-word, context-dependent series, in which the “phonics” was to be analytic phonics meant primarily to help in enunciation (perhaps Code 4), though it could be taught with sounding the letters (at least Code 7) or, as he wrongly attributed to Jacotot, without any knowledge of the letters (Code 1)

As mentioned earlier, in his comments on Professor Pillans’ endorsement of Wood’s Sessional School in Edinburgh in 1828, the Scottish Schoolmaster had referred to the Circus Place School. M’Culloch had been headmaster at the Circus Place School some time before 1837. The Scottish Schoolmaster had said of that school:

“The Professor refers not to Circus Place School, where your masters and misses are taught after the new plan, but proposes to lead his pupils to witness the wonders performed at the Davie’s Street and Market Street Schools, where the children of the poor are instructed. In August 1826, I had occasion to be in Edinburgh, and hearing much said in praise of the method of tuition practiced in the Sessional School (Market Street), I prevailed upon a friend of mine to accompany me to see it....”

The Circus Place School of Edinburgh in 1828, therefore, was in step with the improvements of the activists which were in use at the Sessional School. The Circus Place School was a monitorial school for the children of prosperous families, set up just like the monitorial school for the poor of the highly publicized John Wood of Edinburgh. When McCulloch's book was published in 1837, its title page stated he was formerly "Headmaster of Circus Place School." That would presumably be about the time Professor Pillans made his comment on Circus Place School in 1828, to which the Scottish Schoolmaster referred. That McCulloch was in sympathy and connected with the activists is suggested further by this comment in his preface, in a footnote, after he had said children could be taught the alphabet either at the beginning of their instruction or during their learning of the first words:

"If the teacher prefers to both of the above methods the system of Jacotot - the system which dispenses with alphabetic instruction altogether, and to introduce the pupil from the first to the knowledge of words - he has only to omit the early pages of the book, and commence with the first sentence."

Yet, according to his preface, his "Books First, Second and Third" did teach the sounds of the alphabet, but a close reading of his statement shows the purpose was primarily enunciation, not decoding of print. His books could probably be used to teach phonically (and would then rate perhaps a Code 7) but they could also be used to teach by the alphabet method and "analytic phonics" on whole words, rating perhaps a Code 4, or could be taught, a la Jacotot (or, more precisely, according to M'Culloch's wrong interpretation of Jacotot's method), and rate a Code 1. They are therefore curious books, straddling various viewpoints.

Although M'Culloch took the time in 1837 to mention the opinions of Jacotot in Belgium, he TOTALLY OMITTED any mention of his famous fellow-schoolmaster in Edinburgh, John Wood, whose views on beginning reading at that very time were being promoted in far-away America. Yet what is revealing concerning M'Culloch's awareness of the changes being promoted by Wood is that McCulloch's "reading series" in 1837 totally omitted the speller as the beginning step and introduced children to reading through "meaningful" sentences.

Yet, in 1823, only 14 years before, Mavor in the preface to his speller which was quoted previously had taken it for granted that the columns of words in a spelling book were to be the beginning step in reading. Mavor's speller had been published by Longwood's, who became the book agent for the British schools in 1848. Mavor's "sound" syllable speller had been the mainstay of Longwood's business for years, as a source quoted previously had testified. Yet by 1848, only 25 years after Mavor revised his massively-used Longwood speller in 1823, the publisher Longwood became the book agent for all the "meaning" reading series in Britain which had displaced its own once-massively-used speller for beginners! Longwood apparently managed to straddle the period of the switch from "sound" to "meaning" while maintaining its comfortable profits.

M'Culloch wrote in his "Preface":

"In the following little work, an attempt has been made to furnish a series of Lessons fitted to serve the double purpose of introducing a child by easy gradations to the pronunciation of the English language, and of providing him with a kind of reading adapted to interest and exercise his opening faculties.... The principle is this: - to present only such lessons in the first instance, as exemplify the simple and primitive powers of the letters, and to introduce the learner to secondary and anomalous sounds by slow degrees and after.... intervals. Accordingly, it will be found that the lessons (are)... arranged in the order of the sounds of the letters; that the words of which they consist have been selected with a reference to their sound rather than their length; and that so far from restricting the beginner to words of one syllable, easy disyllables and... trisyllables have

been admitted in preference to monosyllables whenever the former exceeded the latter in simplicity of pronunciation.

“In the FIRST BOOK, all that is attempted is to furnish the means of familiarizing the pupil with the powers of the long and short vowels, and the primitive sounds of the consonants most in use - the most anxious care being taken to exclude from the lessons all words in which either vowels or consonants have other than their simple sound. In BOOK SECOND, .... is conducted... exercise on double consonants, diphthongs... and broad sounds of the vowels, and on single consonants, such as c and g which have two different sounds. And it is not until he has proceeded to the THIRD BOOK when he may be supposed able to read a simple lesson with tolerable felicity, that he is introduced to words in which an arbitrary combination of vowels and consonants is found. In short, the plan pursued throughout is to familiarize the pupil with the prevailing sounds before embarrassing him with any of the numerous varieties and anomalies, and thus to teach him the laws of English pronunciation \* in a gradual order of development, suited to a tender capacity....

“A few anomalous words, indeed, such as do, to, of, as, &c, which are so very much in use as to render it impractical to construct the simplest sentence without their aid, have withstood all attempts to exclude them; but these necessary deviations from the general principal will not present, in the first instance in which they occur, any material impediment to the pupil’s progress.... October 29, 1837”

The preface is disarming. The material sounds like excellent story-approach context versions of Noah Webster’s phonic speller. It is his footnote which raises grave doubts:

“It is perhaps scarcely necessary to guard the reader against supposing he will find a full and systematic view of English pronunciation in the present series of works.... The author has long been of opinion, that the time for a child to be taught orthography and orthoepy in the systematic manner in which they are exhibited in the best Spelling-books, is not at the commencement, but at the close of his Elementary Education.”

His further remark about the “ordinary” way of teaching suggests that the method normally used in Edinburgh by 1837 was the sight-word method, and that the teaching of phonics (“enunciating the letters”) was the exception. Furthermore, if “enunciating the letters” were not done, the syllable tables were to be dispensed with:

“If this method of enunciating the letters is followed, it will be found advantageous to teach the pupil to spell and pronounce the columns of syllables as well as the words on pages 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12; but if the ordinary mode is preferred, it will be better to omit the unmeaning syllables altogether and to confine his attention to the words in sentences. (These) last, his eye and memory assisted by his previous acquaintance with their sounds, will enable him readily to acquire, even though he may not be able to collect their sound from naming and combining the letters.”

In other words, the “ordinary” method in Edinburgh by 1837 was sight-words, followed by “elocution,” the children imitating the teacher’s enunciation, but children might have learned phonics from M’Culloch’s book intuitively because of the book’s arrangement.

M’Culloch’s books were very widely used, which suggests they were widely promoted. The government list of approved books stated:

“Dr. M’Culloch’s Series of Reading Lessons is in very general use in efficient middle-class schools, and the best Parochial and other Elementary Schools, in the north of England and



Scotland. As their character has become known in the midland and southern counties of England, they have had a constantly increasing sale.”

Yet the 1837 series must have run into trouble in “the best Parochial... Schools... in... Scotland,” because a powerful group there chose to write its own series, suggesting dissatisfaction with available material. The 1848 government list stated:

“Scottish School Book Association.... This new series has been compiled under the superintendence of the chief members of the Scottish Schoolmasters’ Association, and may be regarded as the work of the most intelligent members of that body. The use of these books is becoming more general in the parochial and private schools of Scotland.”

It is evident, with the phrase, the “use of these books is becoming more general” that the series was not taking the market by storm. The Scottish Schoolmasters’ Association and “the most intelligent members of that body” may very well have included people like the Scottish Schoolmaster who published in 1829 that wonderful collection of letters, but they did not have the influence of the activists. The primer the Scottish Schoolmasters produced (apparently about 1845) was a wonderful Code 8. The British Library has a copy under call number 12203 c 40 (1845?):

“PRIMER, OR NO. I. OF A NEW SERIES OF SCHOOL-BOOKS. Compiled for the Scottish School-Book Association. Stereotype Edition. Edinburgh: Published for the Association, by William Whyte and Co., Late Booksellers to Queen Adelaide, 13 George Street, Price One Penny Halfpenny.”

The title page repeats the above to “Compiled for the Scottish Schoolbook Association” and then has the alphabet in small letters underneath. That the material is meant to be phonic is shown by this remark on the title page: “Note - c and g sound hard as in can, go, in the first two Books. The soft sound is not introduced till No. III.” The bottom of the title page had the rest of the material which appeared on the cover. The fact that “method” in reading was important to the compilers of the book was shown further by the note on the back cover:

“N.B. - For directions as to the manner in which this book should be taught, see Report and Syllabus, to be had gratis of the Publishers.”

The primer taught the long vowels and the open syllabary before introducing sentences of two letter words, all words of which were open syllables with long vowels which had just been taught. It then taught the short vowels and closed syllabary and followed it with sentences of two letter words of long and short vowels, all of which had been taught. It then covered short “a” words of two and three letters, followed by sentences, working up through short “u” words of up to four letters, followed by sentences using the sounds introduced to that point. It continued to follow a systematic, phonic pattern through the book (one curious touch being its reference to the “short” sounds of the vowels as the “shut” sounds). It was deadly serious, however, about pupils’ learning its material, as shown by this note at the end:

“NB The pupil should not be allowed to leave this book, till he can read every lesson easily and accurately.”

The British Library’s copy was stamped Sept. 13, 1852. No further reference to the book has turned up in any sources I have seen, and I suspect it was not in use very widely. It apparently did not survive very long, as the appalling Irish Readers of 1836 or earlier did, which were still in print in 1869. It should be noted, however, despite its heavy reliance on “sound,” that it was a phonic primer, not a speller. The speller had obviously disappeared by 1845 as the text for beginners.

A disturbing fact is that William Collins II was “appointed publisher to the Scottish School Book Association and the Irish National Schools” some time after 1856, and:

“In a period of 10 years he provided the latter body with 2,320,500 copies of 31 books.”

Among those were the Irish Readers which Collins was then publishing (Ellis, page 51).

“In 1875 William Collins II purchased the Scottish School Book Association for which he had been agent” (Ellis, page 91).

Presumably, William Collins II was the heir to William Collins of Glasgow (Ellis, page 18):

“The house of Collins had issued its first school book in 1821 on commercial arithmetic, followed by a book of elocution. Collins attained success in 1836 when he published Leitch’s Practical and Economical Readers, and in 15 years sold 1 1/2 million copies.”

The list of approved books in 1848 included “The Juvenile Reader, by Neil Leitch, A Reading Lesson Book for the first or second class of an elementary school used in Scotland.” The British Library has, under call number 12985. A. 89, an 1848 copy of The First Monitorial Class Book, “Twenty-Fifth Edition. By N. Leitch, Late of Annfield School, Glasgow. F. Orr & Sons, & J. Lumsden & Son; Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh; Whittaker & Co., London.” This older book, in a twenty-fifth edition, was not on the approved list, but, with the word “monitorial” in its title, it must have been originally published far earlier. It was very possibly one of the widely sold series of “Practical and Economical Readers” originally published by the Collins company in 1836, to which Ellis referred on page 18, and it may have been published by these other companies by 1848 under some arrangement with the original publisher, Collins. Composed largely of short sentences, and despite some short vowel arrangement on some few words, this early book by Leitch was Code 1 in its over-all effect. It therefore seems likely that Neil Leitch’s Juvenile Reader which was on the 1848 approved list was also a Code 1 book.

Even though the Scottish Schoolmasters had published a Code 8 book diametrically opposed to Code 1 treatment about 1845, all their textbook sales some time after 1856 were apparently being handled by the successful publisher of the very early Code 1 Leitch readers, who were also publishing at that very time in 1856 the Code 3 Irish Readers! Such a publisher would hardly be likely to promote the Code 8 material. It sounds as if the activists had buried the Scottish Schoolmasters’ “sound” opposition to “meaning” in beginning reading that had been published about 1845 by having the Collins company, the publisher of “meaning” materials, absorb that “sound” opposition about 1856.

The next reading materials on the 1848 list appeared as:

“Sessional Schools of Scotland by Rev. Dr. Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh, Compiled by the late Rev. Dr. Andrew Thomson, of Edinburgh, an eminent divine of the Scottish Church. The circulation of these books is nearly confined to the Sessional Schools of Scotland.”

Copies of Thomson’s material have not turned up. However, John Wood of the Edinburgh Sessional School and his reading materials were highly regarded. It seems unlikely that Thomson would have chosen a different approach for the Sessional Schools. The probability is that Thomson’s materials for beginning readers were similar to Wood’s: meaning-bearing, not sound-bearing.

Thomson’s materials for the Sessional Schools did not include a speller. Spellers had been the backbone of lower schools in 1823, when according to Mavor the “great” did not stoop to write any of the

flood of spellers which were then appearing. Mavor had acknowledged in 1823 that spellers were the books with which children were then taught to read. Yet the 1848 list of seven government-subsidized reading series, none of which contained spellers, made it clear that a beginning reading book was the foundation book by that date. (Unlike those in America in 1848, most of these beginning books were not called primers.) Therefore, the government-approved list in 1848 had actually endorsed the dropping of the speller for beginners by requiring that all reading materials be “reading books in series,” which meant that the first book would have to be a reading book and not a speller.

Only ONE speller was on this 1848 approved list, and it was obviously not meant to teach beginning reading. It was the Rural Spelling Book, by C. W. Johnson, F. R. S. That was a curious touch: the ONLY approved spelling book in 1848 was written by one of the “great,” a Fellow of the Royal Society, even though Mavor in 1823, twenty-five years earlier, had said that the “great” at that time did not stoop to writing spelling books! One wonders if Johnson, an F. R. S., knew the education activist, Brougham, who was also an “F. R. S.”

Reading Disentangled was listed even though it was not part of a reading series, just as the solitary speller which was listed was not part of a reading series. Reading Disentangled was described as “In very general use for the instruction of very young children in reading in all classes of Elementary Schools,” “Reading Disentangled, being a Series of Elementary Reading Lessons on Sheets, By the Author of ‘Peep of Day.’” The “Schedule” said further that it consisted of 37 sheets of Foolscap broadside” and sold at full price for 6 shillings.

The British Library catalog lists their two earliest copies as follows:

“Reading Disentangled, or, Classified Lessons in Spelling and Reading - London: Printed and Sold by Roake and Varty (1836?), British Library Shelf Mark 625.K.9.”

This earliest edition, however, could not be located at the time the British Library wrote me in answer to my request for information on copies. Instead, the second earliest edition was available, listed as:

“Reading Disentangled, or, Classified Lessons in Spelling and Reading - Fourteenth Edition, London: Varty and Owen (1855) By the Author of ‘Peep of Day,’ British Library Shelf Mark 826.l.19.”

They also had an edition of 1873, indicating the sheets were in use for a very long time.

The British Library letter to me said that, in the first book listed above, sheets one to 17 were recorded as labeled, “First Series,” and sheets 18 to 34, “Second Series,” while in the Fourteenth Edition of 1855 the sheets were consecutively numbered from one to 37. Obviously, it was the second version approved for school use in 1848. The name of the author is given as Mrs. Favell Lee Bevan Mortimer.

Since Reading Disentangled was in “very general use for the instruction of very young children in reading” in 1848, that fact implied that reading “very generally” WAS “entangled” for such young children by 1848. Yet the Scottish Schoolmaster in 1829, who had taught hundreds of young Scot boys to read by “sound” for 30 years, showed in the most casual fashion that he considered teaching children to read to be very simple. He also said, again very casually in 1829 as if the fact were to be unquestioned, that children could read fluently by seven years of age. Because the syllable table and “sound” spellers for beginners were thrown out starting in the 1820’s, and by the same kind of people that the Scottish Schoolmaster was opposing on other grounds, the “meaning” method that had been used in their place had been producing massive “entanglements” long before 1848.

The index in F. J. Harvey Darton's *Notes on Children's Books in England - Five Centuries of Social Life*, First Edition 1932, Third Edition, revised by Brian Alderson, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1982, showed these references: to *Peep of Day*, by Mrs. F. L. Mortimer in 1833 on page 49, and to *Reading Without Tears* by Mrs. F. L. Mortimer in 1850 on page 249. The American edition of *Reading Without Tears* by Harper & Brothers, New York, in 1860, (and possibly an earlier Harper edition) was part of the trans-Atlantic book piracy of the period, when copyright laws between Great Britain and America did not yet exist. The Harper material was clearly Mrs. Mortimer's 1850 English text, since it stated it was written by the author of *Peep of Day*.

A copy of the 1860 Harper edition of *Reading Without Tears* is in the Harvard library. It is a Code 3 sight-word text with two-step whole-word phony phonics. That was the pattern of most mid- and late-nineteenth century British beginning readers. Children first learned some whole sight words, and then took the endings from known whole words and prefixed them with beginning consonant sounds from other known whole words to build new words. To confirm that this was the intent, Mortimer said a word like "egg" should be read as a whole. Obviously, the word was all "ending." Her book started with sentences of two and three-letter words in very large print with rhyming words across the top built from the same endings, and gradually reduced the print and lengthened the words.

Whenever such rhyming was used to teach beginning reading after 1826, the whole-word approach was being used - the building of new whole words from the endings and beginnings of other whole words which had been learned previously as sight words for their meaning. This was in contrast to the eighteenth-century spellers whose emphasis, when they listed rhyming words, was on the sounds of the letter patterns within those words instead of on the meanings of the whole words. The spellers used these sound patterns of meaningless collections of letters to build words synthetically. "Meaning" had nothing whatever to do with it. In fact, it was this very absence of "meaning" in the pre-1826 spellers about which the activists had complained so loudly and so long before and after 1826!

Mrs. Mortimer's *Reading Without Tears* of 1850 is a Code 3 book and has little to do with the old spelling book sequence and handling of phonic material. Yet when I received from the British Library the photocopies of their 1855 edition of Mrs. Mortimer's *Reading Disentangled*, which had first been published about 1836, I found it more systematically covered the sounds in English than *Reading Without Tears*. Furthermore, it did so very much in the old spelling book sequence. That was also true of the *Irish Readers* which apparently first came out in the early 1830's. In the 1830's when change to a generally Code 3 approach was taking over in beginning reading instruction in the British Isles, to have omitted the old spelling book sequence would presumably have aroused too much latent opposition. However, it should be noted that Mrs. Mortimer's heavily sight-word 1850 textbook, *Reading Without Tears*, was still in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published, but the more phonic *Reading Disentangled* classroom charts apparently did not last past about the 1870's even in England.

Despite its following the old spelling book sequence, *Reading Disentangled* rates only a Code 4, and not the higher code of almost all the old spelling books. That is because of its heavy emphasis on reading paragraphs containing sight-words whose sounds have not yet been taught. Each chart did teach a phonic lesson, but from whole-word examples. Following the old spelling book pattern for the sounds in English was characteristic of some of the first challengers of "sound" through the 1830's, as with the *Irish Readers*, where the hidden emphasis was actually on "meaning." It was only years later, as with the later editions of the *Irish Readers* and *Reading Without Tears*, that the primers assumed more of the "Dick and Jane" storybook form we know today instead of the word-list spelling book phonic sequence interspersed with prose paragraphs.

Both of Mrs. Mortimer's works used the same general approach: attaching consonants to endings from known whole sight words to build new words. For the most part, each of the *Reading Disentangled*

charts introduced a new sound in meaningful whole words, separated their endings from their initial consonants, and then practiced those endings in rhyming words, with a sight-word story on the side of each chart. Despite the fact that the charts followed the old spelling book sequence of phonemes, they still rate only a Code 4 because of the emphasis on whole words and “stories” before real decoding has been taught.

That the move to “meaning” and away from “sound” in Great Britain was fairly uniform by 1840 is shown by the 459th edition of Rusher’s Reading Made Most Easy, a Code 1 book, which the Harvard library dated to 1840. Its first section has two-letter sentences, the next three-letter sentences, the next four-letter sentences, and so on, without a trace of “sound” teaching, not even initial consonants plus endings from known words (Code 3 phony phonics). Yet the original “reading-made-easies” dating back to the eighteenth century were very different.

In *Children’s Books in England - Five Centuries of Social Life*, F. J. Harvey Darton, Third Edition, Revised by Brian Alderson, Cambridge University Press: 1982, First Edition 1932, Darton reported that among the materials published for children, besides schoolbooks, were Mrs. Marat and her Conversations, Mrs. Mortimer’s *The Peep of Day*, *Far Off, Near Home*, and *Line Upon Line* and about a score of others using the dialogue form. Darton said that those authors did not seem to know that by the use of the dialogue device they were continuing the “catechism” approach used by Aldhelm and Aelfric in the early Middle Ages, and that the catechism method had been the longest lasting approach used with English children..

Therefore, Mrs. Mortimer’s *The Peep of Day* was apparently arranged in the conversational dialogue form popular at the time, and it was apparently meant as a religious text, and not as a reading text like *Reading Disentangled* or *Reading Without Tears*. Darton added on page 249 that children had, besides Mrs. Marat’s and Mrs. Mortimer’s works, the works of Mrs. Jerram (whose maiden name was Holmes, and who wrote the *Child’s Own Story Book*, Third Edition, 1843), and the works of Mrs. Leathley such as *Chickseed without Chickweed*. Darton said that 250,000 copies of the latter book were sold starting in the late 1850’s.

Yet, when compared to the vast sales of chapbooks in the eighteenth century, the sale of 250,000 copies of Mrs. Leathley’s book over a period of many years is hardly impressive. That becomes particularly obvious when it is realized that children’s books like the above, although not school books, nevertheless were often bought in large numbers with school funds for use as prizes for school children. Yet all of the massive sales of eighteenth century chapbooks had been made to the actual users of those books, who bought them for themselves or their children and those users paid for the books with their own money, not government funds!

In summary, as a review of the 1848 approved materials for teaching beginning reading makes obvious, government money was being used to foster the “meaning” approach to teach beginning reading, instead of the “sound” approach. The result was a collapse not many years later in the size of the market for books and pamphlets, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 39

### The Long-Term Effect on British Book Sales Caused by the Switch to “Meaning” in Teaching Beginning Reading

According to Mary F. Thwaite in *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, The Horn Book, Inc., Boston: 1972 (page 94):

“Little manuals of more direct religious purpose found almost equal favour. Such was the successful *Peep of Day* (1833), by Mrs. Favel Lee Mortimer, which reached a sale of a quarter of a million copies by 1867.”

Between 1833 and 1867, this book meant for little children reached a sale of a quarter of a million copies, and was “successful,” like Mrs. Leathley’s book mentioned by Darton which also sold 250,000 copies. The quarter-million sales of *Peep of Day* over a period of forty-three years are very unimpressive compared to the millions upon millions of chapbooks sold in the previous century when the population was far smaller.

Children born in 1825 and afterwards would have learned to read about 1830 or afterwards. The assumption can be made that the majority of those children except for the poor were taught to read English by “meaning.” Yet almost all born before 1825 except those taught in schools using Bell’s 1823 texts were taught by “sound.” It is possible to estimate when the population of uncomfortably disabled “psycholinguistically guessing” readers taught by “meaning” exceeded the population who could read English automatically and comfortably by “sound.” In populations in the nineteenth century, speaking very roughly, I have heard it said that children fifteen and under formed about half of the total. If true, that means that in 1840 fifty percent of the population would have been born in 1825 or later and the majority in that group old enough to read would have read uncomfortably by “meaning.” Furthermore, the percentage of “meaning” readers would increase sharply with each succeeding year. By 1864, those having been born before 1825 and so having learned by “sound” would be over forty years of age, and in that time of shorter life spans would be a relatively small part of an expanding population. By 1874, when these “sound” readers would be over fifty years of age, they would be an even smaller part of the nineteenth-century expanding population. However, many of the English poor continued to learn by sound after 1830 until as late as the 1850’s, so they swelled the population of “sound” readers in England to some extent for twenty or even thirty years longer.

In possible confirmation of the fact that populations in the nineteenth century tended to have fifty percent or so under fifteen years of age, population figures were given in Volume 18, page 233, of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1963). Table 5 showed age distribution in various countries in the mid-twentieth century, and populations in less developed countries which tend not to use birth control do tend to have close to fifty percent of their populations under fifteen years of age. It should be remembered that, in the nineteenth century, when modern health care was unknown, mortality rates were far greater almost everywhere, including Great Britain, which would tend to lower the average ages further. Sample data from Table 5 is shown below.

#### Percentage of Populations under Fifteen Years of Age

Philippines 1948 - 44.2  
Brazil 1950 - 41.9  
United States 1950 - 26.9  
Sweden (1950?) - 23.4

### Percentage of Populations Over Sixty Years of Age

Philippines 1948 - 4.9

Brazil 1950 - 4.3

United States 1950 - 12.2

Sweden (1950?) - 14.9

With the effects of the differences in the sizes of age groups in the population in mind, it is interesting to quote the only actual statistics that Ellis gave (page 80) on sales of penny literature aimed at the poor in the last half of the nineteenth century. His statistics concerned only the 1860's. His figures indicate that the residual "sound" readers among the poor were still buying vast amounts of worthwhile reading matter in the 1860's.

Ellis also mentioned, quite significantly, that "penny fiction" in its serial form died out after 1880, which could only have happened if it had ceased to be sufficiently profitable to issue it in a serial form. The market for penny fiction had therefore obviously shrunk by 1880. Ellis wrote:

"In the 1880's "penny fiction" of the kind described began to be difficult to obtain in its serial form, but was still available in 6d. volumes, and was widely circulated among young people....

"In contrast to this type of publication, there were numerous periodicals in which were serialized the Bible, the history of England, and even editions of the works of Bunyan, Cervantes, Scott, Shakespeare, and other writers. Books of an educational character were published in serial form too, for example Cassell's Popular Educator, which at the cost of 1d. per issue was first issued in 1852. Cassell was estimated to have sold between 25 and 30 million copies of his penny publications each year in the 1860's.... Other publishers emulated Cassell with cheap 'libraries'...."

A sale of 25 and 30 million copies EACH YEAR such as Cassell had in the 1860's is enormous and would be considered so even today in America. Contrast those 1860's YEARLY sales figures of cheap penny literature catering to the poor to the "successful" sales figures of Alice in Wonderland of 180,000 copies between 1865 and 1898, a period of THIRTY-THREE YEARS (Ellis, pages 66-68). Alice in Wonderland was a hard-cover book, of course, bought by the prosperous. It would appear that the English poor in the 1860's, who had still generally been learning to read by "sound" until the 1850's, were buying ENORMOUSLY more literature than the prosperous English, who would have been taught to read with the "meaning" reading books published after 1830. Note also the apparently high intellectual level of Cassell's material being sold to the English poor in the 1860's!

Yet these vast sales figures from the 1860's are the only publishing statistics which Ellis produced for cheap reading matter in the last half of the nineteenth century, though he said other publishers had imitated Cassell. Ellis referred to large sales of children's magazines, but as quoted elsewhere, these were used in schools, and the indication is that their actual totals were in no way comparable to Ellis's 1860's figures.

The sale of such a children's magazine is discussed in Children's Books in England - Five Centuries of Social Life, F. J. Harvey Darton, Third Edition, Revised by Brian Alderson, Cambridge University Press: 1982, First Edition 1932 (Page 343). Darton wrote of the Chatterbox magazine. It was introduced December 1, 1866, and published until well into the twentieth century. Darton said, without giving any dates on its use, that it had been used in schools as a reading book, but contractions presented a difficulty for oral reading (another indication that the children of the period could not really read). "She'll" and

“we’re” were a problem but not “he’ll” because that contraction was omitted from the stories “on moral grounds”!

The magazine was therefore used to practice oral reading, probably from about the 1870’s when the enthusiasm for “supplementary reading” seemed to invade the English schools as it had invaded the American schools after Colonel Parker’s influence. Since about 1830 in schools using a series of reading books, it had been customary for teachers to read a selection first and for children to repeat it afterwards in chorus, before individual children read it aloud. Therefore, in no way was school “reading matter” teaching children to read independently in England any more than in America, until real phonics began to find its way back into the schools in both countries about the turn of the century.

The sales of magazines for use in schools in the late nineteenth century certainly cannot be equated to the sales of chapbooks bought by individuals for their personal use in the early and mid-nineteenth century, either in quantity or in purpose. Figures on sales of publications in the nineteenth century confirm that the “meaning” approach in the teaching of beginning reading had badly damaged the publishers’ market in Great Britain by the end of the nineteenth century. That market had shrunk and in part dried up as the government schools that taught reading by “meaning” had increased.



## Chapter 40

### The Mid-Nineteenth-Century Unsuccessful British Phonic Systems

In the 1840's in England, Isaac Pitman produced his special phonetic print, in which the actual spelling of words was altered by the use of his expanded alphabet. His material was used for a relatively brief time in Great Britain and America.

In America, a variation on Pitman's material was constructed in 1853, presumably by Elias Longley. Longley spoke of the method's having been "perfected" in 1853, in his 1857 copyrighted *American Phonetic Primer*, Longley & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. Longley's version of Pitman's material was used in Syracuse, New York, in the late 1850's and early 1860's, as well as in other areas. In the "Introductory Remarks" to his 1857 book, Longley wrote:

"The experience of every observing teacher agrees with the declaration of an eminent English educator, that 'learning to read is the most difficult of human attainments,' and that 'scarcely anything appears more unreasonable, illogical, contradictory, and perplexing, than the ordinary methods of teaching the art.' More time is spent in learning to read and spell our language, than is necessary for the acquisition of all the other branches of a good English education.

"The cause of this difficulty is, that the letters have no fixed power or sound.... The result of this absurd and lawless manner of spelling is, that no one can tell the spelling of a word from hearing it pronounced, or its pronunciation from seeing the manner in which it is spelled... The remedy for this evil is a phonetic alphabet...."

The anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster in 1828 would have emphatically disagreed with this quotation published in 1857 that "learning to read is the most difficult of human attainments" since for thirty years his little charges had read fluently by seven years of age. That was in the days before "meaning" had displaced "sound" for beginning reading. That was also shortly after the late eighteenth century when Oliver Goldsmith wrote so charmingly about little Goody Two-Shoes and her highly successful teaching of neighborhood children with the simple syllabic "sound" spelling book. The Scottish Schoolmaster comments came not too long after eighteenth-century adult Englishmen, quoted elsewhere, wrote fondly and even wrote poetry about learning to read by the "sound" syllabary in the eighteenth century in the so-called dame schools.

Yet, as discussed in Appendix B in the Bumstead entry, it is absolutely astonishing to find that the 1857 quotation about reading being "the most difficult of human attainments" came from Richard Edgeworth, writing in Ireland in 1798! Edgeworth SHOULD have known that what he was saying in 1798, when children were still uniformly taught to read easily and quickly by the "sound" syllabary, was absolutely senseless. That raises the question of how Edgeworth could have become so confused, or whether he was not really confused but had some unspoken motive when he chose to make a remark that was simply wrong in the late eighteenth century.

Furthermore, both the Scottish Schoolmaster and Noah Webster in America would have been flabbergasted by the monumentally wrong conclusion that:

"...no one can tell the pronunciation [of a word] from seeing the manner in which it is spelled...."

Not long after Pitman's material appeared, W. L. Robinson in England invented a pronouncing print using normal spellings. It used the standard 26 letters of the alphabet but the letters carried additional markings to demonstrate their variant sounds. In 1864, Edwin Leigh in the United States published a similar pronouncing print using normal spellings. Since both men were doing essentially the same thing in essentially the same time-frame although on different sides of the Atlantic Ocean, it is very surprising that neither Robinson nor Leigh appears to have referred to each other in his writings. Robinson stated he had worked with Pitman's materials first. It is therefore conceivable that both Robinson and Leigh were independently inspired by Pitman's work and had never heard of each other.

The earliest text by W. L. Robinson which I found at the British Library (call number 12983.aaa.24) was *The Pronouncing Reading Book, for Children from Seven to Ten Years of Age, on a New Plan, Lessening the Difficulty of Learning to Read, and Imparting a Correct Pronunciation, with an Introduction to the Art of Reading*, London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts. It included "A Chart (on the) Powers of the Letters. 63 Characters Representing 44 Sounds. Compiled by W. L. Robinson, 1862."

Robinson said in his introduction:

"The advantages proposed by this Book are a saving of time in learning to read, and the acquisition of a right pronunciation of our language.

"The work is intended to be a First Reading Book for Children able to say words of one syllable at sight and words of two syllables by spelling....

"Children properly taught should speak well at three years of age; and, by means of very short daily lessons, ought to acquire the alphabet and learn regular words of one, two and three syllables by five years of age. At about five they may begin with *The Pronouncing Reading Book*, and may read it through twice or thrice in the next year, and at the same time have their first lessons in writing. At six, a more advanced Reading Book printed in ordinary unmarked type may be used, and along with that spelling may be taught by writing short extracts....

"The expedients used in Walker's, Webster's, and other pronouncing dictionaries are largely employed here. Useless silent letters are printed in italics, and letters with dots or diacritical marks, are used in twenty varieties, whereby the pronunciation of vowel and consonant letters having more than one power, is... indicated."

In his 1862 text, Robinson made it clear that children were expected to learn to read before they moved into his "reading book." However, that even then he expected them to do so with his explicit phonics was only made clear in a later book.

Robinson's description of his approach was more completely given in his 1876 book, available at the British Library under call number 12985.cc.36, *A Phonic Reading Book for Young Children on a Plan which Lessens the Difficulty and Saves Much Time in Learning to Read, with an Introduction Explanatory of the Method, for the Use of Teachers*. Second Edition, Manchester: John Heywood, 141 and 143 Deansgate; London, Simpkin, Marshall, & Co. 1876.

The book included a notation that his "Reading Sheets" as well as the *Phonic Reading Book* were also "supplied to the public and to schools direct from the author, William L. Robinson, Wakefield." This was a bad sign by 1876. The important publisher, Longmans, had handled Robinson's material in 1862, but now was no longer doing so. Simpkin, Marshall, the present London publishers, were also major publishers, but, if they had been promoting the book successfully, would Robinson have gone to the

trouble also to supply material “direct from the author?” An author normally does this only if convenient, commercial channels are effectively closed to him.

The beginning of the book included a chart entitled, “Robinson’s Phonic Lessons.” To some degree, it was similar to the kind of thing Leigh was doing in America, though not so effective. Robinson also described what he thought were the only methods available to teach reading. It is staggering to realize that in 1876 Robinson apparently was totally ignorant of the existence of the ancient syllabary “sound” approach and the use of the speller with analytic or synthetic phonics to teach beginning reading, which had been banished less than fifty years earlier!

Robinson wrote:

#### “Robinsons’s Phonic Method Explained

“Addressed to Teachers. Methods of teaching reading - There are four principal methods of teaching to read. First, the alphabet or old method, in which the child is taught to utter the names of the letters in their order, and then to say, if it can, the word they constitute. Second, the look-and-say method, in which the teacher points to and says the word as a whole, without either naming the letters or giving their powers, the child repeating it after the teacher, so that by frequent recurrences it becomes imprest on the memory. Third, the various Phonic methods more or less perfect, in which the child has to give the sounds or powers of the letters and not their names in the order in which they occur and from their sound to ascertain what the word is. Fourth, the Phonetic method, (Ed.: the Pitman print) in principal and manner of teaching similar to the Phonic but in which an enlarged and special alphabet of about 34 single letters is used, containing many new ones of an unusual form. Each letter stands for a particular sound and that sound is never represented by any other letter; consequently the irregularities of our language are avoided and the power of reading books phonetically printed is acquired sooner than the reading of ordinary printed books by other methods. When the child can read phonetic books fluently, he is passed into ordinary books, the increased difficulties of which are soon overcome.

“Comparison of Methods - The first or the old alphabetic or name method is the worst of the four; the tiresome and time-wasting process of spelling words aloud rarely gives the child the power of saying them, and he has at last to be told them on the Look and Say system. The second or Look and Say method, though tolerably rapid in its results, is very unphilosophical, as these results are entirely due to the memory alone. It is, however, a useful adjunct to the phonic method in respect to those irregular words in which the names or the powers of the letters are inadequate to enable the child to say them, one, two, eight, rough, cough, etc. The fourth, or phonetic method, has never found much favour with the public and probably never will, owing to its strange looking alphabet. There remains for us to consider the third, or the various kinds of phonic teaching, some of which have received a considerable amount of attention and public favour, and are used in the Normal Training Colleges for elementary teachers (Ed.: presumably the sort of approach used by Kay Shuttleworth). Good reading can, of course, be taught by any one of these four methods, but they are so manifestly dissimilar in principle and detail that it is impossible to conceive of them as possessing an equal value. The time necessary to acquire good and fluent reading will differ in all of them....

“In most of the phonic methods at present in use, no attempt is made to give assistance to the child by means of italic letters and accents; the consequence of which is, that about 50% of the words remain irregular, and must be taught the child on the Look and Say system.... The object of the present adaptation of the phonic principal of teaching to read is, to increase the number of words which are regular or suitable for phonic teaching to about 75 per cent, leaving only 25 per

cent irregular words to be dealt with on the Look and Say system instead of 50 per cent as in the more defective phonic methods.

[Footnote, page ix] “Two carefully recorded experiments showing the value of the phonetic and phonic methods for saving time in teaching to read are worth preserving. The first was that of a man twenty-seven years of age, a prisoner in the Wakefield Gaol in 1855, whom I taught to read on Pitman’s phonetic system, the school masters of the establishment having considered it an impossibility to teach him to read on account of the dullness of his intellect. I gave him three lessons a week of twenty minutes duration each, for thirteen weeks. At the end of the tenth week, he had read through the Gospel of St. John in phonetic type and was then transferred to the ordinary printed Testament, reading through again the same Gospel in the next three weeks. The schoolmasters then resumed his education and some months afterwards, in addition to reading, he had also learned to write well. The second experiment was with my own phonetic system, upon a child two and a half years old who acquired the phonic alphabet and 300 monosyllables by three years of age; about 1900 words of one to three syllables in nine months more when she was put into books for the first time; and at four years of age had read ninety of Aesop’s Fables, three chapters of one of the Gospels, and 200 lines of poetry. At four and a half, the child could read books and newspapers fluently at sight. This experiment took place many years ago, and no evils whatever have resulted from this precocious teaching. The lessons indeed were very short, three a day of five minutes duration for the first six months, three a day of ten minutes for the next six months, and three a day of fifteen minutes each for the succeeding two years, the average daily instruction having been less than half an hour a day.

[Page xi] “Learning to read on the Phonic system is so easy and pleasant and requires so little mental effort that children of three years of age may be taught without the slightest (detriment) to their health.

[Page xx] “An experience of eighteen years in the Wakefield Lancastrian Infant School into which this system was introduced in 1858 has also shown that when the children taught phonically are removed to the upper schools there is a greater aptitude to spell correctly than in those who have been taught alphabetically. The Phonic Reading Book may be commenced at five years of age and be read through twice or even three times before the children leave the infant school at seven years of age.

[Page xxi] “A child sent to school at three may be employed in the lessons on sounds, (and) the vocabulary lessons and sheet reading lessons until five years of age, when he is put into The Phonic Reading Book which he ought to read fluently at seven.

[Page xxii] “Mrs. Harper, the (experienced) teacher of the Wakefield Lancastrian Infant School, and now about to conduct a Board school in Leeds on the Phonic system, has, at my request, furnished me with her opinion as to the best mode by which an ordinary alphabetic school may be converted into a phonic one.....

“Wakefield, March, 1876. W. M. Robinson”

Robinson said that “Mrs. Harper” felt it would require six weeks to change a school from alphabetic to phonic, although it would take teachers months to adapt to the change. Mrs. Harper, as will be mentioned, promoted Robinson’s method before the London School Board, apparently unsuccessfully. It is interesting that Robinson wrote the above in 1876, the same year that Leigh’s phonics began to be opposed in Massachusetts.

The use of Pitman's phonic print died out because children who were trained to read words which were spelled phonically had trouble later memorizing conventional spellings, although they read fluently. The same objection applies to the newer ITA print of the Pitman company which was widely used about twenty years ago in both Great Britain and America. The problem of spelling has been raised concerning the current IBM Ready to Read phonic program, in which the children use computers. With that program, children may use "invented" instead of solely dictionary spellings and reportedly may become dependent on those wrong spellings. However, Robinson's method was enormously successful in turning out good readers and resulted in no such spelling problems since it used only the letters of the alphabet to spell words correctly, but with additional markings on the letters. Yet Robinson's program died out too. Robinson's material apparently met the same kind of opposition in England that the wonderfully successful Leigh material was meeting at the same time in America.

Yet, by the 1890's, phonic reading materials were apparently beginning to be available in England again. That was the same period in which Rebecca Pollard's and Ward's phonic materials were becoming available in the United States. A book from an English phonic series from the 1890's is listed in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, which suggests a renewed interest had developed in phonics in England in the 1890's. The text was wrongly listed on page 77 as:

Barnes Phonetic Method. Albany Phonetic Reader, No. 3. London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1893 111 p. PE 1121

Yet Laura Soames was clearly the author of the Albany Phonetic Readers. The name, Barnes, appears nowhere on the Department of Education library's copy of the No. 2 reader. The contemporary American Catalogue showed that Macmillan put out her materials in 1894: *L. Soames' Phonetic Method for Learning to Read, Nos. 1, 2, 3*, Macmillan was conceivably putting out American editions to match Swan Sonnenschein's English edition.

The following note was at the beginning of the No. 2 Reader:

"To the Teacher. This little book is Holborn's Practical Infant Reader No. 2 transcribed phonetically, and [I thank]... the Educational Supply Association for allowing me to use it.... Brighton, May, 1893, Laura Soames. Teacher's Manual in Preparation, the Child's Key Shortly, Albany Phonetic Readers NO. 1, 2, 3,..."

The next page showed the "English Phonetic Alphabet" with phonetic respellings. While the material was very poor, it did demonstrate a renewed interest England by 1893 in teaching reading phonically.

For the most part, however, teaching children to read by phonics appears to have been as unsuccessful in Great Britain as it was in America until about the turn of the twentieth century.

## Chapter 41

### A Description of Some Beginning Reading Materials Available in the British Isles After 1826

The nature of beginning reading materials changed sharply after 1826 in the British Isles as in America. Following are descriptions of some of these British books, which survived on the shelves of the British Library.

A parody of the old spelling book form appeared in London in 1838, published by “T. Hogg,” with the title, *The Child’s First Book and Sunday School Primer*. It was a terrible book, but by 1838 a market must have existed for such incompetent works. It began with alphabets and only open syllables, but no closed ones. By page 6, two letter sentences appeared:

“Do to us, as we do to ye. As I do so do ye.”

Pages 8 and 9 contained three letter short vowel words:

“bib dib fib nib rib  
fob mob nob rob sob  
bad dad lad mad sad”

Pages 12, 13, 14, had three letter words in alphabetical order with no real sound analogy, followed by sentences. Although page 29 had many words with sound analogy, the book as a whole was no higher than Code 5. It ended with very long textual material and, overall, truly was a terrible book. The probability is that there were many books like it for sale in the British bookstores of the period.

In a volume marked, *Reading Books, Grammar, Etc.*, British Library call number 12985 bbb 26, are several texts on reading. One is titled *The New Class Books, for Reading, Spelling, & Questions. Part I. Reading*. “London: Simpkin, Marshall, & Co., Stationers’ Hall Court Leicester: Printed and Published by J. F. Winks. Twelve Shillings per Hundred - Full Allowance to Schools.” It carries the British Library stamp, “February 26, 1852.” It begins with the alphabet in capitals and small letters and on page 2 appears:

“First Reading Lessons  
FIRST LESSON - TWO LETTERS

Am I at We go on

So go on	Is he up
Do as In	So he is
Lo it is	We do so
Am in it	If we be
So do to	He is in
Am as he	Do ye it
Is he as	As we do
Do go to	Lo it is
Up in it	So we go

“So we do go on to it  
Do ye so as he in it

Lo if ye do so as he  
As he is or as we be  
Or it is so as ye do  
Do so as ye go on to it

(Page 3) "SECOND LESSON - THREE LETTERS.

"No man can see God  
God can see all of us  
Let me go in His way  
It is sin not to go in it

"For to sin is to do bad  
We are not to sin at all  
Or we can not go to God  
So let me not sin at all

"A bad boy is in his sin  
I can not go in his way  
We are all of us to die  
We are not to die in sin

"If you or I die in our sin  
We can not go to God  
The Son of God did die  
For me and for all of us (No periods were used.)

(Page 4) "THIRD LESSON - FOUR LETTERS

"Let me go to my task  
And try to know more  
I must know all I can  
Thus I am made wise

"If I love what is good  
Then God will love me  
The word of God is good  
And it is the best book

"No book can be like this  
It tells that God is love  
Let me read this book  
It tells God made all

"All us and all we see  
The sun moon and sky  
And sea and dry land  
And saw all were good"

Page 5 had "Fourth Lesson - Four Letters."

Pages 6 and 7 had one syllable words of four letters, though on page 6 are the five-letter words, “points” and “great,” and on page 7 “whole” and “heart.”

Page 11 contained, “Who Made All Things?”, a one-syllable religious text, and one-syllable texts continued to the end on page 32.

Advertised on the back of the book was Second Reading Lessons. The advertisement wrongly said that the first book only had four-letter words but rightly said it had only one-syllable words. The second book had two-syllable words and easy passages from Holy Scripture.

The third book was described as First Spelling Lessons, Containing Words of from One to Four Letters and One and Two syllables. Note that the children had read TWO sight-word books before they were given ANY spelling in this reading series published by the major publisher, Simpkin, Marshall, & Co. about 1852. Yet only thirty years before, as attested to by Mavor, spelling had been the beginning step in reading.

The description of the series continued:

“Part IV Second Spelling Lessons Containing words of from two to five syllables, also scripture names accented and explained, with explanations of religious words.

“They may be had of any Bookseller in the kingdom.”

In the same binding as the previous book appeared a series of toy books published in London by J. Bysh, 157 and 158, Albany Road, Old Kent Road, and stamped by the British Library April 16, 1861. These toy books were parodies of the older spellers and the newer primers, with aborted, mixed up syllabaries, very like the often appalling toy books printed in America from about 1830 to 1870.

One of the parodies was only ten pages long but claimed to be Mavor’s Spelling Book, Arranged for the use of Preparatory Schools. Two of the ten pages were on the insides of the front and back covers. The little monstrosity began with a picture alphabet followed by short words which rapidly turned into multi-syllable ones. The publisher’s use of Mavor’s name was a tribute to the fame of Mavor’s spelling book. The publisher obviously hoped the fame of Mavor’s speller would increase his own sales.

Another London publisher of toy books capitalizing on the fame of former books (and by doing so confirming their fame) was T. Goode, 30, Aylesbury Street, Clerkenwell. The British Library copy of his little parody is stamped March 5, 1858, and titled The Royal Primer, Illustrated, an obvious imitation of John Newbery’s eighteenth century publication, a version of which continued in print as late as the 1820’s.

On the inside of the cover is the alphabet in capital and small letters, along with the digits. The first leaf is marked, page “3,” and has mixed capitals and a picture of a boy at the bottom, followed by the open, but not the closed syllabary. Yet it is the closed syllabary which contains the critical short vowels, which reportedly are found in about sixty per cent of English syllables.

Page 4 did show short vowel rhyming words: “bad lad pad dad mad sad; bid did hid pid rid lid; bed led red fed ned med.” That was the end of the sound treatment. Next came word categories: “Ale bread buns beef milk beer cakes lamb flesh port rum crum beans pies tarts wine crust cream veal peas.” Under this interesting list was a picture of a hen and a swan, for unexplained reasons. Next came another word category: “cap coat fan hoop shoes hat cloak... clogs stuff slip lace frock scarf shirt gown frill muff stays shift.”



This was followed on page 5 with another unrelated picture of swans and these interesting sentences, without periods: “I am he go ye up to it As we go If he be As he is As I am It is so As I do So do you We go on Go by us Do ye as we It is to me Lo I am he As if ye do Oh not do so By it I am I am to be Ah me it is so.”

Then came more “meaningful” text without periods: “Will you go to see the rabbit I will show you the way It is in my aunt’s garden”

Page 6 had a picture of a dog, and long sentences, some with divided two-syllable words.

Page 7 had more pictures and the same kind of sentences, one section being religious.

Page 8 showed spelling columns by sound analogy, with words of four, five and six letters.

Page 9 had a picture of a lion and text.

Page 10 contained a two-syllable word list, with the syllables accented.

Page 11 which was the inside back cover, concluded, in the style of *The Royal Primer* of the eighteenth century and Anglican primers since the sixteenth century, with grace before and after meat and the Lord’s Prayer. At this point, however, the printer must have run out of woodcuts for pictures, because immediately after this serious material he showed a picture of boys fencing! In no way could such a nonsensical publication as this be considered anything except a toy book, and a very poor one, at that.

Bell and Daldy were major publishers, and put out probably in 1863 *The School Primer*, “Illustrated with 65 Engravings.” Bell and Daldy’s *Illustrated School Books*. London, Bell and Daldy, 186 Fleet Street.” The copy at the British Library is stamped 7 April 1863, under the library’s call number 12982 aa 57. The following appears at the beginning:

“The lessons in this Primer are arranged step by step. In almost every instance, words used in any one page may be found either at the end of the lesson or on the previous pages. Where this arrangement has not been possible, words have been printed in *Italic letters*; with these the Teacher is requested to help the pupil if it be necessary.”

This sounds as if the book were meant to be a sight-word book, but Bell and Daldy in 1863 were apparently reacting to the influence of people like Robinson and Pitman who had been promoting phonics in beginning reading. The approach in the book is very like the German analytic-synthetic method, and, overall, the book rates a Code 6. It could be higher if used with more phonic emphasis.

It began with showing the alphabet in small letters, and followed it with the letters in mixed order. On the next page began a section marked, “Alphabet.” The letters were shown next to pictures which contained their shapes:

a	(Picture of trellis, a shaped)	a
t	(Picture of sign, t shaped)	t
c	(Picture of cat)	at
		cat

On the next page, this appeared, but with pictures in the space shown below between the two columns:

h	cat hat
r	car rat
m	ham ram
n	can man
p	cap map
o	top mop
g	hog nag
d	hod dog

The normal word approach, therefore, was apparently being used for every letter.

This was followed by syllables of two letters, but always open syllables in words of two letters. The phonically irregular word, “do,” was footnoted with a proper phonetic pronunciation. Common words of three letters followed, some phonically arranged, but included were the irregular words “was are old you boy the.” On later pages, words were arranged by phonic analogy at the top of each page under “Practice.” Although I did not add this note at the time I took notes, it is obvious these word lists were followed by text. For 1863, the book used a very phonic approach and rates a Code 6.

However, a book published in 1845 was very different and rates a straight Code 1. It was titled, *An Easy Introduction to Reading the English Language, Designed for Sabbath-Day Schools, in Six Parts*. “By a schoolmaster, Wellington: Sold by Richard Corner, South Street, and Simpkin, Marshall and Co., London, MDCCCXLV price 8d.” It was as weak as the 1852 Simpkin, Marshall and Co. text described earlier.

The parts were described as follows:

“I. The alphabet & c. with twelve lessons, four lines each, of words not exceeding two different letters. II. A table of words, with seventy-one lessons, eight lines each, of words not exceeding three different letters. III. Forty-five lessons... of words not exceeding four different letters. IV. Fifteen lessons... of words not exceeding five different letters. V. Twenty-three lessons... of words not exceeding six different letters. VI. A table of words of seven and eight letters, with ten lessons of monosyllables in general.”

The 1845 text was religious, but it is evident that the emphasis was on context reading, and not on spelling lists. No mention was made at all of spelling anything, only of reading it. It is evident that the book itself followed the straight sight-word approach, but limited the introduction of new words by letter-length: first two-letter words, then three, and so on. That was the pattern which had been followed in many old spelling books and which had first been introduced by Dilworth in 1740.

The massively used Irish Readers will be described later, and the massively used Reading Disentangled has already been described. The few other beginning reading textbooks and toy books which have just been described in this chapter were obviously not such best-sellers, but they are very probably representative of the general beginning reading materials which were published in the British Isles from about 1826 until 1863. Such materials were apparently “meaning” oriented like the Irish Readers and Reading Disentangled, with Code 1 or Code 3 approaches, until a shift began to appear after 1860 towards “sound,” as with Bell and Daldy’s materials and Robinson’s materials. The shift was probably originally sparked by the advent of Pitman phonetic print in the 1840’s. The shift paralleled American developments, such as Leigh print, and the American developments were probably also sparked by the arrival there of Pitman phonetic print. Yet, as will be discussed, that beginning of a return to “sound” was aborted in England just as it was in America, and it disappeared shortly after 1870.

## **Chapter 42**

### **On the Arrival of “Thorough and Efficient” Inspectors and “Standard” Tests in Great Britain**

The greatly increased centralized control of the testing Standards which arrived with the Revised Code of 1862 was cushioned by the seeming increased liberty that resulted from the government’s abandoning the list of “approved” textbooks that had been in existence since 1848. It is possible that there had been claims that the government-approved list of textbooks amounted to government censorship, and the eventual dropping of the list was possibly in response to such claims. It certainly would have been impossible to introduce Pitman’s 1840’s phonic materials or Robinson’s 1862 phonic materials into the government-subsidized schools if Pitman’s or Robinson’s phonic materials were not on the government-approved list, and the promoters of those materials would certainly have complained about such a state of affairs. Pitman’s material actually pre-dated the 1848 list, but it was notably absent from the original list of “approved” materials. It may be meaningful that the first heavily phonic British book I turned up, other than Robinson’s and Pitman’s materials, was Bell and Daldy’s. That did not come out until 1863, one year after the approved textbook list was dropped.

It is interesting to notice, historically, that every increase in government “control” of education is camouflaged by a seeming granting of increased “liberty” in some other area. The present shell game, both in America and Great Britain, concerns the increased “parental choice” of the school buildings in which to enroll their children, while the governments tighten the screws on curriculum in ALL school buildings by moving to institute national “achievement” tests. Who ever heard of a school that did not “teach to the tests”? Parents may now select the building into which to place their children. Yet the governments may now select the “truths” to place in those same children’s heads, and those “truths” are certainly not going to be Biblical ones!

Ellis stated (page 44):

“In 1858 the Minutes of the Committee of Council were consolidated and reduced to form a code. It was specified in Article 4 of the Code of 1860 that ‘the object of the grant is to promote the education of children belonging to the class who support themselves by manual labour’. Schools could only be assisted if they were associated with a recognized religious denomination or if ‘the Scriptures are read daily from the Authorized Version’ (Article 8) in addition to secular instruction. Grants were available only to schools which were open to inspection (Article 13).”

That the Scriptures were read daily does not sound so impressive when it is remembered that the Bible, and the Psalms, as texts for the children to use, had effectively been removed from the schools by the “approved” list of textbooks that had arrived in 1848. Having the church schools “open to inspection” was also extremely undesirable, particularly since the government “inspectors” might have very different ideas about the universe and “truth” than either the church school personnel or the parents of the children.

One such enormously influential “inspector” for many years was Matthew Arnold. A review of Arnold’s life and opinions is confirming evidence of the fact that letting government “inspectors” into church schools is not, necessarily, a good thing.

Alec Ellis wrote the following in Chapter 6, “Books in School 1850-1870,” in *A History of Children’s Reading and Literature*, Pergamon Press, Oxford (et al): 1968, page 50:

“Matthew Arnold advocated the adoption of chosen texts and looked to the Committee of Council to select suitable books. It is curious that he was not so much concerned with the relative merits of books as the need to standardize their use in schools.”

Need? That implied a conviction that a central authority should exist to standardize “truth” in church schools. Only church schools received government textbook grants at the time, purely government schools not yet having come into existence in England. Who was this Matthew Arnold who advocated a central authority to decide what textbooks should be permitted in religious schools? Was he religious?

According to The Columbia-Viking Desk Encyclopedia, Volume I, The Viking Press, Inc., New York, 1953, page 68, Arnold’s father was Thomas Arnold (1795-1842) a preacher who was headmaster of Rugby (1827-42) who:

“...gave new life to whole English public school system by reforms (adding mathematics, modern languages to course of study; introducing monitorial system; encouraging independent thought).”

The reference to the “monitorial” system indicates the elder Arnold was among those “reformers” who were opposed so strenuously by the humble but brilliant and witty Scottish Schoolmaster. The Scottish Schoolmaster of course, had no such influence as the headmaster of Rugby.

The encyclopedia said that Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), Thomas Arnold’s son, was:

“Inspector of elementary schools 1851-86, he became (1857) professor of poetry at Oxford... his own poetry showed romantic pessimism, (e.g., Dover Beach....)”

For 35 years, as one of the inspectors who controlled the purse-strings for government grants to church schools, Matthew Arnold exercised authority over the religious schools under his control. Furthermore, he is on record, as quoted by Ellis, as coveting even further authority for the educational bureaucracy. Arnold wanted the government bureaucracy to have the power to authorize “standard” sets of textbooks for church schools, which obviously meant the power to control the contents of the textbooks.

The final two stanzas of Matthew Arnold’s poem, Dover Beach, written in 1867, (quoted from the Viking Book of Poetry) show the attitudes of this government appointee who had such disturbing authority over church schools but who coveted even more for that government bureaucracy of which he was an honored part:

“The Sea of Faith  
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth’s shore  
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furl’d.  
But now I only hear  
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,  
Retreating, to the breath  
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear  
And naked shingles of the world.

“Ah, love, let us be true  
To one another! for the world, which seems  
To lie before us like a land of dreams,  
So various, so beautiful, so new,

Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,  
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;  
And we are here as on a darkling plain  
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,  
Where ignorant armies clash by night.”

Arnold’s unpleasant atheistic poem denied the objective existence of faith, hope and love. This poem by Arnold, the son of a clergyman, was therefore deeply anti-Christian, and Arnold certainly must have known it to be so. To appoint this atheist/agnostic to oversee Christian schools made about as much sense as to appoint Friedrich Nietzsche or Karl Marx. It only made sense if those appointing him were activists with a hidden agenda to help the tide of faith to recede a little more quickly.

Did Arnold think a child’s beliefs could be influenced by schools, such as the schools over which Arnold was given power? One would assume so, judging from Stanzas from the Grand Chartreuse (also from *The Viking Book of Poetry*<sup>36</sup>.) containing Arnold’s gloomy agnostic thoughts while visiting a monastery:

“For rigorous teachers seized my youth,  
And purged its faith, and trimm’d its fire,  
Show’d me the high white star of Truth,  
There bade me gaze, and there aspire;  
Even now their whispers pierce the gloom:  
What dost thou in this living tomb?”

“Forgive me, masters of the mind!  
At whose behest I long ago  
So much unlearned, so much resign’d!

I come not here to be your foe,  
I seek these anchorites, not in ruth,  
To curse and to deny your truth.

“Not as their friend or child I speak!  
But as on some far northern strand,  
Thinking of his own gods, a Greek  
In pity and mournful awe might stand  
Before some fallen Runic stone -  
For both were faiths, and both are gone.

“Wandering between two worlds, one dead,  
The other powerless to be born,  
With nowhere yet to rest my head,  
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.  
Their faith, my tears, the world deride;  
I come to shed them at their side.”

“Wandering between two worlds, one dead, The other powerless to be born,” sounds as if Arnold were anticipating a New Age. So many activists were back then, just as today. What he makes abundantly

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<sup>36</sup> From *The Viking Book of Poetry of the English-Speaking World*, Chosen and Edited by Richard Aldington, The Viking Press, New York: 1944, pages 971-972.

clear in his second, unpleasant poem is that he had been brainwashed by “rigorous teachers” who “seized” his youth, “masters of the mind,” who had forced on him a totally anti-Christian view of reality. In effect, Arnold stated, based on his own experience, that a young person’s religious faith can be intentionally destroyed by his teachers. One wonders who his teachers were. Certainly his activist father must have been among them. However, the fact that this atheist/agnostic, Matthew Arnold, had inspecting authority over a number of Christian schools for 35 years was not only an abridgement of the schools’ religious freedom but was an abomination.

Ellis reported (pages 55-56):

“The Code of 1860... made clear that books must be selected from the list compiled by the Committee of Council....”

Therefore, the censorship of school books was firmly in place right up to the time when it was suddenly abandoned, and “control” was replaced by the “Standard” tests. Ellis had stated (pages 44 and 56):

“The Newcastle Commission on The State of Popular Education in England (1858) reported in 1861. It had considered the measures which would be required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction and decided that it was necessary to institute an examination in schools, on the results of which the position of teachers would depend. These proposals were made effective in the Revised Code of 1862....

“A small section of the Newcastle Report dealt with the Book Department of the Committee of Council. It was argued that the Committee could be accused of censorship no matter to what extent it protested to the contrary. Many books were in circulation which contained errors and were thus unfit for use in schools, but were not condemned by the Committee of Council, whilst others did not appear in the list for the sole reason that it must be confined within reasonable limits....

“The Newcastle Commission recommended that a general annual grant should supersede the various special grants, including that for books, and that the list should be withdrawn.

“...In accordance with the recommendations of the Newcastle Commission, grants were paid to schools on the basis of attendances and results....”

The “results,” of course, were the tests on the Standards. It was a direct swap: the approved book list was traded in for the testing “Standards.”

As noted elsewhere, literacy had been high in the British and Wesleyan schools of the north before government control increased.

Ellis had stated (pages 47-48):

“In the later 1850’s it was not uncommon in British and Wesleyan schools in the north for at least 75% of the children to read books of general interest with fluency, but even in the highest standards there was an almost complete absence of expression.”

Yet “expression” has nothing whatsoever to do with reading ability. The area affecting expression is on the opposite side of the brain from the areas concerned with decoding ability in reading. That is demonstrated by a report by Sid J. Segalowitz in his book, *Two Sides of the Brain* (Prentice Hall, Inc.,

Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: 1983, pages 37-38). Segalowitz told of a teacher with an impairment in a certain area of the right hemisphere similar to Broca's area on the left, who lost all ability to speak with "expression," despite retaining her other capabilities. Because she could no longer speak with expression, she lost control of her classes.

Children can be drilled, of course, to speak - and to read - with expression. That they SHOULD be drilled to do so, I deny. Unless they have similar brain damage to that of the unfortunate teacher, they will speak - and read - with expression automatically when moved by their own feelings to do so, and that is soon enough, indeed.

Over 75% of the children - obviously meaning the total of all children including beginners in the schools - could "read books of general interest with fluency," which meant books OTHER than the readers they had been drilled on. That certainly proves that those northern children in the late 1850's, before the "meaning" reading books had invaded their schools, were doing very well indeed.

However, Ellis then made this statement, seemingly opposing it as a sign of "improvement" over the presumed "failure" of the plus 75%:

"Standards of reading improved rapidly in the Church schools of Chester, Shropshire, and Stafford. Whilst in 1859 the inspector estimated 25% of the children could read passably a book such as the 3rd Irish Reader, in 1861 he found that 33% of them could read fairly well from their accustomed book and 8% could read whatever suitable book was placed before them."

The 75% "expressionless" but accurate readers of general texts in the late 1850's in the north, probably all under twelve years old, were enormously more successful than the only 8% of children in Chester, Shropshire and Stafford who were able to read such general texts in 1861! Furthermore, even with the text read over and over in school, only 33% of this latter group could read that text well enough for the inspector to consider that they passed it! Those results were reminiscent of Bell's "meaning" material in 1823, when he said it sometimes took sixteen months to cover the first thirteen "meaningful" pages of context reading successfully! The first book of the Irish Reader series to which Ellis referred was a Code 1 to Code 3 book, and its appalling nature is discussed elsewhere. It is not surprising that the children getting those "meaningful" Irish Readers were failing, or that the children in the charitable schools in the north could read so well. That is because many charitable schools in the 1850's were not yet using the "meaning" reading series, undoubtedly because they could not afford to buy them.

However, since many children at that time were tested in oral reading only on books they had practiced over and over in school, the resulting comments on reading achievement are not reliable, except for the "fail" rate. Those who were unable to read what they had practiced over and over obviously could not read at all, like the 75% failing in Chester, Shropshire and Stafford in 1859, and the 67% failing in 1861.

Ellis reproduced an 1857 "estimate" of the number of years children spent at school. Such "estimates" are obviously guesswork, and are of limited use. What seems certain, however, is that many British children, like many American children at the time, spent very little time in school, so it was critically important to make the most of that time. To give a child who would spend only a year or two under instruction a book like the Code 1 first Irish Reader teaching sight-words by "meaning" instead of a "sound" battledore or speller was a criminal act: in no way could such unfortunate children learn to read.

Pamela Horn (page 2-) referred to the gradual increase in government inspection of charitable church schools:



“The number of Government Inspectors also rose and by 1850 had reached twenty-three. As yet their duties remained extremely wide - they included approving specimen building plans, ascertaining ‘means of instruction’ (such as inspection of subject-teaching, books and school apparatus) assessing ‘organization and discipline,” and inquiring into religious teaching. Most of the H.M.Is. were recruited from a well-to-do background and had enjoyed an education at one of the older Universities before they assumed their inspectorial role; they were naturally held in some awe by the humble elementary school teachers whom they visited, and also by the pupils. But as yet they did not inspire the fear and dislike which future generations of teachers and children were to feel towards them.

“This transition from respected superior to dreaded ogre took place only in the early 1860s, as a result of a change in Government policy in regard to the distribution of state grants.

(page 41) “Under the new ‘Payment by results’ system introduced by the Revised Code of 1862, all future grants, except for building, were to be made on the basis of a capitation payment of 12s. per child per annum; four shillings of this depended upon the child’s regular attendance at school (under a qualified head teacher) and the rest upon his or her performance at an annual examination in the three ‘Rs’ which was now to be conducted by an H.M.I. Failure in any one of the three subjects examined - reading, writing and arithmetic - meant the loss of 2s. 8d. from that particular child’s grant. The examinations were arranged in a series of Standards and each child was expected to move up a Standard every year. The details of the Standard examination are given below.

“Standard I

Reading: Narrative in monosyllables.

Writing: Form on blackboard or slate, from dictation, letters, capital and small, manuscript.

“Standard II

Reading: One of the Narratives next in order after monosyllables in an elementary reading book used in the school.

Writing: Copy in manuscript character a line of print.

“Standard III

Reading: A short paragraph from an elementary reading book used in the school.

Writing: A sentence from the same paragraph, slowly read once, and then dictated in single words.

“Standard IV

Reading: A short paragraph from a more advanced reading book used in the school.

Writing: A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time, from the same book but not from the paragraph read.

“Standard V

Reading: A few lines of poetry from a reading book used in the first class of the school.

Writing: A sentence slowly dictated once, by a few words at a time, from a reading book used in the first class of the school.

“Standard VI

Reading: A short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper, or other modern narrative.

Writing: Another short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper, or other modern narrative, slowly dictated once, by a few words at a time.”

These reading “Standards” sound considerably less impressive when considered alongside the fact that the only books used were the schools’ reading books, and these had been practiced aloud in chorus, over and over, generally until they were memorized. Concerning such memorization, Pamela Horn quoted from the autobiography of an inspector in rural Wales some ten years later, during the early 1870’s, E. M. Sneyd-Kynnersley. (He said that the “great aim of inspector, teacher and children was to finish by 12:30 (p.m.) at the latest.”)

“Our plan of campaign was delightfully simple. Most of the children were in the two lowest standards. These were supplied with slates, pencils, and a reading-book, and were drawn up in two long lines down the middle of the room. They stood back-to-back, to prevent copying, and did dictation, and arithmetic, sometimes dropping their slates, sometimes their pencils, sometimes their books, not infrequently all three, with a crash on the floor. When we had marked the results on the Examination Schedule, all these children were sent home, and the atmosphere was immensely improved. Then we proceeded to examine the rest, the aristocracy, who worked their sums on paper. As a rule, if we began about 10 we finished about 11:45.... They read with a fluency that in those early days used to amaze me, knowing, as I did, that they knew very little English; till I found by greater experience that they knew the two books by heart, and could go on equally well if the book fell on the ground....”

According to Ellis (page 44), the 1860 “Code” was consolidated from the “Minutes of the Committee of Council” but did not concern testing. The “Revised Code of 1862” was the first which instituted testing by standards. The “New Code of 1871” resulted from the 1870 legislation which had authorized the establishment of government schools under school “Boards” to be supported by taxes, the first true state schools in England.

In the “Revised Code” of 1862, Standard I was not required to spell words, but Pamela Horn said (page 42):

“In the course of time the Code was amended somewhat, so that writing was tested in Standard I by a ten-word spelling test, in Standard II, III, and IV by a prescribed number of lines of ‘Dictation,’ and in Standard V by the reproduction of a short story read twice by the Inspector....”

Her comments are puzzling, since these additions do not actually appear in the published code for 1871 so when they were added is unknown. Possibly they appeared in the codes of 1881 or 1882.

Up through Standard IV in 1871, children were only tested on reading from books used in the school, and the dictation was also from the same books. This explains Pamela Horn’s following remarks (page 43):

“Again, through the judicious comparison of notes between teachers in a particular district, dictation exercises could be made a simpler proposition - as H.M.I. Kenney-Herbert pointed out in respect to the Aylesbury district of Buckinghamshire in 1887. According to his experience ‘spelling proper (was) not taught, but the spelling of particular passages of particular books.’ He went on: ‘We have now for some time been giving dictation from the books “ordinarily in use at the school”, according to the instructions. Now it is a very difficult matter to find passages of a certain length suitable as tests of spelling; they occur, of course, but are few and far between. Teachers naturally observe what pieces are chosen and, when they meet, compare notes. The result is that the passages soon become “stock”, and it is not uncommon to see a smile of

satisfaction run round a class, on the day of the examination, when one of its oldest of old friends is read out as the exercise selected from it.”

That spelling books had once again received importance in the schools in the 1880's is shown by the comments of "Flora Thompson" quoted later, from pages 47-48 of Pamela Horn's excellent book. The probability is that phonics had come back in the British schools in the 1880's through the spelling books, just as happened in America. Nevertheless, the spelling failures in England for adults who would have learned to read about 1870 were spectacular by the 1890's, reported in the "Introduction" to *The New-Method Speller*, which was copyrighted in America in 1892 by Warren H. Sadler, and printed in Baltimore, Maryland, by the Sadler-Rowe Company in 1892.

"...In England it is reported that at a recent examination of candidates for Public Service, nineteen-twentieths of the class failed in spelling, and an Educational Report of that country says: 'Spelling is not what it should be. What we want is to teach spelling, and not merely to practise spelling.'

"Civil Service examination papers in this country also show a remarkable deficiency in this important study."

The spelling failures in both countries in the late nineteenth century resulted from teaching beginning reading by the "meaning" method which had arrived as the Siamese-twin to the government-controlled schools. The harmful effects of that method appear most starkly in bad spelling. Bad spelling appears to be the hallmark of permanently impaired conditioned reflexes in reading.

Pamela Horn commented (page 46) concerning "payment by results" which was the effect of the Revised Code of 1862:

"In the average school, the grant formed anything between one-third and one-half of the annual income... A series of bad reports could cripple a school financially, and might also affect the teacher's own salary.... In these circumstances, it is easy to understand the despair of teachers when, despite all their efforts, a poor result was obtained. At Olsworthy Wesleyan School, Devon, in 1886, the log book sadly records: 'Have worked harder this year than ever before. - No good'.... Who can doubt that in this tense atmosphere the children's own position would often be extremely uncomfortable....

"In this sort of situation, it is scarcely surprising that as time passed 'examination day became more of a torment in schools, and the inspectors themselves became slaves of the examination machine, filling in forms, visiting schools and writing reports.'"

The amount of human suffering that has been caused by government-controlled schools is incalculable.

## Chapter 43

### New Reading Texts Appeared for the New Tests, While Some Old Ones Stayed, And the Long-Term Effect of Such Texts

Books were prepared, predictably, to meet the Revised Standards of 1862, and one of them was the following in 1864, published by Simpkin, Marshall and Co., two of whose texts from 1848 and 1852 have already been described:

“Reading Book, containing easy Lessons in monosyllables, also writing, arithmetic, & spelling Lessons, adapted to meet the requirements of the revised code for Standard I. By two certificated masters. London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., E. C., Manchester: John Heywood. 1864.”

In its preface, it repeated the requirements of the 1862 standards:

“Requirements of Standard I of Revised Code Reading: Narrative in monosyllables.

“Writing: Form on black-board or slate, from dictation, letters capital and small, manuscript.

“Arithmetic: form on black-board or slate, from dictation, figures up to 20, name at sight figures up to 20, add and subtract figures up to 10 orally, from examples on blackboard.”

It then gave its aim:

“The object and aim of ‘The Infant School First Standard Reading Book’ is to provide teachers of infant schools with a graduated series of lessons, adapted to meet each of the requirements of the Revised Code, for Standard I.

“We learn from the reports of Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Schools that there have been more failures in this than in any of the other standards. This is attributed to the want of proper apparatus, and it is sincerely hoped that this little work will, in some degree, assist in producing much better results.

“In this series of books, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic have been combined, so that the progress of the child in each of these subjects may be more equalised, and the work of the teacher thereby facilitated.

“This book with thirty-two additional pages, is published as ‘The First Standard’ Reading and Home Lesson Book. T. S. B., J. G.”

The make-up of the book was like Andrew Bell’s “meaning” materials of 1823, dependent on context for word identification, but the lessons were simple little monosyllables at the Standard I level. Nevertheless, despite the extreme simplicity of Standard I, “Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Schools” had said “there have been more failures in this than in any of the other standards.”

Ellis reported (page 57) the percentage of over-all failures in reading in 1864 at 11.87, in 1865 at 11.23 and in 1867 at 9.29. (It should be remembered that failing children were not tested again in the same standard, so this does not represent all the children actually in the schools.) Ellis also said:

“A single book was read continuously until the examination when a child could repeat the text from memory....”

The real failures in these years would have been very much higher, if the children were not just reciting the texts from memory. (They were doing the same kind of thing in American schools at that time. Classes read the same texts over and over and over again in chorus, after the teacher had read the texts to them first so that they “knew” all the “words.”)

Ellis had a further very disturbing comment (page 89):

“In 1870 the most expected of working-class children by the Government was that they should read a newspaper on leaving standard VI, a requirement which could well have been met by a child of 8 years old. Inspectors admitted that no attainment below Standard IV could be of permanent benefit to a child, and yet 80% of children passed only in the lower standards before leaving school. Fewer than 10% of the children attended school for 4 years.”

Therefore, under the government-controlled schools of 1870, 80% of the children left school with “no permanent benefit,” and unable even to read a newspaper, no less a chapbook. No wonder the sales of cheap printed materials aimed at the poor in England had so greatly declined by the last half of the nineteenth century.

In Ireland, the National Schools had been established by an Act of 1831, and were under the authority of the National Commissioners of Education. Although the earliest Irish Reader I have seen is dated 1836, from the date of the Act setting up the Irish National Schools, the original Irish Readers might have been printed as early as 1831.

The Irish Readers (to be discussed later) which had been in use from at least 1836 (and possibly from as early as 1831) to after 1869 (to judge from two editions available at the British Library) demonstrate the two-step sight-word phony phonics that has become dominant in reading instruction in the English language. Two-step sight-word phony phonics rates a Code 3 on a scale of 1 to 10, where one is straight “meaning” and 10 is straight “sound.” Yet to the average adult the harmfulness of these materials is not evident: they look “phonic.” Their harmfulness can only be understood if it is acknowledged that the act of reading is a set of conditioned reflexes which, once formed, may not be unformed, because once people begin to read they are exposed to printed matter for the rest of their lives. Those conditioned reflexes, therefore, cannot be extinguished through disuse.

It is the existence of different and opposite conditioned reflexes which accounts for the extraordinary differences of opinion in rating the difficulty of teaching beginning reading. The Scottish Schoolmaster in 1829 stated that by the time a child is seven he can have been taught to read anything fluently, and he, himself, had been teaching children to read for thirty years by the “sound” approach. Yet Longley, as mentioned elsewhere, made this statement in 1857 when the “meaning” approach had taken over, and he obviously believed it:

“The experience of every observing teacher agrees with the declaration of an eminent English educator, that ‘learning to read is the most difficult of human attainments’ ....”

The astonishing source of Longley’s quotation was Richard Edgeworth, and the probable insincerity of that remark by Edgeworth in 1798 has been discussed earlier.

Recorded differences over many years in the degree of the loss of reading ability due to aphasia can demonstrate the effect of differences in beginning reading methods over those same years.

An instance of loss of reading ability, a form of partial aphasia, which was only temporary, is given in *The Waysiders*, by R. M. N. Crosby, M. D., Delacorte Press, New York: 1968, page 103. Dr. Crosby said the British physician, Lordot, had told in 1843 of a temporary loss of his ability to read in 1825. Lordot had reported in 1843:

“Whilst retaining the memory of the significance of words heard, I had lost that of their visible signs. Syntax had disappeared along with words: the alphabet alone was left to me, but the function of the letter for the formation of words was a study yet to be made. When I wished to glance over the book which I was reading when my malady overcame me, I found it impossible to read the title. I shall not speak to you of my despair, you can imagine it. I had to spell out slowly most of the words, and I can tell you, by the way, how much I realized the absurdity of the spelling of our language. After several weeks of profound badness and resignation, I discovered whilst looking from a distance at the back of one of the volumes in my library that I was reading accurately the title Hippocratis Opera. This discovery caused me to shed tears of joy.”

Dr. Lordot was an adult when he had his aphasic attack in 1825. He would therefore have been taught by the syllable/spelling book approach, or “sound,” after having first learned the alphabet.

Note that his loss of reading ability was total, except for the letters of the alphabet. Isolated letters and other meaning-bearing symbols are thought to be stored on the right side of the brain, where the Japanese Kanji characters are stored. Yet the syllabary, which is pure sound, would have been stored on the left or language side of Dr. Lordot’s brain, where the Japanese Kana syllable characters are stored, and so would the spelling book words which were built on that syllable foundation. Dr. Lordot apparently had a temporary impairment of some sort on the left side of his brain, which affected the area concerned with reading “sound,” (presumably the left angular gyrus area) but not its mirrored counterpart on the right side of the brain, (the right angular gyrus area) which presumably deals with the “meaning” of symbols like the alphabet and the Japanese Kanji characters.

Yet Dr. Lordot also had made the extraordinarily puzzling comment, “Syntax had disappeared along with words.” People before 1826 learned to read with syllables first, instead of words, while today we learn to read with whole words. As a result, did those who learned to read by syllables have more of an awareness than we do today of what appear to be the three sequential steps in speech: syllables/syntax/words?

Another instance of temporary loss of reading ability is given by Dr. William H. Calvin and Dr. George A. Ojemann in *Inside the Brain*, A Mentor Book, The New American Library, Inc., New York: 1980, page 32. The book used a fictitious name for the patient who had a stroke on the left side of the brain:

“Upon sitting down to read (the newspaper), he discovered to his astonishment that he could not read. He could see the paper, recognize the letters individually, but only the shortest two- and three-letter words made any sense.... His spoken language was normal.... A year later, Fred had recovered most of his ability to read.”

That patient, who was reported on page xii to be an older man, was living when the book was published in 1980. Assuming he was 60 or 70, he would have learned to read about 1925 or 1915, when most American reading series taught heavy phonics in supplemental charts (in effect, the old spelling book approach), but only after having started with a little exposure to sight-words in a beginning primer.

The man's retention of the alphabet and some short words suggest these were handled by the right side of his brain which was not affected by the stroke, while the "sound-bearing" remainder of his reading vocabulary, which needed to be handled by the left side, was affected by the stroke.

The third case was reported by Sid J. Segalowitz in *Two Sides of the Brain*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: 1983, page 92. Segalowitz said:

"Not everyone uses exactly the same strategy for reading. Our schools, in fact, fluctuate between two teaching methods, phonics and whole-word. Although most people use a phonics approach to reading at least to some extent, it is conceivable that some people can make do with just recognizing the shape of the words. For example, Ken Heilman reports a case of a right-handed man who suffered a left hemisphere stroke. He became globally aphasic, yet could read quite well (considering his condition). Heilman writes:

"After his discharge, his wife noted that when he wished to communicate what he wanted for dinner he would open a cookbook, read through the references, and indicate what he wanted to eat by pointing to the appropriate place in the text. His wife stated that, in addition to the cookbook, the patient kept other printed material next to his favorite chair and would communicate with her by using this strategy.... (This patient) was able to learn more than 100 American Indian signs. American Indian signs are a pantomime-based system of general communication in which hand postures and motions represent iconic images of major lexical items. With (a subsequent) right hemisphere lesion, the patient lost not only the ability to read but also the ability to comprehend and express these ideographic signs."

Since the loss of the unfortunate man's ability to read followed the damage to his right hemisphere, there can be little doubt that he was reading with the right hemisphere. Heilman had published in 1979 the book to which Segalowitz referred. The patient had presumably been an older man, since strokes are much more common among older people. Therefore, the man may very well have learned to read with some of the heavy sight-word programs being promoted by "experts" in the 1920's, or, if he were considerably older, with the heavy sight-word programs in wide use in the 1890's and earlier such as the Heart of Oak readers (which were almost exactly equivalent to our present day "whole language" approach). In any event, undoubtedly because of the method by which he had been taught to read, the man had stored written matter on the right side of his brain, as "meaning" and not "sound" bearing, and so was able to use that right side to read until his tragic final stroke.

What these three case histories over a period of many years show is that different conditioned reflexes can be formed in reading, and the reflexes which are formed are apparently dependent upon the method by which reading is first taught. The initial approaches in the Irish Readers of 1836, therefore, in the very first book which children were given, were critically important, however trivial they seem when they are described.

The first Irish Reader had started with pure sight words (a Code 1 approach). Later, although it seemed disarmingly like real phonics, the book used already learned sight words to form new words by affixing different consonants. That is two-step, whole-word, phony phonics. The "new" words were then practiced by reading them in context selections aloud which provide "meaning" clues to the just-learned "whole words." Whole-word phony phonics is a Code 3 approach. The Irish Reader approach, therefore, was a whole-word approach and it would have resulted in wrong reflexes.

Concerning the history of the Irish Readers, Ellis stated (page 50):

“The five Reading Books compiled and published under the authority of the Irish Commissioners were extensively used in both the National and the British schools of England and Wales.... The series was unfavourably criticized by an Assistant Commissioner in the report of the Newcastle Commission. He considered that the lowest classes in Ireland were more advanced educationally than their counterparts in England, a fact which rendered unsuitable the use of the Readers in English schools. The style was beyond the comprehension of children in the northern counties, and the sentences were too long and complicated for pupils unaccustomed to sustained thought.”

It should be acknowledged that the higher-level Irish Readers did contain difficult material, unlike the first Irish Reader, but it should be emphasized that children never read school material independently by 1859, when the Newcastle Commission began. The teacher read material to them first, with the “proper” inflections, and the children repeated the material in chorus, over and over again, until finally each child read a portion aloud. It was widely acknowledged that children at that time memorized their reading texts. But even with this endless drill, the Newcastle report begun in 1859 conceded that the English children in the northern counties could not really handle the Irish Readers. (Yet it should be remembered that, only twenty years before, English children in the northern counties had been able to handle the “long and complicated” sentences of the Bible which they obviously could not memorize!)

The Irish Readers, which were Code 1 at their beginning, and Code 3 shortly after their beginning, had first been published for the government schools in Ireland in the 1830’s. They had spread throughout government-subsidized schools in England and Wales. (Why should THAT have happened?) The Irish Readers were in “extensive” use in England and Wales at the time of the Newcastle Commission, which began in 1859, and an 1869 revised copy is available at the British Library. Therefore, for at least thirty-three years and probably for considerably longer, these readers had been doing massive damage to literacy in Ireland, England and Wales.

Douglas Hyde’s comments, quoted elsewhere in this history, described the Irish children who were being given a government school education in English as appallingly ignorant, particularly the minority who spoke Gaelic at home. Since these Irish children were almost certainly being given the Irish Readers published by Collins, that means the “Assistant Commissioner” of the “Newcastle Commission” was apparently not getting the real facts on Irish achievement. The children in the “northern counties” of England were failing with the awful things, and so probably, if Hyde were correct, were the Irish children.

William Collins II of Glasgow, Scotland, was publishing the Irish Readers by 1869, and by doing so carried on the textbook approach of the older William Collins of Glasgow (presumably not his father but his uncle or grandfather, since the younger man was not called William Collins, Jr.). The older William Collins had published *The First Monitorial Class Book* by N. Leitch which had a twenty-fifth edition by 1848. It was effectively a Code 1 pure sight-word book, despite its listing of some short vowel words. It obviously omitted teaching the alphabet, but taught letters through their use in words. By page 2, it was using two-letter sentences in small letters: “go up. he is.... if we be. go to it.” The use of small letters was necessary, of course, because the alphabet in capitals had not been taught either. Pages 3 and 4 had sentences of two letter words, and then, on page 4, the following, using three-letter words:

“bad, man, fat, sad, lad, mat, bag. hen, pen, red, get, ten, men, net. bad men. my fat hen. a sad lad. go to bed. a red mat. get a pen. a fat man. my net bag. I am in. a hat peg. get red wax. we met. my pen is bad. set me in bed. get me a net bag. my hat is wet.”



The fact that a word list of short “a” and short “e” words preceded the above sentences did not mean the children were taught the short sounds: they were taught whole words, and then immediately practiced them in “meaningful” contexts. The word lists on the succeeding pages introduced some short o and short u words, but they were mixed in with other shorts, so attention could not even be intuitively focused on them. Some brighter children might have done this on the short “a” and short “e” words given above, but not on the following mixed lists. Therefore, the children were not being taught and were not learning the critical short vowel sounds present in about sixty per cent of English syllables, but only whole words to be used immediately afterwards in context.

By page 7, capitals began to be introduced in words and the words became four letters long. The book ended on page 12 with 5 letter words. It was, in effect, a Code 1 book for beginners. Collins senior had also had enormous sales on the Leitch readers, which were presumably like Leitch’s *The First Monitorial Class Book*. Therefore, Leitch’s highly successful book, published by Collins senior of Glasgow, anticipated the phony phonics of the highly successful *Irish Readers*, the publication of which was taken over by Collins junior of Glasgow sometime after their original publication in Ireland.

The 1869 edition of the first book of the *Irish Readers* was entitled, *First Reading Book for the Use of Schools. New Series, Illustrated*. Glasgow & London: William Collins, Sons, and Company, and Sold by All Booksellers. 1869. (British library call number 12202 dg ll).

The book began with the alphabet in capital and small letters on page 3. Yet the children were supposed to learn the letters through their use in the context selections, just as with Leitch’s book, because page 4 was the first lesson, clearly entitled, “SECTION I. LESSON I.” It contained a picture of a cow, and over the picture the letters “a i m n o s t x y.” These letters were then used in sight-word phrases in columns under the picture: “an ox, it is, no ox, my ox, it is so, so it is, is it an ox? is it my ox? is it so? no.” The page had used no capitals, obviously because the alphabet in capitals had not been taught. Yet it took time to introduce the use of the comma and the question mark, both “meaning” and not “sound” bearing!

The same approach was continued on page 5, which was “LESSON II.” It introduced the small letters “b f g h e u p r” and phrases using only some of the letters covered so far: “is he up or no? go up. I am up. is he on an ox? he is on my ox. I am on an ox. go up to it.” The probability is that the children retained no memory of those letters which were not used in words, since the focus of the material was on words.

“LESSON III” continued with the rest of the letters: “c d j k l q w z v” and again used only some of them in context: “lo, we go. do as we do. do (go) up. is he at j, or at z? he is at z; I am at j. is it q? no, it is p. is it v? no, it is u.”

“LESSON IV.” contained isolated sight words at the beginning: “to do go we.” They were followed by more phrases: “am I to go to my ox? is it so? it is. am I to go in to it? is he to go to it? he is to do as we did.”

On page 6, “SECTION II. LESSON I,” some of the capitals were introduced in sight words, and the first phony phonics appeared. The children up to this point obviously had been reading print as meaning-bearing whole words. Three pairs of words then appeared: “can had, rat hat, mat sat.” Section I had covered two letter words and this section moved into three letter words. This looks to the unwary as if the short “a” sound were being taught, but obviously the children at this point would be conditioned to see these words as more “whole words.” Four of the words provided the “phonogram” “at” from which were built more words by adding the consonants r, h, m, and s (pure analytic “phony phonics,” building new words from old words). Under the words was a picture of a cat biting a rat, a nasty touch for little children, followed by this “meaningful” context: “The cat has a rat. Can it be Sam or Pat? It is Sam. Pat

had on a hat. He sat on a mat.” The use of the article “a” (pronounced either u or a) obviously interfered with any generalization the children might make for themselves about a consistent sound for “a” from the short “a” words being used. Furthermore, the difficult sound “th” had not been taught, but the sight word “the” was introduced.

Page 7 had “LESSON II. bad, has fat, Ned bed, net Sam has a fat ram. Dan has a bad pen. Let Ned go up to bed. It is a bad net. Has Sam a hat? No, he has a cap.” Although this might seem to be teaching the “short e” sound from the words “Ned, bed, net,” what kind of generalization could a beginning reader make for himself with the unexplained inclusion of “long e” in “he,” as well as the short “u” sound at the end of “the”? The child would therefore learn ALL these words as “whole words.”

On the bottom of page 7 was “LESSON III. den fed get hen yet pet pen Dan The fox is in his den. Can I get a pen? Ben fed my pet hen. Dan is not yet in bed; he is a bad boy.” Note the inclusion of sight words containing vowels not yet “taught”: “short o” in fox and not, and the diphthong “oy” in boy.

Page 8 had “LESSON IV will bit pig lip pin pit sin tin A fat pig is in the pit. Ned has a bit of tin. My cat is a pet. A rat bit its lip. Is it a pin or a pen? I will do no sin.” Note the untaught sound of a terminal “y” in “my.” Note the irregular sound of “o” in do used immediately before a regular sound in no, both different from the sounds of “o” in the previous lesson in fox and boy. This provides four different sounds for the letter “o” in sight words before the letter “o” is “covered” by a list of three-letter “o” words in the next lesson. Note the probably phony inclusion of a religious inference.

On the bottom was “LESSON V,” which ran over to page 9. “fits fig gig I will go to you now. Tom has a new hat. It fits him, and it fits me too. Did Ned get a fig? Sam is to go in the gig.” “Short o” had not been covered in the word lists before the “phonic” lessons in this section. Yet the previous lesson had included four different sounds for “o” in sight words: do, no, fox, and boy. This lesson includes several variants of sounds and spellings of “o,” all of which would have to be absorbed as sight words: go, you, now, to, too! In the word “new,” the lesson includes the untaught diphthong “ew.” If not pronounced to rhyme with few, it makes the same sound as “oo” in “too,” “to,” “do,” and “you.” With the handful of sight words the teacher had been pronouncing for him to repeat up to this point, a little child might stumbly try to make the “sound” vowel and spelling generalizations for himself that used to be handled in the spelling books. However, the mixture of spellings and sounds on “o” would throw such a child back to remembering his sight words solely for their “meaning.”

Next came “LESSON VI. bog, cot dog pot toy doll Tom has his top. A doll is a toy. The cot is on a hill. Is it a pot or a pan? It is a pot. Ned saw a pig in the bog. Mat will get a dog for me. The dog ran at a cat and bit it.” The casual reviewer might think “Section II” had been teaching the short vowel sounds. Words have been listed up till now with “short a,” “short e,” “short i,” and now “short o,” but, as has been seen, those sections were very defective. This one is clearly so: “o” is in the middle position of three-letter words, but note the difference in sounds. Five have short “o,” but the sixth has the diphthong “oy,” which had already been used in a sight word in a previous lesson. The children would absorb this new word, “toy,” by a consonant substitution on the previous pure sight-word, “boy.”

“LESSON VII cup put fur rub run sun [Note the mixture on “u”, giving it THREE sounds in only SIX words: cup, put, fur! That should remove any lingering belief that the intent in Section II has been to teach the short vowel sounds, in the order a, e, i, o, and u!] Ned put his leg in the tub. Has not a cat fur? It has, and so has a fox. The sun has set; I do not see the top of the hill. Bid the lad get a cup. A dog can run. Has Bess a tub? Bid her rub it dry.” The children would find “dry” easy to remember: just compare it to the previous pure sight-word, “my,” using a different beginning.

“LESSON VIII for got nor not ill far Bid Tom go and get the pen for me. Tim has not got a pen nor a pin. To do ill is a sin. Can you run far?”

Note the words conveniently grouped for initial consonant substitution: for-nor, and got-not. Furthermore, the sight-word “for” would have to be distinguished from the sight-word “far” by “visual analysis.” The “r” controlled vowel sounds have not been taught: er-ir-ur, plus ar and or.

Page 10 had:

“LESSON IX Snap Fred bled spin rug drum (picture of boys with drum and fife) Fred sat on a rug. Pat has a drum. My dog Snap bit a rat, and its leg bled; it is in a trap; but do not let it go. I can spin and flog my top, but not in the sand. If you hit my cat with a rod it will spit and run.”

Note the continued ugly content which curiously is so often to be found in “meaning” texts for little children: a dog biting a rat, whose leg bled, while the rat was held in a trap from which it was not to be freed, followed by talk of hitting a cat and its spitting and running. The material has now “progressed,” however, to four letter words, containing consonant blends. Yet no attempt is made to teach these blends in any consistent fashion as “sound.”

Page 11 had:

“LESSON X plan house, crop bled Bob plot flax stay (picture of cottage and man) Is his crop of flax in the bog? No, it is in a plot of land on the hill side, near his house. Bob is in bed; it is a bad plan to stay in bed too long; but he is not well, and can not get up. Ned hit him, and his lip bled.”

That was another nice content touch for impressionable little children: “Bob” is in bed because Ned beat him, and “his lip bled.” Note also that the list of words at the top are pure sight words, with no attempt to group them phonically.

The book proceeds with two “story” lessons to a page and six to ten words at the top of each. These words were being learned as sight words, and would provide the sight-word bank which could be used later on which to draw to compare known words to unknown words to see like parts.

To the casual observer, Lesson XIII seems to deal with a terminal “silent e” which makes the first vowel a long sound. Lesson XI had a silent e word, “rope,” and Lesson XII another one, “like” but there is no reason to think the rule was taught with these isolated sight words. However, Lesson XIII included cane, care, give, date, hate, made, lame, takes and Jane. Note the three exceptions to the rule out of the nine words given: care, give, and takes. These exceptions would need some explanation, which undoubtedly was not given. So it is doubtful that the children could have intuitively absorbed the silent “e” rule. The probability is that no attempt was made to teach it.

Section III did seem to have the lessons arranged phonically, but that the intent was “elocution” and not decoding becomes clear with the words listed at the head of Lesson XIX on page 35: feint gray rein veil prey. Any text attempting to teach children to decode such words by their sounds would never mix words in this fashion. The intent here was obviously to teach whole words, to be pronounced (“elocution”) with the long “a” sound. Children had an opportunity to practice that pronunciation in the seven-line story which followed the word lists. That was the form in which lessons in Section III appeared: a list of words with a particular sound to pronounce, followed by a short story using the words, very much as done in My Fair Lady: “The rain in Spain stays mainly on the plain.”

With Section IV, even the “elocution” phonics ended. The sentences on page 44 were sad, indeed:

“We shall be glad when we grow old that we were taught to read. But some boys and girls do not love to read; they say it is too hard.”

“Frank took no pains to learn; he did not look at his book: and when his turn came to read, he could not, and so lost his place in the class....”

Section V was a section of little stories, each preceded with five or six two-syllable words divided by hyphens. Page 64 was the last page in the book, and introduced italic letters to print a page of religious material.

The 1869 copy was published after the spelling book as a beginning book was no longer even a memory. The 1836 copy, however, came out immediately after the change. Primers, or beginning reading books in the 1830’s parodied the old spelling book arrangement, obviously to placate the public which had a memory of the old approach.

The 1869 book was a revision of the 1836 text, and, while much had been changed, it repeated verbatim some of the sentences in the earlier text and followed its general form. Both were Code 3 books, the earlier one more explicit in its “phonic” treatment, which is to say, in demonstrating how to form new words from known sight words. A copy of the 1836 text is in the British Library under call number 1212 b.20, and is titled, *First Book of Lessons for the Use of the Irish National Schools*, Dublin, Printed by John S. Folds, 5, Bachelor’s Walk, 1836.

On the inside of the title page, this appears, which is not in the 1869 revision:

“Teachers will observe that the first Section of Lessons is designed merely to make the child familiar with the forms of the Letters. In the second and third Sections, there is a regular gradation from the simplest to the most difficult sounds. It is recommended to Teachers, to make their pupils perfectly acquainted with one Lesson before they proceed to another, and to exercise them as much as possible on the meaning of such words and sentences as admit of being defined and explained.”

Page 3 had the upper and lower case alphabet, and the vowels, “a e i o u and sometimes w and y.”

Page 4 listed the consonants, the alphabet in italics and figures.

Page 5 had a list of sample words as a phonic key, not unlike Webster. That was very curious, as no further use was made of it in the book!

The very form of the book, from Section II on, paralleled much of the phonic content of spellers, but the intent was obviously very different. Words were taught as wholes and practiced immediately in context, and the “phonics” in Section III was obviously aimed at elocution, and not decoding.

Starting on page 6 appeared the first lessons:

“FIRST BOOK  
Lessons in the Forms and Sounds of the Letters.  
SECTION I.  
LESSON I.

a i m n o e s t x y

“an ox,      my ox      is it an ox?  
it is,      is it?      it is my ox.  
no ox      is so,      is it so? no.

“LESSON II.

b f g h e l u p d r n

“is he up, or no?      is it b or h?  
go up? fy, be up?      it is h, is it.  
is it on an ox?      it is b or p.

“LESSON III.

e j k l g & w z j

“ho, we go;      is it j or z?  
so we do;      he is at z, I am at j  
ox, go up      is it c, or k, or d?”

These were almost the same as the 1869 version, and the effect would be the same: the children would form a conditioned reflex to regard words as meaning-bearing wholes. However, surprisingly, this 1836 version then included the alphabet to be learned in Lesson IV and V, in capital and small letters and in italics. Lesson VI and VII were as follows:

“LESSON VI

“I am to go to my ox; is it so? As he is to go, am I to go? I am. Is he to go up? no, do as we do.

B L K V C Q U R J Z

“LESSON VII

“So I am to go up on my ox. Do ye to us as we do, do so. Lo, he is at K; I am at Q. Is it C, Z, Y, V, J, or B?”

On page 9 began SECTION II:

“LESSON I.

“cat    hat    ram  
fat    mat    rat

“Can it be Pat or Sam?  
Sam has on a hat.  
He sat on a mat.  
Has Pat a hat? no.  
Pat is on a fat ram.  
The cat has a rat.”

Note that the word list has five words with the phonogram “at,” which “whole words” the children could distinguish from each other by the initial consonant. By page 9, the children would perceive words only as “wholes” after the treatment of Section I.

“LESSON II.

“bed	hen	net
den	leg	pen

“Ned has a pen.	Let Sam go to bed.
It is a bad net.	A hen has a leg.
A man in a den.	Can I get a pen?”

The words to be compared as wholes in this list would be “den-hen-pen.”

(Page 10) “LESSON III.

“fig	pig	tin
lip	pit	wig

“A rat in a pit.	Ned’s bit of tin.
Has a pig a lip?	A cat in a net.
Mat has a fig.	A wig on a pen.”

The words to compare as wholes here would be “fig-pig-wig.”

“LESSON IV.

“bog	dog	pot
cot	fop	top

“Tom has his top.	A doll is a fop.
A cot on a hill.	Sam has a dog.
A pig in a bog.	Is it a pot or a pan?”

The words to compare as wholes here would be bog-dog, cot-pot, and fop-top.

“LESSON V.

“cub	fur	sum
cup	gun	sun

“Ned has cut his leg.	Tom has a gun.
Has a cat fur?	Is it cub or cup?
Is it sum or sun?	A dog can run.”

In the 1836 version, five lessons had been set up in the sequence of short a, short e, short i, short o and short u. In the 1869 version, this sequence was blurred.

(Page 11) “LESSON VI

“A dog ran at a cat, and bit it.  
Bid him go and get my pen.  
My ... is on a pen; is it not?  
O, Sir, it is. To do ill is to sin.

“LESSON VII

“I can get a wax doll, and a cap.  
But let me get up, and go to bed.  
If I sin, I am bad.  
Let me not sin, as bad men do.”

This section looks as if it teaches short vowels, but it has not done so, essentially for the same reasons as given for the 1869 book. However, on Lesson VIII, it included a whole-word approach which was omitted in the 1869 book. Blends were passed over as sight words in that text. In this, the children were carefully shown how to build new sight words from previously learned ones: nap became snap, rap became trap, and so on. After it taught these words, they were practiced in sight-word contexts, using, without previous teaching, such words as “do” and “was”:

LESSON VIII

“nap	snap	pit	spit
rap	trap	log	flog
led	bled	top	stop
lip	slip	rug	drug
pin	spin	rum	drum

“LESSON IX

“Snap bit a rat. Its leg bled.  
It is not a trap; do not let it slip.  
Tom was on (Page 12) a rug; he had a drum. I can spin and flog my top, but not a doll.  
A log hit a cat; it did not spit and run.

“LESSON X

“Stop it is a bad drug; let it drop.  
Bob is in a snug bed; he is in a nap;  
it is a bad plan to be in bed at ten.  
A crop of flax; is it in a bog?  
No, it is in a plot at my hut. Ned hit Top a rap; his lip bled.  
It is a sin to do ill.”

The resemblance in the sentences to those in 1869 is obvious. The book then continued with much more explicit treatment on building new words from old words, and used it to cover the silent “e” rule, which was covered so vaguely in the 1869 issue:

“LESSON XI

“can	cane	mad	made
hat	hate	man	mane

“He has a hat on his pate; has he not?  
Can you lend me a cane? I will give it back.  
Snap has not a mane, he is not mad.  
I hate to do ill; I was not made to be bad.”

The next lessons followed the same approach for long e, long i, long o, and long u words formed by the addition of a silent “e”: sample words, followed by sentences. By LESSON XVII, the material was all sentences.

Starting on page 16, SECTION III was much more explicit about building new whole words from old ones, arranging the lessons of “instruction” in the order of the vowels. Sometimes the words were alike in their endings and sometimes in their beginnings: elm, helm, help; and sometimes internally: mend, send, tent. It is true the old spelling books arranged words by such phonic analogy, but children taught to read with spelling books had been drilled from the beginning to regard words as amalgamations of letters to be read as “sound” and not as wholes to be learned for their “meaning.” The resemblance between the spelling book and the sight-word primer is therefore only seeming and not real.

The word lists were all immediately followed by sentences, obviously fostering context guessing on the newly taught sight words.

“LESSON I

“act fact ark bark  
ant pant arm harm  
ask task art cart (sentences)

“LESSON II

“elm hemp nest  
helm melt send  
help mend tent (sentences)

(Page 17) “LESSON III

“ink limp risk  
drink list silk  
lift ring sing (sentences)

“LESSON IV

“cord fork scorn  
cork horn sort  
corn horse stork (sentences)

(Page 18) “LESSON V

“bust gulf lump  
burn hunt trust  
curd hurt turn” (sentences)



Isolated phonemes were now introduced, first “th” initially and then terminally, and then varied spellings for the “au” sound and the short “u” sound. Note in Lesson VIII and IX the greatly varied spellings for these sounds. The purpose of this section is obviously elocution, and not decoding. Children were only being taught how to pronounce correctly.

“LESSON VI

“this these  
that them” (sentences)

“LESSON VII

“bath girth theft  
depth smith thick  
fifth tenth width” (sentences)

“LESSON VIII

“ball salt wall  
call stall warn  
halt tall wasp” (sentences to page 20)

“LESSON IX

“glove month worth  
love word worn  
sun work world” (Irish accent?)

The lessons continued with “sh” spellings followed by sentences, and then the same treatment for “ch, wh, oo, oi, ea, ei-ey, ew-ue, aw, au, ou, ow,” and “ie-oe.” That last was on page 32. Pages 33 to 36 contained just sentences, with the last page religious, ending with the Roman numerals. This pattern was familiar from the spelling books which had covered all the variant sounds in English and their spelling. What made this book so different was that it drilled children to regard words as “wholes” in Section I, and then, in Section II and III, falsely seeming to adopt the spelling sequence, actually taught words as wholes and then practiced them in context so that they would continue to be perceived dominantly as meaning-bearing. The “phonic” treatment was whole-word consonant substitution. However, by the time the 1869 version was printed, the necessity to ape the old spellers had disappeared, and much of the phonic sequence in the original Irish Readers had disappeared too. Section III in the 1869 version dispensed with much that was in the 1836 version.

Ellis wrote on page 51:

“William Collins II issued his first school atlas in 1856 and was later appointed publisher to the Scottish School Book Association and the Irish National Schools. In a period of 10 years he provided the latter body with 2,320,500 copies of 31 books.”

The Irish Readers published by Collins obviously had great influence. The reason for the failure of the children using them, referred to previously, becomes apparent when their Section I is considered: a pure sight-word “meaning” introduction to reading.

It was the use of such government-approved books as the “meaning”-approach Irish Readers which caused the scandalous drop in reading ability which Ellis reported (page 89). Inspectors admitted that no attainment below Standard IV could be of permanent benefit to a child, and yet 80% of children passed only in the lower standards before leaving school at the end of several years’ attendance. Yet, as referred to elsewhere, English bootblacks and others like them in the eighteenth century who had been denied such “formal” education had nevertheless learned to read ably when “sound” was the only approach known. They were, in fact, such accomplished readers that they pooled their coins to buy periodicals like the famous, high-readability-level Spectator. The literate poor of the eighteenth century had been turned into the functionally illiterate poor in the nineteenth century by the government-controlled schools.

## **Chapter 44**

### **The Wrong Methods Endorsed by “Experts” Arrived Piggy-Back on the New Government-Controlled Schools on Both Sides of the Ocean**

The “sound” spelling book for beginners was under attack in England, Scotland and Ireland in the same period of time as in America, starting in the 1820’s and continuing to about the 1840’s.

The dropping of syllabic spelling (“sound”) by John Wood in the Edinburgh Sessional School in Scotland was referred to approvingly in *The Spelling-Book Superseded* by Robert Sullivan of the government schools of Ireland. Robert Sullivan was very probably the “Prof. R. Sullivan,” whose other material was shown on the 1848 list of approved textbooks for English schools, Schedule I. - Lesson Books for the Scholars, which list has already been discussed. On that schedule, Prof. R. Sullivan was listed as having written three of the approved books, *An Attempt to Simplify English Grammar*, *Geography Generalized*, and *An Introduction to Geography and History*. He is probably also the man who wrote Sullivan’s *Literary Class Book* praised by Baker, as discussed later. In *The Spelling Book Superseded*, Sullivan recommended using new and different methods than the old spelling books for teaching spelling even to older children. *The Spelling-Book Superseded* was published in “Rochester” in 1853 but whether it was Rochester in England or America is unknown. The 1853 Rochester edition in the Harvard Library was the sixth edition and showed that the book had had three major revisions by that date, so presumably the first edition had been at least ten years or so earlier. As late as the 1876 American Catalogue, it was still in print, appearing as “Sullivan, R. - Sullivan’s spelling book superseded. New Ed. 31 c” available from “Sadlier.”

Sadlier published Catholic school books at the time, so unfortunately the new philosophies apparently had reached the Catholic schools, too. One of the saddest things in “reading instruction history” is the gullibility that people demonstrated when they were faced with such self-proclaimed “experts.” This proves that there is nothing new about the astonishing gullibility shown by school administrators today concerning “whole language.” However, the record on Sullivan’s book demonstrates the blanketing effect in the English-speaking world of the educational philosophies of the period, and shows also that such “expert” works as Sullivan’s could persist for many years.

Sullivan said he had been working in the National Schools of Ireland (the government schools) “with which it is his pride and pleasure to have been so long connected,” These government schools appeared in Ireland some time after the Penal Laws were repealed which for about a century had forbidden the teaching of Catholics. The Penal Laws, of course, confirm beyond the slightest shadow of a doubt that some people can hold illiteracy in high regard, in such high regard that they can actually legislate it for certain groups of people in order to control them. As has been mentioned, Richard Edgeworth had been involved by 1806 in the original planning for these Irish government schools, only seventeen years after the French Revolution which had finally installed the idea of such government schools into Western culture. As discussed in the section on France, the brand-new idea of founding government schools instead of church schools had been bubbling away for decades among the anti-religious philosophers of France whose later major achievement was the bloody and anti-religious French Revolution.

For many years in the Irish government schools after they were finally founded, teachers were forbidden to speak in anything but English to children who could speak only Gaelic, and teachers were forbidden to teach Irish history. This is discussed by Douglas Hyde in “Irish as a Spoken Language,” from his *A Literary History of Ireland*, which chapter was reprinted in *Irish Literature*, Bigelow, Smith &

Company, New York: 1904, Volumes III and IV, pages 1603 to 1610. (The sections to be quoted later, shown in brackets, were footnotes in the original.)

Douglas Hyde saw the problem, understandably, as a national one, but it was anything but that. The problem was (and remains) centralized governmental control of education, in all countries. Such governmental control was and is exercised by cliques of change-agents. The resultant “education” was and is tailored to their specifications. This “education” has shaped and continues to shape the minds of children. No longer was and is the content of a developing child’s mind to be determined by its parents. It was and is to be determined by “government schools,” the curriculum of which was and is consistently shaped by change-agents. Even in private schools the curriculum became controlled, because most textbooks being published were written for sale to government schools, and their teachers were “trained” in normal schools whose curriculum has been under the control of change-agents.

The excerpt by Douglas Hyde which is quoted later, while completely true in itself concerning the harm being done to Irish children, gave no inkling of the suffering that had been caused to the lower-class English families by the move there to government-controlled schools about the same time. Because of the use of the sight-word method, these English schools were unable to provide even simple literacy to the bulk of their students. Yet, after about 1870, parents were often prosecuted criminally if they held their children out of these schools. They were prosecuted even when an older child was minding younger children so the mother could work for money to buy food, and even when these poor children lacked the shoes with which to walk to school through snow or mud! The real issue with government schools in all countries, and in England and Ireland as in others, was the existence of change-agents who were imposing their will on others, through having manipulated passage of the necessary enabling legislation.

Things were obviously not going very well with government education of the poor in England, in the same general period during which Hyde wrote of government schools in Ireland, which schools were obviously for those who could not afford private schools. Hyde’s excerpts give an appalling account of these government schools as they developed in Ireland, and their “achievements” from the early nineteenth century to 1891:

“According to the census of 1891, something over three quarters of a million people in Ireland were bilinguals, and 66,140 could speak Irish only, thus showing that in thirty years Irish was killed off so rapidly that the whole island contained fewer speakers in 1891 than the small province of Connacht alone did thirty years before.

“This extinguishing of the Irish language has not been the result of a natural process of decay, but has been chiefly caused by the definite policy of the Board of “National Education,” as it is called, backed by the expenditure every year of many hundreds of thousands of pounds. This Board, evidently actuated by a false sense of Imperialism, and by an overmastering desire to centralize, and being itself appointed by the Government chiefly from a class of Irishmen who have been steadily hostile to the natives, and being perfectly ignorant of the language and literature of the Irish, have pursued from the first with unvarying pertinacity the great aim of utterly exterminating this fine Aryan language.

“The amount of horrible suffering entailed by this policy... by insisting upon <children> growing up unable to read or write, sooner than teach them to read and write the only language they knew, has counted for nothing with the Board of National Education, compared with their great object of the extermination of the Irish language, and the attainment of one Anglified uniformity... in vain have disinterested visitors opened wide eyes of astonishment at schoolmasters who knew no Irish being appointed to teach pupils who knew no English...

“In vain have the schoolmasters themselves petitioned to be allowed to change the system, in vain did Sir Patrick Keenan (afterwards himself Chief Commissioner of National Education) address the Board saying, ‘the shrewdest people in the world are those who are bilingual; borderers have always been remarkable in this respect, but the most stupid children I have ever met with are those who were learning English while endeavoring to forget Irish. The real policy of the educationist would in my opinion be to teach Irish grammatically and soundly to the Irish-speaking people, and then to teach them English through the medium of their native tongue.’

“...Will it be believed, the Board of National Education insists upon the Irish-speaking child starting out from the first moment to learn to read a language it does not speak. (For many years the schoolmaster was not even allowed to explain anything in Irish to a child who knew no English! This rule, however, has been abrogated.) It is forbidden to be taught one syllable of Irish, easy sentences, poems, or anything else. It is forbidden to be taught one word of Irish history. Advantage is taken of nothing that the child knew before or that came natural to it, and the result is appalling....

“The children are taught, if nothing else, to be ashamed of their own parents, ashamed of their own nationality, ashamed of their own names. The only idea of education they now have is connected not with the literary past of their own nation, but with the new Board-trained schoolmaster and his school, which to them represent the only possible form of knowledge. They have no idea of anything outside of, or beyond, this. Hence they allow their beautiful Irish manuscripts to rot - because the schoolmaster does not read Irish....

“A friend of mine traveling in the County Clare sent me three Irish MSS. the other day, which he found the children tearing to pieces on the floor. One of these, about one hundred years old, contained a saga called the ‘Love of Dubhlacha for Mongan,’ which M. d’Arbois de Jubainville had searched the libraries of Europe for in vain. It is true that another copy of it has since been discovered, and printed and annotated with all the learning and critical acumen of two such world renowned scholars as Professor Kuno Meyer and Mr. Alfred Nutt, both of whom considered it of the highest value.... The copy thus recovered and sent to me is twice as long as that printed by Kuno Meyer, and had the copy from which he printed been lost it would be unique....

“It is a remarkable system of education, and one well worth the minutest study that can be paid it, which is able to produce these effects, but with even the smallest philological regard for the meaning of words, it cannot be called ‘education.’”

The last paragraph applied equally well to the government “education” in England, Scotland and America at the same period. The people shaping education in all these countries were soul-mates.

However, government schools achieved a particularly nice touch in Ireland: not only were they crippling reading ability as in England, Scotland and America, but they were destroying a language: Gaelic. Government schools are continuing to destroy a language today, but it is English this time, with the abandonment of the teaching of grammar and real literature. The “whole language” method in government schools is now throwing out spelling books, as well.

But the problem, as discussed, was not a nationalistic one: it was the shaping, under centralized governmental control, of the minds of the children of private citizens. The control of these centralized educational policies has consistently been in the hands of change-agents in all countries. In England, Scotland and America, therefore, the centralized educational control was resulting in damage, too - most of all to literacy and religion.

Sullivan had also written previously, *Outline of the Method of Teaching in the National Model School*, obviously the Irish National Model School. In the section, "Orthography," Sullivan dispensed with the spelling book and said he wanted it replaced by dictation, which most naturally would follow the method given in another text he wrote. That text contained words likely to be misspelled, such as those of similar pronunciation, and also practical rules on spelling. He said, "Such a Text Book has since been supplied by the Author." He claimed children without dictionaries or spelling-books would learn the meaning of words from their reading lessons (which is largely true, of course, once they know how really to read, but they were not learning how to read independently with the sight-word primer method which had replaced the spelling book for beginners). In a footnote on page 9 with the above comment, he referred to being able to distinguish the spelling of meet, mete, and meat, and said, "The sound of it is not sufficient; we must know how it looks: and this the eye will enable us to do, for, as has been well said by an American writer, 'the eye in such cases may be said to remember.'" His quoting an American is further confirmation that the educational pond in the English language was a common one shared by English-speaking countries. Sullivan also quoted on pages 10 and 11 the Edgeworths of Ireland concerning the ridiculous practice which had been in use since the eighteenth century of having children learn the dictionary by heart, and then said (page 12):

"The following is from "Wood's Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School..."

Sullivan's familiarity with Wood's school in Scotland is further proof of the shared educational waters in the English language which were being energetically stirred by activists. In the New York Public Library is a twenty-one-gun blast at that Edinburgh Sessional School, printed just about the time the school was becoming "famous," in 1829, portions of which publication have been quoted previously. It was entitled, *Letters Addressed to the Parochial Schoolmasters of Scotland, Concerning the New Method of Tuition. Containing Strictures on Professor Pillans' "Principles of Elementary Teaching".... "By a Schoolmaster,"* Montrose and Edinburgh: 1829.

That blast came from someone who was obviously well acquainted with the school and the educational practices of the time. His persuasive, highly literate remarks were not passed from English-speaking country to English-speaking country and reprinted like Wood's works, whom Pillans was endorsing. Instead of that, all the favorable publicity concerned Wood and those like him. Yet the Edinburgh Sessional School of the late 1820's was as fraudulent in its claims and phony publicity as the infant school movement starting about 1818, as the Quincy movement was starting in 1875, as Progressive Education was from the 1890's to the 1930's, as Open Classroom was as generally practiced in the 1970's (though it should have been otherwise), or as "Whole Language" is in the 1990's. All of these met with sickening acceptance apparently as a result of massive publicity.

Why did the blatant error of John Wood's school, visible to anyone who was honest enough to look it straight in the face, get such vast publicity, even way back in 1828, that it hopped a channel and an ocean, and spread from Edinburgh not just down to London but over to Ireland and across to the United States?

Sullivan quoted from Wood's opus. The quotation is another indication that the improvement in Wood's school was moving from "sound" to "meaning" by throwing out the syllabic spelling book, and that Professor Sullivan of the Irish government schools was endorsing that move, probably more than ten years before 1853.

The quotation from Wood read:

"In the Sessional School, the children are now taught to spell from their ordinary reading lessons, employing for this purpose both the short and the long words as they occur. Under the

former practice in the school, of selecting merely what are longer and apparently more difficult words, we very frequently found the pupils unable to spell the shorter and more common ones....

“In former times, the practice prevailed of telling a long story about every word which was spelt: thus, in spelling the word exemplification, for instance, even a child in the higher classes used to say, ‘e x, ex; e m, em. exem; p l i ple, exemple; (f) i, fe, exemplefe; c a ca, exemplefeca; t i o n, shun, exemplefecashun; six syllables, and accented on the penult syllable.’ This obviously, as a general practice, was a great waste of time, and is, we believe, almost universally exploded. In our own school, the pupil, in spelling, merely names the letters, making a marked pause at the end of each syllable....”

That “improvement” in the old method of spelling had been adopted by Andrew Bell before 1808, and he had named it “unreiterated” spelling. As mentioned earlier, Bell discussed this first “improvement” of his in *The Madras School, or Elements of Tuition*, London: 1808 (pages 64-77). Yet Bell’s “improvement” was not original. Dropping the “spelling” or reciting of letters in syllables apparently first appeared in France, although, as discussed, Comenius had recommended it for multi-syllable words.

Py-Poulain Delaunay in 1719 claimed that some people by that time wanted to renounce spelling. In 1755, Cherrier published a method which dropped spelling, and so did some others in later years: Viard in 1759 and Luneau de Boisjerman in 1778 and Year VI of the French Revolution. Such an “improvement” was an obvious move away from syllable “sound” and toward whole-word “meaning.”

Sullivan continued, on page 13:

“The following extract is from ‘Thayer’s Lecture on Spelling and Definitions,’ (delivered before the American Institute of Instruction)....”

Sullivan showed in a footnote that it was published “by Knight in the Schoolmaster,” additional proof of how little a barrier the Atlantic Ocean was to spreading confusions. The following quotation, however, was reasonable:

“I have said nothing of the practice, once so common, of assigning lessons in spelling and defining from the columns of a dictionary, sweeping through the whole, from the letter A to the last word under Z - if the pupil continued long enough at school to accomplish it... one of the most stupid and useless exercises ever introduced into a school....”

Thayer was referring to the obvious fact that the meaning of words could only be learned properly in the context of sentences. But it is interesting that Sullivan in the Irish National Schools was reading what Thayer had to say before the American Institute of Instruction.

In “Orthoepy, or the Correct Pronunciation of Words,” (page 82), Sullivan referred to the fact that Thomas Sheridan was the first to conceive of a pronouncing dictionary, and referred to Boswell’s biography of Johnson:

“The ANALOGIES of the language, the AUTHORITY of lexicographers, and above all, the CUSTOM of the most correct and elegant speakers, are the guides to which we must refer in all cases of difficulty. Nor can these difficulties, in every case, be resolved by such references; for we shall often find analogy opposed to analogy, authority to authority, and custom divided, even among the most elegant speakers. The following passage from “Boswell’s Life of Johnson” will serve as an illustration:

“Besides, sir, what entitles Sheridan to fix the pronunciation of English? If he says he will fix it after the example of the best company, why, they differ among themselves. I remember an instance: when I published the plan for my dictionary, Lord Chesterfield told me the word great should be pronounced so as to rhyme to state; and Sir William Yonge sent me word that it should be pronounced so as to rhyme to seat, and that none but an Irishman would pronounce it grait. Now here were two men of the highest rank, the one the best speaker in the House of Lords, and the other the best speaker in the House of Commons, differing entirely.’

“In this case the pronunciation of Lord Chesterfield prevailed, though opposed to analogy because he was considered the most polite speaker of his day....”

Concerning Johnson, whose greatness cannot be doubted, his behavior does suggest that the “great” are not above jealousy. Thomas Sheridan’s contribution to culture was monumental: a PRONOUNCING synthetic-phonics dictionary. Although Sullivan acknowledged the fact, Sheridan has been denied almost any credit for this contribution in any other sources that I have seen, and the fact that Sheridan was the first to have the idea has to be pried out of references by inference. (Surely, that is a very strange state of affairs.) The 1963 Encyclopedia Britannica, for instance, only refers to Lord Bute’s giving a pension to Sheridan to promote Sheridan’s scheme for a pronouncing dictionary, with no mention that Sheridan’s was to be THE first to show pronunciation directions for anything except accented syllables, and that it was a major milestone in culture. (The fact that Perry took Sheridan’s idea and produced a pronouncing dictionary ahead of him does not alter the fact that the concept itself was Sheridan’s.)

I suggest that Johnson, unlike the Encyclopedia Britannica, did realize the extent of Sheridan’s contribution. Though Sheridan had been Johnson’s supporter and friend, envy won out over friendship and may have contributed to Sheridan’s and Johnson’s eventually becoming enemies.

Professor Robert Sullivan obviously knew of Sheridan’s contribution, but except for his reference I have never seen Sheridan’s invention alluded to in any other materials except the passing reference in the Encyclopedia Britannica to Lord Bute’s granting of a pension to Sheridan to promote his scheme for a pronouncing dictionary. Sullivan also knew of Wood’s ideas. Knowledge of Sheridan’s wonderful contribution sank into oblivion, but Wood and his harmful ideas were referred to for years in writings on education on both sides of the Atlantic.

Professor Robert Sullivan was apparently a luminary in the nineteenth-century Irish government schools and his textbooks were apparently famous in the mid-nineteenth century in England and America. His book that was meant to replace spelling books, and that endorsed the “meaning” method, is one of the hosts of confirmations from both sides of the Atlantic that the promoters of the “meaning” method in teaching the reading of English were also the promoters of government schools. Yet both the “meaning” method in the teaching of beginning reading and the idea of government schools which were being promoted by such “experts” as Sullivan had not originated in the British Isles in the nineteenth century.

As has been discussed, both concepts had originated in France in the eighteenth century. In the eighteenth century, both topics, beginning reading instruction and government schools, had been of great interest to the movers-and-shakers both before and during the French Revolution. The French Revolutionists had left a copious paper trail on those topics that the English language movers-and-shakers of the nineteenth century could consult.



## Chapter 45

### On Charles Baker, A Particularly Disturbing Self-Confessed Change-Agent for Over Thirty Years

Concerning the use of wrong methods in connection with government-subsidized schools, it is particularly surprising to find that the idea of using the pure deaf-mute reading method for hearing children was being spread in England in the nineteenth century, with no apparent connection to Gallaudet. However, it is highly unlikely, obviously, that no connection ever existed. Angell had claimed in his 1830 primer that he had been uninfluenced by the 1826 Franklin Primer, and his claim was very unconvincing. So was Charles Baker's claim unconvincing, given below, that he had independently arrived at the idea of using the pure deaf-mute method to teach reading to hearing children. It should be noted that Baker's personal history may suggest that he was an activist in the teaching of reading BEFORE he worked in a school for deaf-mutes. (Note the third and fourth paragraphs of the second excerpt.)

Baker's particularly interesting document is filed with other papers in a volume in the British Library and was stamped by the British Library July 14, 1864. The paper is titled, On Teaching Reading, - A Paper Read to the Church Schoolmasters' Association, Doncaster, "By Charles Baker, Headmaster of the Yorkshire Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. London: William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row." Its "Preface" reads:

"Several years have elapsed since this Paper was read, and printed for private circulation, - its reappearance is due only to repeated inquiries for it, which have not arisen altogether from its original circle of hearers and readers; these inquiries the author is desirous of gratifying, since the lapse of time does but confirm the view which he carried into practice thirty years ago.

"The mode of teaching reading which he then endeavoured to bring into favour has met with some adherents. These, however, are not generally to be found among Schoolmasters, nor among compilers of school-books, nor yet among the framers of the Revised Code - for Group I. is to be examined in monosyllables! while the views advocated in this paper are founded on the conviction that short words are, from their sameness of appearance, and difficulty of comprehension, a barrier to progress. Eastfield House, Doncaster, March 31st, 1864"

The fact was that his "views" had very generally been adopted by 1864, except his "view" that beginners should not be limited to monosyllables. It is of great interest that his description of how to teach reading was an almost perfect match for the way reading was actually taught in England by the 1870's, at which time beginners were no longer limited to the monosyllables to which he objected. (Standard I in 1871 required that children be tested in texts that contained multisyllables.) Baker had apparently begun his work with the deaf about 1831. He admitted in 1864 that he had been promoting sight-words for beginners for thirty years, which presumably would have been since at least 1834. He said that others shared his aim. This corroborates the fact that the switch from "sound" to "meaning" after 1826 was the result of purposeful work by activists. Baker's disarming claim that he and the others had not been successful in their efforts is refuted by the reading books in print in 1864, the year he published this paper.

Baker's paper was very long and almost all of it is pertinent, but only the most important sections are quoted below. On page 4, Baker quoted a remark from an unnamed "expert" who was also quoted by Longley, as mentioned elsewhere in this history, along with the fact that the so-called "expert" was Richard Edgeworth. Baker also made it clear that his intent was to affect the method of teaching reading

in the National Schools. Furthermore, the “Church Schoolmasters Association” which he was addressing was obviously composed of the teachers in the National Schools.

“...’Reading,’ as usually taught, ‘is the most difficult of human attainments’....

“I shall divide the subject of this paper into two parts, the first, comprising my own theory and experience in the art of teaching Reading; the second, the means which I would suggest for obtaining a better style of reading in our National Schools.

“Thirty years have elapsed since my attention was first directed to this branch of instruction. I was then examining the principles of a work by Dufief on the French language; and it became quite clear to me that we learn French, in England, chiefly by remembering the phases or appearances of the words, and this was one of the principles of the work.

“Soon afterwards I became engaged in the instruction of the deaf and dumb, and one of the first observations I made was, that we kept the children six, eight, even twelve months, learning the alphabet on their fingers - learning to distinguish one letter from another - and acquiring the art of forming the letters on their slates. Not an idea was communicated to the children during this process - not even the name of a single object around them....

“...I commenced a new system - that of teaching the children words from the first day of their admission, and at the end of six months, I had the satisfaction of seeing that the children were acquainted with the name of every common object about them, and in all respects equal to pupils who had been eighteen months under instruction on the old system. I will just add, in passing, that this improvement has found its way into nearly every Institution for the deaf and dumb in the kingdom - though in every case resisted at first.

“The more I practised this course myself, the more I became satisfied that a method somewhat analogous would be applicable to teaching reading to every child - but it was working in my own mind for several years before I ventured to recommend any one to put it in practice. I was confirmed in my views by reading the works of Pestalozzi and Jacotot, and the first time I suggested such a departure from the ordinary course of teaching reading was in the case of a hearing and speaking child in Doncaster.”

Now this is, as the Scottish Schoolmaster would have said, “the veriest fudge.” Pestalozzi taught by heavy - ludicrously heavy - syllabic phonics, so that alone was a misstatement. Jacotot used massive phonic analysis.

But, more importantly, Baker had become a director of an institution for the deaf and dumb about 1831. It is inconceivable that in that position at that time he would not have heard of the Abbe de l’Epee’s methods, as refined by Sicard, which used sight words. In the previous section on French history, mention was made of a visit to Sicard’s school in the early part of the French Revolution by an Englishman concerned with the teaching of the deaf, so it is certain that knowledge of Sicard’s work had reached those concerned with teaching the deaf in England. Even outside the group of those concerned with the teaching of the deaf, other Englishmen knew of Gallaudet’s general work on education, as shown by previous citations. If Englishmen knew of Gallaudet’s work on general education, it is also highly likely that they would know of his career in teaching the deaf. It is therefore highly likely that Baker, director of a school for the deaf in England, would have heard of Sicard and his highly publicized work in France. He should also have heard of Gallaudet and his highly publicized work in America between about 1817 and 1830 in which Gallaudet used pure sight words for the deaf.

In Barnard's American Journal of Instruction, in his 1860's article on Gallaudet, he told of Gallaudet's use of the pure sight-word method with a little deaf-mute girl, even BEFORE Gallaudet went to France in 1815. Baker very likely might also have heard that, by 1835, Gallaudet had written a deaf-mute-method reader for hearing children, in which he taught the alphabet only after teaching sight word. That 1835 reader, The Mother's Primer, was widely used. Yet Baker had the unbelievable arrogance and probable dishonesty to imply that he, himself, had INVENTED the use of pure sight words for the deaf and, later, that he was the first to have promoted that approach for hearing children! He wrote:

"A lady of this town, the mother of several children, was remarking to me with regard to one of them, that she was just about to commence a task which would extend over two years - that of teaching the child to read - that she had occupied this length of time with each of her elder children, and that it was a dreary and disheartening labour. I found that she commenced in the orthodox way with A, B, C, went on with a b ab; b a b bab, b a b e, babe; and so on through all the established gradations of the time. There was no syllabic spelling at that time, [Ed.: presumably like Andrew Bell's] no phonic system [Ed.: probably not referring to Robinson but to Shuttleworth], no "Fonetic Nuz" [Ed.: presumably Pitman's], no "Reading Disentangled;" [Ed.: by Mrs. Favel Lee Bevan Mortimer, published by Varty] none of the inventions of later days; for, Mrs. Williams, [Ed.: who wrote Syllabic Spelling], Dr. Kay Shuttleworth now Sir James Kay Shuttleworth, Bart., the Pitmans, and Varty were alike unknown. There was nothing but alphabetic teaching with all its impediments, choking the progress as fast as progress was made.

"I asked the lady referred to whether she would have the courage to forsake the old path altogether, and to try a new one. I found that she was willing, from her past painful experience, to adopt any course I might suggest, and I desired her to begin with some interesting child's book in a large type, such as Barbauld's Lessons - not the Hymns, at first, as being too full of figurative language - and to read a lesson of a few lines to the child with the book open, and the child's attention fixed on it - pointing to each word as she read the sentences - thus giving the child an interest in the matter of the lesson; then to take a single line, and to read it deliberately, the child repeating each word after her - to repeat that line over and over again, till the child knew each word by its appearance; then to add another line, and another; and to go over the whole together, for a quarter of an hour; to resume the lesson a few hours after; going again over the old ground; but adding some new sentences, and thus to proceed day by day, attentively marking the progress she made.

"I was here met with the objection, since so often raised, How will the child learn to spell? I desired that with the reading exercise writing should commence, and not the writing of letters merely, or parts of letters but of words, and not words without meaning, but the names of objects, such as pin, can, nut &c, and if accompanied with pictures of the objects, so much the better. I also pointed out how much the child would learn from analogy, even as to new words, which had in their formation, syllables, prefixes, or terminations, similar to others already taught - adding that I relied on writing, copying first, and dictation afterwards, for teaching correct spelling."

Baker's comment that the child was to "learn from analogy" was a reference to the use of Code 3, two-step, whole-word phony phonics. Of course, with phony phonics, the emphasis remains on "meaning."

"I then referred her to an extract from Edgeworth's Practical Education to which I would also draw your attention.

“As it is usually managed, it is a dreadful task indeed to learn, and if possible a more dreadful task, to teach to read; with the help of counters, and coaxing and gingerbread, or by dint of reiterated pain and terror, the names of the four-and-twenty letters of the alphabet are perhaps in the course of some weeks firmly fixed in the pupils’ memory. So much the worse, all these names will disturb him if he had common sense, and at every step must stop his progress....”

(Ed.: He quoted the Edgeworth’s 1798 book at length. The book was critical, obviously, in the shift from “sound” to “meaning.”)

“Although in these days we are much in advance of the work I have quoted, in many respects; there is much that is good yet to be drawn from it in others. But what was the result of the experiment of the lady with her child? Four months sufficed to enable the child to read any chapter in the New Testament.”

At this point alarm bells should be ringing in any experienced teacher’s head. Some rare children can make such progress, with any method. Nevertheless, when a little five or six year old can learn to read the New Testament after only four months of sight-word teaching, the achievement ranks with climbing Mount Everest.

“My next trial was of a different character to any I had hitherto directed or superintended. A friend at Portsea, who was anxious that the method should be tried with the convicts there, wrote to me for precise instructions. He supplied himself with lessons in large type, the words of which were visible at several yards distance, and operations were commenced with the lowest class of convicts - those unable to read - success attended the experiments; in a few weeks they were able to read any of the lessons set before them.”

Here he claimed that “in a few weeks” convicts learned to read with sight-words. We should remember that the vast majority of our convicts are functional or total illiterates - and virtually all of them spent years in government schools which almost uniformly teach by sight words. Yet most of our convicts not only did not learn to read with sight words “in a few weeks,” but did not learn to read after many years!

“The same course was recommended by me to other individuals, and followed with equal success.”

The truth hidden in this statement is that he continued actively to promote the sight-word method. The words “equal success,” however, are open to interpretation.

“My next experience was personal, and took place several years after. My eldest child was approaching seven years of age, the time when, in my opinion, regular instruction in reading should commence; the age, at which the mind unfolds rapidly, and requires constant direction. My success gave me confidence, and I rejected all other methods of teaching reading; successive experiments confirmed me in the plan I had adopted, and proved that a child may be taught to read better, and with less trouble to the teacher, and with less harass to itself by rejecting alphabetic teaching altogether, and without having recourse to either the Syllabic or the Phonic methods.

“About this time, I met with the following confirmation of my experience....”

Note that his oblique comments at this point did not state flatly that he had used the method with his own child. Nor did he flatly state that his own child succeeded with the method. Baker’s wording, which

had been clear and direct, had suddenly become indirect and vague. Furthermore, children in England at that time were very often taught to read at three years of age. The probability is that his seven-year-old child could already read fairly well.

However, Baker followed this comment with an undated quotation he claimed was from the American “President Lindsey’s” Lecture on Domestic Schools, in which Lindsey suggested that groups form wherever one person could read so that person could teach others. This is an obvious extension of the Bell/Lancaster ideas, as well as related to the purposes of Lord Brougham’s Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. Yet in all my historical research in education, I have never heard of the American “President Lindsey” who was apparently from Tennessee, whom Baker chose to quote. Baker had heard of this obscure Lindsey from America but never mentioned a far more famous American, Gallaudet, of whom Baker most certainly should have heard through his work with deaf-mutes. Lindsey was not identified as a teacher of the deaf, and very probably was not such a teacher. Yet, as mentioned in Chapter 22, Kentucky, next door to Tennessee, was the fourth state in America to establish a school for the deaf, in 1823, preceded by New York, Pennsylvania and Connecticut. By 1863, there were 22 American schools for the deaf, all teaching by de l’Epee’s and Gallaudet’s “meaning” methods, not by Heinicke’s “sound” approach.

Baker reported that Lindsey had said:

“Adults have been recently taught to read, in penitentiaries and elsewhere, in a very short period - even within one or two weeks, in some cases - who previously did not know a letter. The chaplain or teacher opens his Bible - directs the eye of his pupil to the first verse of the first chapter - reads it distinctly - points out each word to the learner, and makes him repeat it - and so on to the end of the verse. In a few minutes, the pupil can read the verse backwards or forwards. He now knows the words by their phases or appearance in the book.

“Many children have been taught to read in this manner, by individuals who had never heard of M. Jacotot, - and long before he was born. By him, indeed, the method with certain modifications, has been announced to the world as a grand discovery: and it constitutes the first stage in the progress of his ingenious and greatly admired system of instruction. Let every teacher, however, do what he can. Let him adapt his mode of instruction to the circumstances of his pupils. He will succeed, upon any plan, within some three or six months, in teaching his class or company to read. Were such a system to be put immediately and universally into operation in Tennessee, there would not be an individual, between the ages of six and fourscore, incapable of reading, at the end of the year throughout the State. Not a dollar is wanted for the purpose. Any books will answer. Any place will do....”

Therefore, Lindsey in Tennessee some time before about 1861 claimed children and adults could learn to read with the “whole language” sight-word approach in only three to six months and sometimes in one or two weeks! Even the “whole language” advocates today do not make such bizarre claims. After quoting Lindsey’s puzzling claims (and why did he make them?), Baker continued:

“I personally superintended the next attempt thus to teach Adults to read; it was made at Millbank Penitentiary. Myself and two friends were received by the chaplain, the schoolmasters, and several officers and three classes of convicts were taken in succession....”

So, Baker and “two friends” went to the trouble to introduce the sight-word method to the prison: more activism.

“...but with the lowest class, consisting of about twenty, brought forward for the occasion, I was deeply interested. They might be called the very subsidence of society, and they were selected that morning by the schoolmasters present, for their utter inability to read. We took a large type lesson\* containing about fifty words, and commenced by reading the whole of it, the lesson was placed before them, and their attention was directed to it; each sentence was then read, and the men were called upon, first simultaneously, then individually to read it after the teacher. Every sentence was read and understood. Questions on the sense of the lesson were asked and answered correctly, except in one or two instances; and with the exception of one youth, and he of very low intellect, every word in the lesson was pointed out by everyone in the class, as it was called for, unconnectedly, and every word read, connectedly; the only occasional stumbles in the course of the lesson being with the small words such as no, as, so, upon, unto &c. This was a very satisfactory experiment to me, as it proved in how very short a time adults might be taught to read; and I remember one strong impression that my mind received at the time, connected with Sunday Schools. I had shortly before visited one, where two-thirds of the pupils were engaged in spelling lessons, while on this plan each child might have carried away in the precious hour devoted to instruction, both in words and meaning a living lesson from our Saviour’s life, instead of dead letters, acquired only to be forgotten before another Sunday.”

\*“One of Mimpriss’s Gallery Lessons on the Gospels.”

Baker’s “piety” was undoubtedly a good selling point with his gullible audience.

Baker mentioned at this point that he was able to appoint a schoolmaster to replace one at the prison (to the great misfortune of the convicts). Baker’s activism in this instance also should be noted.

Next Baker claimed he taught a gentleman’s eldest son “Willy” who had tried to learn to read for two years with no success. However, with Baker’s inspired sight-word teaching, Willy was a good reader in only a few weeks. What IS wrong with all our present-day “Willys” taking reading remediation that they cannot read after only a few weeks’ instruction in sight words?

Baker finally commented that his sight-word inspiration was not totally unique, and gave a bow to others doing similar work. Yet Baker continued to ignore Gallaudet and the fact that the method Baker was promoting was based on de l’Epee’s deaf-mute method of pure sight words learned as “wholes” for meaning::

“It is no little satisfaction to me that I am not here to-day under the disadvantage of advocating a new thing. You have seen that Jacotot, the Edgeworths, Dufief, and President Lindsey have all been before me - some in principles - others in their application. Whether what I have said, or may yet say, is accepted or rejected by your verdict, I feel confident that all who are present must (go) with me to a great extent.

“You know that we do not spell words to little children when we are teaching them to speak, and that we endeavour to make them understand, not by selecting the shortest words, but words of simple meaning, whether they are long or short.

“You are aware that for the same reason that we do not speak to little children in monosyllables, we do not divide polysyllables, pausing in their utterance, in order that each syllable may be better understood....”

Here Baker even rejected Andrew Bell's already watered-down approach of pausing between syllables when learning to read new words. Instead, Baker endorsed a total shift from "sound" to "meaning." He continued:

"I must now say a few words on the mode of teaching reading which experience has led me to adopt and to advocate. Convinced that its general acceptance would be a public advantage, I have done all in my power to make it known especially by means of the little works of which I claim the parentage. In several of them I have made a few observations on this subject. I will read from the preface of 'Reading without Spelling.'"

Here Baker acknowledged he had been doing all in his power to promote the pure Code 1 sight-word method, and that he had written books on the topic.

Baker's directions for teaching a reading lesson were also very like those given in the 1870's and 1880's by the Cassell company and by T. J. Livesey, Master of Method, and Lecturer on School Management, Training College, Hammersmith. Baker said that the teacher should begin by first reading a sentence to the class, pointing to all the words. After the teacher had read the sentence, then the pupils could imitate the teacher. Yet there was, of course, nothing new in that. It had been followed since the 1820's, and its original excuse for existing was that it was supposed to aid pronunciation. Baker also said that approach would help pronunciation. Yet it is evident the pupils were only parroting, not reading. Baker said:

"By this course of proceeding it will generally be found that the pupil will read the entire lesson with ease... Writing from dictation will be sufficient spelling exercise, first the words, then sentences, then whole lessons...."

"There are some excellent directions for reading, gathered from a variety of sources, in the introductory portion of Sullivan's Literary Class Book. Enough, I do not hesitate to say, for every schoolmaster, and saving the necessity of reference to more expensive works. Of this book I think every schoolmaster should have a copy if only for the first 50 pages...."

The Sullivan who wrote Sullivan's Literary Class Book is probably Professor Robert Sullivan who wrote *The Spelling-Book Superseded* which has already been discussed. He also wrote several general textbooks on the 1848 English list of government-approved textbooks. That English list had also included the atrocious but massively used Code 1 to Code 3 Irish Readers from the Irish government schools. Any "directions for reading" given by Professor Robert Sullivan, who was associated with the Irish government schools, undoubtedly fitted right in with the Code 1 to Code 3 Irish Readers which had been written for the Irish government schools. Furthermore, Sullivan had made a point of praising John Wood in Edinburgh, Scotland, who was using a Code 1 approach to teach beginning reading. These activists, such as Baker, Wood, Sullivan and others in the British Isles, and Gallaudet, the Alcotts and others in America, all appear to have been cut from the same piece of cloth. It is certain that their writings dovetail to an astonishing degree.

On page 18, Baker wrote:

"The writer of two articles communicated to Dr. Forbes Winslow's *Journal of Psychological Medicine* takes up this subject on different grounds, and arrives at the same results. He considers that a very large proportion of the stupidity now existing in the world is artificial and the direct result of educational influence."

As discussed elsewhere, that is just what Dugald Stewart of John Wood's Edinburgh had thought. Baker continued concerning the articles to which he referred by an anonymous author:

“ - After touching on many other points of great interest, he examines the prevailing mode of teaching reading and spelling. He says: -

“It is commonly supposed that the visual organ must analyze each word into its component parts or letters, and that adult readers are constantly deciphering the page in this way, although habits may render them unconscious of the operation, and able to perform it with great rapidity. With this view I can by no means coincide, believing that all words, not of extraordinary length, are perceived as distinct objects, without any necessity for analysis, but as a friend is recognized at a distance, not by any observed combination of several peculiarities but by the tout ensemble with which we are acquainted. Indeed, to those who read daily, common words are more familiar objects than detached letters; and it is a well-known fact that persons, who are doubtful about a question of spelling, will often write down both the alternatives... so as to see, by comparison, what arrangement will produce the accustomed appearance....”

Note the description of “global” sight words by a French term, “tout ensemble.” Did the writer of that article use French sources? Was his original source possibly “Dufief” to whom Baker had referred? However, the excerpt from that unnamed writer anticipated Cattell's ideas between 1883 and 1886 but was written some time before 1864.

Baker's next comment was bizarre, and anti-sound. Baker said because of many variable vowel sounds, the knowledge of letters when reading could actually be hurtful! He continued:

“The educational periodicals have occasionally referred to the subject of teaching reading during the last few years, but none of them have grappled with the entire subject, simple as it may seem to those who have read this Paper. In the monthly Paper of the National Society for December, 1862, we read as follows -

“We do not proceed wisely in presenting the alphabet to the child in the commencement of its reading studies, because the alphabet is a collection of abstract signs... but if you place a picture of a horse or cow &c. before the child, or give the words “horse” “cow” &c. as representative of the picture of a real animal, the child will immediately associate the picture, and next the word or signs, with its previous and more perfect impressions. Therefore a short picturesque sentence should be selected to teach the child as a first reading or alphabetic lesson (and then the letters)....”

Note the endorsement by an unnamed author in English of a “sentence” method in December, 1862, recalling Dr. Keagy's similar comments in 1826, which have been quoted previously. Baker continued on page 22:

“One of the most successful schoolmasters in Nottingham, Mr. George Herbert, of University School, recently delivered a lecture to the Schoolmasters' Association of that town and county, in which he advocated the principle of teaching reading which is described in this paper. He referred to several instances which had come under his notice, in which children from five to six years of age, taught upon the plan he recommended - by words instead of letters , - in lessons of fifteen minutes a day, had learned to read well, two in thirty, two in fifty, and in three cases in sixty hours.



“Unfortunately, however, the Revised Code steps in, and not content with prescribing what rate of payment shall be made for certain Results, but also the manner in which those results shall be achieved - for its says Group I. shall read a ‘narrative in monosyllables’ it is clear then that the robin, the sparrow, the squirrel, the cabbages, carrots, potatoes, the shoemaker and other familiar objects, the lion, the tiger, the elephant, and such well-known pictures must not enter into the lessons of Group I., but that words, which are so obscure, that many volumes have been written to illustrate and elucidate their office, force, and meaning, may form the stock from which the lessons for the little ones are to be drawn.

“A writer in *The Museum* for January, 1864, makes some sensible remarks on the subject in an article entitled, “‘Reading and Spelling.’”

The writer of *The Museum* article had recommended conversation with the class before introducing reading instruction. Although he mentioned the alphabetic and phonic method, he endorsed the use of tablet lessons (sheets of paper with printed words) put in front of the class, which the teacher was to read first, so that the children could mimic her. This is the exact approach which was used in many readers of the 1870’s, and, of course, was the apparent method used to teach Mrs. Mortimer’s *Reading Disentangled*, which was composed of such sheets of sight-word paragraphs, with Code 3 two-step phony phonics lessons on the side.

Baker continued on page 25:

“Spelling is best acquired by copying... and... dictation. The late James Simpson, Esq., of Edinburgh, whose life was devoted to practical improvements in every department of education, writing on this subject to the author of this pamphlet, says, ‘He much likes the teaching of reading by entire words instead of syllabic analysis. He was always hostile to vocal spelling. We spell only when we write. He would like to know how the entire word system answers after long trial?’”

So “James Simpson, Esq., of Edinburgh” whose “life was devoted to practical improvements” in education, endorsed “meaning” over “sound” in teaching beginning reading. He also knew about 1864 that the “word system” had had a “long trial,” and knew Baker was the man to ask about its progress. Baker was saving for his Grande Finale his most outrageous statement in his answer to Simpson’s inquiry:

“To this inquiry, which has been frequently made since the subject has been canvassed, it may safely be replied that a single failure of it has never been reported - while many who have had the courage to renounce their old habits and prejudices, are ready to attest its value.”

So Baker claimed in 1864 to have promoted for over thirty years a fail-proof method of teaching reading. He had said before this that, during this period of more than thirty years, he had done “all in my power to make it known.” Now he said “a single failure... has never been reported.” Yet the method was only the same pure Code 1 sight-word approach which has resulted in massive reading failures and produced “reading remediation” classes in every benighted country in the Western World which has used it.

Baker’s words, “... it may safely be replied that a single failure of it has never been reported,” certainly lend themselves to paraphrase: “It may safely be replied that Baker was lying.”

## **Chapter 46**

### **New Reading Texts Appeared, to Meet New Testing “Standards” and to Conform to Current “Expert” Philosophy**

British publishers of reading texts after 1862 freely admitted that they constructed those reading books to match the government Standards which first appeared in 1862. The testing Standards were arranged in levels of difficulty. Children were tested at the first level on texts of one-syllable words, and at the higher levels on increasingly difficult texts composed of multi-syllable words. The new textbooks matched those levels of the testing Standards.

More reading series came on the market after the “approved” list of textbooks was dropped in 1862. That was the same year that the testing Standards were adopted, with their various levels of difficulty. The number of reading series then greatly increased after the arrival of government schools in 1870, because government schools had more money to spend on such things as textbooks than the church-affiliated schools did.

Not long after 1870, the new government schools crowded out many of the partially government-subsidized church schools because the purely government schools were given considerably more tax money. The church schools sorely needed but did not get sufficient tax money to up-grade their facilities to meet the newly-imposed government requirements. In his book, Ellis said that many church schools simply collapsed after 1870 because of the new government demands which they were unable to meet. The government subsidy carrot for which the church schools had originally given up their liberty turned out in the end to have been poisoned.

Pamela Horn wrote (page 27 of her book) the following concerning the quality of the new reading textbooks. She said that in 1876 one of the inspectors remarked that, although:

“...there are three or four very good series, there are many others altogether inferior, ... announcing that no child who reads them can possibly fail...”

Yet the new reading textbooks were not only written to conform to the new testing “Standards” but to “expert” philosophy in the teaching of reading, as described in the following chapter on the “expert,” Livesey, and the previous chapter on the activist, Charles Baker. “Expert” reading methods also appeared in books which were not meant to be used in schools. The influence of such “experts” became truly pervasive.

Some texts which were probably more expensive than school primers were the “reading-made-easy” books which were popular in England in the mid-nineteenth century. Their “stories” were arranged by word-length - first two-letter word paragraphs, then three-letter-word paragraphs, and so on. This “reading-made-easy” element of word length, which had been used by John Wood in the materials for his famous Edinburgh school in the late 1820’s (and which actually dated back to Dilworth’s 1740 spelling book), was implicitly adopted in the government testing Standards of 1862, and in the reading texts written to conform to those Standards. That is because the lowest testing Standard was limited to one-syllable words, and one-syllable words can easily be arranged by letter-length. It was the practice of controlling the use of words by the number of syllables in words, which is necessary in the “reading-made-easy” approach, about which Charles Baker particularly complained about 1863. Baker wanted straight sight-words used, but without introducing words according to their numbers of letters or syllables.

Andrew Tuer surmised that “reading-made-easies” may have originated in the eighteenth century. Certainly the title did, and variations on those words occur on spelling books even in the seventeenth century. However, it is clear from R. C. Alston’s *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Volume IV, Spelling Books*, “Printed for the Author by Ernest Cummins, Bradford, England, 1969,” that eighteenth-century books with similar titles were simply spelling books, not reading books like the mid-nineteenth century materials. W. Rusher’s unlocatable 1789 *Reading Made Most Easy*, referred to by Tuer, most probably was also a spelling book. Certainly Alston concluded that Rusher’s 1789 text must have been a speller, because he included it in his *Volume IV, Spelling Books*.

Some of the “reading-made-easy” titles before 1801 which Alston included in his listing of spelling books are shown below. Alston’s listing indicates that the “reading-made-easy” books before 1801 were not sight-word primers, even though by the mid-nineteenth century they had become sight-word primers. For those copies listed below that he was able to examine, he concluded that each was a spelling book. (Capitals have been added to titles where Alston did not show them.)

No. 865 Davie(s), T. *The Newest Reading Made Quite Easy: or, an Introduction to Reading the Holy Bible.... Twenty-eighth Edition.* London, R. Murch, 1787.

No. 870 Rusher, W. *Reading Made Most Easy. Third Edition.* London, 1789. *Critical Review*, LXVII, 1798, 560. Alston indicated that no copy of this reported edition had been located.

No. 875 Anonymous. *The New Reading Made Easy; or an Introduction to the Reading of the Holy Bible....* New edition, London, H. Goldney, 1790. Alston said that no earlier editions had been located.

No. 876. Williams, Jeremiah. *The Newest Reading Made Completely Easy: or, an Introduction to Reading the Holy Bible....* Thirty-sixth Edition; Coventry, M. Luckman, and sold by G. Robinson & P. Oriel, London. Printed around 1790, but Alston said that no earlier editions had been located.

No. 878 Wise, T(homas). *Reading Made Easy, and Best Guide to Spelling: Containing Lessons for Spelling and Reading....* London, J. Hollis, around 1790.

No. 930 Babcock, Elisha. *The Child’s Spelling Book: Calculated to Render Reading Completely Easy to Little Children;... Compiled by a Printer.* Hartford, John Babcock, 1798.

No. 955 Hewetson, Isaac. *Reading Made Easy; or a Step in the Ladder to Learning:... Penrith,* Anthony Soulby. Alston listed it as possibly published in 1800.

From the Scottish Schoolmaster’s statements quoted earlier, it is evident the “reading-made-easy” books before 1828 of which he knew were spellers that began with the syllable tables and then arranged word lists and reading selections solely by their length: first two-letter words, then three-letter words, and so on, working up finally to two-syllable and three-syllable words. Arranging words not only by the numbers of syllables but by the number of letters in one-syllable words apparently had become the “reading-made-easy” element before the nineteenth century.

Introducing words in spelling books according to the number of syllables in those words was a very old practice, having appeared in the *New England Primer* and elsewhere for many years. Coote’s speller

in the late sixteenth century had also introduced his meaningless lists of syllable patterns at the beginning of his speller according to the numbers of letters in those meaningless syllable patterns. That, of course, did not represent a shift from “sound” to “meaning,” even though it involved counting letters.

However, the practice of introducing one-syllable meaning-bearing WHOLE words, NOT JUST SYLLABLE PATTERNS, by the number of letters in those whole words, was first announced by Thomas Dilworth as an “improvement” in his famous 1740 speller, as discussed elsewhere. That was a clear shift from “sound” to “meaning,” even though it was probably inspired by Coote’s speller. Dilworth’s foolish invention, underemphasizing “sound” in favor of visual memory, must rapidly have spread, appearing in Newbery’s books and elsewhere.

Alston listed the following spelling book as early as 1746. That was only six years after Dilworth’s speller appeared which was the first to arrange one-syllable meaning-bearing words by their length:

“Weald, William, Reading Made Easy, London 1746.... There were clearly a large number of editions between 1746 and 1850 but I have only been able to trace one complete text, a reprint entitled Weald’s Lessons Improved, Scarbro, 1847....”

Note the date, 1746, and the use of the words, “reading made easy.” Weald’s was a spelling book, and very possibly one of the first with its one-syllable word lists arranged, like Dilworth’s, by letter length, but in association with the words, “Reading Made Easy,” which words had been used in various combinations since the seventeenth century. The Scottish Schoolmaster had clearly identified one-syllable word-length as the “reading made easy” element by 1829, and very possibly it was first identified as the “reading made easy” element in Weald’s 1746 speller.

But by the mid-nineteenth century, the “reading-made-easy” had crossed totally from “sound” to “meaning.” “Sound” syllable tables and word lists which could be arranged by “sound” analogies had disappeared. Only “meaningful” stories remained, in which word identification was “helped” by context guessing. The stories appeared in the order of word length: first paragraph composed of two-letter one-syllable words, then paragraphs composed of three-letter one-syllable words, and so on.

Edinburgh, Scotland, had produced the “expert,” John Wood, by 1826, who became famous all over the English-speaking world in three years or less (which fame powerfully suggests that John Wood was being packaged and sold by influential people). Edinburgh was still producing “experts” to promote sight-word reading in the period 1850-1870. Ellis quoted James Currie of the Church of Scotland Training College at Edinburgh. The college was the probable successor to Wood’s Sessional School since Wood’s Edinburgh school was to be turned into a training college in the late 1830’s, as mentioned elsewhere in this history.

James Currie had obviously been a highly respected authority in the period after 1850. His name showed up, for instance, in one of the lead quotations in the article, “Reading,” on page 304 of Sonnenschein’s Cyclopaedia of Education, Syracuse, New York: C. W. Bardeen, Publisher, and London, England: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1889. (The other quotation was by the famous Scot psychologist, Alexander Bain.) Currie defined reading as “learning to recognize in written signs words which are already familiar to the learner in spoken language.” That leaves no possibility for building vocabulary through reading! However, Bain’s definition was that reading “is the art of pronouncing words at sight of their visual characters,” which was considerably better.

Ellis said of Currie (page 52):

“Dr. Currie considered that it was necessary for the contents of the books to be graduated in order to afford the children sufficient practice in each stage of their progress.... He advocated the use of “Look and Say” which he thought was free from the objections raised against phonics....”

Baker had openly claimed great success with “Look and Say” and Currie implicitly claimed success. Ellis said (page 48):

“James Currie, the Principal of the Church of Scotland Training College at Edinburgh, suggested standards of attainment which should be reached by children at elementary school. On leaving a good infants’ school at the age of 7 years, a child should be able to read with fluency easy narratives and the simpler parts of the Bible, and having progressed further should be capable of reading accounts in newspapers, either silently or orally....”

Currie was giving the kind of achievement standards for the teaching of reading that had been the norm in the days of the Scottish Schoolmaster some thirty or so years earlier, before 1829, which middle-aged Scots would still assume were only natural. For Currie to admit the kind of disabilities that the sight-word method was actually producing in children would have provoked a public reaction. Yet it is flatly impossible that children would have been able to read as well as Currie said they could read if they had been taught with the sight-word method that Currie endorsed.

Anywhere in the English-speaking world today, test the oral reading of seven-year-olds with “easy narratives and the simpler parts of the Bible,” if they have been trained with sight words and phony phonics, and assuming they have not previously been drilled on reading aloud those same materials. Then count the massive errors and the stumbling with the “best” readers. In no way can that kind of performance be called “reading.” The weaker readers will probably just mumble occasional words and then stare blankly at the page in front of them. It was NO accident that group oral reading tests disappeared in America when the sight-word method started its come-back in America in the 1920’s.

Note that Currie agreed with most “experts” of the twentieth century that a series of readers were “necessary” for children learning to read in order to match “each stage of their progress.” Yet the Scottish Schoolmaster had said:

“Between the age of five and eight, a child may be taught to read, with fluency, any of our best authors in prose or in verse....”

The Scottish Schoolmaster, after his thirty years of teaching little children to read, was aware of no “stages” in the progress of children to reading fluency, which “stages” would require books to match each “stage.”

Actually, these staged books were how the reading failures were covered up, and how the reading failures are covered up today. Children are supposed to be reading “at their grade level,” but there is no such thing as a grade level if children have really been taught how to read .

After “meaning” displaced “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading after about 1830, children simply memorized their reading books at their “reading level” by chanting them orally in school (although the “chanting” practice went out with the nineteenth century). Children were then judged on their “achievement” by how well they could recite their memorized “readers.” The same appalling practice was followed in America in the nineteenth century.

On page 26 of *The Victorian Country Child*, Kington: The Roundwood Press: 1974, now published by Sutton Publishing, Gloucestershire, Pamela Horn spoke of this chanting practice:

“Learning by rote was the usual method adopted, and the standards set were not very high. Anyone passing a school at this period would hear the monotonous sing-song chanting of children’s voices as they repeated the sentences learned off by heart:

‘Ann is ill

Take a pill’ 112

and so on.”

Her “112” citation was “Sybil Marshall - Fenland Chronicle (1967)” which was obviously based on an historical document. Note that the seeming “phonics” in the chanting is only phony phonics. It is consonant substitution on a learned word: ill, pill, and is used in context with what is probably a sight-word: “take.”

That “chanting” of a text which had first been read aloud by the teacher was around for a very long time and was permitted to pass for reading. The original excuse for it was that it taught proper “pronunciation” and “expression,” since before 1826 it had actually been used in the upper grades to teach elocution, apparently primarily in Scotland. ( Its heavy emphasis in Scotland may well have been because a heavy Scottish accent could hamper children, when they became adults, in their dealings with the English.) Elsewhere in this history, the text by Livesey outlines the steps in “teaching” that produced such chanting.

Ellis reported in his chapter, “School Books and Literacy 1870 - 1902” (page 97) comments on the publisher, Jarrold, which appear to concern the 1890’s. Ellis’s comments confirm such “chanting” after 1870, when the London School Board was formed, and probably as late as the 1890’s:

“Jarrold the publisher issued a set of Empire Readers which were adopted by the London School Board and met most of the suggestions made by inspectors. The series reduced the difficulties of beginners to a minimum by the use of large clear type, and by confining the attention to words of similar sounds and combinations of letters in the books for younger children. A careful graduation [sic] of lessons ensured continuous progress, and a large number of dialogues served to produce natural and easy reading in place of monotonous chanting....”

Besides the assumption that “chanting” had been the previous norm in “reading instruction,” note the “words of similar sounds and combinations of letters in the books for younger children.” That is “phony phonics.”

“Trends” show up best in minor publications, which base their content on the way the marketing wind in publishing is blowing. One such primer is First Series - Educational Course. The Primer, by The Rev. W. L. Nelson, Dean & Son, Ludgate Hill, London. The British Library copy is stamped 2 February 1871, so presumably was published about that time. Its title page said Nelson was “Head Master of St. Stephen’s School, Edinburgh,” and that the book was “Embellished with upwards of One Hundred and Fifty Engravings of Familiar Objects.”

First appeared the alphabet in capitals. On page 5 appeared the lower case alphabet, a picture of cat, and mottos top and bottom and on other pages: “Careful habits produce good results. Diligence produces its own reward.” The mottos were in small print, presumably to be read by the master.

After the lower case alphabet appeared four pages with a “Picture Alphabet of Well-known Objects: “e” e-le-phant, “f” flag, etc.

Page 10 had the alphabet in regular and in mixed order.

Page 11 had pictures of animals, with their names underneath.

Page 12 gave the short vowel closed syllabary and some names.

Page 13 had pictures and words: ta ble easy chair fire place.

Page 14 had the long vowel open syllabary followed by some words.

Page 15 had pictures and phrases: a loaf of bread, sow - ing corn, wa- gon

Page 16 had phrases of two letter words.

Page 17 had pictures and words: birds lin net spar row

Page 18 had two letter words and phrases.

Page 19 had pictures and words: car ri age, ex press train...

Page 22 had two and three letter words and sentences.

The pictures were always arranged on opposite pages by themes: seed - ing, chick - ens, shep herd. Some words were arranged by analogy on later pages.

By page 30 it introduced three letter blends: bla ble bli, etc.

The book ended on page 40. It was a poor blend of some of the earlier spelling book and some of the new “book one” approach. Only because of its syllabary and blends, it rated possibly as high as Code 5.

A series which was published in 1871 or 1872 had only the Standard VI copy available at the British Library, but that has material of interest. The inside of its cover read: The School Board Readers. “A New Series of Standard Reading Books for Elementary Schools. Edited by a former inspector of schools.”

“The Editor of these Books being a gentleman of great experience, the Publishers not only await with confidence the judgment of Teachers as to their excellence, but they challenge comparison with any existing Series of Readers, more particularly as they are framed exactly to meet the requirements of the New Code of 1871, having been compiled since its adoption.

“The distinctive features of this Series are as follows: -

“1. That each book contains within itself all that is necessary to fulfil (sic) the requirements of the New Code, 1871; that is to say, a Course of Graduated Reading Lessons, Spelling and Dictation Exercises, and sufficient Examples in Arithmetic for home lessons for the whole year.

“2. That they are designed expressly for Schools under School Boards, as they contain no distinctly denominational teaching.

“3. That Illustrations are introduced where they are considered necessary.

“4. That, in addition to their exactly meeting the requirements of the New Elementary Schools, the lowness of their price cannot fail to recommend them.

“5. That the Type, Paper, and Binding will be found all that can be desired.

“THE PRICES ARE AS FOLLOWS: -

“ELEMENTARY READING BOOK, Part I., containing lessons in all the short vowel sounds.

Demy 18 mo., 16 pages, in stiff wrapper.

0 1 s. d.

“ELEMENTARY READING BOOK, PART II., containing the long vowel sounds, and other monosyllables.

Demy 18 mo., 48 pages, in stiff wrapper.

Price 0 2

“STANDARD I., containing Reading, Dictation, and Arithmetic.

Demy 18 mo., 96 pp., neat cloth, price 0 4

“STANDARD II., containing Reading, Dictation and Arithmetic.

Demy 18 mo., 128 pp., neat cloth, price 0 6

“STANDARD III., containing Reading, Dictation and Arithmetic.

Fcap. 8 vo., 160 pp., neat cloth, price 0 9

“STANDARD IV., containing Reading, Dictation and Arithmetic.

Fcap. 8 vo., 192 pp., neat cloth, price 1 0

“STANDARD V., containing Reading, Dictation and Arithmetic.

Crown 8 vo., 256 pp., neat cloth, price 1 6

“STANDARD VI., containing Reading, Dictation and Arithmetic, and Lessons on Scientific Subjects.

Crown 8 vo., 320 pp., neat cloth, price 2 0

“To be followed by a Series of ELEMENTARY MANUALS on the Special Subjects of the Revised Code.

“CHARLES GRIFFIN & CO., 10, Stationers’ Hall Court, London”

The Preface on the Standard VI book read:

“This book is intended as a higher Reading-book, either for the First Class in the School or for Pupil-teachers....

“REQUIREMENTS OF THE NEW CODE, 1871 [Ed.: for Standard VI]

“Reading. - To read with fluency and expression.



“Writing. - A short theme or letter, or an easy paraphrase.

“Arithmetic. - Proportion, Vulgar Fractions, and Decimals.”

The Griffin & Co. books demonstrated the undeniable fact that in England by 1871 both teachers and texts were under the straitjacket control of the government tests. Those “thorough and efficient” tests which had arrived in 1862 had abolished by 1871 any lingering academic freedom in the government-controlled schools!

Ellis said (page 91):

“The terms of the Forster Act of 1870 resulted in a vast increase in the publication of school books.... In 1875 William Collins II purchased the Scottish School Book Association for which he had been agent, for in the face of expansion the existing arrangements became unwieldy. 920 school books were listed in the catalogue for 1875 compared with 571 10 years earlier....

“In 1879 Blackie’s Comprehensive Readers were the first of what was to be a wide selection of school books in arithmetic, geography, grammar and history. School editions of the classics were issued in the same year. Other publishers who were involved in the publication of school books were Bell, Blackwood, Cassell, Chambers, Constable, Gleig, Lockwood, Longman, Macmillan, Nelson, Rivington, Seeley, and Warne.”

A series he did not mention was Moffatt’s. On page 92, he gave further information on these publishers, who put out:

“...more than one series of readers such as Blackie’s Advanced Readers, Elementary Text Books, and School Series; Cassell’s Modern School Readers and School Board Series, and Chambers’s Educational Course and English Readers. Each publisher was not necessarily issuing new books continually, for example, no works in Gleig’s School Series were published between 1872 and 1880. Inspectors expressed particular satisfaction with Bell’s Readers, and Nelson’s Royal School Readers, the latter of which were ‘more extensively used than any others’ in many areas.”

The British Library has a copy of a January, 1877, issue of *The School - A Monthly Journal Illustrated*, of Edinburgh. Its publishers stated on page 24:

“To meet the demands of school boards and country trade, the school books of Nelson, Longmans, Murray, Collins, Blackwood, Chambers, Oliver and Boyd, and others may be supplied on a short notice.”

The names of Nelson and Collins appear on both lists, the list of publishers named by Ellis, who was emphasizing English use, and the Scottish list from 1877. The Scottish list implicitly suggests the series it listed were the ones in widest use in Scotland in 1877. Not surprisingly, the record shows that Nelson, Collins, and Oliver and Boyd were Scottish publishers, and so may have been some of the others, and the omission of some of the English publishers mentioned by Ellis might have been expected. However, for many years, both Nelson and Collins had vast sales of their reading series in both countries, so their reading books may be cited as a kind of norm for the period in which they were published - Collins for the earlier period, and Nelson for the later.

Ellis had said, as quoted above, concerning the period after 1870 (page 92):

“Inspectors expressed particular satisfaction with Bell’s Readers, and Nelson’s Royal School Readers, the latter of which were ‘more extensively used than any others’ in many areas.”

The two publishers whose readers have most consistently turned up in available references, therefore, are Nelson and Collins (whose Irish Readers have already been described), although Collins’ books seem to have faded after 1870 when Nelson became more prominent. Yet at no time was there any market monopoly, which is an unspoken commentary on how ludicrous the McGuffey market-monopoly myth is in America.

### The Nelson Reading Series

Concerning Nelson’s, Ellis said on page 65 of his Chapter 8, “The Golden Years of Children’s Literature Part I 1860 -1890”:

“The commercial success of Nelson was achieved through the publication of books for children... In the 1870’s the house of Thomas Nelson was the largest publisher of juvenile literature.”

A brochure on the history of the Nelson publishing company which the Nelson company published recently contains these comments:

“(in 1858)... the firm became known as Thomas Nelson and Sons. Since July 1852 (the sons) had been in sole control of the business, their father having been forced to retire through ill health. The educational department went on to build up its list of publications....

“Thomas Nelson, the founder, in his last years an invalid, died in Edinburgh on 23 March 1861. He had the great satisfaction of seeing the small business which he started as a second-hand bookshop develop into an organization giving work to almost 600 people. His vision of producing good reading for the masses had been fulfilled.”

Note here that Nelson, the founder, had expected the “masses” of adults before 1861 to want good reading, and his “educational department” for children was only one part of his successful company. In 1861 when he died most of the “masses” still could really read.

“...there took place a dramatic change in the law, which was to have a long-lasting effect on the educational publishing industry and on Nelson’s in particular. On the passing of the English Education Act in 1870, to be followed shortly by a similar Act for Scotland, the Nelsons were quick to recognize the new demand that would be created for improved school-books. They resolved at once to meet this challenge. With the help of W. Scott-Dalgleish as editor, Thomas Nelson junior launched the “Royal Readers.” These not only proved highly successful, but set a standard which was to be imitated by many other publishing houses. The “Readers” were supplemented by books on history, geography, English language and literature, all written to meet the requirements of the new Act. The school-book department now formed the backbone of the business.”

The quality of the Nelson materials undoubtedly did set a publishing standard concerning the appearance of books. Their nineteenth century readers are, indeed, superior publications in their publishing format. Furthermore, the readers above the primer level are comparable in the quality of their content to the best of readers, such as the higher books in the American McGuffey series. Yet the Nelson

“Royal Readers” of 1870 certainly did NOT set the standard in how to teach beginning reading. In the teaching of beginning reading, the Royal Readers simply followed the pattern which had become dominant by 1870 and which was endorsed in the teachers’ colleges: teaching beginning reading by “meaning,” and not by “sound.” The “phonics” that was endorsed in teachers’ colleges was phony phonics: building new “whole words” from old “whole words” that had been taught by sight. “New” words were produced by adding or substituting letters on previously memorized “old” words (Code 3). It would be many years later before the Nelson company, like other publishers in England such as Blackie’s, would produce truly phonic materials (Code 10), again not setting a standard but only responding to the demands of schools. Hardly surprisingly, these later materials also were of very high publishing quality.

Yet the Nelson company had apparently been following current practices in the teaching of reading before their 1870 materials. Listed on page 71 of *Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900*, published by the U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985, is “The Little Reading Book in Words of One Syllable. London, Edinburgh, and New York. T. Nelson and Sons, 1868. 32 p.” The size of that book suggests it was a primer, or beginning book, and the fact it was arranged “in words of one syllable” suggests it was a sight-word book. Therefore, even before its 1870 sight-word beginner’s text, the Nelson company was preparing sight-word readers, like most other publishers.

The Nelson brochure noted that some time after 1880:

“The ‘Royal’ school series now consisted of 70 titles, and, in addition to other school texts and Sunday school reward books and cards, there was a comprehensive catalogue of books for the drawing room and home reading, books on travel and natural history and tales for the young. These were to remain the staple products of the firm until the early 1890’s.”

Amidst all these high-quality materials, the Nelson company probably did not pay very much attention to its little light-blue book, only covered with a paper cover, perhaps about four by six inches, which was entitled *Nelson School Series, The Royal School Primer. Illustrated.*, T. Nelson and Sons., London, Edinburgh, and New York. (The British Library copy which I saw had the catalog number 12202 cc 3 107, and was stamped on its back cover, “July 12, 1872.”) Nelson’s did not know that this little, flimsy publication was destroying a good part of its future markets for books, because it guaranteed that the “masses” for whom Nelson senior had published would have considerable trouble in the future with the ability to read. The *Royal School Primer* would turn children into inefficient “subjective” “meaning” readers instead of into efficient “objective” “sound” readers, and, in addition, it could produce bumper crops of “functional illiterates.”

Inside its cover, it advertised:

“The Royal Primer Wall-sheets. For class teaching, the large type lessons in this book, with pictures, have been published in a large form, as Wall-sheets for the School-room.”

It then gave the following “Hints to Teachers”:

“1. Teach the child to read the words at sight on the Wall-sheets, without spelling them.

“In English, spelling is frequently of no use in helping a child to read; for example, the pronunciation of the most common words such as one, two, does, who, &c. cannot possibly be learnt from the spelling. In reading lessons, all such words must be taught each as a whole.

“Spelling is of use, not so much for reading as for writing; and it is therefore of the utmost importance that slate exercises should be introduced as early as possible. For this purpose, the

simplest possible form of character has been adopted in this book, as a first step toward writing. See note on print-writing - page 2.

“2. Make constant references to the Wall-sheets; and always point to the parts of the animals and other objects as they are mentioned in the lesson.

“The principle of association comes into powerful play here. The picture suggests the whole story, and the parts of the picture suggest the words used in telling the story. We have abandoned the plan of forcing into the Primer all the possible sounds of the vowels and consonants. On that plan the child is made to utter a great many sounds which it has no occasion to use; to learn a great many words which it cannot understand; and often to wade through pages of tiresome repetition, and even of pure nonsense. We have used the child’s own vocabulary. We have simply told a story of each picture as the child might tell it, using no words which a child is not itself in the habit of using daily.”

The first page gave the alphabet in small and capital letters, followed by this further advice, but no mention of teaching the alphabet:

“To Teachers - This book has been arranged in two parts - Reading- lessons and Word-lessons - so that they may be taught either together or separately. The length of each day’s lesson is left to the discretion of the teacher.

“The Word-lessons at the end of the book (page 27 &c.) contain all the words employed in the Reading-lessons, grouped with additional words of the same sound. As they are systematically arranged, and of progressive difficulty, they are well adapted for showing the child the process of word-building from single letters.”

The “Word-lessons” at the end of the book were whole-word phony phonics, building new words from old. The statement that the word lessons contained all the words employed in the reading lessons is misleading, since many of the words in the first reading lessons were not covered in the word-lessons till much later, and, I suspect, in some cases not at all.

Page 2 contained the small and capital alphabet in print writing, and said, concerning “Print writing”:

“This new form of letter is especially adapted for being copied with the pencil or pen. The letters are not the ordinary written characters of the so-called script but such a modification of printed characters as a good pen printer easily and naturally makes.

“The value of this character for school purposes can hardly be over-estimated... Children who practice it will pass easily from it to the ordinary written character at a later stage.”

Yet no mention is made of learning this “Print writing” alphabet before beginning Lesson I, just as no mention was made of learning the printed alphabet which preceded it. Teachers had instead been specifically told, “Teach the child to read the words at sight on the Wall-sheets, without spelling them.”

“Page 3 Part I READING-LESSONS. Practice.

cat	hen	pig
dog	tub	fly

“Note: Read these words to the child; then make the child read them till it is perfectly familiar with them. Endless mistakes and confusions arise from overlooking the simple principle that the

reading of a word should come first, and the spelling of it afterwards. NEVER ASK A CHILD TO SPELL ANY WORD TILL IT HAS PRONOUNCED IT.

“Exercise  
dog, cat, hen, pig, tub, fly

A dog and a cat.  
A hen and a fly.  
A pig and a tub.”

Page 4 [a good quality picture of a cat at the top, with each sentence, as on page 3, on a line by itself]

“This is a cat.  
It is a fat cat.  
I can see its tail.  
I can see its paws.  
It has a long tail.  
It has soft paws.

“Teach the children to read the words at sight without spelling them. Spelling should be a separate exercise. An oral lesson in spelling, or a slate exercise, may be given each day from the Word-lessons at the end of the book.”

The first lesson had introduced five words, each with a short vowel sound: cat, hen, pig, dog, and tub, plus a variant spelling for long i: fly. Yet no mention had been made of vowels, and there was no way any child could generalize about the short vowel sounds with only these six words, all of which had different sounds. The so-called first word-lesson which was supposed to go with this reading lesson had only employed the short a sound. Now, in only the second lesson, new vowel sounds are introduced in sight words, with no explanation: long e in see, long a in tail, and the diphthong aw in paws. Note also the special sound “th” in this, which combination of letters stands for a letter missing in our alphabet (but present in the Icelandic.) Note the variant sounds of “s” in “has” and “see.” The “word lesson” to go with the second reading lesson concerned only words built from short “a” phonograms, plus one long “a” word (name). Therefore, the only way a child could operate on these two lessons which were a wild mix of letter sounds was by pure sight-word reading. Wrong conditioned reflexes in reading would be well on their way to being formed before Lesson 3 was even started, even if the child had been taught the alphabet, which seems unlikely.

Page 5  
“The cat sees a mouse.  
Run, mouse, run!  
If you do not run, the cat will catch you.

[Picture of mouse]

“This is the mouse: the cat did not catch it.

“Before proceeding to the next page, make the children read the above sentences in different order. For example in “This is a cat,” “it has a long tail,” “I can see its tail,” and so on. Most of the lines may also be turned into questions, by simply transposing the words, and pointing to them on the Wall-sheets in the following order: -

'Is this a cat?' Answer - 'this is a cat.' 'has it a long tail?' Answer - 'it has a long tail' &c.

Page 6

"1. Do you see the cat?

I can see it.

It is a fat cat.

It has soft paws.

"2. This is its tail.

It is a long tail.

I can catch the tail.

The cat can catch its tail.

"3. Do you see the mouse?

I see it.

Has the mouse a tail?

It has a long tail.

This is its tail.

"4. Cat! Do you see the mouse?

The cat sees the mouse.

Run, mouse, run!

The cat sees you.

The cat will catch you if it can.

Run, Run, Run."

Page 7 - [More of the same, followed with this note confirming vocabulary control:]

"The sentences in these two pages consist of the same words as the previous lessons and no others."

Page 8 - [Picture of dog]

"Tom and his dog.

Do you see that dog?

It is Tom's dog.

Tom is kind to it and the dog loves Tom.

It will play with him, and do what he bids it."

Page 9

"Tom is at the pond: he throws in his stick.

Good dog, bring it out.

The dog swims for it.

[Picture]

See, here he is with it: how well he swims.

"This lesson on the dog, and subsequent lessons on the sheep, the hen, the bird's nest, &c. gradually introduce new words to the pupil - a few at a time."

Page 10 and 11 - [Little paragraphs as before]

"The words of the previous lessons and no others are here worked up into new sentences."

The book follows this pattern, in large print, to page 26. Then Part II, beginning on page 27, contains the “Word-lessons.” By comparing those word lessons given below to the reading lessons quoted above, it will be apparent that, in no sense, were the children being given real phonics, but only whole-word, phony phonics.

“Lesson I

at	r-at	an	r-an
c-at	s-at	c-an	and
f-at	th-at	m-an	h-and

A cat A rat A man A hand”

Lesson I in reading had included the words “cat, dog, hen, pig, fly, but, and.” The sounds in none of these words had been taught, and presumably even letter names were not taught, or this would not have been marked “Lesson I” Yet note that no mention is even made of “dog, hen, pig, fly, but” in this first word lesson, though they were in the first reading lesson. Instead, only the two words, “cat,” and “and” are used to build new words. “Cat” produced “fat, rat, sat, that.” The parts of “and” produced “can, man, ran, hand.”

“Lesson II.

ad	ag	am	as
h-ad	b-ag	l-amb	h-as
l-ad	r-ag	sh-all	n-ame

“A lad. A bag A lamb I shall

“Lesson III

ar	t-ar	ap	ass
b-ar	st-ar	c-ap	l-ass
f-ar	are	l-ap	gr-ass

A bar A bar A star A cap An ass

“Lesson

ed	l-ed	et	y-et
b-ed	N-ed	g-et	y-es
f-ed	r-ed	l-et	fr-esh

“A bed Ned Red Yes

“Lesson V

en	m-en	h-en	end
B-en	h-en	th-en	b-end
d-en	t-en	wh-en	s-end

“A den Ben A hen An end

“Lesson VI

em	b-eg	est	ell
h-em	l-eg	b-est	t-ell
th-en	egg	n-est	w-ell

“A hem An egg A nest A well

“Lesson VII

be	we	b-ee	b-een
me	she	s-ee	gr-een
he	the	tr-ee	sw-eet
here	these	thr-ee	sh-EEP

“We see A tree A sheep Three

“Lesson VIII

is	if	its	th-is
h-is	it	s-its	w-ith

“This His With Its”

The approach is obviously one of building words from other words. Yet note that even the appearance of vowel order is not really followed: Short “a” words were followed by short “e” words, but then long “e” words were inserted before working with short “i” words, but no attempt had been made to include long “a” words.

Lesson 9 continued with short “i” in id, im, and in spellings, lesson 10 and 11 with similar short “o” phonograms, and Lesson 12 with short “u” phonograms. Lesson 13 on page 30 concerned the short “i” special phonograms ill, ick, and ing, and Lesson 14 ilk, and ink, and give-live, which are exceptions to the silent “e” rule, but, then, silent “e” had not been taught.

Lesson 15 concerned the phonograms ong and ond, and “o” like “u” short: come, some, love and glove.

Lesson 16 confused the teaching of “oo” which can either sound like good or pool. Instead it “taught” “ood” “ook” in words which mixed both these sounds. To add to the confusion, it finished with the irregular words, “to, do, too.”(also exceptions to the silent “e” rule). Lesson 16 concerned ood food good ook book look m-oon s-oon w-ool to do too a book the moon a stool wool.

Lesson 17, page 32, was more phonically regular, with so go no ow sow row snow grow throw oat coat boat snow -a boat a coat more.

Lesson 18 contained ow cow sow how now bow ouse house mouse out stout trout a cow a sow a mouse a trout.

Lesson 19 concerned ...ind find kind ite kite white ine mine wine a fly. a kite. wine. the sky.



Lesson 20 covered all ball call hall aw paw jaw straw a ball a hall a paw straw. Note that “paw” as a sight word had occurred in reading lesson two!

Lesson 21 covered calf half back jack catch latch thank bank a calf jack a latch a bank.

Lesson 22 covered the ate and ake and ade phonograms: ake bake cake lake make take ade fade made ate gate mate a cake. a lake. a gate. a mate. Note that this “lesson” could have been avoided by teaching the silent “e” rule.

Lesson 23 covered ail tail nail hail pail sail, aid laid maid, ain pain rain, a tail a nail a maid a pain.

Lesson 24 covered bird third, her herd, one young no, they there, a bird one three where.

Lesson 25 covered eat meat seat beat neat heat ew few new yew you two... new meat. two seats.

(Lesson 26 was missing from the notes I took at the British Library in 1991.)

Lesson 27 covered ay day may say lay play w arm wh at (Both of the last were written separated, followed by these words:) a day. may. play. What? (written with a capital and a question mark).

It should be evident that this primer was teaching sight words in its “reading” lessons and the purest of phony whole-word, sight-word phonics in its words lists. It is, effectively, Code 2.

This primer was followed by No. I. Royal Readers, First Series. It began with one-syllable words and worked up to two-syllable words at the end. The “Preface” said:

“As a special lesson in Pronunciation, the more difficult words are divided into syllables, and accentuated. Teachers will find that, when their pupils have learned to pronounce words correctly in syllables, the difficulty of spelling them has been greatly reduced.”

The Andrew Bell approach had triumphed. Now children were incapable of finding syllables in words for themselves. The first lesson in Part I of The Royal Readers No. I is reproduced below, to show that it was “meaning” oriented and did nothing to make up for the lack of “sound” teaching in the primer:

“THE SEE-SAW

“Look at me! I am up in the air. See, I let go both hands, and yet I do not fall.  
Now, John, do you try. You go up, and I go down.  
Take care, and hold fast while you are up in the air.  
See-saw! Up and down. It is great fun to ride on the see-saw.

are fun let try  
fall hold now yet fast John see you

Hold fast. See-saw.”

According to the preface, the list of words following the lessons were meant for “oral” spelling, and the phrases at the bottom for “dictation.” The 1871 “standards” required that children in Standard I be able to spell a few words. However, the following note appeared at the bottom of this page:

“It is not advisable at this stage to include in the spelling-lesson the most difficult words of the reading-lesson. Reading is easier to the child than spelling. The spelling of difficult words is introduced step by step in the subsequent lessons.”

The Preface to The Royal Reader No. 1 had recommended that children be questioned at length about the pictures, which concerned the stories. The Royal Reader No. 2 included actual comprehension questions after the stories.

New editions of reading series in England at that time were common and normal, but it is interesting that the approach of The Royal School Primer (presumably published about 1871) was greatly modified in the revised New Royal Primer, Part I (and presumably Part II) which T. Nelson & Sons, Ltd., published some time before 1884. (However, both the older and the newer primers appeared in the Trade Catalogue of School Books which Nelson published in 1884. The earlier primer in paper covers sold for 1 1/2 pence and 2 1/2 pence in limp cloth; the New Royal Primer cost 1 pence for Part I and one pence for Part II in paper, but two pence for each in limp cloth.)

The newer primer also had a Part I and Part II, but they were published separately. Yet the approach of the earlier primer was totally gone. Part I followed the sequence of short vowels, and Part II of long vowels. The “Word-lessons” at the end of the book, formerly Part II, were totally omitted. The inside cover read:

“This Primer may be used in connection with any of the ordinary methods of teaching to read. The plan of each Lesson and the arrangement of the whole Book are the result of long experience and very careful experiment....

“Accordingly, each vowel lesson is introduced by a picture and a corresponding key-word. Below the key-word there are other words that rhyme with it. Each of these words is presented to the eye of the child in two forms - as a whole, and with the letters separate - in order to show that the complete word is a combination of letters.

Part I. is confined to the Five Short Vowel Sounds.

Part II. contains the Long Vowel Sounds arranged on the same plan.

“The primer is followed by an Infant Reader consisting chiefly of Simple Stories.”

Of course, this sounds phonic. Page 2 and 3 had the alphabet in capital and small letters. Page 4 had a grid of 28 boxes, holding 27 two-letter sight words in large letters, in the following rows:

“so, go, lo, no,  
he, be, me, we,  
at, an, am, as  
if is it in  
on or of ox  
by my up us  
to do”

These were sight words, since no vowels had been taught, and they mixed long and short vowels. It was also the two-letter word approach which had been used when the two-letter syllabary was first dropped, but this version was set up to rhyme. In the absence of teaching by “sound,” rhyming becomes a device to remember sight-word distinctions. Twentieth century sight-word readers make a vast use of rhyming. Yet it is almost totally ignored by phonic readers.

Page 5 had a picture of a dog cart and children on the top, followed by three groups of sentences:

“I am in. Go on.  
Is he to go in? No.  
He is to go on.  
On, on, we go.”

This was context using the sight-words just taught.

On page 6 the short-vowel treatment finally began, and it turned out to be only the use of consonant substitutions on the phonogram “at.” Short “a” itself, to be used in combination with any letter, was not taught. Nor was it ever taught, but just the three phonograms “at,” “an,” and “ap,” before which consonants were placed to form new words. At the top of page 6 was a picture of a cat, with the letter “a” to the left and the phonogram “at” to the right. Under the picture were three words that had been built from “at”:

“cat  
rat  
mat”

On the opposite page 7, the “word-building” was repeated at the top: a. at. cat. Under that appeared:

“ 1.  
“A cat. A rat.  
On a mat.  
  
“ 2.  
“A fat cat sat on  
the mat.  
  
“ 3.  
“Is it a hat? It is  
my hat.”

The same treatment appeared on pages 8 and 9 for the phonogram “an” and on pages 10 and 11 for the phonogram “ap.”

On page 12, the phonogram “ed” appeared with the three words built from it being bed, fed red. On the opposite page appeared the three sentences, using the same sight words from page 4 that the other samples had used, and the sight word “the” which had been introduced on page 7. Pages 14 and 15 covered the phonogram “en” in the same fashion. Page 16 introduced “ig” with the three words built from it, pig, big, fig, and pages 18 and 19 covered “in” which had already been used as a sight-word on page 4 and in many of the sentences. Short “o” was covered with the phonograms op, ox and og, and short “u” with the phonograms ub, un and ut. The book ended with the lower and upper case alphabets again, “For Slate Work.”

The Nelson material from some time before 1884 was an improvement over the previous Nelson version of about 1871, but it was still only Code 3. It was using a basic sight word vocabulary in which to practice “new” words built on a small handful of phonograms, to which were affixed consonants. This so-called “short vowel” book used only three different consonants out of the 21 in the alphabet for each short

vowel. Yet the syllabary used almost all of the consonants for each short vowel. True sound was therefore not being taught, but only the “trick” of word building from known sight words - “phony phonics.” Despite the “phonic” appearance of the little book, the children were being conditioned to deal with print as composed of meaning-bearing whole words, and not as arising from sound. Part II of the newer Nelson primer from some time before 1884, dealing with long vowel sounds, is not available, but it is reasonable to assume that it used the same approach: building a handful of words from long-vowel phonograms. This was the kind of Code 3 phony phonics being promoted at the normal schools in the 1880’s.

### The Cassell Reading Series

In 1879, the Cassell company which had published the massively successful materials in the 1860’s for adults published a reading series for schools. The company had also published earlier readers before 1879, as shown by what were presumably imports of Cassell materials listed in the 1876 American Catalogue of Leypoldt. The company’s name by 1879 was Cassell, Pelter, Galpin & Co. The British Library has a copy of the first book in the 1879 series under call number 12202.eee.37, and its title is First Infant Reader. The Modern School Readers, “Price 2d (or in Limp Cloth 4d).”

On the back of the title page of the first book the following appeared:

“To the Teacher. The experience of many years has convinced us that a judicious combination of the WORD and PHONIC method of teaching children to read is the best.”

Compare that 1879 English statement to the 1878 American statement in the Appleton Readers:

“The experience of many years has convinced us that a judicious combination of the word and phonic methods is the best.”

Trans-Atlantic communication was obviously in fine working order in 1878-1879.

The Cassell comments continued:

“Very many children attend school at between three and four years of age, and (the) Kindergarten system of teaching the shapes and names of the letters of the alphabet affords pleasant and instructive lessons suited to the capacity of young scholars.... The alphabet being mastered, in so far as the shapes and names of the letters are concerned, WORD-BUILDING is the next process. Construct simple syllables consisting of short vowels followed by single consonants, such as it, an, am, ox, on, &c., and build up a number of words by successively prefixing single consonants. In prefixing the consonants, special attention must be given to the powers of the consonants. Care should be taken to select only such words as have a meaning in the minds of the scholars.

“Three exercises should be adopted in word-building. -

“I. Construction, by means of single letters, on the alphabet stand.

“II. Printing on the blackboard and on the slates.

“III. Reading from large sheets.

“Immediately sufficient words are known, easy and natural sentences should be constructed, and the very common words of exceptional pronunciation should be gradually introduced. The

facsimilies of the “Reading Sheets” will show how a system thus begun is gradually built up step by step, with the easiest possible gradations, always bearing in mind that our object is not so much to teach a few words as to cultivate the power in Children of making out words for themselves.

“I. Introductory - by repetition from the “Reading Sheets” (Numbers iii to xii)

“II. READING LESSONS, constructed entirely with words from the “Reading Sheets” (Numbers III to XII). The engravings in every case illustrate the text.

J. H.

“Note - In the early stages in teaching Reading, the blackboard should be in constant use.”

Note the “constant use” of the blackboard, just as was occurring in America at the same time.

It is abundantly clear that J. H. was recommending whole-word, phony-phonics which was apparently the norm in England as in America by 1880. By 1880, Robinson had made little dent in the reading approaches in England, and Leigh’s approach was disappearing in America except in St. Louis, and in its McGuffey adaptation of 1879.

Reading Sheet I covered the capitals, and II the small letters of the alphabet. Reading Sheet III on short “a” included these phonograms, with seven words built from each by prefixing them with a consonant: at, ad, an. It then had the following context:

- “1. A man a hat a bat
2. A pan a lad a rat
3. A cat and a rat
4. A fat man a bad lad”

Sheet IV followed the same approach, with the following phonograms on short a, and words underneath them as on the third sheet: ap, am, ar, and five context uses under them, the last of which was “Sam has a fat ham.”

Out of 21 possible consonant combinations with short “a,” this phonogram approach had used only six, but it then moved on to short “e”. As a substitution for either the old syllabary or true sounding and blending phonics, the Cassell material was doing only 6/21 of the teaching job.

Sheet V on short “e” covered six consonants before moving on to Sheet VI on short “i,” again doing only 6/21 of the teaching job on closed syllables with “e”. However, short “i” covered 8 of 21 consonants, a slight improvement. Sheet VII covered short “o” with seven consonants, and Sheet VIII short “u” with seven consonants of the possible 21.

Yet this had been shown on Sheet IV:

“To be named at sight: ‘a as has’“

This had been shown on Sheet VI:

“To be named at sight: ‘is his ‘tis’“

This was shown on Sheet VII:

“To be named at sight: ‘of, the’“

This was shown on Sheet VIII:

“To be named at sight: ‘put’“

Ten sight words had therefore been introduced by the time the incomplete short vowel phonograms were finished.

Sheet IX continued the hopelessly inadequate “syllabary” approach, but on open syllables followed with “context” selections. The Cassell material certainly could not be called a synthetic phonics approach:

“Sheet IX (long e and o)

b-e	w-e	s-ee	g-o
h-e	y-e	b-y	n-o
m-e	b-ee	m-y	s-o

“To be named at sight: “to do you”

“1. Can you see the bee?  
2. Do not hit the bee.  
3. Sit by me in the sun.  
4. Bid Ned go to bed.

-----

1. My dog has a pup.  
2. Let me see the pup.  
3. The rug is set. Do not sit on the rug.”

That ended the vowel teaching, without having covered, even inadequately, long “a”, long “i” or long “u”, or any of the diphthongs: oi, oy, au, aw, ou, ow, oo, etc. Sheet X then moved into what was really spelling, and not decoding practice:

“Sheet X Terminal double consonants

-ill (two examples) (Includes doll)	-ass (no example) -inn (no example)	-ell (seven examples) -egg (no example)
---	--	--

To be named at sight: “was, saw, off”

This was followed by the usual collection of sentences for context reading.

Sheet XI covered consonant digraphs, which is necessary phonetically, but note that they were handled as initial consonants with phonograms, which is the word-building approach, not sounding and blending:

“Sheet XI - Compound Initial Consonants

sh-e	th-an	th-is	sh-ot
------	-------	-------	-------

sh-y	th-at	sh-ed	sh-ut
th-y	th-em	sh-ip	wh-en
wh-y	th-en	sh-op	wh-ip

To be named at sight: ‘who, what, are’“

This was followed again by sentences.

After having done a totally inadequate (ludicrous?) job of teaching “phonics,” the final Sheet XII concerned itself with whole-word modification, the making of plurals or possessives from existing words. It followed this list of words with the usual sentences, and included this:

“To be named at sight: ‘have, live, give, you.’“

The “Introductory lessons” in the book which duplicated part of the lessons from the Reading Sheets just repeated the sentences from those Reading Sheets, but none of its ludicrous “phonics.”

What this establishes, plus the notes by J. H., was that the Cassell reading books were teaching typical phony phonics, building meaningful whole words from phonograms and consonants, and then using them immediately in “meaningful” contexts, such as that shown below, along with the teaching of pure sight words.

Cassell also published in 1879 *The Second Infant Reader... “in Two Parts.”*

“Introductory - Being Reprints from the Reading Sheets Nos. 13-24, Reading Lessons Constructed Entirely with Words from the Reading Sheets Numbers 13 to 24. The engravings in every case illustrate the text.”

Text followed all of these lessons, but the comments which follow concern only the “phonogram” phonics which were taught at the head of these lessons, and the new “sight words” which were introduced.

Lesson XIII covered long “a” with silent “e”, and Lesson XIV long “i” with silent “e”. Lesson XV covered long “o” with silent “e”, and long “u” with silent “e” and also gave three sight words: boy, girl, first. To teach these words as sight-words and then pretend to be producing a “phonic” text is monstrous: teaching “ir” should have been systematically covered with er, ur, ar, and or, and “oy” should have been covered along with the other diphthongs. The eighteenth century spelling books would never have introduced these words without focusing attention on their phonemes.

The next two lessons covered some consonant blends but as phony “phonogram” phonics, with the phonograms clearly separated from the consonant blends with hyphens:

Lesson XVI covered double initial consonants, as “gl-ad.”

“Sight: one, two”

Lesson XVII covered double initial consonants, as “tr-od,” and consonant digraphs at the end, as “d-ash,”...

“Sight: here, then, these”

Lesson XVIII covered double terminal consonants, as “b-ack.”

“Sight: bird, were, once”

(Missing XIX in notes)

Lesson XX covered double terminal consonants, as “D-ick,” “f-ish.”

“Sight: eve, come, some”

Lesson XXI covered double terminal consonants, as “l-ock,” wr-ong,” “m-ust”

“Sight: hear, said, says”

Lesson XXII had no heading, but covered columns of two syllable words, a few of which are shown:

“af-ter      un-der      let-ter  
nev-er                      (columns under all these)

“Sight: they, their”

This was followed with sentences.

Lesson XXIII introduced these phonograms with “ee,” and columns of words under them:

“eel      eed      een      eer  
r-eel              (columns)

“Sight: any many lamb”

Lesson XXIV covered “oo like u-full, oo like u - rule,” and produced columns of words under three such phonograms:

“ h-ood      l-ook      f-ood

“Sight: could, would, should”

By this point, the content of the reading selections in these lessons had become increasingly like those in the 1826 Franklin Primer.

Cassell’s Third Infant Reader had these remarks at its beginning:

“It is assumed that the scholars at this stage have acquired sufficient powers of generalization to name any simple word when its type is given. Thus if pail is known, they should be able to name nail, sail, snail, &c. Hence, in the second part of this book, in addition to the words of the “Reading Sheets,” other but similar words are carefully introduced. In other respects, the Third Infant Reader is constructed on a plan similar to that of the First and Second Readers.”

It could not be clearer that the “phonics” taught was whole-word phonics with consonant substitution.



Sheet XXV began with these phonograms: a-long g-ain aid, m-aid, hay. At the end, it badly mixed spelling types with the same sounds but different spellings, and with no explanation given to the children for the confusion: stay, break, bear, pear, great, veil, grey

Sheet XXVI covered “e long” with words built from these phonograms, again with mixed spellings: s-ea, st-eal, th-ief, f-field.

Sheet XXVII covered “i long” with mixed spellings: d-ie to dye, eye; fl-y, ch-ild, s-ign (and under it h-igh, n-igh, n-ight, r-ight, tr-ied, fl-ies).

Sheet XXVIII covered “o long,” oak ow.

Sheet XXIX covered “o long,” oe, old, bolt, with examples, yolk, roll, most, shew.

“Sight: build, built, climb”

Sheet XXX or XXI (notes missing one or other) covered “u” as in mule, ewe, d-ue; oo as in moon bl-ue; oo as in good fr-uit, p-ut, f-ull.

Sheet XXXII covered “a broad,” all, b-all; aw; p-ause; w-alk; c-aught.

Sheet XXXIII had “a” as in c-alf; “a” like short o - w-ant; “o” broad, f-orm, “o” middle sh-oe, l-ose.

“Sight: de bt, heir, hour”

This phonic “lesson” is ridiculous. No child could absorb such a mixed-up, overloaded mess except as pure sight teaching. Since the word selections in each lesson were followed with context stories, that assured the children would remember the words as sight words.

Lesson XXXIV had “e short,” d-ead; “o like short u,” s-on; “y short,” Ma- ry, po-ny.

“Sight: knee, knew, knife”

Lesson XXXV had “idle e final”  
else, purse, trifle.

“Sight: moth-er, broth-er, fath-er”

Lesson XXXVI had “Sounds of Ough.”

“Sight: laugh, four”

This comment appeared at the beginning of the next book:

“In the Fourth Reader, new words are carefully introduced, they should in each case form the subject of a short word lesson. For example,

tak-ing      din-ed      ask-ed”

Aside from that curious comment on adding endings to whole words, there was no phonics in that book. However, the 1879 Cassell series as a whole looked “phonic” to the unwary. Yet it had left out

more phonics than it taught, just like most reading series in use today in America and Great Britain, and its sequence was unspeakably confused and unbearably complicated on the little phonics which it did cover. By using whole-word consonant substitution, followed by heavy reading selections employing these words, the 1879 Cassell series would not turn out “sound” readers but would turn out “meaning” readers with the usual high fail rates and reading disabilities.

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In summary, the drive for government-subsidized schools of the nineteenth century in Great Britain had brought with it the “meaning” method in the 1820’s (as with John Wood’s in Scotland, the Andrew Bell monitorial schools, etc.) Shortly afterwards, “suitable” reading texts such as have been described in this chapter and in earlier chapters arrived to teach children to read by “meaning.” Despite ineffective challenges by phonic methods in the mid-century which have been described previously, teaching reading by “meaning” apparently remained the norm in schools in Great Britain until after the turn of the twentieth century.

However, as in America, an emphasis on spelling apparently returned in the 1880’s. It must have produced the same “accidental” effect in Great Britain that it did in America. That effect was to remediate much of the appalling disabilities caused by the “meaning” method of teaching beginning reading.

## Chapter 47

### A Description of the “Best” Methods by 1880 for Teaching Reading, by the English Training College “Expert,” T. J. Livesey

The Nelson and Cassell series, and those like them, were only following the lead of the “experts” in the teachers’ colleges. This is evident from a guide to teaching reading published probably in 1880. No publication date is given but internal evidence suggests it was published in 1880. Its title is Moffatt’s How to Teach Reading, Illustrated with Notes of Lessons, “By T. J. Livesey, Master of Method, and Lecturer on School Management, Training College, Hammersmith. Author of How to Teach Arithmetic, etc., etc., London, Moffatt and Paige, 28, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, E. C..” Moffatt and Paige also published reading series from the 1870’s through 1900.

The “Introduction” read:

“...In teaching reading, it will thus be seen:-

“(a) The teacher has to cultivate the eye to distinguish and remember varieties of form. In all his reading lessons, but particularly in the earliest stages, he will have to aim at stimulating and strengthening the observing faculties of the children. He will compare and associate the forms to be learnt with such as are already familiar - linking on the unknown to the known. He will analyse on the blackboard the more complex forms into their simpler elements; calling on children to reproduce them with pencil or with kindergarten sticks.

“He will introduce variety into his lessons, so as to invest the subject with interest; and by a repetition that is not monotony, he will endeavor to fix the forms firmly and permanently in the memories of the children.

“(b) The teacher has to cultivate the ear to recognize and remember sounds....

“(c) The teacher has to train the vocal organs to produce sounds distinctly and correctly....

“(d) The teacher has to cultivate the understanding and judgment. Even in the earliest reading lessons, he will not rest satisfied with mere mechanical accuracy, but will see that the children understand what they read, and read it so that others can understand it.

“By explanation and illustration, he will clear up all difficulties in text and subject matter; and by constantly questioning children as to the meaning of what they read, will drill them into habits of intelligent thought....

“(e) The teacher has to cultivate the literary taste and the emotions. To teach expressive or rhetorical reading with the maximum of success, the teacher will need to be a man of culture and of strong feelings, and will earnestly endeavor to make his pupils think as he thinks and feel as he feels....

“Chapter I (page 4) The Methods of Teaching Reading.  
In the teaching of reading there are two fairly distinct stages.

1. In the first or elementary stage, the teacher has to help the children over the mechanical difficulties of the subject, until they are able to make out words for themselves and pronounce them with ease and accuracy.

2. In the second or advanced stage, he has to cultivate the intelligence and taste of his pupils, so that they may not only understand and appreciate what they read, but interpret it to others with truthfulness, elegance, and force.

“The so-called “Methods of Teaching to Read” have to do with the first stage only of reading, and have been designed to assist the children to recognise words for themselves.

“The different methods of teaching reading are: -

- I. The Alphabetic)
- II. The Phonic ) Synthetic Methods.
- III. The Phonetic).
- IV. The Look and Say. Analytic Method.
- V. Mixed Methods.

“I. THE ALPHABETIC METHOD.

By the “Name” method, or “Reading through Spelling,” or, as it is usually, though somewhat loosely, called, the “Alphabetic Method,\*” children are first taught the names of the letters of the alphabet, and then, by spelling, their combinations in syllables and words.

\*“The Phonic and Phonetic Methods are also alphabetic methods.”

“The sounds or functions of the letters are not formally taught; but the children are left to discover them by a process of “silent induction.” The method is one of synthesis, commencing with the simplest elements of written language, viz., letters, and gradually leading up to the most difficult words.

“How Reading is taught by the Alphabetic Method

“1. The children having learnt the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, - or even a few of them, - by some such method as that described on page 27, pass on to the spelling of small words.

“2. Such a sentence as it is an ox being placed before the children on tablet or blackboard, the teacher spells each word slowly and distinctly, pointing to each letter as he names it.

“3. The children repeat each word simultaneously after the teacher, thus: - i, t, it; i, s, is; a, n, an; o, x, ox.

“4. This is repeated again and again, simultaneously and individually, until each child in the class can spell his way through the sentence.

“5. When the children have mastered the spelling of the words; they are then taught to read them; and only when they hesitate and “stick” at a word are they called upon to “spell it.”

“The children continue to read by spelling until they have mastered the First Book, by which time they get accustomed to read off words at sight, resorting to spelling only in the case of new and difficult words.

“Arguments against the Method.

“The main objections raised against the Alphabetic Method are: -

“1. The names of the letters of themselves very rarely suggest the sound of the word they represent....

“2. Since there is nothing in the names of the letters to suggest the sound of the word, the mere naming of the letters, - apart from seeing them, - is no help to the reading of words. The voice, in naming the successive letters only does what the eye can do much quicker. The evidence of sound lends nothing to the evidence of sight. The method seems to appeal to the ear without really doing so. It pretends to be Phonic, but it is not.

“3. Not only is it no help; but the spelling of words actually distracts the attention from the main purpose of the lesson, which is reading; for since the eye sees the succession of letters much quicker than they can be named, spelling only retards the “reading off” of words, and gives rise to hesitation and slowness.

“4. The method can only be defended on the ground that it teaches spelling as well as reading. But it may be urged that it does this, even, in an unscientific way. It inverts the true order of teaching. Reading should come first, then spelling.

“With our orthographically anomalous language, spelling depends in great part on the visual memory. When we wish to be sure of the orthography of a word, we write it down to see how it looks. Even when called upon to spell orally, we try to call up a picture of the word, and look at it with the “minds’ eye,” trusting to the sight of the letters, not relying on their sounds.

“Since spelling depends chiefly on the strength and accuracy of the visual impress, and as a correct visual impression of a word is only obtained by repeatedly seeing it, it follows that much reading (and writing) is the best preparation for correct spelling; and that reading should precede spelling, not follow it.

## “II. THE PHONIC METHOD.

“The Phonic, like the so-called Alphabetic Method, is synthetic, and commences with the letters of the alphabet. By it the children are taught the sounds or powers of the letters (instead of their names), and the combination of these sounds in syllables and words.

“The sum of the sounds c + a + t = cat as truly as the sum of 300 + 40 + 6 = 346. And just as children pronounce the whole number 346 by naming in order the several parts of it, - three hundred- (and) forty-six,- so they pronounce, for they cannot help it, the whole word Cat by repeating in order, and without pausing, the true sounds of its letters.

“Now, if the sounds of the letters in English were constant, as in German or Italian, and we had one sound for one symbol, and one symbol for one sound, it is clear that such a method would be easy, interesting, and scientific.

“BUT THE ENGLISH ALPHABET IS FULL OF IRREGULARITIES AND CONTRADICTIONS; I. The Same Symbol Represents Different Sounds.

The five vowels do duty for nineteen or twenty different sounds; and not one of these letters has a constant value. (A table for vowels was inserted here.)

“2. The Same Sound is represented by Different Symbols.

To Represent forty sounds in English, we use, including digraphs, some two hundred symbols; so that the sounds are as unreliable as the symbols. A very few instances will suffice to illustrate this phonetic jumble.”

It should be noted here that, even if he were correct and not greatly exaggerating, “two hundred symbols” is a very much smaller load on the memory than the “10,000 highest frequency words.” Also, “two hundred symbols” is only a little more than double the Japanese Kana symbols which little Japanese first graders handle with ease, after which they then take on and conquer over their school years about 2,000 Kanji picture characters.

A table for letter sounds was inserted in his text at this point, arranged in columns. For the sound of “a” in “ale” was listed “April, brain, straight, gaol, hay, great, rein, they, deign.” For the sound of “i” in “ice” was listed “line, lie, height, spy, buy, eye, guile, silent, sign, rhyme.” For long “e” was listed “even, me, fee, pea, key, people, brief, conceit, police.”

For the consonant sound of “k” in “kick” was listed “week, cock, music, chorus, talk, ache.” For the sound of “m” in “madam” was listed “am, lamb, hymn, home, psalm, phlegm.” (In phonic programs, children simply have the silent letters in these words pointed out to them.) For the sound of “sh” in “shin” was listed “shake, sugar, chaise, pshaw, potion, passion.”

Yet this scouring of the language for spelling irregularities is meaningless since such word irregularities are a very small percentage of the whole English language, and, even so, can be handled in groups: chorus-Christmas, etc., talk, walk, chalk, etc. That such irregularities can be handled with ease is proven by the first-grade teachers of real synthetic phonics, of which I was one. They have the majority of their phonically-trained children reading almost anything put into their hands fluently at first sight by Easter.

The majority of such first-grade children also learn very soon to spell irregular words with ease and apparently do so mainly by exposure, apparently “storing” the memories on the left, sequential, side of the brain instead of the right, “global,” side. The fact that sequence and sound have little to do with “global” memory is the probable reason for most of the misspellings I have received from second-grade sight-word-trained children in which letters in a word were arranged in a jumble, with disoriented sound-sequences. It is also the apparent reason for the total inability of an intelligent third-grader I taught to sound out from her store of sight words the new word “picnic,” even though she could read her third-grade sight-word reading book fluently. Comparing the spelling scores of phonic vs. sight-word trained children is actually the best way to show the enormous superiority of the truly phonic method, and to show that letter sequence has surprisingly little to do with global word memories.

However, methods such as the old Lippincott series by Charles C. Walcutt or the old Economy method are not truly effective phonic programs, nor, from its description, is the English series written by Hunter Diack and J. C. Daniels. Yet any visitor to a classroom taught in the correct manner by Sue Dickson’s Sing, Spell, Read and Write truly phonic program can confirm for himself that most children taught proper phonics can handle word irregularities with ease by the end of first grade. Also, if such a visitor could go back in time to sit in the anonyScottish Schoolmaster’s parochial schoolroom before

1829, he would find the little “sound”-trained seven-year olds there zipping through the oral reading of the Bible, which is full of the kind of words that Livesey cited like lamb, psalm, and people.

Livesey continued:

- “3. Of the twenty-six letters three are redundant, viz., c, q, and x, which could be represented by s and k for c soft and hard; by k, and by ks respectively.
- “4. This eccentric orthography has been characterized by Professor Max Muller as ‘unsystematic, unintelligible, unteachable.’ The late Lord Lytton said of it, ‘A more lying, roundabout, puzzle-headed delusion than that by which we confuse the clear instincts of truth in our accursed system of spelling, was never concocted by the father of falsehood.’ Sir C. E. Trevelyan calls it ‘a labyrinth, a chaos, an absurdity.’ Professor Meiklejohn has said, concerning it, ‘A child can put no trust in the symbol - he cannot believe his eyes; he can put no trust in the sound - he cannot believe his ears.’ And last, not least, a witty Churchman has said, that ‘the spelling of English is an aid to faith; for when a man has once realized that t h - o - u - g - h spells tho (long sign), and that r - o - u - g - h spells ruf, he is in a condition of mind to believe anything he is told.’”

Livesey completely twisted Lytton’s meaning in a story Lytton had written some decades earlier. Lytton put these words into the mouth of a “Dr. Hermann.” As Mitford Mathews pointed out in *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, 1966, Lytton only did so to mock Horace Mann (Herr Mann) in Mann’s war against teaching English by “sound.” Presumably, Livesey was given this earlier quotation by someone else or he would not have misrepresented its real meaning by quoting it out of context.

Livesey’s book was published in England about 1880. In 1886 and 1887, James McKeen Cattell was living in England, and, as discussed elsewhere, gave a paper before the Aristotelian Society in London on his great “whole-word” “discoveries” in reading psychology. Presumably Cattell would have been checking available sources in England on reading about that time - which were scant indeed - but Livesey’s book would have been one of them. Later, R. R. Reeder wrote his reading history at Columbia in 1900 when Cattell was in a position of great influence there. Reeder curiously dredged up the obscure Lytton quotation from about a half-century before, again misrepresenting its real meaning. Mitford Mathews some sixty years later in his book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, took the time to correct Reeder’s interpretation. Curiously, Reeder also paraphrased Livesey’s argument against spelling in reading, claiming as Livesey did that it slowed down the reader.

That Reeder in 1900 should paraphrase Livesey from England some twenty years earlier suggests Cattell at Columbia may have handed Reeder at Columbia a copy of Livesey’s book from about 1880. A parallel incident suggesting that Cattell brought home to America information on English material on reading was W. S. Gray’s listing, in his 1917 bibliography, of the Englishman Romanes’ 1880’s reading tests as the earliest reading tests ever done. (Romanes, like Cattell, had addressed the Aristotelian Society in London, as recorded in Sokal’s book on Cattell, *An Education in Psychology*.) Gray had begun the work on his 1917 University of Chicago doctorate at Columbia in 1914, under the personal direction there of E. L. Thorndike who was Cattell’s close friend and ex-student. (However, as mentioned in Chapter 24, William James also reported on pages 538 and 539 of his 1890 psychology text on Romanes’ reading experiments. James had also visited England in the 1880’s. As recorded earlier, James had become Cattell’s close friend some time before the end of 1892.)

Next, Livesey wrongly concluded that to teach by simple phonics was impossible:

- “5. Without some modification of the English alphabet, then, it is clear that the Phonic Method is wholly impracticable. Two methods, however, have been devised, by which the Phonic principle can be applied to the teaching of English. The first may be called the ‘Phonic Sign Method’ (Robinson’s); the other is the ‘Phonetic Method’ (Pitman’s, or Ellis’s).

#### “THE PHONIC SIGN METHOD

This is a purely Phonic Method, by which children are first taught the sounds of the letters; then their combinations in syllables and words. Its peculiarity is, that the twenty-six letters of the English alphabet are combined and marked (as seen below) so as to make up sixty-three symbols, representing forty distinct sounds.”

Livesey showed on page 11 a table on Robinson’s Phonic Alphabet, and then said on page 12:

“It will be seen from the preceding table, that

“(i) Redundant Letters are retained, so as not to interfere with English spelling.

“(ii) Digraphs, or double letters, are used where they stand for simple sounds, as ee, oa, th, etc.

“(iii) Diacritical Marks, or accents, are employed to show the various sounds of the letters, as,

a in man; a (long sign) in mane (long sign).

a (umlaut) in far; a (circumflex) in small.

“(iv.) Silent Letters are printed in italics.

“The following is a specimen lesson in Phonic type from Robinson’s Phonic Reading Book: -

He then reproduced in Robinson’s phonic type The Three Fishers by Kingsley.

“How Reading is Taught by the Phonic Sign Method

“1. The extended alphabet will have to be learnt first. In other words, children will, -

“(i) Learn the forms of the sixty-three symbols.

(ii) Learn the sounds of the sixty-three symbols.

(iii) Learn to associate the sixty-three sounds with the sixty-three symbols.

“(i) To impress the form of a letter on children’s memories, the teacher may, -

(a) Point out the symbol on the alphabet card.

(b) Compare its shape with some familiar thing.

(c) Draw the letter on the blackboard.

(d) Let children draw the letter on slates.

(e) Let children construct the letter with kindergarten sticks.

(f) Let children pick out the letter from a reading tablet.



“(ii) To teach children to appreciate and remember the SOUNDS of the letters, the teacher may, -

- (a) Show them how the different sounds are produced (see pp. 52-53), allowing children to imitate by putting tongue, teeth, lips, etc. in a similar position.
- (b) Associate kindred sounds, showing, for example, that p, t, k, s, f, are produced by the same organs as b, d, g, z, and v, respectively, the former being whispered, the latter vocalized.
- (c) Compare and associate, where possible, letter sounds with familiar nature sounds, as, - “z” with the buzz of a fly. “m” with the hum of a bee, “s” - hissing of steam, “sh” - signal for silence, “ch” - the sound of a locomotive, “p” - the puffing of smoke, “w”... with the bark of a dog, etc.

“(iii) To teach children to ASSOCIATE sound with symbol, the teacher may, -

- (a) Point to the letters when he teaches their sounds.
- (b) Let children give the sounds of letters, as he points them out here and there on blackboard or tablet: as p, e, g, - t, o, p, the children, at the end, repeating the whole word, peg-top.
- (c) Give out successive sounds, as p, e, g, - t, o, p; or pronounce the word peg-top, and call on individual children to point out the letters sounded.

“2. When children have learnt the letters, they will pass on to Vocabulary Sheet Lessons, consisting of words of from one to four syllables, containing no double consonants, no silent letters, no irregularities.

- “(i) The children will first spell the lessons through, that is, repeat the letter-sounds in succession; as (marking letters) cart, hart, sharp, church.
- (ii) When children can spell through the lessons, the teacher will call on them to read words at sight, or by “mental spelling” alone.

“3. The Reading lessons will alternate with Sound Lessons.

- (a) Teacher will utter successive sounds, as p, o, t; sh, o, p; and call on children to name the word.
- (b) Teacher will give children a word, as pot-shop, and call on them to utter its component sound.
- (c) Teacher will spell silently, that is, will place his mouth in position to form the letter-sounds of a word, - and call on children to name the word.
- (d) Teacher will give out a word to children, and call on them to spell it silently.

“4. When they can read the Vocabulary Lessons, the children will pass on to Tablet Reading Lessons, then to the Phonic Reading Book\*, and last of all to ordinary Readers.

\*“Robinson has provided Vocabulary Sheets, but no reading tablets. Ordinary tablets may easily be converted into phonic tablets by putting in the diacritical marks, and colouring the silent letters.”

“Arguments for the Method.

- “1. It makes reading a pleasant and an easy task: the most puzzling words, as “psalm,” “debt,” “gnat,” etc., at once lose their difficulty.

- “2. Exercising, as it does, the constructive and reasoning faculties, it is interesting and satisfying; for children, when they know the alphabet, can make out words for themselves.
- “3. It teaches spelling better than the Alphabetic Method, because the evidence of the ear supports the evidence of the eye.
- “4. It ensures thorough training of the ear and vocal organs, removes defects of speech, promotes distinct articulation and tends to eradicate provincialisms. The method was employed with great success by the late Mr. Robinson, of Wakefield, and is at present used with the best results in some of the large Yorkshire schools. (See Mrs. Harper’s evidence before the London School Board.)”

Livesey’s reference to the “late” Mr. Robinson establishes that Robinson had died before Livesey’s book was published about 1880. Furthermore, Mrs. Harper’s testimony to the London School Board must have come after Robinson’s 1876 book, or Robinson would probably have mentioned it.

“Arguments against the Method.

- “1. The opponents of the method urge that the use of the same letter with diacritical marks, to indicate (different) sounds, is apt to confuse the children. This is not found to be the case in practice. Children are twice as long (say, two months) in learning the phonic, as they are in learning the ordinary alphabet; but when this is learnt, they are able to read words better than children who have been learning to read by the alphabetic method for a much longer time.
- “2. It necessitates the use of superfluous digraphs and silent letters. But it does this in order to retain the English spelling, and it may be urged that the fault lies in the language, not in the method.
- “3. It cannot teach anomalous words like one, who, etc., which must be taught by the “Look and Say.”
- “4. It is difficult to teach by this method, and requires skill and training on the part of the instructor\*.

\*“This is why it is not so “popular” as the Alphabetic Method, which can be used by anybody, even a “butcher, or baker, or candlestick maker.”

“III. THE PHONETIC METHOD

“This is a purely Phonic method by which children are taught the sounds of letters, then their combinations in syllables and words; but it differs from the other phonic methods in having an alphabet of its own.”

On page 18, Livesey gave Pitman’s phonic alphabet and a sample of text printed in it.

“How Reading is taught by the Phonetic Method.

“1. The letters of the Alphabet are first taught, - a few at a time, - by their powers only, as in the Phonic Sign Method described on page 13.

“2. As soon as children know a few letters, they begin to read easy words. They are told to repeat the successive letter-sounds of a word quickly, and they cannot help pronouncing the word.

“In Mr. Ellis’s Phonetic Readers, - now out of print, - the transition was facilitated by a (book) in which the same lesson was printed on opposite pages in Phonetic and Romanic type respectively.

“For a fuller discussion of the Phonetic Method, the reader is referred to “The English Language Spelled as Pronounced,” by George Withers (Trubner & Co.) and Mr. Spedding’s article on “Teaching to Read,” in *The Nineteenth Century* for June, 1877.”

The fact that *The Nineteenth Century* published an article on reading in 1877 is of interest, because it was supposed to publish James McKeen Cattell’s article on reading in 1887, but it never did so, instead publishing another article that Cattell wrote.

*The Nineteenth Century* was a famous English periodical, and the one which had agreed to publish the talk mentioned earlier by the American psychologist, James McKeen Cattell, which he gave before the Aristotelian Society in London on February 21, 1887. On May 28, 1887, Cattell rewrote the Aristotelian talk for *The Nineteenth Century* under the title, “The Way We Read.” That paper is listed among the Cattell manuscript files at the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C., but only the first page (of no importance) is there. (Why is the rest of the paper missing?) The missing remainder of two or three pages would be of great interest. In his excellent book on Cattell, *An Education in Psychology*, Sokal recorded Cattell’s own comments concerning his Aristotelian address, to the effect that his paper had aroused a considerable interest and had been followed by a lengthy discussion by the intellectual members of that society. However, *The Nineteenth Century* never did publish “The Way We Read” but did publish a second paper submitted in 1887 by the young psychologist, Cattell, “The Time It Takes to Think,” listed as “22 (1887): 827-830.”

On pages 538 and 539 of his 1890 psychology book, William James quoted from page 136 of the book by George John Romanes of England, *Mental Evolution in Animals* (1884). (Sokal recorded that Romanes had also addressed the Aristotelian Society, on an unknown topic, about 1887.) In his 1884 book, Romanes said his reading experiments had shown a great difference in the time people took to read materials. “Perception-Time” was the title James gave to the section in which he quoted at length directly from Romanes concerning his reading experiments. That section title has a great resemblance to the title of Cattell’s second article, “The Time It Takes to Think.” Therefore, Cattell’s second article may also have included some material on Cattell’s reading experiments. However, it is certain that speed of reading, or reading rate, became a subject of great interest to psychologists and reading “experts” after about 1890, and Romanes’ and Cattell’s experiments must have initiated that interest.

Livesey continued:

“Arguments against the Method.

“1. It has been urged that the method is likely to destroy correct spelling. Phonetic teachers deny this...

#### “IV THE LOOK AND SAY METHOD.

“By the “look and say,” or “Reading without Spelling” method, children are taught to recognize and pronounce whole words at a single effort, without stopping to spell them. A child gets at once a general impression of the shape of a word, associating (it) with its sound and with its sense; and has this “visual impress” made vivid by analysis and permanent by repetition. The method is analytic - beginning with the whole word, then proceeding to its parts.

“How Reading is taught by the “Look and Say” Method.

“1. An easy sentence is placed before the children, on black board or reading-table, as, -  
It is an ox.

“2. The teacher, pointing to the words, names them in succession without spelling; the children repeating the words simultaneously after the teacher. (This several times.)

“3. The teacher, pointing to the words, calls on children to read them simultaneously without help, -

- (i) Forwards,
- (ii) Backwards,
- (iii) Promiscuously.

“4. Individual children are called on to read the words in any order in which the teacher may point to them.

“5. Teacher now takes up each word separately for analysis, and -

- (i) Asks children the number of letters in the word.
- (ii) Tells them the names of these letters.
- (iii) Calls on them to pick out the same letters on an alphabet card or reading tables.
- (iv) Lets them print the words on slates.

“Arguments for the Method.

“1. Reading depends chiefly on the eye. The eye “takes in” things as wholes, and afterwards examines their parts. General features strike the eye first: familiarity alone makes it (conversant) with detail.... We may recognize a person and know him for some time, before we notice that he has grey eyes or small teeth or large ears.

“It is much the same with words. It is easy for the eye to carry away a general impression of a word sufficient for purposes of recognition; but it is only by seeing the word again and again that it can distinguish all its letters at a glance.

“2. The method is analogous to that of learning a spoken language. In learning to speak, the child hears a word as a whole, remembers it as such, and associates its meaning with its sound. In learning to read, the child sees a word as a whole, remembers it as such, and associates its meaning with its form.

“3. By whatever method a child is taught, he is not able to read until he can recognize words at a glance; and the Look and Say Method arrives at this end by the quickest and directest route.

“4. There are many irregular words in English, like two, one, who, beauty, etc., which can only be taught by “Look and Say.”

“Arguments against the Method.

“1. It has been urged against the method, that since general impressions are relied on, general resemblances, as between the words through and thorough, often lead to confusion and error. On the other hand, it may be said, that it is a part of the method to analyze and compare, so that all such resemblances would be pointed out and contrasted.

“2. It has been said, that by this method, children do not acquire the power of the Alphabetic Method. (Yet) children acquire unconsciously a knowledge of the powers of the letters; they get familiar by analysis with commonly recurring syllables, and they acquire a habit of syllableizing mentally, new words like con-fla-gration, and of pronouncing them with but little difficulty.

“3. Some have said that the method does not teach spelling. This is not correct, since much reading produces good spelling, and this method gives practice in reading from the beginning.

“4. It is the strongest objection to the method, that it begets a slovenly pronunciation. Clear enunciation depends on the distinct articulation of each separate letter of a word, and this end is not attained so well by the Look and Say, as by the Phonic Method.

“V. MIXED METHOD.

“Since there are good points in all of these methods, it is possible to construct out of them a method which shall embody the most valuable features of each.

“Adopting the Look and Say Method as a base, the teacher might, incidentally, and by degrees, teach the sounds of the letters, and ensure that accuracy of enunciation which the Phonic Method undoubtedly gives; while by teaching the names of the letters, and allowing children to spell words after reading them, he might secure all that is valuable in the Alphabetic Method. How this may be done in practice, will be shown in the next chapter.”

At this point, Livesey suggested teaching letters a few at a time, with those that are similar, or by nine words, with pictures, that contain all the alphabet:

“Lesson I, box, II, jug, III, can, IV, fez, V, vest, VI, drum, VII, quill, VIII, whip, IX, key.”

Livesey disliked picture alphabets because he said they did not contain the names of the letters. He did not seem to realize the purpose of most picture alphabets is to give the actual sounds of the letters, and that, in their alphabet, the Phoenicians had named their letters for actual objects in their language which began with the sounds of each letter, so that the names functioned just like a picture alphabet! On page 35, Livesey gave what he considered to be “An Improved Picture Alphabet.”

“Horace Mann has well said, that ‘while, as a general rule, six months are spent in mastering the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, a child will learn the names of twenty-six playmates or twenty-six playthings in one or two days. The consideration of this fact has suggested the following method of teaching the alphabet.’”

Livesey then showed pictures with their names: a corn, bee hive, ce dar, de er, ea gle, ge ranium, ef figy.

“By repeatedly seeing picture and letter side by side, the two become inseparably associated in the child’s mind. When therefore he sees the letter alone, it recalls to him the associated picture, and remembering the name of the picture, he remembers, of necessity, the name of the letter....

“The words thrown into rhyme and set to easy music will form a pleasant and instructive exercise for infant schools, thus: - A is heard in Acorn that grows upon a tree, b is heard in beehive, the workshop of the bee, c is heard in cedar, whose boughs are broad and dark, d is heard in deer that bounds across the park (etc.)....

#### “EARLY BLACKBOARD OR TABLET LESSONS.

“1. When children have learnt the alphabet, they may be taught to name short words at sight, just as they have been taught to name the letters.

(Page 38) “2. The first reading lessons should be either on tables, in type large enough to be seen easily by a whole class, or, better still, should be printed by the teacher on the blackboard.

“The advantages of blackboard lessons are

- (a) The children can see the letters made, and can watch the process of “word-building”
- (b) The letters can be printed big enough to be read by a large class.
- (c) The same words can be variously arranged, or variously combined in different lessons, so as to ensure repetition without risk of monotony.
- (d) Special typical difficulties or irregularities can be classified on the blackboard, and made the subject of special lessons....

(Page 39) “3. Success in teaching reading will depend very much on the easy gradation of lessons, and on the systematic arrangement of the regularities and irregularities of the language. The first blackboard lessons should begin with the easiest words, and should lead up step by step to the more difficult combinations. They should be confined to the regular monosyllables, so that children may get some idea of law and uniformity at the outset. Contradictions and anomalies which, after all, are but exceptions to a rule, and serve only to perplex and to discourage beginners, should be kept, at first, altogether in the background....

“STAGE I In first lessons, the teacher will print on blackboard three or four two-letter words, arranging them in columns, thus

“I am on an ox  
Am I on an ox?  
An ox I am on.  
Am I? I am.

“In all such blackboard or tablet lessons, the teacher will -

1. 1. Point to each word in succession and name it, the children repeating the words simultaneously after the teacher. (This several times.)
2. Point to the words in succession and let children repeat them alone simultaneously. [He said as before, “forewards,” etc.)
3. Let children, when they are called upon, spell a word after reading it, as “am, a, m, am

4. Call on individual children to read the word [He said as before, forwards, backwards, promiscuously) or name the words, and call on children to point them out.
5. Let children print the words on their slates.

“Two-letter words. The teacher in the first stage will confine his lessons to the thirty-six (or so) two letter words contained in the English language, viz: [He gave a table with these:]

Short vowel sounds - an am as at ah, if, it, is, in, or, of, on, ox, us up. Long vowel sounds - lo no so go ho oh do to (irregular) he be me we ye ma pa ta-ta ha, ha! my by fy! hi!

#### “STAGE II.

“I. The lessons in this stage will consist of the two-letter words already learnt with a single consonant prefixed.

“Here the “phonic” method comes into play, and the powers of the consonants should be taught in a systematic series of lessons, thus

- “(i) The sound of B in b-at, b-ox, b-it
- “(ii) The sound of C in c-at, c-an....
- “(iii) The sound of D in d-in, d-an, d-on
- “(iv) The sound of F in f-ox, f-an, f-at

“and so on, until children are familiar with all the powers of the letters.

“Then the words so learnt may be thrown into sentences, as

- a. a fat rat sat on a mat. fan, the cat, ran at the rat.
- b. dan has a hat. And Pat has a bat.
- c. The man has a sup In a tin can or cup, etc., etc.

#### “STAGE III.

“1. Artificial and uninteresting because unmeaning combinations, as ab, ad, ag, ap, etc., have so far been purposely kept out of sight. They are useful combinations, but should be taught only in words, never alone.

“2. Now that children are familiar with the powers of the letters, the transition from known words to such as contain these combinations is extremely easy.

“Certain known words should be taken as the “key-notes”; analogy will do the rest; thus: -

“Key-notes b -at c -up d -in b -ad, c -ut, d -id, f -op, b -ag,  
c -ull, d -ip, f -og, etc., etc., etc., etc.

“3. When such combinations are known, words can be multiplied almost indefinitely, and learnt by the easiest transitions, thus -

“ad gives dad, had, lad, mad, pad,  
bag gives rag, fag, wag, lag, nag  
cut gives hut jut nut rut but  
cull gives dull hull lull null....

did gives bid hid kid lid rid, did  
dip gives nip lip pip sip tip,  
fop gives mop hop pop sop,  
fog gives bog dog job hog log.

“4. Such words can be easily strung together in sentences, as -

1. A nag and a hog and a kid and a frog  
All ran a-way from a dog in the bog.
2. The bad dog was mad, and it bit a fat lad.  
And cut his top lip. Oh, de-ar me! how sad!

“STAGE IV.

“1. When children have become thoroughly familiar with the short sounds of the vowels, words containing the long vowels should be introduced. It should be pointed out that the final E mute lengthens a vowel sound.

(Page 43) “Lists of words should be printed on the blackboard in illustration of the law, and read by the class, thus short A, (and) long...”

[Here a table was inserted showing short a words becoming long a by adding an “e”: h-at h-ate, m-an m-ane, t-ap t-ape, b-it b-ite, p-in p-ine, r-ip r-ipe, n-ot n-ote, c-on c-one, h-op h-ope, j-ut j-ute, t-un t-une, t-ub t-ube.]

“2. It may next be pointed out that the sound of long e in here and mete is usually expressed by ea as in fear or by ee as in deer. Lists of words should be printed on the blackboard to read by the class, as...” (showing “here fear, deer,” and next to “fear: rear near hear,” to “deer: peer leer veer,” next to “peat: neat heat meet beet,” and so on. Some of my notes here are unclear.)

“3. Double consonants may now be introduced, and lists of words, as before read off from blackboard, as sh-op sh-ip sh-in, ch-op ch-ip ch-in, th-at th-ick th-in, wh-at wh-ich wh-en, gr-ass gr-ape gr-een, kn-ee kn-ife kn-ew.

“4. The words learnt in Stage IV, may be combined in sentences, as The lean deer sleep beneath the fine beech trees in the wide green park near the sea, etc.

“READING PRIMER

“When children have had such preparatory blackboard lessons, they will be able to take up a Primer and read it with comparative ease. They should not be confronted with new verbal difficulties until they have grown accustomed to the use of books....

(Page 44 to 45) “3. Even when children have passed into books, the blackboard may be occasionally used with advantage.

“(i) For introducing new typical sounds in a series of words, to be mastered by the children before they are met with in reading lessons, as...”

[Livesey listed ng ie oa and under them sing king, etc., field wield chief brief thief grief, etc., boat oat etc.]



“(ii) For introducing exceptional sounds and teaching by contrast with regular sounds, as...”  
[Livesey listed as regular, “cull,” and irregular, “full.” Under cull, he listed lull fuss thrush but, and under pull he listed, bull puss bush. He showed another pair of regular and irregular columns: dear fear clean speak meat wheat, opposed to tear bear lead bread dread, etc.

“SCHEME OF READING LESSON.

“PRIMERS.

“Children should be standing in a semicircle, so that teacher can walk round and see that each child is pointing to the place.

“1. Teacher names the words at the head of the lesson, children pointing to each word as pronounced.

“2. Teacher again names the words, and the children repeat each word after teacher, and then spell it - simultaneously.

“3. Children read the words simultaneously without the teacher - a forward, b backward, c horizontally. About five minutes may be devoted to this exercise. If the books are well graduated, the only new and difficult words are arranged at the head of the lesson, so that if children know these words, they will be able to read the lesson with tolerable fluency.

“4. Teacher reads first paragraph through, and asks or gives meaning of new words.

“5. Teacher reads same passage by single words, children repeating after him simultaneously.

“6. Children read the passage simultaneously without the teacher.

“7. Individual children are called upon to read the passage. (The succeeding paragraphs to be treated similarly)....

“Chapter III. THE QUALITIES OF GOOD READING AND HOW TO SECURE THEM

“The qualities of good reading are (1) Distinct enunciation, (2) Correct pronunciation... fluency... intelligence in reading... expression....

“Chapter X (Page 93)

“Practical Steps in a Reading Lesson.

“I. Explanation and simultaneous reading.

“First Step, before opening books, the teacher will generally make a few introductory remarks bearing on the lesson... to arouse interest, etc.

“Second Step, the teacher reads aloud the hard words at the head of the lesson, distinctly enunciating each letter and syllable; and the children repeat each word after him simultaneously (this several times).

“Third Step. - Children then read the same words simultaneously, without the teacher, forward, backward, horizontally.

“Fourth Step. - Teacher then reads the first paragraph slowly, and elicits or explains the meaning of difficult words and constructions.

(i) In most lessons, at least in the higher classes, there will be some words which are entire strangers to the children....

(ii) To secure the intelligent and intelligible reading of a passage, the teacher should explain it, or see that it is understood, before the children are allowed to read it....

“Fifth Step. - The children read the first paragraph simultaneously and slowly in a monotone, enunciating each letter distinctly, and pronouncing each word clearly, forcibly, and separately... (up to standard II).

“Sixth Step. - The teacher reads the same paragraph in phrases, the children reading after him simultaneously, and imitating his emphases, pauses, inflexions, etc.

“Seventh Step. - The children read the same passage simultaneously and alone, with expression, the teacher stopping and correcting when the class are not working together. (Dispensed with in higher as well as Fifth).....

“Eighth Step. - After the simultaneous reading of a paragraph, the children will be called upon to read the same paragraph individually, the teacher occasionally reading as a model.

(Page 98) At the end of the lesson, the teacher should question rapidly

“(a) on the meanings of words explained in the text, and

“(b) on the subject (matter) and purpose of the lesson. (Blackboard should be turned away from children and books closed.)”

Livesey gave after this in Chapter V the notes on a reading lesson to Standard I from Moffatt Explanatory Reader I.

Livesey also showed a lesson from the much higher Standard IV, as quoted below from page 117:

“Scheme of Reading Lesson, Standard IV.

N.B. The scheme is the same for Standards VI and V.

“1. Teacher reads words at the head of the lesson, children repeating them after him simultaneously.

“2. Children read same words - forward, backwards, horizontally simultaneously with the teacher.

“3. Teacher reads first paragraph slowly, eliciting or explaining meaning of underlined words, etc. (See notes below.)

“4. Teacher reads first paragraph in phrases with expression, the children read after him simultaneously, imitating his emphases, pauses, etc.

“5. Teacher calls on individual children to read the same paragraph. (The other paragraphs are to be treated similarly.)

“6. At the end of the lesson, children close books and teacher examines on text and subject matter.

“Points	Explanation	Blackboard
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Introduction. Ask children if they have read the Mockingbird American Christy’s song, Listen to the Mocking Bird? Ask them if they can guess why it is called a mocking bird.

“Paragraph 1 Tell them they are going to learn all about it. Open books.

“floods of delicious melody - Have children ever heard a melody?  
...Elicit meaning of delicious  
Melody - succession of single tones.  
Delicious - sweet”

Livesey’s book therefore establishes, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the “correct” method of teaching reading in England about 1880 was Code 3, phony phonics from memorized whole sight-words: “meaning,” instead of “sound.” Furthermore, any help it could give children independently to decode words was almost totally lost by the “teaching” procedures he described, in which children only parroted and memorized the text which was previously read aloud to them by the teacher.

Livesey’s publisher, Moffatt, exceeded Livesey’s advice about teaching by “meaning” in its reading series published in the early 1880’s. The British Library has, under call number 12201 33 20, Moffatt’s Explanatory Readers, First Primer, Moffatt & Paige, 28, Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, London. The British Library copy, stamped March 26, 1885, is about four by seven inches, and the type in it is large. The primer in an earlier series of Moffatt’s, published in the 1870’s, was not available.

The first page contained the small and large alphabets and the digits. The second page, numbered page 4, had the following:

“It is by me. It is by an ox. He is by it I go up to it. We do go. We go. Do so. We go to it. Go to the ox. It is by me.

“I am on it. My ox is on it. It is to be so.

“Lo he is in. I go in.”

Page 5 continued:

“Is he to go? He is by it. Is it my ox? Go to it. We go up to it.

“Lo it is up. It is my ox. I go up to it. Am I to do so? Do as I do.”

Then it moved immediately from two-letter sentences into three-word stories:

“THE PIG.

The pig is in the sty. Do not hit the pig. Let him eat.

“Is he not fat? Yes, he is so fat he can not run.”

Page 6 continued with the words, “The Fox,” a picture of a fox, and under it new words in pairs of two, with no “sound” relationship, followed by sentences:

“fox, big sly, box in, out.

“The fox is sly. Do not go to him. He bit Tom one day. Tim is a big boy. He has a cap on.

Page 7 read introduced the first four- and five-letter words:

“Tom has my toy in his box. May I get the toy out of the box?

“BAT AND BALL

“Rolls, ball dry, like bat, hard

“The ball rolls as you hit it. I like to play at bat and ball with Tom. Tom can hit the ball hard.

“One day the ball hit me in the eye, but I did not cry.

Page 8 read:

“My new cat. [Picture of girl and cat] new, call, like, Snow, name, white

“I see the new cat. Do you like her? Yes, I like her. What is her name?

Page 9 read:

“Her name is Snow. We call her Snow, for she is white like snow.

“THE HAY. play, grass cow, when soon, row

“The sun is up. It is now day. Let us run out, and play on the hay.

“The hot sun will soon dry the hay. It is for the cows to eat, when the grass does not grow.

Page 10 and 11 read:

“MY OLD DOG [picture of dog] name, what, just, lets, back, him

“That is my old dog. His name is Bob. Bob will do just what I tell him. He lets me get on his back and pat him. I am fond of my old dog Bob.

“THE WET DAY.

“play, must, rains, room, cold, will

“Can we not go out and play? No, for it is a wet day. See how it rains!

“When it is fine, then you shall go out. Get your ball, and I will play with you.”

The new words were listed first on the following pages, followed by the “story.” Only those words are shown below, by page number, which establishes that Moffatt’s beginning book in the 1880’s was using a straight, Code 1, sight-word approach, unlike the Code 3 endorsed by Livesey, whose book they had published about 1880. Just as in America where the Leigh method was eclipsed after 1880, the move in England was back to sight-words, after a brief interlude of phonic use in materials like Pitman’s and Robinson’s and their few imitators. What little phonics survived was the Code 3 version of Livesey’s, but Moffatt was not using even that in this text published by 1885, which the British Library stamped March 26, 1885:

Page 12 - look, this, doll, nice, like, small

Page 13 - frock, night, with, found, lace, tore

Page 14 - buy, glad, when, good, comes, school

Page 15 - eyes, drives, hair, coal, strong, kind

Page 16 - owls, white, yard, large, black, egg

Page 17 - come, large, warm, cold, play, now

Page 18 - field, rain, small, corn, ground, grain

Page 19 - dress, great, fire, flame, girls, pain

Page 20 - house, white, come, twice, back, front

Page 21 - shoes, these, chair, smart, nice, new

Page 22 - grass, birds, field, skip, lamb, dew

Page 23 - small, like, best, page

Page 24 - blue, none, must, look, eggs, four

Page 26 - bird, eyes, sees, dark, path, bark

Page 28 - chair, floor, does, doll, hand, says

Page 29 - large, does, bright, eyes, light, sleeps

Page 30 - name, glad, time, back, went, jump

Page 32 was the last page of the book. It had a picture of a mill. and read:

“At the top of the hill, there is a mill. The wind makes the sails go round.

“The mill grinds the corn into flour. With the flour men make nice bread.”

This Code 1 primer had used over 150 words, without the slightest indication that they were in any sense a phonic selection. Any Code 3 “word-building” with this list would have to be outside the text itself, but the utility of such “word-building” would probably be very slight, considering the overloading with pure sight-words learned in context.

Livesey’s teacher’s guide published about 1880 had given Code 3 material the official blessing of a teacher’s college “expert.” Therefore, that his own publisher, Moffatt, should almost immediately afterward, by 1885, have published this Code 1 primer is something of a mystery. Apparently, Charles Baker’s Code 1 kind of “expertise,” quoted earlier, was more influential on Livesey’s own publisher than Livesey’s Code 3 “expertise.”

## **Chapter 48**

# **Mandatory School Attendance Laws Were Passed About the Same Time That Tests Proved That Government-Controlled Schools Were Producing Functional Illiterates.**

Concerning the length of time spent in school, Ellis stated (pages 48-49):

“In a report of a Conference on School Attendance in 1857 it was estimated that...

“42% attended less than 1 year  
22% attended 1 or less than 2 years  
15% attended 2 or less than 3 years  
9% attended 3 or less than 4 years  
5% attended 4 or less than 5 years  
4% attended 5 or less than 6 years”

That means that in 1857, at the time when Britain had assembled its world empire, only three percent of its population had attended school more than six years. Its colonial administrators are widely considered to have been an efficient lot, and yet most must have come from that 97% of the population that had attended a formal school less than six years. Nevertheless, they were obviously educated men, in the real sense of the word “educated,” instead of the fallacious sense of equating “education” to time served in a government school. To put these figures in another light, and to show the hopelessness of government schools, virtually all of America’s large population of functional illiterates have attended school far, far longer than did 97% of the population of England in 1857!

Ellis referred to the preface to *Social Problems* (1873), by Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth. In it, Kay-Shuttleworth described the spade work which had been necessary in order for the government to be able to take over education. Ellis wrote:

“The nation had to be awakened to a sense of its necessity; the religious communions had to be reconciled to the interference of the secular power; the school managers had to be trained in all the details... [etc.]”

After all this hard work by activists, (and his 1873 comments certainly confirm that a cadre of activists had been hard at work for years), the government was in a position to take over the role of parents and to be the controlling influence in the training of the nation’s children. Surely, it is no accident that the de-Christianization of Europe, including Great Britain, has proceeded in direct proportion to the growth of government-subsidized schools and compulsory attendance laws.

The hostility to religion shown by government-school activists in such places as France and Mexico in the nineteenth century was not openly shown in Great Britain and America, although we are getting plenty of it today. Concerning the historical record on such hostility elsewhere, see the article on Mexico in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (1913) on anti-religious legislation which affected schools there as early as 1857. In France, government schools were one of the first-fruits of the French Revolution in 1789, which revolution inaugurated a time of great religious persecution and one of history’s most depraved periods. However, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the primary source of government schools everywhere in modern times WAS the French Revolution, even though government schools had first been suggested in

modern times twenty-six years earlier, in 1763, by the Frenchman, Chalotais, in his enormously influential *Essay on National Education*.

In contrast to what happened in Mexico and France (and in many other places), Orestes Brownson testified from his own certain knowledge as an undercover activist in 1829 and 1830 that the drive against religious education in America was intended to be indirect. The drive against religion in education has remained largely indirect in America until fairly recently. Furthermore, as Pamela Horn pointed out, most of the government-subsidized schools in England were church schools until the twentieth century. Nevertheless, much of the curriculum was effectively under the control of the state because of the state's control first of textbooks and later of tests, and the state's implicit control at all times of the "certification" of teachers.

It is almost incredible but nevertheless true that, because of such state control, the Bible and catechism were removed as official textbooks in English church schools by about 1860! Although both the United States and England permitted some mention of religion in the schools in the nineteenth century, the secularizing effect was very much in place. A particularly nasty example can be found in the Syracuse, New York, board minutes from about the 1850's, when mandatory school attendance laws were being invoked to try to force a Jewish child to attend school on the Sabbath, Saturday.

Ellis's comments on page 82 certainly suggest that "control" was the dominant concern of the activists:

"The Education Act of 1870 provided for the formation of School Boards in every school district which did not possess adequate facilities, and empowered them to formulate by-laws which would render compulsory the attendance at school of children aged 5 to 13. The London School Board implemented these provisions but granted exemption to children over 10 who had passed Standard V, and who were obliged to work for domestic reasons....

"Successive legislation was intended to ensure the attendance of children at school. The Sandon Act of 1876 rendered parents liable to financial penalties if their children did not receive the required quantity of instruction, and the Mundella Act of 1880 stipulated that the framing of attendance by-laws should be compulsory. In 1882 compulsion was in operation throughout the country...."

"Compulsion" did not result in better education in the 1870's and 1880's as Ellis showed by referring to sources from the period, which remarks of his are quoted shortly, any more than it has resulted in better education today. However, it certainly did result in children serving more time in government schools. Ellis stated on page 86:

"In 1870 the average length of school life was 2.55 years; in 1880 it was 5.19 years; in 1890, 6.13 years, and in 1897, 7.05 years. Thus since 1870 the period actually spent in elementary schools in England and Wales by the average pupil was almost trebled."

The religious schools had been under the influence of the government for many years, because of following the carrot of government financial grants. Yet after the 1870 Act they were put at a sharp financial disadvantage to the newly-formed government schools. They were suddenly being forced to pay very dearly for their carrots. Ellis stated (pages 82-83):

"The 1870 Act allowed voluntary bodies 6 months in which to remedy any deficiencies which existed in their educational provision. The Societies were stimulated to build new schools, and between 1870 and 1880, 1 million new school places were made available. Whilst school



boards received income from local rates, government grants, and fees, that of voluntary schools was confined to government grants, fees, and voluntary subscriptions. Government grants to voluntary schools were increased by the Education Act of 1876.”

Some of the voluntary schools simply caved in under the new financial burden which put them at such a disadvantage to the government schools which were supported by local taxes (“rates”). They turned their schools over to the government. Ellis stated (page 95):

“The appointment of school boards, which enjoyed such wide powers and an availability of adequate finance, was instrumental in securing higher standards of provision in schools. The effect of the reforms was detrimental to the voluntary schools for which the burden became so overwhelming that many of them opted to be placed under the jurisdiction of the new boards.”

Ellis wrote further on the effect of the 1870 legislation on private schools for the poor (page 84):

“There were 200 ragged schools in London in 1870 which were attended by 23,000 pupils, but most of the schools disappeared after the establishment of the school boards.... Unfortunately large numbers of dame schools were not assimilated into the new system. In 1878 there were still hundreds of children in Leicestershire who were taught in unsuitable premises in these schools. Inspectors did not have the power to intervene and local authorities were often unwilling to do so. One inspector of schools in Yorkshire advocated that either they should be abolished or made subject to inspection....”

That Yorkshire inspector certainly was not endorsing “freedom” in freedom-loving Yorkshire! As Pamela Horn said, inspectors came from the upper classes in England. Such inspectors would have little understanding or sympathy for poor parents who were sending their children to dame schools run by poor women. Therefore, the dame schools certainly were not being judged and found wanting by a jury of their peers.

Ellis wrote concerning the background for the passing of the Education Act of 1870:

“Approximately 1 1/2 million children in 1870 were on the registers of inspected schools, but at a conservative estimate an equal number attended either establishments which were completely unsuitable for educational purposes, or no schools of any kind. An inquiry into Liverpool schools for poorer children in 1869 revealed that 25% were in the former category and another 25% in the latter. The Education Act of 1870 was intended to remedy this situation.”

Presumably he meant that of the poorer Liverpool children under age 13, half were not in “inspected” schools, and of this half, an equal number were in “unsuitable” schools and an equal number in no school.

Those not in school, however, obviously may have been earlier in either a government-inspected school or an “unsuitable,” (i.e., not government-inspected) school and should be omitted from statistics. Of the remaining numbers, about two-thirds of the poorer children by 1870 received the government-inspected instruction which produced such appalling failure rates on reading tests. As government control over education increased, the literacy rate had dropped accordingly because of the methods used in the government-controlled schools.

By 1876, the dame schools were almost gone. Therefore, there was a large population of young people by that date who had learned to read by “meaning,” instead of “sound.” Ellis included a chapter on books published between 1860 and 1890, and glowingly (and properly) reported on the wonderful flood of children’s books which appeared in those years, including, for instance, *Alice in Wonderland*. This

implies a great “growth” in literacy, and produces a vision of crowds of happy children now being able to read delightful children’s books.

However, Ellis also gave some reports on sales figures of children’s books which can be compared to school population figures. The results of these can be compared to his sales figures for cheap commercial periodicals for adults in the 1860’s. This analysis tells a sorry tale of declining literacy as “meaning” replaced “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading. The “thorough and efficient” government-subsidized schools teaching reading by “meaning” had almost wiped out the once-profitable commercial market for cheap printed matter for poor children. Almost the only cheap periodicals for young people after 1870 were published by church groups, which were, of course, not in business to show a profit. Ellis said (page 78):

“The majority of children’s periodicals were the products of religious organizations....”

A major source for children’s book sales was the widespread use of books as prizes in school. For instance, Ellis said (page 77):

“After 1870 the R.T.S. [Ed.: Religious Tract Society] recognized the demand for prizes in the newly opened board schools. Most of the Society’s best sellers were published in these years....”

Since commercial publishers were obviously largely uninterested in publishing cheap periodicals for children, this indicates the profits from publishing for the poor had dried up. Yet, when the population was far smaller in the eighteenth century, the poor had bought so many cheap chapbooks, full of exciting stories and unsettling philosophies, that the upper classes had busied themselves printing “suitable” material for their inferiors to read to counteract the enormous “bad influence.”

True literacy can be achieved with only a year or so of instruction by “sound” instead of “meaning.” The ability to read, once truly acquired, does not disappear in adult life, as is demonstrated by the letter from Mrs. Spray which Pamela Horn quoted, given elsewhere in this history. Nor should the ability to read disappear, as properly taught reading is only a set of conditioned reflexes. Other conditioned reflexes acquired in childhood do not disappear either, despite infrequent use, such as the ability to ride a bike or to roller skate - or to row a boat. English children after the 1870’s were in school for considerably more than a year and yet they were obviously NOT acquiring the conditioned reflexes underlying true reading ability. On page 84 in his chapter, “Elementary Education for All 1870 - 1902,” Ellis was obviously referring to 1870 - 1892 sources concerning the failure to achieve true literacy:

“However, the educational system as it existed was subjected to severe criticism. The large sums of money which were expended did not yield permanent results because the majority of children did not continue their education on leaving school.”

Of course, the “because” in the above is fallacious. Instead, the results were not “permanent” even after years of compulsory attendance because the children had been taught reading by “meaning” instead of by “sound” and had therefore not acquired the proper conditioned reflexes. As Dr. Hilde Mosse said on page 78 of Volume I of *The Complete Handbook of Children’s Reading Disorders*, Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York: 1982:

“Reading disorders can be caused by an inability to form the necessary conditioned reflexes or by the establishment and practice of wrong reflexes.”

Actual statistics presented by Ellis confirm failures, though he interpreted them as showing improvement. It should be remembered that a child could not be presented for examination in a standard

which he had previously failed. Therefore, statistics on children taking the tests tell nothing of the numbers of children ineligible for the tests, which might have been very large indeed. Ellis said (page 90):

“Continuous improvement was shown in examinations, and whilst in 1872 children in standards IV to VI comprised only 17.96% of the school population, in 1886 the proportion had risen to 34.68%. Also, the index of backwardness diminished so that the proportion of scholars aged 10 and over presented in the lowest standards for examination purposes fell from 63.71% in 1872 to 36.33% in 1886.”

In “reading” the children were largely only reciting memorized texts. Yet 83% of the children in 1872 were tested at Standard III or lower, and 65% were still being tested at that level in 1886, to say nothing of those failing. Statistically, only 50% of all the children, and excluding NONE who had previously failed from taking the tests, should have been at that level, which was anything but demanding! The Scottish Schoolmaster’s seven year olds would all have read fluently, not at the Standard I required of seven-year-olds in the 1880’s, but at Standard VI (though probably without “expression”). Yet two-thirds of the children ten years old and older in 1872 were “examined” at Standard III or lower, and more than one-third in 1886 (to say nothing of the failures ineligible for testing, and to say nothing of whether those actually presented for testing “passed” the standard at which they were tested!)

The material being “tested” was still largely memorized material even after 1884. Ellis said (page 92):

“...In 1884 the Revised Instructions to H.M.I.s [Her Majesty’s Inspectors] referred to the length of lessons in books:

‘It may be taken as a general rule that 40 lessons and not less than 80 pages of small octavo text should be required in standards I and II, and not less than 60 lessons and 120 pages in higher standards.’

“The purpose of this regulation was to prevent the use of books in which the contents were so meagre that they could be learned by heart in the course of a year, and represented no accurate test of a child’s reading ability. Two pages were regarded as a minimum for an effective reading lesson and longer lessons were desirable for older children. Narratives and poetry could well be longer than those which dealt with technical information relating to geography, history and science.”

Note the “two pages” for an “effective reading lesson.” A class of thirty or so children would read and reread those thin two pages after the teacher, and then discuss its content ad nauseum. The 1884 regulations did nothing to remove the longstanding “learning by heart” of “reading” texts on which children were tested.

As late as 1888, the children obviously lacked the ability to read independently and to sound out words, which abilities had been the norm in the eighteenth century. Ellis said (page 93):

“...in 1888 an inspector remarked that many of the geographical readers contained ‘too many hard names to be good for instruction in reading.’“

The upper grade children using these readers continued to stumble over pronunciations, even though they had been already been given the correct pronunciation by the teacher’s reading them orally first.

Yet spelling books apparently were again receiving emphasis in some English schools in the 1880’s, just as in America, and may also, as in America, have stressed phonics, so by the turn of the century real

reading achievement was undoubtedly increasing. Paradoxically, it was at that point that testing was dropped! That spellers which could result in teaching reading to upper grade children were clearly in use by the 1880's is shown by this comment by Pamela Horn (page 47):

“Again, at Cottisford in North Oxfordshire, the young Flora Thompson remembered with bitterness her own brushes with the H.M.I. In this particular area in the 1880's the office was held by an elderly clergyman.... All of the other children shared Flora's apprehension. ‘There was no singing or quarrelling on the way to school that morning. The children... walked deep in thought; or, with open spelling or table books in hand, tried to make up in an hour for all their wasted yesterdays...’”

However, as time went on, the vise of centralized control in education continued to tighten in England, despite the dropping of testing. Actually, the tightening of the vise represented another trade-off, as when the control of texts was dropped and replaced by testing. That is because when testing was dropped at the turn of the century, local control was lost and central control was installed. Ellis wrote (page 85):

“There was an immediate need for a closer integration of the educational system.... (In 1900) a Board of Education was formally constituted.

“In 1902 an Education Act was passed which was probably the most important event in the history of education in England since the full recognition of elementary education as a national necessity in 1870. School boards were replaced by Local Education Authorities, which made possible a closer co-ordination of elementary and secondary education.”

Once compulsory attendance has been achieved, “control” in education is exercised most in the three “T” areas: by controlling Tests, by controlling Textbooks, and by controlling Teachers through “certification.” It is absolutely astonishing that teacher “certification” has been permitted to develop in England and the United States since both countries prize freedom so much. In countries with a free press and free speech, how can any group claim the right to “certify” anybody as a “suitable” teacher for OTHER people's children? What has happened to the old concept that a teacher has authority only because he is acting “in loco parentis” obtaining his limited authority directly from the children's parents, who freely but temporarily choose to give it to him? Yet certification of teachers has been around in both countries for about the past hundred and fifty years, and it is built on the assumption that the responsibility for children's education does not rest with the parents but with the state. It appears that great numbers of Paul Reveres have been as sound asleep as Rip Van Winkle for that hundred and fifty years, when instead they should have been out riding to spread the alarm.

The controlling of tests first arrived in England with the Revised Code of 1862 as a trade-in for dropping the controlling of textbooks, as has been described. The reading failures the tests disclosed from the formerly “approved” textbooks were enormous. That by 1870 the schools were still failing in this most fundamental task, the teaching of reading, is shown by Ellis's comment on page 89:

“In 1870 the most expected of working-class children by the Government was that they should read a newspaper on leaving standard VI, a requirement which could well have been met by a child of 8 years old. Inspectors admitted that no attainment below Standard IV could be of permanent benefit to a child, and yet 80% of children passed only in the lower standards before leaving school.”

Therefore, the “inspectors” who were actually testing the children said 80% of them in 1870 had received NO benefit from attending the government-subsidized (and controlled) schools! That was an enormous waste of time and money!

With the arrival of the true government schools, and not just government-subsidized schools, under the act of 1870 came the “New Code of Regulations 1871.” The following is taken from page 303 of the microfiche at the New York Public Library, call number: “1871 IV 303. Author: Great Britain - Parliament. Title: Sessional Papers.”

“Standard of Examinations - Reading

“Standard I - One of the narratives next in order after monosyllables in an elementary book used in the school.

“Standard II. A short paragraph from an elementary reading book.

“Standard III. A short paragraph from a more advanced elementary reading book.

“Standard IV. A few lines of poetry or prose.

“Standard V. A short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative.

“Standard VI. To read with fluency and expression.

“Writing.

“Standard I. Copy in manuscript character a line of print and write from dictation a few common words.

“Standard II. A sentence from the same reading book slowly read once and then dictated in single words.

“Standard III. A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from the same book.

“Standard IV. A sentence slowly dictated once by a few words at a time from a reading book used in the first class of the school.

“Standard V. Another short ordinary paragraph in a newspaper or other modern narrative slowly dictated once by a few words at a time.

“Standard VI. A short theme or letter, or an essay paraphrase.

“No scholar may be presented... for their examination... under a lower standard or under the same standard. After 31 March 1873 no scholar above 9 years of age and no evening scholar above 14 years of age, will be examined in Standard II.”

The spelling test above Standard I does seem moderately demanding, but, as quoted elsewhere, teachers taught “spelling” by practicing those sentences in the readers which seemed suitable for spelling tests, and so seemed likely to be chosen by the inspectors. Therefore, the “practice” effect was very evident and would have resulted in much higher scores. Furthermore, children could apparently “pass” in reading at higher levels while still failing in lower levels of spelling. The percentage of errors permitted

before a child was “failed” in spelling is not indicated. It is highly unlikely that 100% accuracy was demanded. If only 70% accuracy were demanded on simple sentences, then the testing was not very demanding. However, I have turned up no information to date concerning the specific failures in spelling, which would be illuminating.

Baker made a great point in his 1864 paper of opposing the monosyllable Standard I 1862 reading test because it was unnatural. By 1871, only seven years later, note that Standard I called for the reading of multisyllables. Those preparing the Standards must have been listening to Baker or to those who agreed with Baker.

Ellis described the codes of 1881 and 1882 (pages 89-90):

“Code of 1881: Requirements in reading

“Standard

I Read a short paragraph from a book not confined to words of one syllable.

II Read a short paragraph from an elementary reading book

III Read a short paragraph from a more advanced reading book

IV Read a few lines of prose or poetry selected by an inspector

V Improved reading

VI Improved reading”

Ellis said (pages 89-90):

“...Reading was tested in the ordinary class books if approved by the inspector, but these books were to be of reasonable length and difficulty, and unmarked. Every class was to possess two or three sets of reading books although this was considered by many to be quite inadequate.”

Nine years had elapsed between the first testing standards adopted in 1862, and the New Code of 1871, and ten years elapsed before that was revised in 1881. Yet, only ONE YEAR elapsed until a new code was adopted in 1882. Obviously, something had gone awry which needed mending. One thing apparently was Standard IV, which required that children “Read a few lines of prose or poetry selected by an inspector.” That was the same as the 1871 Standard IV, except that the words had been added, “selected by an inspector.” With the addition of those words, children had lost the advantage of “reading” poetry they had previously memorized in class. As a result, apparently, of the too-demanding phrase, “selected by an inspector,” Standard IV was totally revised in 1882, and that demand was omitted.

“Code of 1882: Requirements in Reading

“Standard

I Read a short paragraph from a book not confined to words of one syllable

II Read a short paragraph from an elementary reading book

III Read a passage from a more advanced reading book, or from stories from English history

IV Read a few lines from a reading book, or history of England

V Read a passage from some standard author, or from a history of England

VI Read a passage from one of Shakespeare's historical plays or from some other standard author, or from a history of England.

VII Read a passage from Shakespeare or Milton, or from some other standard author, or from a history of England.”

These standards effectively lasted only eight years, since the pressure to meet testing “standards” which had existed from 1862 greatly lessened after 1890. Pamela Horn pointed out (page 49):

“Even the apparently over-strict Brodie [Ed.: an inspector] welcomed the ending in 1890 of the old ‘payment by results’ system in its most rigid form.... The Code of 1890, which brought about this modest improvement... was reinforced in 1895 by a further alteration, which allowed the Inspector to substitute ‘two visits without notice, spent simply observing the school in a normal day’s work, for the annual pre-arranged examination visit.’ Although by no means all schools adopted the new form, many did....”

Centralized control of reading instruction therefore slipped after 1890, with the phasing out of the tests, and so did “teaching to the tests” which was geared to match the sequence in the reading textbook series.

In the 1870 - 1902 period, Ellis said that the control of textbooks was effective only under the London School Board. However, in 1884, the official “Instructions to Inspectors” in England specified that books were supposed to “conform to the requirements of the Code”.or to be rejected if were rated by individual inspectors as “unsuitable.” Nevertheless, the instructions did not involve lists of approved books. Ellis said (pages 95 and 96):

“The Committee of Council was adamant that inspectors must not recommend the use in schools of any particular books, but it was widely held that managers and teachers required guidance in their selection. It has been shown that in practice the Committee maintained some control over the publication of school books in the Instructions to Inspectors, and in 1884 the latter were permitted to ‘disallow the use of any books which are plainly unsuitable, or which do not conform to the requirements of the Code’.

“A further controlling factor in the use of school books was the appointment of school boards after 1870, in which many of the members were highly qualified to exercise supervision. The London School Board found it necessary to withdraw numerous books from schools under its control because they infringed the rules which related to religious instruction.”

Note the censoring of religious references in textbooks by the London School Board, with which government group the professedly-agnostic-but-effectively-atheist Thomas Henry Huxley was so closely associated, as discussed later. Note in the following the preparation of a list of “approved” readers by the London School Board members who were supposed to be so “highly qualified to exercise supervision.” Ellis said (pages 95-96):

“A recommendation that the [London] board should issue textbooks of its own was rejected but a list of readers was compiled. An agent was appointed to supply and deliver items required at a standard rate of discount, but in order to effect economy in dealings with manufacturers and publishers, a Central Store was established by the Board in 1874....

“The report of the Cross Commissioners in 1888 represented a watershed in the attitude to books in schools. It was claimed that no case had been established for the prescription and recommendation by inspectors of particular books....

“The Commission was opposed to the introduction of a set of government approved textbooks but considered it useful to publish an extended curricular programme so that managers and teachers would be increasingly aware of the requirements of the syllabus and select their books accordingly.”

However, the atmosphere was freer after 1890 with the dropping of the rigid rule that financial support was dependent on the “Standard” test results. In this far more independent atmosphere, when government control on reading instruction greatly lessened, real phonics had begun to come back in English reading books by about the turn of the century. The record suggests that centralized control of beginning reading instruction through texts, tests, and teacher training had enormously lessened, even though centralized control of education in England was increasing.

The supposition can be made that most of the old “experts” pushing the “meaning” method in reading in the Victorian period in Great Britain had either retired or died. Yet when the swing back to sight-words appeared in Great Britain during the 1920’s and 1930’s, it apparently did so under a new crop of “experts.” They eventually “achieved” in England the same unhappy effect on beginning reading instruction as in America, through functioning as “experts” in teachers’ colleges and as “experts” on study panels. That the latter is so is suggested by publications to which Ellis referred, which he listed in his index (page 227). These texts would be well worth researching if time permitted. Note the ominous dates of 1928 and 1931 on the three which concern beginning reading:

“Hadow Committee Reports

“Books in Public Elementary Schools (1928)....  
Education of the Adolescent (1926)....  
Infant and Nursery School (1931)....  
Primary School (1931)....”

However, before 1890, when the Standards and the tests were in effect, in tandem with teaching of reading by “meaning,” the record showed appalling reading failures.

A lengthy speech with statistics on school results was given on October 2, 1878, by Sir Charles Reed, Chairman of the London School Board. His talk was quoted in the American Circular of Information No. 2 for 1878 of the Bureau of Education, United States Department of the Interior, Washington, Government Printing Office: 1878. The circular was entitled Elementary Education in London and was compiled by John Eaton, Commissioner, and approved by C. Schurz, Secretary of the Interior. In his speech, Reed had referred to results from tests on the “standards.”

The “infants” or children under seven years of age were not tested, even though they may have been in school from the age of four or even three. At the close of the first year for the seven-year-olds, according to the first standard that had been in effect since 1871, children were expected “to read a short paragraph from a book not confined to words of one syllable...” The second standard was only expected



to do a little better. The fourth standard was supposed “to read with intelligence a few lines of prose or poetry...” The footnote describing the standards in the American report added the words, “selected by the inspector,” which phrase obviously must have been given to the compilers of the American report in 1878 by someone from England. Yet those words did not actually appear on the 1871 standards. As quoted elsewhere in this text, a microfiche copy of the actual 1871 English document in the New York Public Library does not contain that phrase.

It was another ten years before the “standards” were revised again in the Code of 1881 and the literature does not suggest that any alterations occurred to the standards in the meantime, though of course it is possible. The phrase was added to Standard IV in the 1881 standards but was removed the following year, at which time Standard IV was completely changed. (It should be noted that nine years had elapsed between the revision of 1871 and the original standards of 1862, and ten years had elapsed between those and the standards of 1881, but only one year elapsed before the changes of 1882!) Unless some alteration was possible in the formally adopted standards of 1871 before the next formally adopted standards of 1881, this 1882 change seems to be an implicit admission that something had gone awry with the appalling demand that the inspector select the text at the fourth standard. Children could not repeat from memory a random selection chosen by the inspector. Note that the requirements implicitly state that the first and second standards were to use reading texts selected by the teacher. These would almost certainly be practiced texts and very probably memorized texts, like those referred to by Colonel Parker in America in his 1900 anecdotes about New England practices before 1875, referred to elsewhere in this history.

Reed stated concerning the schools in London at the end of the 1877-1878 school year (page 16):

“...at the close of last year 41.5% were in the 1st standard, 25.8% in the 2nd, 16.1% in the 3d, and 16.6% in the 4th, 5th, and 6th.”

Percentages of children in each standard could logically only come from the numbers of children presented to the inspectors for actual tests in those standards. Reed must therefore have only been referring to the percentages of children tested in each standard, and not to the total children enrolled in the schools. If all children had been promoted annually, each standard tested would have contained 16.66%. Instead, the bottom Standard I contained 41.5%, and the three top standards all together, IV, V, and VI, which should have totaled 50%, instead totaled only 16.6%. Furthermore, these figures omit children who had failed the previous year and who were not ready to jump two standards in their testing, as re-tests could not be made on such failing children at the level on which they failed. Obviously, such failures from the previous years might have been a sizable group. However, even with those children eligible to be tested, which are the apparent source for Reed’s figures, two-thirds of the children who should have been at levels IV, V and VI had not reached them!

Children had to stay in school till thirteen years of age and had to be enrolled by the age of five. The London school board, according to Reed, had received plaudits at the Vienna Exposition of 1873 for its success in enforcing mandatory attendance laws. In London, therefore, most children by 1878 would have been in school since at least 1872. It is evident that the failure rate by the 1877-1878 school year was ENORMOUS. Again, it should be noted that these figures almost certainly only refer to the children eligible to be tested, which means those children would not have failed those particular standards previously. It is obvious that the only children who could really read in the compulsory government schools in London were some of the 16.6% eligible to be tested in the top three standards. The reading program in the London compulsory government schools by 1878 was therefore a dismal failure.

It is at this point that the “Figures cannot lie, but liars can figure” syndrome showed up, so dear to the hearts of educational statisticians. It is obvious that not all children were tested, since a child could not be tested in the same standard twice, if he had failed it previously. It is evident that most failures were

unlikely to jump past the standard they had failed to the standard above it in only one year, which is the only way they could be tested the following year if they had failed.

Yet Reed produced these seemingly fine figures (page 16-17):

“In standard subjects the percentage of passes last year in reading was 87, in writing 84, and in arithmetic 79.1. This compares favorably with the percentages for the entire country, which are given as 85.78 for reading, 78.99 for writing, and 69.97 for arithmetic.”

Some material quoted previously showed that, about 1870, 80% of the children never reached higher than Standard III of the six standards. An 87% “pass” rate is therefore obviously far too cheery. To show the possible effect of the education bureaucracy’s removing “failures” from its testing population, by its rule that children could not be tested twice at the same standard, consider the following “worst case” scenario. Obviously, failures should not have been continual for the same children, but the figures given below nevertheless demonstrate the worthlessness of the government’s statistics. The figures also glaringly illustrate the government bureaucracy’s defensive reason for its otherwise puzzling omission of previous “failures” from its testing population. Since the results of its tests became public knowledge, including “failures” in each subsequent year would have ENORMOUSLY increased the percentage of children failing, and that would have been very poor publicity each year for the activists!

The board schools were in operation in 1871. Assume that the first testing year for children in board schools was 1871-1872. Of course, the dreary statistics already cited on the massive failures on the Standards before 1870 in government-subsidized schools make it certain that a very, very large percentage of children in the new government board schools would have failed the first Standards test in 1872. Yet, for the sake of argument, assume that out of every 100 tested, 87 passed in reading in 1872 (since 87% was the figure which Reed said was the passing average in London at the end of the 1877 year). Only those who passed in 1872 could be tested the following year in 1873. If 87% passed in the next test of 1873, the 1873 total of “passes” would amount to 76 out of the original 100 tested. When that 1873 “pass” group was tested in 1874 with an 87% “pass” rate, the total would drop to 66 out of the original 100. When that 1874 “pass” group was tested in 1875 with an 87% “pass” rate, the total would drop to 57 out of the original 100. When that 1875 “pass” group was tested in 1876 with an 87% “pass” rate, the total would drop to 49 out of the original 100. When that 1876 “pass” group was tested in 1877, the total would drop to 43 children actually being tested out of every 100 children enrolled in school. In 1878, the total would drop to 37 out of 100. Two-thirds of the children would be omitted from these statistics issued by “experts” to tell the public that 87% of the London children were passing in reading. Does some intermediate case to this “worst case” scenario account for the tiny percentage of children, 16.6 per cent, who Reed specifically said were eligible to be tested in the upper three standards in London in 1878, instead of the 50 per cent of the children who should have been eligible to be tested in the top three standards?

Reed referred to more than test results in his report. He reported glowingly on the teaching staff. (A ratio of one teacher to about 75 pupils appears probable from his numbers, which is a mute testimony to ineffective schools.) He said (page 15):

“At Lady-day we had in our schools 2,378 adult teachers, of whom 406 held first class certificates and 1,283 second class. These were exclusive of 1,479 pupil teachers and 272 candidates....”

“Pupil-teachers” were a hang-over from the Bell and Lancaster influences, and were also subject to regulation, but note that the adult teachers held “certificates.” No dame school head had such a “certificate.” “Certificates” came from normal schools and courses, where teachers were taught all the

“correct” ways to teach. The correct way to teach reading, of course, was by “meaning.” Just as in America, the poison in education was coming from “certification” in “normal schools.” “Certification” represents pure, “expert”-ridden, institutionalized, bureaucratic “control,” permanently insulated from the corrective forces of reality.

The government schools in Britain were achieving the same dismal results in reading achievement as the American schools in the 1870’s because they also used the “meaning” method for teaching beginning reading. Furthermore, the “meaning” method used in the government schools had also arrived in the private schools after about 1826 because of the mindless following of “expert” advice. As discussed earlier, William James had referred to George James Romanes’ casual testing of the reading of adults in England, which Romanes had reported in his 1884 book, *Mental Evolution in Animals*. Romanes had said he found “an astonishing difference between different individuals with respect to the rate at which they are able to read,” and he had said further that the slowest readers were the weakest in comprehension, despite the fact that he had “tried the experiment with several highly distinguished men in science and literature, most of whom I found to be slow readers.” Romanes had simply turned up, with his testing in England, the reading disabilities that might have been anticipated from the “meaning” method that had been in use there since shortly after 1826.

Concerning the results of the “standard” examinations<sup>37</sup>, which concern only those children eligible for testing but which tell nothing about the proportion of previously failing children not eligible to be tested, Ellis stated (page 90):

“...in 1872 children in standard IV to VI comprised only 17.96% of the school population (Ed.: obviously of the TESTED population), in 1886 the proportion had risen to 34.68%. ...the proportion of scholars aged 10 and over presented in the lowest standards for examination purposes fell from 63.71% in 1872 to 36.33% in 1886.”

Since it was not possible for a child to be presented “for examination” in a standard which he had previously failed, this obviously does not indicate any provable improvement. Children aged 10 and over should all have been tested at Standard IV and higher, if they had moved up a standard each year. Yet at least two out of three had failed by 1872 since they were tested in a standard below that, and at least one out of three by 1886 for the same reason. Yet the improbable assumption cannot be made that all children aged 10 and over were tested because none had failed the previous year. It should also be remembered that all that Standard IV really asked in reading was that children had succeeded in memorizing poetry in a reading book they had been reading all year, apparently except for the year 1881 when the inspector chose the selection at Standard IV. It is highly illuminating that this demanding provision was removed after only one year, when the new Standard IV was issued in 1882.

The Superintendent of the Boston Schools until 1878, John Philbrick, referred to developments in England, in the Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston. 1871, page 154:

“I have already alluded to the importance of comparisons in educational matters, and I shall take this occasion to make a practical application of the principle by quoting from the recent doings of the School Board for London. This body, consisting of forty-nine members, was elected on the 29th of November, 1870, in pursuance of a special provision of the Elementary Education

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<sup>37</sup> A sardonically humorous article from England is reproduced in Appendix A from the *The American Teacher*, (page 278, The New England Publishing Company, Boston, Massachusetts: 1884, probably May) concerning school inspections and testing in England for the “standards.” Although humorous, the article also demonstrates the worthlessness (and often downright cruelty) of government meddling in education, which, by its nature, belongs in the private sphere.

Act, which received the assent of the Queen on the 9th of August of the same year, and which is intended to secure to the people of England and Wales the advantages of a complete system of elementary schools. The great interest attaching to the doings of the London Board results not from the experience of its members in developing or administering a great municipal system of common schools, but from their exceptional character in respect to ability and learning, and from the fact that, unhampered by tradition or routine, they have availed themselves of the light derived from the experience and wisdom of foreign countries to an extent unknown in any similar undertaking. A special Committee of fifteen members, Professor Huxley being the chairman, was appointed to submit a scheme of education. This Committee has made its first report, which is evidently the result of the most careful and thorough study of the subject. This report classifies the schools into Infant Schools, for children below seven years of age; Junior Schools, for children between seven and ten years of age; and Senior Schools, for older children.... (page 155) It is concluded that the period during which the children are under actual instruction in school should be five hours daily for five days in the week...

“The subjects of instruction recommended for the several grades are as follows: -

“INFANT SCHOOLS

- a. Morality and religion.
- b. Reading, writing, and arithmetic.
- c. Object lessons, of a simple character, with some such exercise of the hands and eyes as is given in the “Kindergarten” system.

“In addition, the general recommendations respecting music and drill apply to Infant Schools, in which singing and physical exercises, adapted to the tender years of the children, are of paramount importance.”

This, of course, was a performance solely on paper. The real results were appalling.

London children had been subject to local compulsory attendance laws ever since the 1870 education legislation had given local boards the option to command school attendance. Yet compulsory education for the country as a whole did not become general till later. Pamela Horn referred (page 52) to compulsory education legislation of 1876 and 1880 which concerned the whole country (though it was frequently unenforced):

“For although the completion of a specified number of attendances permitted children to work part-time once they had passed the minimum school leaving age of 10, a permanent severing of the links with school below the age of 13 depended upon the results of their annual examination.... Under local bye-laws, therefore, a minimum level of attainment was laid down - usually Standard IV or Standard V - and only when this had been achieved could the children legally leave.”

Pamela Horn said that if a child had 250 attendances a year (morning and afternoons being counted as separate attendances) for five years, that child could get a “dunce’s pass” before 13. Many parents, for economic reasons, were anxious to obtain permission for their children to leave school. Concerning this, Pamela Horn said:

“Yet, against the miserably poor family background of many labourers and their children, this anxiety is understandable. It is touchingly illustrated in the letter written by a labourer’s wife (a Mrs. Spray) from Magham Down, near Hailsham in Sussex which was sent to the Education

Department in 1886. It referred to her twin daughters, aged 12, who were seeking work as nursemaids and who, presumably, had not passed the appropriate Standard examination.”

The letter which was quoted was astonishingly accurate in spelling, since the wife of this labourer can be presumed to have had very little education herself. Presumably about forty years old in 1886 when she wrote the letter as the wife of a sixty-year-old laborer and mother of twelve-year-old twins, she would have been a five-year-old learning to read about 1851. In 1851, dame schools and the spelling book were still prevalent for poor children and the average attendance at school was less than two years, nationally. Yet this poor woman had learned to read and to write understandably (though not perfectly) with a minimum of schooling, while the vast majority of children forced to attend government schools for years in the 1870's and 1880's could not, according to actual statements made by responsible people at that time, which are quoted elsewhere in this history.

For emphasis, the misspelled words in Mrs. Spray's letter have been underlined. Note how much they are in the minority. Note also that she misspells certain words consistently. She simply learned them wrong (there for their, his for is), but she is still literate in the real meaning of the word. However, she obviously had not attended "school" long enough to be taught punctuation or to perfect her spelling, although it is accurate on the great majority of words she used. It should be noted that Mrs. Spray's spelling was even more "accurate" than that of the scholarly men in England in Henry VIII's day, such as St. Thomas More, before the arrival of dictionaries! It is also evident she would be reading well above the 90% frustration threshold, since her spelling accuracy is certainly far above that level.

Concerning Mrs. Spray's omission of punctuation, so was punctuation omitted by all the writers of all the classic literature of ancient Rome and ancient Greece - Virgil, Plato and the lot of them! However convenient we find punctuation and capitalization, neither existed in ancient Greece and Rome. Their efficient use represents different skills (conditioned reflexes) than the conditioned reflexes underlying basic literacy. What Mrs. Spray's letter demonstrates is that she had excellent conditioned reflexes on "literacy," but had not acquired those concerning punctuation and capitalization.

“I now write a few lines to you to ask you if my daughters can leave school I have sent you there own writeing and there age and figures because we cannot finde them in clothes and food and keep a home for them any longer without there help there Father his 60 years of age and he goes 4 miles every morning and 4 miles back that makes 8 miles a day and then if it his fine all the week so he can work on the farm he gets 14s. but if it his wet he cannot work on the farm he his paid for the days he does work so his earning never amounts to more than 10s. a week and very often under 10s. in the winter months... and this cruel cruel law of a school board it his too bad ... just ask yourselves how you could keep a family on 14s. a week for six month in a year and 10s. the other 6 and finde everything that his wanted will you please will you let me know because they must go for a nurse maide I know of two places and they would have gone only this school board nucence....”

Pamela Horn added (pages 52 and 53:)

“With Mrs Spray's letter were some simple addition and subtraction sums produced by her daughters, plus quotations carefully copied from the Bible. Unhappily for her, this unusual method of approaching the authorities did not yield the result she was seeking. 'Exemption depended not on poverty but on past attendance and the passing of the appropriate standard.'”

The tragic circumstances under which that poor family was forced to exist were directly attributable to the school mandatory attendance laws, which are nothing more nor less than involuntary servitude to the state.

With perhaps about a year of schooling, Mrs. Spray was “literate” enough to write a clear letter. Also, she probably either owned a Bible which she read or had excerpts from the Bible which she read, because she had her daughters copy from it. Yet by the time she wrote her letter in 1886, it had been freely admitted that four out of five children at the age of twelve leaving English government schools, which taught reading by “meaning,” could do neither. Those nineteenth-century children could not write an understandable letter, nor could they read and understand a text, which obviously meant they could not read the Bible. However, the daily oral reading of the Bible had been the norm in hosts of English and Scottish families in the eighteenth century. How the inability of so many English nineteenth-century children to read the Bible must have pleased the kind of activists described by Orestes Brownson! As quoted elsewhere in this history, those activists aimed to oppose religion without making a direct attack on it. For the “education” of four out of five children in the English government schools about 1880, the promotion of the “meaning” reading method had certainly filled those activists’ indirect anti-religion formula.

That it is, indeed, possible to achieve Mrs. Spray’s level of literacy with only one year of “sound” reading instruction is shown by the little story below written by a first-grader from Ashby-de-la-Zouche, Leicestershire, England, at the end of only one happy year in a good school in 1971. Both the impoverished Mrs. Spray who undoubtedly had little “schooling” about 1850 and the little first grader in 1971 had achieved the same level of competence after only a year of so of “sound” instruction. They were therefore overwhelmingly more competent than the children in the 1880’s who had attended English government schools which gave “meaning” instruction for many years.

On June 14, 1971, a small group of American teachers of which I was a part visited the “open classroom” school at Ashby-de-la-Zouche in England. The town had been named after a retainer of William, the Conqueror, and still had some old buildings from the 1500’s. We were told the town had been a Royalist stronghold in 1642 and that Ashby Castle had been blown up by Parliamentary troops except for its tower. Ashby-de-la-Zouche was the town in which the schoolmaster/author John Brinsley had taught until he was dismissed for anti-Royalist sympathies. Brinsley wrote the famous teaching guide, *Ludus Literarius*, published in London in 1612 which, interestingly, endorsed true phonics.

In such ancient surroundings, the school was new, having opened only two years before, in 1969. It was delightful and modern, with rooms opening on a central area, and with much display of the children’s very good art work. It was a happy, relaxed place with well-behaved children. Students at all levels were doing individualized subject matter work in the morning and in the afternoons considerable art work.

In this most modern of schools in this ancient town, it was the first-year students who interested me most. They were being taught beginning reading with the same “sound” efficiency that Brinsley had endorsed in Ashby-de-la-Zouche in 1612 and that the Scottish Schoolmaster had used in Scotland for thirty years before 1829. Although I was told the school had a 200-word basic vocabulary list for beginners, I was also told that the teaching of phonics was massive. The effect, obviously, was that children learned their list of high-frequency words and the rest of their “reading” by “sound” and not by “meaning,” just as had been the case with the eighteenth-century spelling books and with the Scottish Schoolmaster, whose students read anything fluently by the time they were seven. That the program’s emphasis on phonics worked even at upper levels was shown by the mention made to me of one transfer student who had arrived in September scoring at 4.5 years in reading but who reached 9.5 in June.

Since the first-graders also watched a reading instruction program on British television, it was very possibly one of the two BBC programs using the phonic materials of Dr. Joyce Morris. As discussed later, the first program, intended primarily for junior classes in 1965, was *Look and Read*, and the second program for beginners a few years later was *Words and Pictures*.

The first-graders' independently written stories were reportedly hung up without correction, and they were remarkably advanced. I copied the following one, which had just been finished by a little girl, and I attempted to copy it precisely in the time available (although I unfortunately did not record her name). The following is therefore essentially her spelling and punctuation on this story which she had just finished writing in June, 1971, at the end of first grade.

The 200-basic word list she had been taught would obviously have been composed of high frequency words, and, with the emphasis on phonics, would have been as easy to learn as the lists in the old "sound" spellers. (I was astonished to find how quickly my first graders, taught with heavy phonics, learned to spell such high-frequency words correctly with very little or no study, particularly in contrast to the third-graders I had taught for 13 years. Those third-graders had been taught with the deaf-mute-method readers such as Ginn and Scott, Foresman in first grade, and their spelling of words they had not actually "studied" was very poor in third grade.) The little girl's problems, which did NOT include spelling, were two: punctuation and proofreading (besides the use of "was" for "were"). Both punctuation and proofreading are normally emphasized in later grades. Two omitted words which she did not realize she omitted because of her trouble with proofreading are marked like this: ().

Only four words are misspelled and they are underlined below for emphasis. One of them, "jewels," is correctly spelled at the end, so that misspelling is probably another proofreading error. So probably is the misspelling "oter" since "other" is correctly spelled at the end. That leaves two genuinely misspelled words: carefull (she obviously had not been taught that the spelling of "full" is different at the end of a word) and "watter" which is a phonetic misspelling. Yet the common words so often misspelled in elementary school came through perfectly, probably as a result of that 200-word list which must have been taught with much emphasis on "sound": once, time, there, some, girl, sea, they, was, off, nice, good, against, people, one, day, saw, etc.

"Once upon a time there was some sailors they were going to the oter side of the sea to take a girl back to her mummy and So they set off. There was jewls and vases on the () and nice food there was a lot of rocks and they were very sharp rocks so the driver had to be very carefull but he bumped against a rock and sunk all the jewels and all of the vases and all of the food as the boat went over and over and all the people died one day a diver came in the watter and he saw the jewels and the vases and the ship and he took them () the other divers"

The disjointed plot is to be expected from a little girl who was probably only six-years old. Yet the spelling is vastly advanced compared to that obtained in schools using the "meaning" method. This can be easily confirmed by checking some of these words on the Iowa spelling scales of the 1950's!

Notice, however, that the spelling level and punctuation level after one year under instruction is comparable to the achievement of the mother of the little girls who wrote the letter just quoted. That mother probably also had less than one year of schooling and probably spent it using a "dog-eared" spelling book since her spelling is remarkably accurate for a woman who probably had almost no schooling. Her spelling accuracy (and therefore reading accuracy) and the accuracy of the little first grader from Ashby-de-la-Zouche are what can be expected in less than one year from the majority of children taught beginning reading by "sound."

Nor was the little first grader alone in her achievement in 1971. The walls of her classroom were hung with similar stories from her first-grade classmates. These were not the "fake" stories so often seen in "whole language" first-grade rooms where the teacher provides most of the spellings because the children are as incapable of spelling by themselves as they are of reading by themselves.

Yet the government schools in Great Britain about one hundred years before, in the 1870's and 1880's, which mandated that children should serve years in them even if it meant a family went hungry, produced an 80% failure rate after YEARS of "meaning" reading instruction!

Children such as Mrs. Spray's daughters were being forced by law to attend government schools which could not teach the majority of them to read even after years of compulsory attendance. Appalling anecdotes concerning the cruel effects of these compulsory attendance laws can be picked up from the files of English newspapers in the early 1880's. Others appear in an undated pamphlet in the New York Public Library, The Star Chamber on the Victoria Embankment. A True Bill Against The School Board for London, by John Hampden, Ratepayer, Extracted from the "Hackney and Kingsland Gazette," With an Introduction by the Rev. J. DeKewer Williams, London: C. and A. Potter's "Hackney and Kingsland Gazette" Office Steam Printing Works.

From internal dates, it would appear the pamphlet came out most probably in 1877 before a London school board election in November. Note Hampden's equating Thomas Huxley's famous London school board in 1877 with England's historically infamous Star Chamber! (Huxley had been the Board's principal founding member and established its character and nature, but he left it in 1872.) Although the author of the pamphlet had some ideas about class distinctions which are highly offensive, he also had some very persuasive arguments on other matters. In essence, he charged the government-school activists with persecution of the poor. It is interesting that the kind-hearted Brougham, that great promoter of government schools some fifty years before, had deserved the same charge!

The Reverend Williams' remarks were in the Preface:

"...Then Centralization and Uniformity are alike contrary to the genius of this free people.... But the tendency of the School Board has been beyond all precedent and all reason to a slavish Uniformity and a fatal Centralization.... As for those visitors who violate the sanctity of English homes [etc.]... If then Britons are not to be slaves, they must, they should at once free themselves from the varied tyranny of the School Board...."

These were some of the comments in John Hampden's letters:

"...The fact is that the London School Board has determined by all means, however foul, to get the education of London into their hands; and therefore have bought and broken up all Voluntary Schools where they could; and impudently brand all at which the parents fully pay for their children as 'Private Adventure Schools!'...."

"I will show you something worth seeing... the picture of the London School Board, taken by their own Artist, very properly in stone; approved by... the whole Board. It is on their noble School in London Fields, Hackney... On it you see an original and ingenious carving in stone, containing two men, the one knocked down by the other who kneels upon him, seizes him by the hair of his head, and thus, 'taking the law into his own hands,' seems to say: 'I'll be the death of you!' In fact, the one is garrotted by the other. To be sure the artist, according to instructions, has made the sufferer anything but prepossessing (and who would be so when murderously assaulted?) and has given the other wings, as though he were an angel, that is, the destroying angel. And lest the parable should be misunderstood he has labeled the one, 'Ignorantia,' and the other 'Scientia.' Do I like this thing? No, I loath it; it is unmanly, it is un-English, it is ungodly - it is the last and lively illustration of the old proverb - 'The Tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.' But it is the Board's own picture of COMPULSION.



“My least objection to Compulsion is, its great cost; nearly L25,000 in one year! This the ratepayers have to pay; and we have to add to this the various losses to the 7,000 parents summoned in the year; and the time of the Magistrates, who complain of the summonses coming in by the dozen, that is, from 23 to 47 in a day; one of whom sternly rebuked the representative of the Board for calling a respectable parent: ‘The Prisoner.’ Then the cost of the new Prison for Truants has yet to be estimated.

“My objection to Compulsion is that often it is very cruel.... A widowed mother wants her eldest girl to nurse the baby while she earns bread for the family. I hold it fragrant [sic] cruelty to send that girl to school and starve them all. A poor father says that if his son goes to school instead of his place, he must go hungry. I hold it very cruel to say: ‘Never mind whether he’s hungry; send him to school.’.... I hold it very cruel to drive a poor woman to such desperation that she shall come into Court and say ‘You are all a set of villains. Your School Board is ruining all the poor and parting man and wife,’ then throw her very wedding-ring at the Magistrate, saying: ‘Take that and pay yourself.’ A dangerous state of things that!

“But poor George Bevis, he did not send his child to school, as she had the ringworm, he was summoned and fined, and as he had not the amount with him he was taken to prison, had his hair cropped, and was clothed as a felon, and could not communicate with his bewildered wife till the next day. Is not this worthy of the old Star Chamber? I know that the case has been explained to the satisfaction of the irreverend member for Hackney and the Board generally. But I know that the Home Secretary admitted the facts and only promised to prevent a recurrence of them. Here, however, is a case which I leave to speak for itself: ‘John Speer, of Canute street, Rotherithe, appeared to an adjourned summons for not paying a fine of 6d. with 2s. costs, for not sending his son to school. The defendant, who seemed very feeble, said he could not pay. He was nearly blind and unable to work, and his wife had only just got up after her confinement. He had two other children, and that morning they had only a pound of bread and a pennyworth of tea and sugar among the whole of them for breakfast. In reply to the Magistrate he said it was impossible for him to name a time when he could pay. Mr. Patterson thereupon committed him to Horsemonger-lane gaol for five days.’ Alas for Mr. Patterson and his employer; what will their end be?

“Then those School Board Visitors, those detectives among honest people, how inquisitive they are, how inquisitorial they are! A member of the Board told me that through them he knew all about the homes and habits of the people! Surely as Sir Robert Carden well called the interference of the School Board with ragged schools ‘a piece of impertinence,’ this system of visitation, which none but the poor would suffer, is a grand impertinence [sic], and ‘the cottage homes’ should be as inviolate as ‘the stately homes of England.’.... And if one of these ‘rude unfeeling officers’ were to profane my threshold I should certainly act like the Quaker who would not fight; but, when the vessel was boarded, calmly and firmly tumbled the enemy overboard, mildly and truly saying: ‘Friend, thee hast no business here.’

“What surprises me is that many ‘advanced Liberals,’ professing such jealous kindness for the working classes, are in favour of this piece of class legislation, this oppression of the poor - Compulsion. What surprises me is that many Nonconformists, who claim and clamour for civil and religious liberty, are in favour of this despotic rule among the poor - Compulsion. But they ask me whether, if a parent refused to give food or physic to his child, he should not be compelled? I say, of course he should; they are the necessaries of life, and Nature requires that they should be given to all. Well, he answers triumphantly, education is one of the necessaries of life. What, I answer, if there be only one school in the village, and that a church school? Well, he answers somewhat tremblingly, that is a peculiar case; and the right of conscience must be

respected; no child should be compelled to go to that school. Out upon such inconsistency and such dishonesty! in the name of conscience.... Then there is after all the 5th Commandment, 'the first commandment with promise,' the Godgiven Magna Charta of all parents, poor as well as rich. And it is a crime for any people, or any police, to interfere between parents and children, except when the parents or the children are criminals. This is Divine Law. So I am dead against compulsion...."

The London school board by 1878 was carrying on a war with poor parents over "compulsion," even though they could not teach the children of these parents to read. Knowing how to read is the irreplaceable foundation of education, but, as the statistics showed, the London reading program was a dismal failure.

The appalling failure of the London school board to teach children to read is never mentioned in the glowing encyclopedia reports on Thomas Henry Huxley's "contributions" to national education in England as a result of his work on the London school board from its inception in 1870 to 1872.

The Encyclopedia Britannica, (1963), (Volume 11, pages 947 - 948) in its biographical entry on Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), said he was born in England as the seventh child of the schoolmaster, George Huxley. He was described as an English biologist who speculated on philosophy and religion, and who became a strong advocate for agnosticism.

The article said further that he studied medicine and graduated in 1845, publishing a paper on his discovery of an inner sheath in hair. As a naval surgeon, his career was furthered by the naturalist Sir John Richardson, and Huxley received an appointment as surgeon on the surveying ship, H.M.S. Rattlesnake, where he studied the life at the surface of the seas in the tropics. His 1849 paper on this work was printed by the Royal Society to which he was elected as a fellow in 1851, and the next year he was elected to its council. He left naval service in 1854 and became a lecturer in natural history at the School of Mines.

The Encyclopedia Britannica article said that Huxley defended the theory of evolution, specifically against an attack on that theory that had been made by Samuel Wilberforce. Huxley gave that defense at the 1860 meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. It was considered to be a victory for science over what was considered to be obscurantism.

It is true we have been conditioned to accept this sort of judgment, yet Huxley's defense was hardly a victory for "science." The philosophically loaded "theory of evolution" has lost credibility today with many reputable scientists. Even in its heyday it was embarrassed by insufficient supporting data. For a calm presentation of today's abundant and highly scientific evidence effectively demolishing the theory, see *Evolution: Theory in Crisis*, by Michael Denton, M. D., Adler and Adler, Publishers, Bethesda, Maryland, and Burnett Books, Limited, The Hutchinson Publishing Group, Great Britain: 1985. Dr. Denton is a researcher whose field is molecular biology, but his painstaking book reviews the theory of accidental evolution in its relation to all sciences.

The Encyclopedia Britannica article said that, in Huxley's "Essays" of 1892, he wrote that the theory of evolution was not speculation, but a generalization of certain scientific facts.

Yet the theory of evolution was never a generalization of facts but has always been speculation. It not only lacked enough supporting evidence to confirm it initially. Over the years since Darwin presented his theory, scientific evidence has been accumulating in surprisingly vast and constantly increasing volumes to refute it, as Dr. Denton massively and concretely documented. The quantity of such purely scientific

data (totally divorced from any metaphysical consideration whatsoever) which Dr. Denton presented and which refutes the theory of evolution is absolutely flabbergasting.

The Encyclopedia Britannica article reported that Huxley had served on at least ten royal commissions in the years between 1862 and 1883. He was the secretary of the Royal Society from 1870 to 1880, and its president from 1883 to 1885. He was a member of the new London School Board from 1870 to 1872. The article credited Huxley with having had a greater influence on national elementary education than any one else. Although he considered reading, writing and arithmetic of fundamental importance, he was opposed to memorization and believed that the study of simple physical science was a good intellectual discipline. Huxley did endorse teaching the Bible, partly because it was literature, but partly because, as he said in his Essays, he was:

“...seriously perplexed to know by what practical measure the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up, in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion in these matters, without its use” [and since the Bible is] “the most democratic book in the world.”

The Encyclopedia Britannica article said that, by 1872, Huxley had the equipment for a laboratory course in which he could expound his methods of instruction in biology to classes of elementary teachers. Through those classes, Huxley is considered to have had an indirect influence on the teaching of biology through the whole country.

Huxley’s expounding to classes of elementary teachers in 1872 his hands-on methods of instruction in biology are an almost direct parallel to what Agassiz did at Penekese in America in 1873, when Agassiz held a laboratory school in biology for educators connected with elementary schools. That parallel is surely curious, both in the timing and in the purposes and long-term effects of Huxley’s and Agassiz’s classes held for elementary school educators.

The article said that Huxley became a Privy Councilor in 1892. The Committee of Council which had charge of British elementary education was a part of the Privy Council. Therefore, by 1892, Huxley was in a position to have ultimate authority over British education, but he was a sick man at the time. His health had failed in 1885, according to the encyclopedia article, and he died in 1895.

The Encyclopedia Britannica article said that in the last years of Huxley’s life he wrote on philosophy and theology, and that he worked actively against orthodox religion. He wrote in “Life,” in 1887:

‘That there is no evidence of the existence of such a being as the God of the theologians is true enough’ (Life, ii, 162).[He wrote of] ‘the passionless impersonality of the unknown and unknowable which science shows everywhere underlying the thin veil of phenomena’ (Life, i, 239), [but] ‘...atheism is on purely philosophical grounds untenable.’ (Life, ii, 162).

What Huxley endorsed was agnosticism. He also wrote:

‘The cosmic process has no sort of relation to moral ends’ (Essays, ix, 83); ‘of moral purpose I see no trace in nature. That is an article of exclusive human manufacture’ (Life, ii, 268).

The Encyclopedia Britannica article said that Huxley believed that the evil in the moral life of man is the result of the cosmic process, and that the cosmic process would “resume its sway” when evolution began to wind down. (Essays, ix, 45).

Huxley had this conviction since his version of evolution was beset with “entropy.” Because of the principle of entropy in physics, the spring in the clock of time is supposed to run down eventually, since

there would be nothing to wind it back up again. This idea was used in 1895 in H. G. Wells' novel, *The Time Machine*. When Wells' time machine traveled to the most distant future, life was found to have disappeared.

Huxley's grandson, Julian, became enamored of Pere Teilhard de Chardin's theories because they seemed to provide a quasi-scientific reason for believing the opposite: the universe was not supposed to be running down but instead was supposed to be winding up, heading for the "Omega" point. This, of course, is current New Age reasoning. Yet Huxley had another grandson, Aldous, who approached New Age ideas differently: he wrote *The Brave New World*, painting a picture of a hideous "Utopia."

Even though their grandfather, Thomas Henry Huxley, believed in eventual "entropy" for the universe, he may well also have conceived of a future New Age, but on his own terms, since his contemporary, Mathew Arnold obviously believed in a world yet "to be born." Arnold spoke of himself in his highly unpleasant atheistic poem, "Stanzas from the Grand Chartreuse," quoted previously, as:

"Wandering between two worlds, one dead,  
The other powerless to be born..."

Obviously, Arnold's world which was still "to be born" would be a New Age, but it would be a world without religion, and that was the kind of world of which Huxley would have approved. It is not inconceivable that Huxley's grandsons got some of their preoccupation with New Age ideas from their own grandfather.

The American parallels to Thomas Henry Huxley's work are pronounced. Agassiz rejected Darwin's theory, but other than that Huxley can be called the British Agassiz, or one could say that Agassiz can be called the American Huxley. (It complicates the analogy to admit that Agassiz originally came from Switzerland!)

Both Huxley and Agassiz concerned themselves with elementary education in 1872 and 1873, both were opposed to what they termed rote learning, and both were interested in teaching natural history to elementary teachers by actual laboratory work in 1872 and 1873. Furthermore, both had enormous influence at that time.

There probably was a difference between Huxley and Agassiz concerning religion. To the degree that Huxley had any beliefs at all, at the very most they can be called pantheistic. Agassiz' religious beliefs are unknown, but he did refer to the glaciers he had studied so extensively as "God's plows" and made other similar statements. Yet so might a pantheist have made such remarks. Hegel's philosophy was enormously popular in that period, and Hegelianism is a form of pantheism, somewhat as expressed in *Star Wars*: "Let the force be with you."

However, concerning the application of religious ideas, Huxley and Agassiz were not far apart. Except for their social utility, Huxley discounted the Ten Commandments which he considered to be man-made. Huxley must also have rejected free will, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article stating that Huxley believed that the evil in the moral life of man is the result of the cosmic process.

Agassiz may also have discounted the moral law, as Huxley did, to judge from an amused comment in a letter William James wrote on April 7-8, 1871, which appeared in William James, *A Biography*, by Gay Wilson Allen, published by Rupert Hart-Davis, London: 1967 (page 174). Allen stated that James had commented in the letter that Agassiz had been ill but appeared recovered. James then said that James' father had seen Agassiz at a dinner club a few days previously. Agassiz had told everyone there that he had gone to every one of Boston's warehouses over the past six weeks, because he had not felt able to

study and because of scientific curiosity. James wrote that he admired Agassiz because other Bostonians would lack the courage and physical spirits to entertain themselves in that fashion.

The great majority of American people in the 1870's were religious and, unlike William James, would have taken a very dim view of Agassiz' behavior. The great majority of British people were also deeply religious in 1870 and would have taken emphatic exception to Huxley's amoral philosophy. How, then, did the "agnostic" (but more effectively atheist) Huxley reach such a position of influence on British education? Why was it he who was so highly visible on that most visible and most influential of the new school boards in 1870, the London School Board? If Huxley's philosophical views had been publicized and a vote been taken on his appointment to exercise control over children's education (and, in effect, over their minds), he would almost certainly have been overwhelmingly rejected by the British electorate of 1870.

Curriculum in government schools has consistently been under the control of such activists as Huxley and his admirers, and such activists as the followers of Agassiz. While their activism on the curriculum has been most visibly concerned with such lofty subjects as the sciences, literature and mathematics, the curious fact is that since shortly before 1826 activists have also always endorsed harmful "meaning" in beginning reading in opposition to helpful "sound." In England in the 1870's, the activists included men like Thomas Henry Huxley and Matthew Arnold, and in America Louis Agassiz and his followers, among whom the Adams brothers in Quincy almost certainly belonged. The damage the Adams brothers did to American education and to the teaching of beginning reading after 1875 through their agent, the superintendent of Quincy schools, Colonel Parker, has already been discussed. A quieter parallel existed in England after 1870 through the practices of the newly appointed school boards, and, in particular, the enormously influential London School Board to which Huxley belonged when it first began.

It was Huxley's London School Board which first stringently enforced mandatory attendance laws in England, despite their enormous cruelty to the poor. At the exact same time that those mandatory attendance laws were being stringently enforced, those late-nineteenth-century London government schools were producing phalanxes of functional illiterates among the poor, because those schools taught beginning reading by "meaning" instead of by "sound." That was in sharp contrast to the large numbers of truly literate London poor in the eighteenth century who had casually learned to read by "sound" from horn books and spelling books and who had then so enthusiastically bought great quantities of high-readability-level chapbooks.

## Chapter 49

### Some Evidence on Twentieth Century Developments in the Teaching of Beginning Reading in Great Britain

Two reliable guides on practices in the teaching of beginning reading in England from about 1900 to 1930 are provided by W. B. Winch and Mitford Mathews. W. H. Winch's 1925 article endorsed phonics and was entitled, "Teaching Beginners to Read in England: Its Methods, Results and Psychological Bases," *Journal of Educational Research Monographs*, No. 8, Chapter V, Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois: 1925. Winch had been an English school inspector at least from 1905 to 1924, and gave extensive oral tests to children over those years. Another reliable guide was provided by Mitford Mathews in his book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, 1966. Mathews quoted and commented on excerpts from a 1929 work by Jagger which was very hostile to phonics. Both Winch's and Jagger's works, however, gave evidence on contemporary practices in England, and in that fact lies their utility for this history.

Besides having been an inspector in the London schools for many years, W. H. Winch had been for a time an instructor for graduate teachers in London. He was obviously an open-minded man and reported things as he saw them. His comments concerning the period from 1905 to 1924 seem to confirm that the teaching of phonics gradually improved over those years in English schools. Winch came to endorse the phonic method by 1924, but in 1905 had not done so. Yet he, himself, did not indicate that the phonic method had become more precise, and that its refinement was the reason for his change in attitude. Some English reading texts published over those years confirm that gradual improvement in the teaching of phonics. An improvement in teaching results may well have accounted for Winch's changed opinion. Even though the same "Dale" phonic method of which he spoke in 1905 was still in use in 1924, the probability is that the manuals accompanying it had changed, just as the manuals accompanying the Blackie phonic texts in England, described elsewhere, changed sharply for the better over those years. Yet, to judge from Winch's apparently uncritical acceptance of "phonic" lessons he described from 1914 which were particularly inept, Winch would not have been a competent judge of what constituted improvement (or deterioration) in phonic teaching.

What is particularly interesting about Winch's tests, however, is that they were all oral tests. He referred also to another inspector, Ballard, who prepared an oral test, whose name has turned up nowhere else that I have seen, though he was obviously well known in 1925.

Winch spoke of Dumville, who produced test results that purported to endorse the teaching of sight-words, and Valentine who was a phonics advocate and who claimed to have disproved Dumville's tests. Valentine's tests are known to have been in 1913. Benjamin Dumville's article, "The Methods of Teaching Reading in the Early Stages," was published in *School World*, Vol. XIV, November, 1912, on pages 408 to 413. C. W. Valentine's article, "Experiments on the Methods of Teaching Reading," was published in the *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy*, Volume 2, pages 99-112, in June, 1913.

Winch then said:

"...about this time Ballard was making one of those more general observational surveys for which he is now so well known. By means of his One-Minute Reading Tests, he collected results from a whole district and found a phonic method (the Dale) the most successful. Criticisms were made that his one-minute test consisting of words, not sentences, did not test ability in reading...."

Of course, that is totally untrue. Connected oral reading is commonly more accurate than the reading of word lists for poor readers, because the readers can guess missing words in connected oral reading from the context of the selection. Yet word lists make such context-guessing impossible. Therefore, only word lists, not sentences, provide an adequate test of ability to read.

Winch had been talking about Valentine, so “about this time” when Ballard did his oral testing must have been about 1913. Ballard’s very interesting one-minute tests and their pro-phonics results have dropped from the literature, but they probably did much to increase the teaching of phonics in English schools.

In his chapter, “Observations in 1905-1906,” Winch said:

“...I tried to discover which of the prevailing methods of teaching reading to young children gave the best results in the infants’ school themselves, before the children were promoted to the senior departments.... From my own inspectorial knowledge, aided by that of one or two of my colleagues, I selected three infants’ schools, each of which had an extremely high reputation for the teaching of reading and whose successful results were well known. One taught exclusively by the “Dale,” an elaborate phonic system; the second by the “Sonnenschein,” a definite and well-worked out syllabic system; the third by the old Alphabetic, not phonic, spelling system. This last system was fast disappearing.... As to the social class.... They were all placed in good neighborhoods.”

Winch had, of course, twisted his results by picking only successful schools. He found the Dale system best, but the differences were not meaningful. He tested only children over seven years of age in reading Alice of Wonderland, and found they were very competent (but by his very vague standards). When he lectured on Pedagogical Methods in Schools from 1909 to 1913, he said the differences did not justify changing to any method. (Those lectures had been attended by Dumville, who disagreed and ran tests purporting to show the sight-word method best, after which Valentine ran tests which he claimed disproved Dumville and supported phonics.) Concerning Winch’s 1905-1906 results, Winch said:

“Such as they were, they came out thus: the Dale system first, the Alphabetic system second, and the Sonnenschein system third. But all the reading was of the highest order....”

Two unfortunate choices marred Winch’s results. The first was that he deliberately chose three highly successful schools, known for producing excellent results in reading. Why, then, test what is already known? One school claimed to use the Dale method, another the Sonnenschein syllable method, and the third the ABC spelling method. Yet Winch demonstrated from his later comments on the 1914 phonic lessons that he was not really knowledgeable on teaching methods. As Jean Chall said in her book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (page 95):

“Imprecise terminology is another cause of difficulty in synthesizing research findings.... Seldom are... labels fully defined.... What W. H. Winch (1925) for example, called *look-say* is closer to the Bloomfield-Barnhart (1963) linguistic approach of today.”

Winch was not a good judge of reading methods. From comments he made, what he called phonics in his early work in 1905 sounds suspiciously like something else. He said, concerning his testing of seven year olds in 1905:

“In the Phonic school there were more errors than I should have expected in small words which the children really knew. I was not then aware that the child on any system apprehends a well-known letter and sound, and then ‘jumps.’ The Standard I class in this school had already

read from an ordinary reading book not arranged on the Dale system. I noted that the Grade III children who were 7 and upwards, only 8 in number, knew a few sounds only....”

Winch was describing children who had been taught whole words, no matter what “phonic” label had been put on the class. Seven-year-old children who make mistakes on small, familiar words, who guess from initial letter sounds, and who know “a few sounds only” are children who had sight-word instruction.

It is inconceivable that children taught real phonics competently, even the dullest, would know “a few sounds only” after they were seven years of age. As comments elsewhere in this history make clear, even mentally retarded children learn to read by real phonics.

Nevertheless, despite these remarks, Winch considered all three groups he tested in 1905 to be successful. Whether someone else would consider them successful is impossible to judge, because of the method he used to score, which was his second error. His choice for the test was good: a portion of Alice in Wonderland, which would be fairly demanding. However, Winch’s method of scoring made his results indecipherable. He based his total possible score of ten not just on accuracy but on fluency, and they are two totally dissimilar factors. As Alice herself had said, it is possible to say an uncertain thing in such a certain way (fluently!) and, as Quintilian said long before Alice’s day, in the beginning stage, reading should be at first sure, and only later quick. The problem with Winch’s study is that he did not really understand “reading” or how to teach it, despite his obvious good intentions.

The scores he reported were 6.7 for the Dale phonic group, 6.4 for the Alphabetic spelling group, and 5.8 for the Sonnenschein syllable group, out of a possible score of 10 for accuracy and fluency, but what that meant no one knows. It is not surprising, since Winch said he picked these schools to test because he knew they turned out good readers, that he summarized his test by saying:

“All these are very high marks for an examination based on Alice in Wonderland for children of this age.”

It should be remarked in passing that the old Scottish Schoolmaster in 1829 would have expected a 10 from all of them. He considered it normal for children of seven to be able to read fluently anything put in front of them, and Alice is not really terribly difficult.

Winch did add that on the Sonnenschein syllable group being tested, he had found one class in which “...there had been, contrary to the recognized system, some phonic building up of the syllabic bases in one of the lower classes; this was quite evident during my examination.” That was a discrepancy he managed to pick up. The probability is that the other groups were also not taught purely by one system.

Winch had said of his 1905-1906 test group (page 13);

“All the reading was of the highest order; and I frankly told the teachers who came to my lectures, that I should not recommend any of them to use effort and thought and expend municipal funds (for new books might have been necessary), to change their methods on the evidence of the facts supplied by me.”

Winch continued to test over the years, testing in 1914 in poorer neighborhoods, and continuing tests to 1924.

Concerning methods in use in 1924, Winch said:



“Many varieties of method are used... There are phonic methods, in which the sound-values of the letters are taught first; though nowadays, the names of the letters are not neglected. Of these the Dale System has earned, and rightly earned, many enthusiastic advocates... There are also syllabic methods, of which Sonnenschein’s is the best known, where the syllable is taken as the unit of language, and analysis stops short of the syllable. Again, there are look-and-say methods in which there is no analysis of the word at all, and in which the word is sounded as a whole....”

As Chall pointed out, what Winch called “look and say” were probably “linguistic” approaches.

As Winch continued his experiments over the years, his results came more and more to favor phonics, and finally, in 1925, he endorsed the Hayes Phonoscript method, which sounded like a reinvention of Leigh’s or Robinson’s pronouncing print materials. The point, however, is that Winch, himself, shifted to an endorsement of phonics, and that coincided with the improvement in phonic materials published. Poor phonic materials became good phonic materials, or at least better- taught phonic materials. Perhaps that was the case with the Dale phonic method, whatever that was.

Winch said, in conclusion on page 175:

“Over a period extending from 1905 to 1924, observations and experiments have been made in English schools on the methods and results of teaching beginners to read... The result is a victory for the phonic method”

Winch said, however, when a phonic method was compared to “Mr. Hayes’ Phonoscript” the latter was better.

Winch’s 1925 report seems to confirm the trends which are evident on some English reading series published after 1900 which I have been able to examine. Phonics had returned in some materials after 1900, and such materials became more strongly phonic with the passage of time. Whether English schools used the “supplementary phonics” charts so popular in America up to 1930 is unknown. (It seems very possible that they did. They had Reading Disentangled charts through much of the nineteenth century, and, across the Channel, France was using the Boscher phonics charts at that very time, as Elise Freinet remarked, to be discussed later.) To what degree phonics texts were in use in England by 1925, Winch gave no real clue. However, confirmation that the use of phonics was probably dominant in English schools by 1929 came from an opponent of phonics, Jagger.

In *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, Mitford Mathews referred on page 119 to Jagger and his use in England of the sentence method. Referring to a paper by Henry Bradley in 1913 on “Spoken and Written English” Mathews reported that Bradley had said that English writing “is well sprinkled with what Bradley called ‘ideographic devices,’ having at present no value at all in terms of sound.” Mathews said Bradley had cited such sentences as “The hair of the hare is commonly called fur.” Mathews said further:

“Bradley’s article made a great impression upon J. H. Jagger, an English student who later became well known in connection with his advocacy of the sentence method. In 1929 he published a book with the same title as Farnham’s much earlier work, *The Sentence Method of Teaching Reading*. About this identity of subjects, he wrote, ‘In 1887 a pamphlet bearing the same title as this book was published by A. B. Farnham at Syracuse, New York State. As far as the author is aware, no copy of this pamphlet reached the shores of England, and it does not appear to have exercised any influence on English education.’ Jagger explained that ‘The

Sentence Method has arisen spontaneously in some London schools, as a reaction against the mechanical tyranny that phonetic teaching has imposed.”

Note Jagger’s apparent familiarity with the ideas contained in Suzzallo’s 1913 reading triangle, discussed elsewhere in this text. Yet the seemingly well-informed Jagger gave the wrong date, 1887 instead of 1881, for Farnham’s book, and he even gave the wrong initials in Farnham’s name, along with the claim that he had no knowledge of Farnham’s work on the sentence method when he started his own on the sentence method.

“Jagger quoted Bradley’s introductory paragraph, but disregarded the main portion of the essay. This was unfortunate, for Bradley might have saved him from saying: “Our system of written words, in structure and in the way that it is used by us, is mainly indicative of the sense; it is indicative of sound in a secondary degree. The written form of each word is associated directly with its meaning, and indirectly with its sound... To teach reading ideographically, without the interposition of sounds between written sign and meaning, is therefore in accord with the present character of English spelling as well as in accord with the historical development of writing.”

“Dr. Jagger apparently never lost the impression made upon him by Bradley’s introductory paragraph, nor did he assimilate the remainder of the article. In April, 1953, he wrote, ‘English writing today is an ideographic system - or, as those who regard it as a system intended to represent sounds would say, it is perfectly irregular. As a means of representing ideas it is unequaled; as a means of representing sounds, as a phonographic system, it is useless....’ He explained that ‘Reading is getting the meaning of printed and written symbols.’”

Mathews was quoting from Hunter Diack’s *In Spite of the Alphabet* (London, 1965.) Diack was an author with Daniels of a well-known phonic method in 1954, the *Royal Road Readers*.

Jagger’s 1929 disclaimer of any knowledge of the sentence method is reminiscent of Angell’s 1830 disclaimer of any knowledge of the 1826 Franklin Primer. Furthermore, Jagger expected it to be believed that the “sentence” method arose simultaneously in the minds of multiple London teachers in 1929, with no connection with other “experts,” such as the Americans who were busy dumbing down vocabulary in 1929 to pave the way for the 1930 deaf-mute readers. By 1932, England had Schonell as an expert, though, so Jagger and his friends had more company in pushing “meaning.” The books they wrote for the “meaning” method may have paid very well in England in the 1930’s Depression years, just as the deaf-mute method materials did in the United States. After all, in the world of government education, nothing succeeds like failure.

In his 1956 book, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing: An International Survey*, written for UNESCO and published by Scott, Foresman and Company, Chicago, William Scott Gray referred approvingly to Fred J. Schonell’s *The Psychology and Teaching of Reading*, London: Oliver and Boyd, 1945. Gray said:

“Schonell, too, considers that [the phonic method] interferes with the idea of grasping words, phrases and sentences as meaningful linguistic units.”

For a time after the beginning of the twentieth century until about 1930, phonics had made a gradually increasing and naturally occurring comeback in both America and Great Britain, until it was once again attacked in the 1920’s by “experts” such as Gray and Schonell in both places. They succeeded in removing once again the rational “sound” approach from the teaching of beginning alphabetic reading and replaced it with the harmful “meaning” approach that is suited only to Chinese characters. Long

before 1940 in both countries, Gray, Schonell and their cohorts had succeeded in producing massive reading disabilities with their propaganda about “meaningful linguistic units.”

In America, the teaching of phonics had returned to the classrooms when spelling books proliferated from the mid to late 1880’s, as a result of the massive failures in spelling that had come from following the lead of the Quincy schools after 1875. By the late 1880’s, spelling books for second graders which were heavily phonic were available in America, and the same sort of thing may have happened in England. The quotation cited by Pamela Horn from the 1880’s concerning the use of spelling books has already been given. Even though the Standards tested on sentences selected from the readers, the spelling books were apparently back in use in government-supported schools in Britain by the late 1880’s.

By the turn of the century in America, phonics had come back to first grade reading in supplementary phonics charts and occasionally even in the reading primers. Edward G. Ward wrote a phonic series, *The Rational Method in Reading*, published by Silver, Burdett of New York, Chicago and Boston, in 1894. However, it was not until after 1900 that other popular truly phonic readers were published in America and that “supplementary” phonics finally triumphed as the norm in American first grades.

The same move towards phonics showed up in England a year before the publication of Ward’s material, with the publication of the *Albany Phonetic Readers* by Laura Soames. Soames’ readers used the undesirable approach of phonetic respellings and were very poor, judging from a copy of the second reader in the Department of Education Library in Washington. It is entitled *Albany Phonetic Reader No. 2, Soames’s Phonetic Method*, and was published by Swan Sonnenschein & Co. in London in 1893. The following note was at the beginning:

“To the Teacher. This little book is Holborn’s *Practical Infant Reader No. 2* transcribed phonetically, and [I thank]... the Educational Supply Association for allowing me to use it... Brighton, May, 1893, Laura Soames. *Teacher’s Manual in Preparation, the Child’s Key Shortly, Albany Phonetic Readers NO. 1, 2, 3,...*”

The next page showed the “English Phonetic Alphabet” with phonetic respellings.

However, Laura Soames was clearly the author of the *Albany Phonetic Readers* and was listed as such in the contemporary *American Catalogue: L. Soames’ Phonetic Method for Learning to Read, Nos. 1, 2, 3*, published in 1894 by Macmillan. Macmillan was conceivably putting out American editions. However, the No. 2 reader published in 1893 by Sonnenschein which is now in the Department of Education Library in Washington is definitely by Soames. Therefore, it is puzzling to find that reader not listed in *Early American Textbooks* which was based on the Department of Education Library, and instead to find a title listed on page 77 which must be in error: *Barnes Phonetic Method, Albany Phonetic Reader No. 3*, published by Swan, Sonnenschein in 1893. There apparently is no such thing as “Barnes Phonetic Method,” since the *Albany Phonetic Readers* were by Laura Soames. They were a very unsatisfactory attempt to introduce “sound” in beginning reading.

Macmillan also published other phonic materials which I have not seen but which are listed in catalogs along with their multitudinous sight-word materials. As Winch discussed, Swan Sonnenschein were publishing a syllabic method by 1905, obviously a totally different approach from Soames’ phonetic print and undoubtedly meant as its replacement.

If A. Sonnenschein is the same person as the Sonnenschein in the publishing company’s title, the association of that company with efforts to return “sound” to reading instruction would go back to the unsuccessful efforts in the mid-nineteenth century.

On page 154 of *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, Mitford Mathews referred to the fact that a pro-phonics:

“...effort was made by A. Sonnenschien [sic] and J. M. D. Meiklejohn, whose English Method appeared in 1869. From what appears to be a competent and flattering review of it, it is clear that the authors proposed to start the child with the regularly spelled words and later to introduce him to those spelled in irregular ways.... The reviewer was the Rev. F. W. Farrar, Fellow of the Royal Society, writing in *Macmillan’s Magazine*, XXI (November, 1869-April, 1870) 445-48.

“The work of these two scholars did not gain the attention of influential educators. In 1879 Meiklejohn continued his efforts in a book called *The Problem of Learning to Read*. In this he pointed out that the beginner should be made familiar with only one function of each letter; his experience in learning to read should never contradict itself.... Dr. Reeder, an advocate of the New Education, pronounced Meiklejohn’s method entirely erroneous....”

Mathews was referring to the inept 1900 book by R. R. Reeder of Columbia University on the history of teaching reading, for which book Mathews made his contempt very clear.

The trend from sight-words to phonics in England is also suggested by the changing content of Blackie’s readers published between 1879 and 1914 and by the content of Nelson’s series published in 1922 in comparison to its earlier readers. Ellis had commented that both Nelson’s and Blackie’s readers had been widely used in the late nineteenth century, and they were obviously popular afterwards, so they might be cited for evidence on trends.

The Nelson’s material in the 1870’s and 1880’s has been described, and is clearly “meaning” oriented. Although the primer is not available, the First Reader of Blackie’s 1879 series certainly follows the Code 3 “meaning” pattern for a second book. It was entitled, *First Reader, Comprehensive School Series*, “London: Blackie & Son, 49 & 50 Old Bailey, E.C., Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dublin,” and was stamped by the British Library, “December 4, 1879.” It followed the typical sight-word arrangement: a story, a picture, and a word list for the new words in the story. However, in Blackie’s 1879 First Reader, the list of new words came after the story, which suggests a large emphasis on context reading by the Blackie company in 1879.

A change had occurred by the time of the publication in 1908 and 1909 of Blackie’s Model Primers, First Primer (British Library reference 12981 ds. 1908-1909). The title page read, *Blackie’s Model Primers (Phono-Syllabic Method) First Primer*, London; Blackie & Son Ltd., 50 Old Bailey; Glasgow & Dublin.

The First Primer carried the following comment:

“Notes to the Teacher. The system of Reading adopted in this Infant Series is for the best part a combination of the ‘Phonic’ and the ‘Syllabic’ methods. Occasionally, where words of irregular formation are required, the ‘Look and Say’ method is employed.

“Interest and Perfect Gradation are aimed at throughout and the simple words adopted cover the difficulties usually encountered in a Standard I Reader of the average order.

“The First Primer is, in the main, devoted to words based on the short sounds of the vowels, but a few words of two and three letters (essential in the construction of interesting sentences) are introduced in Section III, having the long vowel sounds... Teachers adopting the method

suggested above should consult elementary Phonetics by Scholle and Smith, published by Blackie & Son, Ltd., 2s 6d.”

Colored pictures appeared on the top of the pages. The first picture was of a girl inside a piece of furniture, a chest, and a boy outside. Lesson 1, on page 2, was like the old sight-word approach:

“1. I am in. 2. is he in? 3. no, he is by.”

On the next page was Lesson 2:

“1. I am on. 2. is he by? 3. no, he is in.”

Up to page 41, the book progressed from two-letter to three-letter words, and there was no sign of phonics at all in the text proper. Yet page 42 showed the supplementary lessons that had been given from the very beginning pages.

Each of these supplementary lessons was divided into three parts: Section 1, Section 2, and Section 3. In the first supplementary lesson appeared, “Word Drill, Section 1.” “Easy words.” Short vowels were shown down the side of the page in red, followed by words with those vowel sounds: for “i,” “if it in is,” for “e,” “egg,” etc., for “a,” “am at an as,” for “o,” “on or ox og,” and for “u” “up us.”

Section 2 covered simple words based on these vowels: The first line began with “it” followed by “pit bit fit lit sit kit hit.” The next line began with “in” followed by “pin bin win tin din.” Next was “is” followed by “his this,” and then “am” followed by “jam ram sam ham,” “at” followed by “pat bat mat fat vat fat sat cat hat,” and “an” followed by “pan man fan van dan nan ran can ann.”

The next page had consonants instead of vowels in red, the first line reading “as and has gas was,” then “or for,” then “ox box fox,” then “up sup cup,” then “og dog.” The use of red for vowels and then red for consonants is a clear indication that the sounds of the letters were being taught, and not just two-step analytic phonics, comparing one whole word to another.

Section 3 was titled, “Simple words with long vowel terminal.” On one side of the page appeared “i e o y” on the side. Arranged next to them appeared such words as “be me we he the she bee wee see, no not so go got shot, y by my, to too do.” The children were being taught varied vowel sounds in words in a systematic (though far from ideal) fashion.

At the bottom appeared:

“The words in sections 1 and 3 should be studied before lessons 1 - 8 are read. These lessons are composed of two letter words with the exception of ‘the box egg bit jam dog,’ and the majority of the words in Section 2 will become familiar to the children by association with the pictures.... All the words in Lessons 1, 2 (and ) 3 should be regularly drilled from the blackboard. None but these are used in lessons 1-16.” (The book has 35 lessons.)

Obviously this was mixing “sight” and “sound” treatment of words, but that the children should have had phonic lessons before even beginning reading lessons one to eight was a great shift from the emphasis at the end of the nineteenth century.

The exercise for Lesson 28 was “Short Vowels with Terminal B,” for Lesson 29 with M, for Lesson 30 with T, for Lesson 31 with D, for Lesson 32 with N, and for Lesson 34 with G. Lesson 35 concerned

forming a plural with f (as in scarf, scarves), and “er” in “her,” “or,” and “s” as “s” and “z.” The phonic arrangement was far from ideal, but it was, at least, a phonic arrangement.

At the book’s end appeared, “August 10, 1908 British Library.”

The second primer, stamped June 2, 1909, seems a reasonable phonic follow-up to the first primer. It was certainly not a very effective phonics series and had too much emphasis on sight words, but rates a Code 7.

The question of phonics in reading was a concern in Great Britain at this time, as shown by C. W. Valentine’s 1913 research, reported on pages 105-106 of Jean Chall’s 1967 *Learning to Read: the Great Debate*, and in other sources. W. H. Winch also carried on phonic research in England over a period of many years, his most famous material being printed in 1925 (reported by Chall in her 1967 book, and by Rudolf Flesch in his 1955 book, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*).

The First Primer of Blackie’s weak phonic series had been stamped by the British Library on August 10, 1908 and the Second Primer had been stamped June 2, 1909. Presumably they had just been published. It was only five years later that Blackie’s produced an excellent, truly phonic series, as shown by the British Library stamp of April 25, 1914. Blackie’s obviously produced that more heavily phonic material in response to market demand. The first book was titled, *Blackie’s Practical Phonic Primers and Infant Readers. First Primer*, Blackie and Son, Limited. The British Library catalog number is 12985 ff 18.

The twenty-four page 1914 primer did have three sight words: “the, to, do.” However, the arrangement of its materials was excellent, and it was printed in big print, which, of course, is very desirable for beginners. The series had a Second Primer, *Infant Reader I* and *Infant Reader II*. The primer carried the following comment:

“Explanatory Note: The aim of this Primer is to enable the child to visualize the letters of the alphabet, and produce their sound, without employing their names. To further this aim all ‘Parrot’ rhyming of words has been avoided. The letters are so arranged that the child must look at each one before he sounds it.”

“Parrot” rhyming of words is necessary, of course, in two-step phony phonics, and it was being explicitly rejected in this book, the emphasis being placed on individual letter sounds.

“From the very beginning words are used instead of separate letters, not (for) the purpose of naming the words, but merely to familiarize the child with the word form.

“Later on, when the sounds have been mastered, it will then be possible to combine them into words; but it is not advisable in any part of this primer to name the words. Sounding them will be quite sufficient. If stress be laid on the vowel sound...(in) combination with the consonants... the child will have little or no difficulty in recognizing some of the words he is familiar with. C-at is sufficiently like cat to enable him to know that this book tells him not about c -at, but about the animal he sees so often. By degrees he recognizes other words he is in the habit of using in his every day speech and thus incidentally learns to read.”

The Second Primer, which was stamped April 25, 1914, carried this “Explanatory Note:”

“In the Second Primer simple modifications of the vowels, both by consonants and by other vowels, are introduced; while at the end of the book will be found examples of words similar to those in use in the lessons. Many other examples of the same kind will occur to the teacher.

“In this primer it is intended that the child should still continue sounding the words as a means of discovering their names; but it will not be necessary now to sound any of the small words which are constantly recurring in the lessons. Considerable practice of all exceptions and modifications, which are new to the child, should be given on the black board, preferably before the lesson is begun at all.

“Phonetic spelling should be continued throughout the greater part of this book.”

The fourth book of the series, the Infant Reader II, carried this “Explanatory Note”:

“In this book the greater number of the diphthongs have been introduced and should, like the modifications of the First Infant Reader, form the subject of study preparatory to the lesson.

“The chief aim in the construction of the sentences is to teach modulation of voice as well as fluency....

“Sounding the words may now be dropped altogether, except as a means of discovering any word the pupil does not recognize when reading.

“Words for spelling can be selected from the lesson....”

This last book in the Blackie series, stamped by the British Library April 25, 1914, contained more good phonics. It was advanced in the content of its text because of this good phonics. Infant Reader I, also a very good book and also stamped April 25, 1914, had also said that sounding could be dropped at that level.

From the Blackie texts alone, it would appear that the approach to beginning reading in England had totally changed between the 1880’s and 1914. Yet the most startling change was that in the Nelson texts I saw, which were a totally sight-word, Code 3, approach in the 1870’s and 1880’s, and a Code 10 phonic approach by 1922. (It is, of course, possible that the very large Nelson company was also publishing some sight-word materials in 1922.) Obviously, like their fellow publishers, the Blackie company, the Nelson company was responding to market demand which had obviously changed radically.

Under call number WP 6292, the British Library has a copy of the Teacher’s Handbook to Nelson’s Phonic Series. “Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., London Edinburgh and New York. By Isabel Geddes.” It is stamped February 20, 1922. The following appears on page 6:

“When beginning to join sounds to make (a) word known, the pupil.... (should know) that in order to get the name of a word they must “say the sounds.” The reason for sounding out is to find the names and sounds of the words. Be sure that the pupils understand this, so that they may take an intelligent interest in the exercise. Always make them say the name of the word after sounding the letters.

“It is better not to give books to begin with. For six weeks or two months let the reading lessons consist of drill from the blackboard and sheets. By the end of that period, every child should know the letters and be able to join two or three sounds.

“The first primer can then be read without much difficulty. After another two months, the class should be ready for the second primer.

“Give as much drill in syllables as possible. This is begun with joining three sounds. After about six months, ...practice sounding words of two syllables from the blackboard, then gradually three or more. Give the name or sound of each syllable before proceeding to the next. At first, always separate the syllables with a hyphen. After some practice, the pupils will recognize the syllables at once and will be able to say them without sounding. As soon as this can be done rapidly, stop separating the syllables and allow the pupils to syllabize the words for themselves. Whenever they are able to do this, they will be able to read anything at sight.

“It is not necessary, though desirable, that the pupils should know the meaning of the words they are sounding, but an explanation now and again of some word that would come within their understanding, and that would be profitable for them to know, adds to the interest of the exercise.

“Some teachers think that an exercise like this is so uninteresting that it should not be inflicted upon the pupils. This is a mistake. It is a fact that children take great pleasure in sounding out big words. A few minutes drill now and again is all that is required, but it is most necessary if good sight reading is aimed at. The pupils find that all words are simple when divided into syllables, and soon they will be found trying to read any sort of literature they come across. Drill in irregular syllables should be given both in reading and spelling, until the children are perfectly familiar with them.”

It is abundantly clear with this 1922 series published by Nelson that the pendulum had swung back from “meaning” to “sound” in England. The phonic sequence which Geddes outlined is somewhat awkward and disorganized, but it still rates a Code 10, as her introductory comments indicated it would.

It has been said that the Beacon phonic readers, so popular in America before 1930, were popular also in England. They were reportedly available there until after World War II, though I have not personally confirmed that fact. The comments of Dr. Morris, referred to later, tend to suggest they went out of use before World War II.

Great Britain eventually went back to the sight-word approach for beginners once again, just as America did after 1930. The sentence method was being promoted in 1929, not only according to Mathews’ interesting material which has been quoted. It is also shown by the publication of these three texts listed in The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932:

“Clark, A. G. Sentence-method of teaching reading. pa. 1s ’29 Arnold, E. J.”

“Jagger, J: H. Sentence method of teaching reading, 3s 6d ‘29 Grant educ co.”

“Luke, E. Teaching of reading by the sentence method. 3s 6d ‘31 Methuen.”

Dr. Jeanne Chall in her 1967 landmark book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967) had referred specifically to some of the work of a well-known psychologist from England, Dr. Joyce Morris. Dr. Morris, who is highly qualified to comment on developments in England in the teaching of reading, has written a paper in which she included comments on reading instruction practices in England since before World War II in the late 1930’s until 1993. Her September 18, 1993 paper, is entitled “Phonicsphobia,” and was presented at the “Literacy 2000” conference at Roehampton Institute of Higher Education in England. The conference was reportedly organized by Dr. Beve Hornsby and Longman publishers. For the purposes of this history. excerpts quoted below from Dr. Morris’s comments are greatly illuminating



concerning the history of the teaching of reading in England from the late 1930's until 1993. Since she was a young beginning teacher during World War II (about 1943?), but had received no training from her college tutors in phonics, it appears evident that the teaching of phonics must have been "officially" gone in England by the late 1930's. The theme of Dr. Morris's paper was the existence of intense and irrational opposition to the teaching of phonics, which she labeled, "phonicsphobia." The excerpts below begin from page 2 of her paper:

#### "Causes of Phonicsphobia

"I first encountered irrational attitudes to phonics when I was a newly qualified teacher in a London primary school during World War II. I had not been trained to develop initial literacy in English by any method or materials, and phonics had not even been mentioned by my college tutors. Consequently, I was totally unprepared to meet the needs of my first class of 40 children aged 7 to 10, none of whom could read or spell more than two words.

"In a traumatic state which I shall never forget, because it affected the course of my professional life, I explained my predicament to the headmaster. He uttered a few words of encouragement with reference to my academic and school practice record and, after handing me some tatty copies of *The Beacon Readers* (Fassett, 1922), advised me to study the teacher's manual carefully. He then explained that the scheme had originally been used successfully in the feeder infant school on the same site. But it was discarded by the headmistress and her staff after she had taken a university course which had persuaded her that Beacon phonics had no place in the 'modern' infant school she aspired to create. Henceforth, 'activity' methods and a 'look-and-say' approach to reading were to be the order of the day.

"As the headmaster used professional terms which were new to me, I simply asked him whether these changes had made a difference in terms of the intake to our first-year, junior classes. He simply replied that it was 'not as good as it used to be'. Therefore, he was very pleased that the A and B streams were taken by experienced, infant trained teachers who used 'traditional' methods and a predominantly 'phonic' approach to reading.

"Soon after that particularly memorable day, I learned that our school was due for a general inspection, and I could expect an observer in at least one of my lessons. I trembled at the thought that it might be in one of my trial-and-error reading lessons when I was trying to get to grips with my pupils' difficulties. In the event, I need not have worried because an inspector came to my classroom during a scripture period when we were dramatising the fall of Jericho. He approved of this activity and of the class library I had formed from my own and donated books. In short, as a preserved note from my headmaster testifies, I passed some sort of informal test of competence even though in my heart of hearts I knew it was largely due to chance.

"At lunchtime, the same inspector sat next to Miss 'B', the infant-trained teacher responsible for the first-year, junior B stream. I sat opposite but did not take part in their discussion which began something like this:-

"Inspector: Which methods do you use to teach reading, Miss B?

Miss B: Phonic mainly and systematically.

Inspector: Surely not the old-fashioned c-a-t and all that?!!!

Miss B.: Certainly!

Inspector: But c..a..t sounded out does not make 'cat'!

Miss B: It does in my class.

Inspector: How do you manage that?

Miss B: I use the ‘nip behind the knee’ phonic method. A smart nip behind the knee when a child stands by my desk going ‘c.a.t, c.a.t’ soon joins the sounds together to make ‘cat’.

“Needless to say, I was astonished by this exchange and the ding-dong battle of words which continued until lunch was over. Moreover, I could hardly wait to ask Miss B privately why she had responded to the inspector’s questions in a manner which could result in a black mark on her professional record. She replied that such an outcome was hardly likely because it was well-known that she was very successful in raising the reading, writing and spelling standards of children who came to her almost as retarded as those in my backward class. In any case, she was not professionally ambitious except to be regarded as an outstandingly effective class teacher. Therefore, she felt in a strong position to challenge those in authority like the inspector and infant school head who advocated ‘fashionable’ untested methods and, albeit unwittingly, deprived children of their basic human right to literacy by denigrating the role of phonics.

#### “Monitored methods vs. emotion

“Not long after the war ended, our junior school became oversubscribed and I was allocated a spare room in the contributory infant school for two years. This gave me plenty of opportunities to observe activity methods at close quarters, and to study the possible reasons for the failure of so many of the school’s pupils to make a successful start on the road to literacy.

“I discovered that the headmistress had made phonics a taboo subject and got very emotional if anybody questioned the methods used in her school. I also discovered that below the surface some of the staff were uneasy about what she expected them to do and not to do. In fact, one of them, Miss S, who was a friend of Miss B, confessed to me that she was glad to have the excuse of getting married to resign her post as she was afraid that, if she stayed much longer, she would openly flout the head’s wishes especially about phonics.

“I found a similar emotional cauldron bubbling away in the Surrey secondary school to which I was appointed after deciding that I needed to broaden my professional experience. The main problem there was a headmistress who had led a sheltered life, and knew virtually nothing about how to cope with the behaviour of teenagers from deprived backgrounds. There was also a problem of illiteracy amongst those pupils which I was expected to help solve because, by then, I was an experienced teacher of ‘late’ beginners in reading and a graduate in psychology to boot.

“No member of that school was phonicsphobic, and I was encouraged to persist in trying to find a more motivating, published scheme than The Duncan Readers (Duncan 1947) which, at that time, was the only remedial reading resource available in the school. Having done so without success, I wondered why educational publishers generally had not catered to the needs of retarded, older readers especially for phonic resources. I realised that it was probably because it is not profitable in commercial terms to provide for minority groups. Later on, when I was responsible for reading investigations at the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), I discovered that this was not the only reason. Some school book publishers had irrational attitudes towards phonics and feared that their ‘progressive’ image would be tarnished if they published phonic resources. Consequently, to my knowledge, even a much-needed research-based resource like Stott’s Programmed Reading Kit (Stott. 1962) was rejected by many publishers before, at long last, being accepted for publication by Holmes.

“Phonicsphobics became more visible during the mid-1950’s when Daniels and Diack headed what became known as the ‘phonic revolt’ by publishing in the News Chronicle (Daniels and Diack, 1954a), the rationale of their ‘Phonic-word Method’ as incorporated in their Royal Road

Readers (Daniels and Diack, 1954 b). They subjected both men to the most appalling verbal abuse and on one astonishing occasion in London, Dr. Daniels was physically attacked for daring to give a lecture challenging the ‘ultra-progressive’ methods of teaching reading advocated by members of the anti-phonics movement.

“In 1958, for the first two issues of the NFER journal Educational Research, the Foundation’s Director asked me to write articles summarising research into the effectiveness of different methods of teaching reading. At his suggestion, the first article was about ‘The place and value of phonics’ because, being such a highly controversial subject, it was the most likely to attract readers for the new journal. It certainly did so and revealed cases of phonicsphobia I would never have suspected or expected to meet. For example, soon after publication of that article (Morris 1958), I spent a day in the University of London library checking research references for my second article, ‘The place and value of whole-word methods’ (Morris 1959 a), and for my first report on the Kent Reading Inquiries called Reading in the Primary School (Morris 1959 b). Having skipped lunch and wanting to avoid a tube journey home in the rush hour, I decided to have a light meal in ‘The Restful Tray’ then at the Lyons Corner House in Tottenham Court Road.

“In the event it was one of the least ‘restful’ meals I have ever had. For I had no sooner sat down with my tray when into the restaurant came Miss K, a former colleague in the junior school where I found my vocation for the cause of literacy. I had got to know her well during fire-watching in the evenings when there was no enemy activity over London. But we had lost touch during the intervening ten years or so. Consequently, as she came to sit at my table I greeted her with, ‘It’s good to see you again. How are you these days?’ To my amazement she stabbed a finger at her open copy of Educational Research and replied, ‘Very angry! If I ever meet the Joyce Morris who wrote this article on phonics, I shall give her a piece of my mind.’ Then, almost without pausing for breath, she launched into a diatribe about phonics which was so irrational and emotionally charged that I realised that my old colleague had become ‘phonicsphobic’, apparently incapable of distinguishing between fact and opinion about a subject, the mere mention of which disturbed her equilibrium.

“If further proof of this was needed it came when, eventually, I managed to get a word in edgeways and explain that I had got married since our last meeting and my surname was now Morris. At which point, visibly shocked to find that I was the author she had so decried, she simply said in a manner I shall never forget, ‘Oh Joyce, how could you? You used to be such a nice person!’

“i.t.a.

“About six months after my fall from grace in Miss K’s phonicsphobic estimation, I was appointed reading research adviser and NFER representative on the London University Committee supervising the first experiment with Pitman’s initial teaching alphabet (i.t.a.). I suggested that the experiment should allow comparisons to be made between i.t.a. and both phonic and look-and-say methods of teaching infants to read. Unfortunately, partly because vociferous phonicsphobics tended also to be anti-i.t.a., the late Sir James Pitman persuaded the Steering Committee that it would be best to confine experimentation with his alphabet to a comparison with look-and-say using the then most popular infant reading scheme, The Janet and John Books (O’Donnell and Munro 1949) as the main published resource. This caused a good deal of critical comment, especially after the results were published, and prompted Dr. Haas, Professor of Linguistics at Manchester University, to write a critique for The Times Educational

Supplement entitled, “From look-and-say to i.t.a.” (Haas 1969) in which he pointed out that, if phonics had been included, the results in favour of i.t.a. might have been very different.

“Be that as it may, experimentation with i.t.a. had several important bonus effects. For example, it focused widespread attention not only on the intrinsic difficulties of English orthography for literacy learners but also on its alphabetic nature and, hence, on the basic reason for including phonics as an essential ingredient of educational provision for literacy. It encouraged scholars like Professor Haas to contribute contemporary linguistic knowledge and fresh insights to the task of teaching children to read and write as in his book *Phonological Translation* (Haas 1970). Moreover, experimental i.t.a. teachers naturally acquired a more explicit, detailed understanding of the orthography than was generally expected of primary school teachers when one considers the content of their pre-service courses. Consequently, they had a better foundation for giving effective phonic instruction when subsequently teaching reading and spelling in traditional orthography and, because of that, were very unlikely ever to develop phonicsphobia. Moreover, some i.t.a. teachers such as Sue Lloyd have helped to change attitudes to phonics in recent years and, in her case, by publishing the results of her considerable classroom experience as a resource for teachers called *The Phonics Handbook* (Lloyd 1992).

“Despite these and other favourable consequences of i.t.a. experimentation, I believed in 1959 (and still do) that, instead of orthographic innovations, what was really needed was a radical reform of teacher-training which would put language and literacy at its very heart and give phonics its rightful place in the teaching and learning of initial literacy. Sadly, as explained in my ‘mini-autobiography’ (Morris 1989), I also had reason to believe from my experience as a professional researcher at the NFER that such a reform, if it ever came to pass, was light years away. Therefore, with strong support from Professor Dennis Fry, Head of the Department of Phonetics and Linguistics at University College, London, I decided to carry out linguistic research with the object of providing a more informed base than hitherto available for the phonic ingredient in initial literacy provision.

“At first the linguistics-informed system developed from this research was known simply as “new” phonics and, in 1965, it was incorporated in the pioneering BBC television series, *Look and Read*. To my knowledge as consultant/writer for the series over the next twelve years or so, it was warmly welcomed by teachers of the poor readers in junior classes for whom it was primarily intended, and there was no opposition to its use in schools by LEA advisers and HMI. With only a few objections from educationists opposed to phonics for infants, there was also a similar favourable response when my system was subsequently incorporated in the television series for infants called *Words and Pictures*, and in the research-based scheme for four- to nine-year-olds called *Language in Action* (Morris et al., 1974-83), whose core storybook titles are mnemonics for the basic spelling patterns and main sound-symbol correspondences of English.

#### “Frank Smith and Kenneth Goodman

“All this caused me and like-minded colleagues to be hopeful that the influence of the anti-phonetic movement, which naturally attracts phonicsphobics, was petering out. Alas! It proved not to be the case. If anything, the movement began to grow stronger in 1978 with the publication in Britain of *Reading by Frank Smith*, and the dissemination by enthusiasts, mainly among teacher-trainers, of Kenneth Goodman’s notion of reading as a ‘psycholinguistic guessing game’ and his “‘Whole Language, top-down’ theories which provide a foundation for the ‘real books, apprenticeship approach to reading’.

“On my professional visits to the USA in the mid 1970’s, prominent researchers in the reading field told me that they were alarmed at the growing influence of Smith and Goodman in American schools and teacher-training institutions. They warned me that it could spread to Britain as it had done to New Zealand. But I did not take this warning too seriously because, like them, I could not find any evidence to support the disturbing statements of the two theorists and, besides my own in the major research series of the NFER, I knew of much to refute them.

“In face-to-face discussion with each theorist, I had been similarly disappointed in my quest for evidence. For example, in May 1975, I met Frank Smith with his publisher in New York mainly because the latter admired the first wave publications of *Language in Action* (Morris et al., 1974-83), was contemplating a collaborative project with me, and wanted to witness Frank’s reaction to the scheme and my response to his radical views.

“It was an extraordinary meeting during which Frank admitted that he had never been a school teacher. Nevertheless, he made confident assertions such as ‘Reading cannot be taught’ and ‘Phonics is unnecessary’, knowing full well that his publisher and I thought otherwise, and believed that American children and their teachers would benefit from using a research-based, motivating resource like *Language in Action* for the development of initial literacy in English. Then, politely ignoring our request for scientific evidence to support his views, he introduced me to his then latest publication, *Comprehension and Learning: A Conceptual Framework for Teachers* (Smith 1975) with its declared theme, ‘Children know how to learn’. Finally before leaving us to digest all this, he handed me a copy of the book in which he had written, ‘For Joyce Morris - on an afternoon of mutual comprehension and learning’.

“That polite, diplomatic inscription and afternoon meeting should have warned me not to underestimate Frank’s charismatic power to influence the teaching of reading when, three years later, he came to Britain to lecture and publicize his book *Reading* (Smith 1978) which includes the above extraordinary assertions unsupported by research evidence. I also should not have overestimated the importance of scientific research in education. For, without any real evidence that Smith’s and Goodman’s ideas are effective in classroom practice generally, Liz Waterland’s translation of their ideas into her own practice (Waterland, 1985) has found widespread acceptance among British teachers, teacher-trainers and LEA advisers. This has led to what Margaret Donaldson calls the ‘minimal teaching movement’ using an apprenticeship approach to reading with ‘real’ (trade) books and a ‘generalised rejection of anything that can be called a reading scheme.’ (Donaldson, 1989).”

Rudolf Flesch wrote a best-selling pro-phonics book in America in 1955, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*, but I never heard that Flesch was asked to publicize his book in Great Britain, even though it created an uproar in America at the time. The phrase, “Why Johnny Can’t Read,” has even become a part of American linguistic culture, just like “Don’t give up the ship,” or “Of the people, by the people, and for the people.” Why, then, was Frank Smith obviously given an obviously very large expense account to publicize his anti-phonics book in Great Britain, when it obviously was far less successful as a salable book than Flesch’s had been?

I strongly suspect that very few people in the general American public were buying Smith’s books in 1978. Speaking personally, I find Smith’s books to be quite dull reading. Yet Flesch’s “Johnny” is actually entertaining. I have no memory of any of Smith’s books ever having been best-sellers, as was Flesch’s. Furthermore, as an American primary-grades teacher in 1978, I have absolutely no memory of even a single fellow primary grades teacher ever mentioning any of Smith’s ideas or any of Smith’s books, no less buying one. The only time Goodman’s name came up was when a fellow teacher who knew my convictions about phonics handed me a brochure from Scott, Foresman, containing his ideas,

which brochure she probably picked up at the New Jersey teachers' annual convention. Yet Goodman's Scott, Foresman reading series was in wide use in New Jersey schools at the time, but not in our school. Even if it had been, most teachers' "interest" would have been limited to reading and following the teacher's manual that came with the reading series.

Smith's "professional" books were being promoted and bought in America largely by people other than the general American public, whose children were in the schools, or by the American teachers who were teaching the children of the general public. Yet Goodman's and Smith's fallacies have been massively promoted all over the English-speaking world for the past fifteen or twenty years, while Flesch's book, which initially aroused great interest, has been belittled or ignored.

Dr. Morris continued:

"Fortunately, Beve Hornsby and others working in the dyslexia field have not been unduly influenced by these developments, if at all. They have remained steadfast in using and advocating systematic phonic teaching and multisensory techniques to help children build a sound foundation for literacy. So have Montessori-trained teachers who work mainly in the private education sector. Significantly too, members of both groups are in the [vanguard] of progress in that they use and recommend phonic resources which have a linguistically-sound base such as Alpha to Omega: The A-Z of Teaching Reading, Writing and Spelling (Hornsby and Shear, 1974) and The Morris-Montessori Word List (Morris 1990) which is the latest publication to incorporate Phonics 44.

"For obvious reasons, there are no phonicsphobics among those two groups, whereas, to my knowledge, there are some with influence working in the state education sector. They are largely responsible for the hostility amounting to hatred towards psychologist Martin L. Turner who reported in *Sponsored Reading Failure* (Turner, 1990) that reading standards fell during the previous five years or so, and suggested that this was due to increasing widespread acceptance of the 'real books philosophy' and a corresponding decrease in systematic phonic teaching in infant classes.

"Thus, phonicsphobics nowadays are as hostile to reading researchers who dare to challenge anti-ponic orthodoxy by their findings as Miss K was to me 35 years ago. It could also be argued that they are even more so. For instance, the American psychologist Marilyn Jager Adams, author of the scholarly report *Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print* (Adams, 1990) has been subjected to a great deal of harsh criticism for even accepting the task of carrying out an extensive, detailed review of what research tells us about the place and value of phonics. In reply to her critics (Adams 1991), she states, 'People told me that I would lose old friends and make new enemies. People told me I would be shot.' She also points out that, although phonics advocates appreciate the value of whole language, whole language advocates do not reciprocate, and she is apprehensive of their 'strong-arm tactics'.

"It will be interesting to see what the critics and phonicsphobics make of a new book edited by Roger Beard and entitled *Teaching Literacy: Balancing Perspectives* (Beard 1993), for it contains chapters which critically examine and highlight the weaknesses of the Smith and Goodman theories and the practices of their disciples...."

At this point, Dr. Morris discussed seven possible causes for what she labeled, "phonicsphobia."

"Like all phobias, phonicsphobia is learned behaviour and therefore can be unlearned albeit with varying degrees of difficulty. However, unlike agoraphobia for instance, phonicsphobics are

not usually consciously aware of their condition and, consequently, do not seek treatment. Indeed, those I have personally encountered over the years would probably not consider that they are phobic or even that they belong to an anti-phonics movement, most of whose members I must stress are not so irrationally prejudiced against phonics as to be classed as phonicsphobics. Yet despite all the research evidence against their views, phonicsphobics persist in making fallacious statements such as ‘Phonics is discredited’ and, like Miss K, reveal that the mere mention of the word ‘phonics’ has the power to render them emotionally unbalanced.”

Dr. Morris listed seven possible categories as causes, including unhappy childhood or professional experiences. She also mentioned noisy classrooms, where the teacher found it difficult to work with children individually so that they could learn letter sounds.

At some point in the twentieth century, probably in the late 1930’s and afterwards, whole class instruction was largely dropped in England. Despite the wonderful utility of individualized instruction in some areas, individualized instruction is, in my opinion, totally inappropriate and wasteful for beginning reading instruction (and for most arithmetic instruction and in some other areas). Children cannot be expected to learn phonics if it is not directly taught to them. Yet how can one teacher possibly give such necessary instruction to forty little children if she has to teach each one separately, so that she is giving each lesson forty times instead of once? It is hardly surprising that teachers might fail with phonics teaching under those circumstances and develop a great dislike for it. Such teachers are, of course, to be profoundly pitied.

Dr. Morris stated under the seventh cause:

“...phonicsphobia can be caused by circumstances in which, for instance, class teachers conceal their support for phonic instruction like the previously mentioned Miss S. But, in their case, they do so nowadays because they fear that they will be labeled ‘reactionary,’ ‘right-wing,’ or even ‘not politically correct,’ and thereby ruin their chances of promotion to headships. Moreover, as I have also stated elsewhere (Morris 1990 b), ‘so great is this fear that, on certain memorable occasions, it has been confided to me literally in whispers by inservice course members, who agree with me about the place and value of phonics, but dare not say so publicly.’

“In this context, it is also significant that, before his Birmingham primary school won the L100,000 Jerwood Award in 1992 for educational excellence, headmaster Kevin Cassidy wrote a Guardian article anonymously about how all his staff provided children with systematic phonic instruction on a daily basis with outstanding results in terms of literacy acquisition. He did so because he too feared the unfavourable reactions of ‘experts’ opposed to phonic methods and materials”.

It is suggested that an eighth category might be added to the causes that Dr. Morris gave for Phonicsphobia. It concerns a type of human (male, female, of any age or ethnic origin), which is familiar to us all. Teaching phonics - or teaching almost anything of real value - requires a great deal of effort from teachers, the vast majority of whom are well intentioned and hard working, and more than happy to make the effort. But some few teachers (like some few plumbers and even some few kings) have a powerful distaste for doing anything they do not happen to feel like doing at the moment. For such teachers, it is therefore very convenient to endorse “natural” methods in which the child tries to teach himself how to read, while his “teacher” is left free to do something that he or she finds more entertaining, such as teaching the child how to make crepe paper dolls.

Dr. Morris continued:

## “Consequences of Phonicsphobia

“Literacy is a political subject and never more so than in the last few years. Even if pro-phonics supporters have no political affiliation, they are considered to be ‘ultra right-wing’ by the anti-phonics movement and especially by its influential, phonicsphobic members. Yet, strange to relate, when Dr. Daniels led the ‘phonic revolt’ in the mid-1950’s, and was verbally and physically abused for his efforts to apply research findings and restore phonics to its rightful place in the teaching of initial literacy, he was known to be an admirer of Chairman Mao and his Little Red Book.

“Besides the abuse suffered by researchers from influential phonicsphobics and their followers, some of the consequences of phonicsphobia may be summarised as follows:-

“1. Despite the findings of reputable research about phonics, the vast majority of basal reading schemes available in Britain today are predominantly look-and-say. If they do include phonics, the resources provided for teaching and learning are only a relatively small proportion of the whole scheme and, as in the case of the currently popular Oxford Reading Tree (Hunt et al., 1987), are advertised as ‘optional’.

“Older basal phonic schemes such as the Royal Road Readers (Daniels and Diack, 1954) are out of print or have been brought into line with what some ‘experts’ (including phonicsphobics) refer to as ‘modern’ thinking about the reading process. For example, Gay Way (Boyce 1949) has been given some new content and renamed New Way. More recently published basal schemes for systematic phonic teaching and learning have also gone out of print. They include Language in Action (Morris et al., 1974-83) which ceased to be available as a whole scheme in July 1989, largely because of the influence of the ‘real books philosophy’, and despite the fact that its core story books are by authors of ‘real’ (trade) books writing to linguistic briefs.

“It is hoped that as a result of urgent requests from many teachers, a reprint of at least these core books will be available in the near future. However, much depends on the economic situation, and whether the publishers feel that the time is ripe to ignore the advice of phonicsphobics and meet the need for motivating, linguistically-informed phonic resources. To my knowledge, a few publishers believe this to be so, and they are looking around for authors able to prepare such resources. Meanwhile, they cautiously await reactions to the consultation document for the revised National English Curriculum which will largely determine whether they go ahead with their tentative plans.

“2. Phonicsphobics appear to have influenced Key Stage 1 of the original National English Curriculum because it contains only two references to phonic cues in reading. There is also reason to believe that they influenced the choice of authors for some of the chapters in The LINC Reader (Carter et al., 1990), i.e. the Reader which Ronald Carter, the Editor, says is ‘related organically to the LINC (Language in the National Curriculum) Project’. For example, Chapter 7, ‘The Development of Initial Literacy’ is by Yetta Goodman, wife of Kenneth Goodman. Not surprisingly, it endorses his whole-language, top-down theories and decries the use of structured reading programmes. Chapter 8, “What do we know about reading which helps us to teach?” by Margaret Meek, restates her well-known view that it is the texts by children’s writers of ‘real’ (trade) books which really teach children to read. Moreover, she criticises orthodox reading research because, in her opinion, it ‘breeds its own brand of evidence’, and then goes on to make the extraordinary statement, ‘The consequent problem is that reading specialists are bound to ignore the evidence that arises spontaneously in classrooms because it isn’t generalisable.’



“3. Statements about research like that of Meek, quoted above, certainly do not persuade other teacher-trainers to encourage their students to read the published reports of ‘professional’ reading researchers who appreciate the importance of scientific method in their work and, naturally, do not accept anecdotes as evidence that a particular theory works in practice as some phonicsphobics do. On the contrary, to my knowledge, such fallacious statements have helped some teacher-trainers to continue ignoring generalisable evidence about the crucial role of phonics in teaching initial literacy and they, in turn, have managed to persuade their students also to do so. In other words, it is reasonable to suggest that ignorance of ‘real’ research evidence about phonics is a contributory cause of phonicsphobia and, hence, one of its consequences is that student teachers are not trained to understand research methods and/or to teach phonics. This of course also accounts for the fact that the book lists given in the NFER report, *What Teachers in Training Read about Reading* (Gorman 1989) do not include any research reports or how to use phonic methods and materials.

“4. Experienced teachers who do read research reports, and are enthusiastic, successful users of *Language in Action*, not least because it is research-based, have drawn my attention over the years to how some English advisers and inspectors have tried to persuade them to abandon the scheme. Clearly, what they have suggested after acknowledging the above-average standards achieved by using the scheme does not make sense. For instance, the head of a delightful suburban infant school I visited told me that, despite receiving that kind of acknowledgement, she was recently advised not only to have a less structured reading programme, using children’s literature as the main published resource, but also to provide opportunities for more ‘sand and water’ activities in her school. From this one may justifiably conclude that phonicsphobia is a cause of inappropriate advice, and one of its consequences is that *Language in Action* is now out of print after the generally favourable response to it previously mentioned. Moreover, as already indicated, another related consequence is the failure of all but a few educational publishers even to contemplate following the lead given by that scheme and bring phonics into the modern age, in other words, to make available the carefully-researched, linguistics-informed, motivating phonic resources which many children need to make a successful start on the road to literacy....”

Dr. Morris’s paper is considerably longer than the sections quoted here, and discusses cures for what she so interestingly calls, “phonicsphobia.” As a true expert, Dr. Morris’s experiences since she began teaching during World War II, and remarks made to her by reliable people about practices from shortly before that time, are almost irrefutable testimony about developments in the teaching of beginning reading in England from shortly before 1939 right up to September 18, 1993, the date she gave her talk from which these excerpts are taken.

As an American visitor to English schools in 1971, I was able to observe some practices in the teaching of beginning reading at that time. From June 14 to June 21, 1971, some Wayne, New Jersey, teachers, of which I was one, visited Open Classroom schools in Oxfordshire and Leistershire, England. Our fairly large group of Wayne teachers were separated into groups of four for pre-scheduled visits to a number of schools in each of these areas. During those visits, I took notes, and, after returning to the hotel each evening, expanded the notes from my memories of these visits. I was particularly interested in the teaching of beginning reading, but since we visited classrooms at all grade levels from infant through junior, and observed in all subject areas, my observations on reading were very limited. In contrast, in 1977-78, when I visited first grades in this country and Europe, the visits had been arranged ahead of time so that I could observe the teaching of beginning reading.

Two commercial programs were particularly evident in the English schools in June, 1971. One was the Ladybird high-frequency sight-word series (Code 1 or 2) and the other was the i.t.a. series which was still popular. i.t.a. is potentially Code 10 material, but it sometimes is taught just like a sight-word series,

which drastically reduces its code. In one school, the Breakthrough reading program had just been introduced. In the Breakthrough program, high-frequency printed sight words were filed in little individual folders for each child. Children took out words and then inserted them in little individual sticks to compose a sentence, which the child then copied and illustrated. Later, the child could use a folder which had only letter cards to build words. Breakthrough is an extension of the experience chart approach, which we did see widely used in the very youngest classes. Commonly, a child who was a beginning reader dictated a sentence which his teacher wrote out. The child then copied the sentence and illustrated it.

After returning to this country, I made a brief summary of my daily comments. Those which concern reading from that final brief summary are given below. In the first school listed, I had noted at the time, "Made use of BBC," and more specifically, "Primary... children pulled together for television show." After reading Dr. Morris's comments, I strongly suspect the children in that highly-achieving school may have been watching her phonic BBC material in 1971. In any event, I was told the entire school made massive use of phonics and had brought a transfer student from September to June from 4.5 years to 9.5 years on tests.

Each entry below concerns a different school.

June 14, 1971

Massive phonics on 200-sight-word list. Excellent results.

June 15, 1971

i.t.a. "We have no reading problem at all." Use T.O. for spelling (traditional orthography).

June 16, 1971

Dropped i.t.a. 5 or 6 years ago. Head claimed improvement. Some infants couldn't read that I saw. Uppers couldn't spell. Don't know if they could read. New teacher for remediation in reading.

June 17, 1971

This was a junior school. Head said children with i.t.a. were 2 years ahead. A teacher said i.t.a. produced more fluent writers.

June 18, 1971

First grade: said formal phonics plus sight words. Formal reading schemes. SRA upper grades. 1st grade made word dictionaries.

June 21, 1971

Head said, "You must teach phonics from beginning," but no sign of it. Reading: Janet and John, Through the Rainbow, Ladybird. Poor readers observed.

June 22, 1971

Remedial teacher stated at lunch, "We have very great need here for remedial reading." They teach from speech to writing to reading. He said in Birmingham where he taught before, i.t.a. used and no such problem as here but Birmingham was dropping i.t.a. Head said they used "several reading schemes but hardly ever need phonics."

June 23, 1971

No sign of phonics but it may be there. Ladybird and Key Word Cards. Reading and spelling seemed OK for 10-year-olds but one little boy [close to that age] could not read any words at all in a simple reader. Could not read the second, "up" of "up and up." [Note: The teacher had read the first "up" to him.] No sign of word attack. Children had dictionary pages. ["Dictionaries" were personally written notebooks.] Main page copied from Ladybird word list. Add words to pages as required.

June 24, 1971

Starting to use Breakthrough.

June 25, 1971

Saw some phonics on board in one room. No other information on reading. Integrated day, apparently, based on remark: "If you let a child paint for day ending day, very often he will come up to you with his reader and ask to read. Phonics on board in one room: cat - mat - bat. Children quizzed in auditorium on who had done writing and numbers and who had made something.

Most of these schools were delightful, happy places with very well behaved students. Yet the first school - and possibly the best- Ashby de-la-Zouche - taught heavy phonics and made great use of whole-class lessons on television, and it was possibly Dr. Morris's phonic material. Ashby-de-la-Zouche was turning out highly literate little students by the end of first grade, as demonstrated by the "essays" that I witnessed the little ones writing, one of which has been quoted verbatim in an earlier chapter. Yet, in another school, in which little children were copying from reference works, I was saddened to find they could not even read what they were so laboriously copying.

Why, then, did not all the other schools do the same as Ashby-de-la-Zouche and teach heavy, successful phonics? Presumably those schools which did not use heavy phonics were under the baleful influence of highly placed, influential "experts," just as in America.

In summary, although I personally have seen very few post-1900 texts printed in Great Britain, the evidence suggests that developments in the teaching of beginning reading there after 1900 roughly paralleled those in America, and are continuing to do so today. That is despite the fact that the reading texts actually used, except apparently for Beacon, were usually different. Great Britain had a post-1900 period of gradually increasing and heavy phonic use, which developed apparently from the grass roots without much "expert" input except for a few people like Dumville (pro-meaning) who was disproven by Valentine (pro-sound). Shortly after 1930, Great Britain began to go back to "meaning" as a beginning approach largely because of works written by "experts" such as Jagger and Schonell, whose views could be spread through training colleges for teachers.

I met an Englishwoman one evening in Washington who told me how appalled she had been as a student teacher in the late 1940's with what she thought was the new emphasis being given to sight-word teaching. Yet Dr. Morris's comments certainly indicate the emphasis was in place almost certainly well before the beginning of World War II in 1939. That is because the old Beacon readers that the headmaster

gave Dr. Morris as aids during the war (about 1943?) were already in tatters, and the “juniors” in her class who had not been taught to read would have started school three or more years earlier.

The teachers’ colleges in Great Britain, like the teachers’ colleges here, apparently continue to be a fountain of disinformation on the subject of beginning reading instruction. I have wry memories of a useless conversation I carried on with one of their teachers’ college professors on the topic about 1973, when on a commercial camping trip to Iceland. She was appalled at my opposition to the sight-word approach.

Despite the passing interest since the 1950’s on i.t.a. print and other phonic approaches such as Daniels’ and Diack’s *The Royal Road Readers* (1954), the reading emphasis in Great Britain is still on “meaning” for beginning reading, just as it is in America. Dr. Morris’s comments confirm that fact. Furthermore, England appears to be beset with the same “accountability” testing philosophy which threatens the future of education (and even freedom itself) in America since it will be used to shape a rigid curriculum (which could become “thought control”). In this connection, part of a letter on this topic which I wrote to the editor of the *Wall Street Journal* on July 26, 1990, a portion of which they later printed, is given below:

“Increased parental control of British schools, discussed in David Brook’s article, ‘British Schools Declare Independence,’ (page A16, July 26), is anything but the unalloyed good news it seems to be.

“The whole point of education is curriculum. Yet it is in choice of curriculum that British parents are reportedly losing out. In the name of efficiency, a standardized curriculum is reportedly being promoted in British schools. The state is to decide instead of a child’s parents what should be the ‘standard’ curriculum (i. e., the ‘standard’ truth). That good Englishman, George Orwell, would tell his fellow countrymen to LOOK OUT! The prospect of a curriculum standardized by the state is nothing short of terrifying....

“In America, as in England, parents will have no choice over curriculum. The ‘choice’ of school buildings now being offered only disarms parents and makes them foolishly think they are in charge of their children’s education. Instead of parents choosing their children’s curriculum (which would be REAL ‘choice’), America’s future curriculum will be shaped by such non-governmental agencies as foundations. They will be only too glad to help by underwriting national ‘achievement’ tests, most probably in concert with government-related agencies such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress. It will be such national ‘achievement’ tests which will define and drive future curriculum in American schools.

“If parents in American and British schools promoting ‘choice’ demanded that laws be passed to confirm their right to choose ALL textbooks and ALL tests in such ‘choice’ schools, they would be surprised at how quickly the illusion of ‘choice’ would fade like fog before the sun.”

**PART 7**  
**More on Twentieth Century Developments**



## Chapter 50

### The Background on the Arrival in 1930 of a True Deaf-Mute Method in American Schools

Just as today, some people survived the “meaning” method which had been in almost universal use in American first grades from about 1826 until the arrival of supplementary phonics, or “sound,” in first grades about 1900. Exceptions to the almost universal use of “meaning” in America in those years were those places from about 1865 to about 1880 where some phonics materials made temporary inroads, and those Midwest areas where the 1879 phonic McGuffey series was dominant. Also, by about 1890, phonics had returned at second grade and above in the teaching of spelling, and it resulted in a great improvement in reading ability.

James McKeen Cattell, born in 1860, showed the effect of the “meaning” method in his weak spelling. Weak spelling is characteristic of such Americans as Cattell who were born between 1826 and 1880, as can easily be confirmed by checking surviving handwritten materials.

All of these psychologists - James, Hall, Dewey, Cattell, Judd and Thorndike - who learned to read before 1890 were probably taught to read by the sight-word “meaning” method. Since they stayed in school for many years after the third or fourth-grade level at which real phonics, or “sound,” was finally introduced in elocution or in spelling, they apparently managed to overcome some of the effects from beginning with sight words. Yet they undoubtedly remained “subjective” readers for the rest of their lives, and many of them remained poor spellers. However, their early exposure to the “meaning” method may help to explain their bias in its favor.

A clear split had been present in the 1880’s and 1890’s between the followers of the psychologists and “experts” who favored teaching reading for “meaning” in the first grade, and the followers of people like Rebecca Pollard, an elocutionist, who favored phonics, or “sound,” in first grade. The conflict can be followed in the activists’ publication, *The Public School Journal*, from 1889 to 1893. The non-“expert,” Rebecca Pollard, had said the two reading methods of sight-words and phonics were contradictory, and could never be combined. She was, of course, resoundingly correct.

Pollard’s belief was confirmed by Oskar Messmer’s 1903 German experiments, discussed in E. B. Huey’s *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* (1908). Messmer turned up two kinds of readers: those who read by syllables, automatically, and those who read by whole words and guessing. He named the two kinds, very appropriately, objective and subjective readers, obviously representing “sound” and “meaning,” although Messmer apparently felt they only stood for different stages of development.

In my sabbatical research from September, 1977, to January, 1978, I observed and rated the teaching of reading in first grades on a scale from Code 1 for straight “meaning” to Code 10 for straight “sound,” most schools falling somewhere in between<sup>38</sup>. I then personally tested individually the oral reading of

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<sup>38</sup> I postulate that a further analysis in a graphic form may be possible to describe reading programs. The method by which I described them was on a horizontal scale from 1 to 10, representing the move from “meaning” to “sound.” However, a different analysis is possible, the one commonly used, from the “analytic” to the “synthetic.” If the “analytic” to the “synthetic” approach formed a vertical scale, numbered like the horizontal scale from 1 to 10, but intersecting the horizontal “meaning” to “sound” scale about mid-point (Code 5), it would produce a graphic grid on which it would be possible simultaneously and visually to place programs, not only for their “sound” or “meaning” emphasis, but for their “analytic” or “synthetic” emphasis. This might be useful, because some

about 900 second-grade children in these same schools in their own languages in this country and Holland, Sweden, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria and France. I used for the oral reading test a 144-word portion of a copyrighted speed silent-reading text for 10 and 14 year olds, which I obtained the permission to use from IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) in Sweden in 1977. I had the 144-word English portion translated into German, Dutch, Swedish, French and Icelandic by a commercial translating firm at my own expense, which permitted me to test in languages with the same Germanic and Latin roots from which English was derived. (It was not possible for me to observe and test in Iceland as I had originally arranged to do as a general strike in Iceland was called just as I arrived at the New York airport to go to Iceland. The flight instead went straight to Luxembourg, where I instead received permission to observe and test.)

The great “discovery” of my oral reading research, as discussed in my previous unpublished writings such as my books, *Why Jacques, Johann and Jan CAN Read* (1979), *The Case for the Prosecution* (1981) and *A Counter Report* (1985) and my papers, one of which was *The Wary Reader’s Guide to Psycholinguistics: Subjective vs. Objective Readers* (1982), was the fact that there are two distinct and opposite types of readers of alphabetic print. One type reads by true phonics, “sound,” automatically, (Code 10) and the other reads by sight-words and conscious guessing, “meaning,” (Code 1) (plus those types with a conflicting mixture of the two reflexes, “sound” and “meaning,” who fall between these extremes). It is not just a question of one type’s reading more facily than the other, but of one type’s being distinctly different from the other.

Higher codes consistently showed a different pattern of scores when compared to lower codes. The pattern even appeared when the low score of Code 3 was compared to Code 2.

Shortly before writing my 1981 book, I was astonished to find that my 1978 “discovery” of two opposite types of readers was no discovery at all, and that Oskar Messmer had turned up the two kinds of readers by 1903. Messmer named them “objective” readers (who obviously have “sound” reflexes), and “subjective” readers (who obviously have “meaning” reflexes). Yet Messmer’s remarkable work had almost totally dropped from the literature in English except for a brief discussion in E. B. Huey’s 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, and a paper by Myrtle Sholty in the February, 1912, issue of the *Elementary School Teacher*, published by the University of Chicago, which reported on her own experiments. (I later found that Messmer’s research had been mentioned in passing in Franz Biglmaier’s article on reading instruction in Germany, in *Comparative Reading*, 1973, John Downing, Editor, The Macmillan Company, New York. The chapters in Downing’s book were contributions from people from various countries. As discussed elsewhere, I also found before writing my 1981 book that Henry Suzzallo had discussed different types of readers in his 1913 article on teaching reading in the *Cyclopedia of Education*, although he had curiously made no mention of Messmer.)

It was when I saw Sholty’s paper in the Library of Congress in December, 1980, while routinely checking the materials in the bibliography to W. S. Gray’s 1917 doctorate, that I first learned of the real nature of Sholty’s research. That is because Gray’s description in his bibliography had obscured its nature. In Sholty’s paper, she said her research had confirmed earlier work by Messmer, which she cited. It was from Sholty’s 1912 article that I found that my 1979 “discovery” had been reported by Messmer seventy-six years earlier, and had been confirmed by Sholty over sixty-seven years earlier.

The fact that Sholty’s work, as well as Messmer’s, has virtually dropped from the literature was discussed in my unpublished 1981 book, *The Case for the Prosecution*. A probable reason exists for the fact that both reports have effectively vanished. William Scott Gray, the principal author of the Dick and

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“meaning” programs use some synthetic emphasis, and some “sound” programs use considerable analytic emphasis.



Jane deaf-mute-method readers, published a summary of reading research to 1925, and that has unfortunately been the foundation for all “histories” of “reading research” ever since, since Gray was such a leading “expert.” In his summary of previous research to 1925, Gray “naturally” omitted Messmer’s German work, and “accidentally” misreported Sholty’s research so that it was unrecognizable concerning either its nature or its conclusions. (Sholty’s research was even more badly described in Gray’s 1925 summary than in his 1917 bibliography, which means that somebody by 1925 had to have given conscious attention to that erroneous new description of Sholty’s research. Yet, in no way could that even faultier 1925 description have resulted from a review of Sholty’s actual research.) After Gray had dropped both Messmer’s and Sholty’s research into his poisoned historical well, which well carried such an “expert” label, no English-speaking person was likely to find either report again.

In the Elementary School Teacher of the University of Chicago in February, 1912, Sholty had reported on her tests with three little girls half-way through second grade, so the tests must have been done before 1912, probably after February, 1911. Of the three second-grade girls, two demonstrated that they could read words in parts, (Messmer’s “objective” type, referred to in this history as “sound,”), but one demonstrated she could read only whole words (Messmer’s “subjective” type, referred to in this history as “meaning.”). However, all three little girls at the University of Chicago experimental school were “helped” by context guessing, which was obviously necessary because of the small amount of phonic training used at the experimental school. Sholty specifically referred to Messmer’s research and noted that her research results were in line with his conclusions.

It was in 1911-1912 that Cattell’s and James’ close friend and ex-student, Thorndike, taught for the first time his course at Columbia Teachers College in New York, “Psychology of the Elementary School Subjects” (according to A.I. Gates in the February 1926, Teacher College Record.) Thorndike’s giving such a course for the first time certainly suggests a sharply increased interest in the subject of the psychology of elementary reading. It is probably anything but coincidental that Thorndike began his ten-year-long search for the 10,000 commonest words in 1911, and the academic year of 1911-1912 was probably the next academic year after Sholty did her research at the practice school of Judd’s University of Chicago. It was that work of Thorndike’s, begun in 1911 (according to Arthur I. Gates in Gates’ paper in the February, 1926, issue of Teachers College Record honoring Thorndike) which first made it possible to write reading books with strictly controlled vocabulary up to the fourth grade level for children with normal hearing, using only whole-word phony-phonics and context guessing from memorized sight-words. With such books (actually an inferior deaf-mute method), all children could be trained to read only whole words for “meaning” like Sholty’s third little student, instead of reading words in parts for “sound” like Sholty’s first two students.

The record suggests that it was Sholty’s research, probably done in 1911, which inspired Thorndike in 1911 to begin his work to identify the 10,000 commonest words, which list could (and did) make it possible to turn American students into Messmer “subjective” readers. The record also suggests that both Messmer’s and Sholty’s research were then carefully buried after 1911, for public relations reasons. The public certainly would not approve of teaching its children to read like badly taught deaf-mutes, by sight-words and context-guessing, just because the “experts” thought it would help the children’s so-called “reading comprehension..” That a decision was made very early to bury Sholty’s research (and by extension, Messmer’s) is strongly suggested by the fact that the nature of Sholty’s research was completely obscured by Gray’s description of it in his 1917 bibliography listing all previous reading research. Yet Gray was obliged to include at least some mention of Sholty’s research in his bibliography because the number of reading research studies in 1917 was so small that an omission of even one study would have reflected very badly on his “competence.”

Reading books based on Thorndike’s list of high frequency words did away with real phonics at all grade levels since the children could use the whole words learned up to fourth grade to piece together

words at higher levels with the help of guessing from the context of the selection. That is two-step phony “intrinsic” phonics. Even the words used at higher levels would preferably be chosen from the list of the 10,000 commonest words since they would be more “useful.” The net result, obviously, was the ultimate impoverishment of vocabulary and the ultimate lowering of the nation’s verbal intelligence.

Since no such extensive list as Thorndike’s had been available before, even sight-word programs for hearing children had been forced to introduce some real phonics above the first grade level. Yet, with such a list as Thorndike started to prepare in 1911 and which he published in 1921, real phonics would no longer be “necessary” for most hearing children. Even as high as the fourth grade level, new whole words could be memorized solely by visual comparison to known whole words to see like parts (two-step, visual, phony phonics - the deaf-mute approach).

Two-step phony phonics is an aspect of the age-old deaf-mute method that the Reverend Gallaudet brought to America from France in 1816. The teaching of straight sight-words solely for “meaning” rates Code 1, and Gallaudet started his instruction with straight sight-words learned for “meaning.” Later, known sight-words were compared to unknown words to see likenesses and differences, as an aid to remembering those new words. That is visual phony-phonics, or the Code 3 method. Therefore, Gallaudet’s deaf-mute students used both the Code 1 meaning initially, and later the Code 3 method to expand their visual vocabulary. Yet none of Gallaudet’s deaf-mute students, of course, could know anything about the “sound” of the words whose “meaning” they were learning, or of the “sound” of the letters in those words.

Thorndike’s list of the 10,000 commonest words could (and DID) make it possible to turn almost all American hearing students into whole-word context-guessers, or “subjective” readers like Sholty’s third little girl. The benighted Government report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, on page 11, unwittingly confirms that most Americans today are “subjective” readers just like Sholty’s third little girl, guessing unknown whole meaning-bearing words by mental comparison to remembered whole meaning-bearing words, aided by the use of context meaning.

In the academic year 1913-1914, William S. Gray came to Columbia Teachers College from the University of Chicago where Thorndike’s friend, Judd, was located, to prepare oral reading accuracy tests directly under Thorndike’s supervision. Thorndike himself by then was testing one of the very first silent reading comprehension tests for school children.

The bibliography to William S. Gray’s doctoral thesis at the University of Chicago in 1917, where he had returned to work with Judd in 1915 under a grant from the Rockefeller-supported General Education Board, and which listed Sholty’s article, is very helpful to trace the history of these reading comprehension tests and other reading research, despite the following important omissions.

Binet tested intelligence with oral reading comprehension in France in 1908, but Gray did not mention this.

As already mentioned, Oskar Messmer, whose work was discussed by Edmund Burke Huey in his 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, tested oral reading in Germany in 1903 and found two kinds of readers, the objective and the subjective. Other Germans did other reading experiments, such as Julius Zeitler (“Tachistoskopische Versuche Uber das Lesen,” *Wundt’s Philosoph. Studien*, Bd. XVI, H. 3, pp. 380-463, 1900, also discussed by Huey.)

Also, as Carlo Cipollo told on page 12 of his 1969 book, *Literacy and Development in the West*, Penguin Books, 1969, the Swiss military examined recruits in all subjects after rules established by the Federal Council on 15 July, 1879, and the tests included oral reading and understanding in reading.

Scores ranged from Grade 1 for excellent to Grade 5 for total insufficiency. Grade 1 in reading was “good reading with good accentuation, and correct understanding of the piece read.” Grade 4 was “defective reading with no understanding of the material read.” Grade 5 meant “inability to read.” In arithmetic, Grade 4, next to failing, meant “easy performance of the four operations with numbers up to 1,000,” while the highest grade was described as “easy performance of the four basic operations both with numbers and fractions and knowledge of the metrical system and correct solution of corresponding problems.” Grade 1 in Swiss geography and history was described as knowledge of the map of Switzerland, of the major points of Swiss history, and of the Constitution. Grade 5 was defined as total ignorance of those subjects. Cipolla reported the following statistics on the tests from 1891 to 1900 which had been given to a total of 256,000 Swiss recruits:

	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Arithmetic</u>	<u>Swiss Geography and History</u>
Grade 1	48%	34%	21%
Grade 2	34%	31%	28%
Grade 3	15%	26%	34%
Grade 4	3%	9%	15%
Grade 5	0%	0%	2%

These astonishingly high results on 256,000 young Swiss men certainly contrast most horribly to the disgraceful test results we are getting today from American government school students.

Note that the vast majority of Swiss recruits scored in Grade 1 and Grade 2 in reading and arithmetic, and that the reading and arithmetic scores piled up toward the highest end, with the greatest number receiving the highest score. The piling-up of scores at either end is characteristic for graphs produced from any material which predominantly concerns a learned skill. In contrast, note that the geography and history scores, which required a considerable use of judgment (intelligence) and considerably less of conditioned skill, would form a distinct bell curve if graphed. The highest score is the middle score, and other scores decrease as they move in either direction, towards the beginning and towards the end. That is characteristic when inborn traits such as intelligence are measured.

Yet our “reading comprehension scores” also produce bell-shaped curves, as mentioned elsewhere, instead of skill curves like the above Swiss reading scores, so our reading “tests” are not testing “reading” but primarily intelligence (and degree of attention). In contrast to American reading comprehension tests, the probability is that the content of the Swiss reading tests was simple, so that the Swiss tests effectively were only testing accuracy in reading, which is a learned skill, and not comprehension in reading, which is the product of native intelligence.

However, Gray did not include the Swiss tests in his bibliography and may very well not have known of them.

It is interesting that the first public written “reading comprehension test” in this country was paid for by John Quincy Adams, Jr., at Quincy, Massachusetts, when fourth and eighth graders in the whole of Norfolk County, Massachusetts, were tested in 1878-1879 on various subjects, including oral reading quality (not percent accuracy) and eighth graders were required to give written comprehension summaries on silent reading material. The intent of the test, of course, was to show the success of the Quincy schools under Colonel Parker, who was installed there in 1875 with the help of two of the Adams brothers, compared to the other schools in Norfolk County. Colonel Parker commented about the tests in the School Journal of April 28, 1900, page 451:

“Many of you recall the Norfolk county examination. George A. Walton (no better man could be found) under the direction of the Norfolk county school committee, examined the schools of

the county, town by town. The examination was in the so-called essentials, the three R's, geography and history. John Quincy Adams gave \$500 to have specimens of penmanship, number work, and composition lithographed. The results were published in a pamphlet."

However, since the eighth graders in Quincy had started school four years before Parker arrived, and the fourth graders were in first grade the first year he was there before changes could have been firmly established, the reportedly superior Quincy scores were doubtful. The study was titled Report of Examinations of Schools in Norfolk County, Massachusetts, by George A. Walton, and it was printed in Boston in 1880. These students, however, are in the age group which had benefited from the increased phonic emphasis spreading in the Massachusetts schools from the 1860's until the late 1870's. Their high results (and sample papers were reproduced in the report which certainly confirm the high results) should be compared to the 1845 testing mentioned below. (Gray omitted both the 1879 and 1845 tests from his bibliography.)

Then and Now in Education, written by Stuart A. Curtis and Otis W. Caldwell in 1924, told of the 1845 tests. (Professor Otis W. Caldwell and Jesse H. Newlon were in charge of the experimental Lincoln School founded in 1917 at Teachers College, Columbia, according to Elwood P. Cubberley in Public Education in the United States, Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1919, 1934, page 548. The background on Curtis of Detroit and his Columbia associations are given in Appendix C of this history under the entries for World Book.) Curtis's and Caldwell's book compared scores obtained in tests given in Boston, Massachusetts in 1845 with those obtained in 1919. Not surprisingly, the "sound" oriented 1919 students enormously outscored the "meaning" oriented 1840's students, and did so in almost all subjects, not just spelling. "Reading comprehension" was not tested, but spelling accuracy is a highly reliable indicator of reading skill. The fact that the 1919 students scored higher in all subjects is undoubtedly because reading proficiency enables a student to achieve in all his studies. Correspondingly, reading disability cripples a student in all his studies.

According to Cubberley (page 332):

"There were questions in history, geography, arithmetic, grammar, defining, natural philosophy, and astronomy. The questions and the answers have been preserved, and in 1919 the examination was repeated in the eighth grade of the Boston schools, and later in the eighth grade in numerous other cities, but with this significant difference: in 1845 in Boston the only pupils examined were those picked by the masters as superior, comprising, as the Examining Committee reports, 'the flower of the Boston Schools,' where in 1919 all eighth-grade pupils were given the tests and the results made by all entered into the comparison. The outstanding conclusions from the repetition of the tests are that present day children 'tend to make lower scores on pure memory and abstract (skill?) questions, and higher scores on thought and meaningful questions. In spelling present-day eighth-grade pupils make only one fourth to one third the errors made by the pupils of 1845. The 1919 results in parsing and punctuation were high. In natural philosophy, the 1919 children did much better without instruction than did the 1845 children after study of the subject from a textbook. In arithmetical problems the 1919 children did not do so well."

There is a probable reason that the 1845 children did well in arithmetic. In 1821, Warren Colburn wrote beginning arithmetic texts which taught mental arithmetic, and he achieved apparently spectacular results, judging from an article written in 1881 by a woman who had been taught from Colburn's materials. Though she had hated them when she was first learning Colburn's methods as a child, she was grateful ever afterwards, and noted the great drop in skills in younger pupils after Colburn's materials had been chased out of the schools by later "experts." (See the entries on Colburn in Appendix E, and also Appendix B.)

Cubberley included this footnote concerning the 1845 Boston tests:

“The following statements are quoted from the 1845 survey of Boston’s schools:

“1. It is very difficult to believe that, in the Boston schools, there should be so many children in the first classes (eighth grades) unable to answer such questions, that there should be so many who try to answer and answer imperfectly, that there should be so many absurd answers, so many errors in spelling, in grammar, and in punctuation.

“2. There is another sad reflection suggested by these answers. They show, beyond all doubt, that a large proportion of the scholars of our first classes (eighth grades), boys and girls of fourteen or fifteen years of age, when called upon to write simple sentences, to express their thoughts on common subjects, without the aid of a dictionary or a master, cannot write without such errors in grammar, in spelling, and in punctuation as we should blush to see in a letter from a son or daughter of their age. And most of these children are about finishing their school career: they are going out into life.”

Another such comparison from the 1840’s which was not in Gray’s bibliography was described on pages 312-313 of Cubberley’s Public Education in the United States. For part of his data, his source was a 51-page pamphlet, The Springfield Tests, 1846-1906, by J. L. Riley, Holden Patent Book Cover Co., Springfield Massachusetts, 1908. Riley’s pamphlet was a reprint of the results of the two tests, with comparative results in spelling, arithmetic, writing and geography. Cubberley reported on that written examination which had been given in 1846 to 86 ninth grade pupils in the Springfield, Massachusetts, schools. Some forty years later, all the papers were found in the high school building attic. The same tests were then given to 245 ninth grade pupils in Springfield in 1906, and then to Minneapolis seventh and eighth graders in 1926. Each period, of course, represented a different emphasis in reading and spelling. The 1846 group would have been largely “meaning” trained, the 1906 group would have probably been trained by “sound” from the second grade and above with spellers, and the 1926 group would have learned by “sound,” most probably with supplementary phonics in first grade. Twenty spelling words were given to all groups, the same 20 difficult, low frequency words. Spelling proficiency is the best single indicator of oral reading proficiency. Here are the spelling results for the 1846 and 1906 ninth graders and 1926 eighth graders:

	1845 <u>Springfield 9th</u>	1906 <u>Springfield 9th</u>	1926 <u>Minneapolis 8th</u>
Percent of 20 difficult words spelled correctly	40.6	51.2	60.1

The figures speak for themselves: “sound” outscores “meaning.” Note that the 1926 scores are FIFTY PER CENT HIGHER than the 1845 scores! What is also very suggestive is that the scores rose in all subjects in the 1906 and 1926 retests, and not just in spelling, tending to confirm the belief that if spelling (reading) skills are damaged, so is the rest of a child’s education. These tests should be given again today, in 1994, to contrast the results to those of 1845, 1906 and 1926. Such tests should confirm the disgraceful failure of today’s education.

In his book, Introduction to Educational Measurement, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston: 1951, Victor Noll wrote of the test given to thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds in the Boston Schools in 1845, which test has been discussed previously. Noll said:

“Below are some typical questions, chosen at random, from the examination:

- “(a) What do you understand by the Norman Conquest?”
- “(b) What is the square root of 5/9 of 4/5 of 4/7 of 7/9?”
- “(c) Name the principal lakes in North America.” [Obviously, more than the Great Lakes were to be named!]
- “(d) Define Monody.”
- “(e) What is the difference between an active and a neuter verb?”
- “(f) Explain the hydrostatic press.”
- “(g) What causes an eclipse of the sun?”

If Noll’s selection of questions were truly random, then that 1845 Boston test was a lot more demanding than the comments about it which have been previously quoted would suggest. It is hardly surprising that the 1845 Boston pupils did not do very well, but it is almost equally surprising if the 1919 eighth-grade students, about whom Otis and Caldwell wrote, did much better on such questions!

Noll then said (pages 18 and 19):

“Although there seems to be no record of anything like the Boston Survey in the United States for nearly fifty years thereafter, we are told of an English schoolmaster, one Reverend George Fisher, who reported having constructed what he called a Scale Book. The account of this is given in an article published in 1864 by E. B. Chadwick. In his Scale Book the Reverend Mr. Fisher included a scale of handwriting against which samples of children’s handwriting could be graded, a standard list of spelling words, and questions in mathematics, navigation, Scripture knowledge, grammar and composition, French, general history, drawing, and practical science. Thus he provided examinations by which any pupil could be tested and graded, not only in each subject or area, but also on the total and the average of all, or any combination of, subjects.

“The work of Fisher, as in the case of Mann and the Boston School Committee, made no great impression....”

In a footnote on page 18, Noll gave the following citation for the information on Reverend Fisher:

“E. B. Chadwick, “Statistics of Educational Results,” *The Museum, A Quarterly Magazine of Literature and Science*, 3:429-84 (January, 1864). Original not seen. Taken from a report entitled “Educational Measurements of Fifty Years Ago,” based on a communication from E. L. Thorndike, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 4:551 (November, 1913.)”

Reverend Fisher’s tests can possibly be dated to the early 1860’s but I have no further information concerning them. W. S. Gray probably knew of these tests since they were discussed in this 1913 article which was published while Gray was Thorndike’s 1913-1914 graduate student. Presumably Gray thought the circa-1860’s tests from England did not concern reading skills in any way, which would explain why he did not include them in his 1917 bibliography.

The 1879 Swiss reference is the earliest I have found to the formal testing of oral reading, but it was preceded by the earliest formal test I have found of silent reading comprehension, that of Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1878-1879. However, subject matter was tested in the 1840’s as mentioned above, but no formal reading tests were done.

Gray’s omission of the preceding items from his 1917 bibliography is actively helpful, because his incomplete list clarifies the frame of reference in which the psychologists of the 1913-1914 period were

operating. Gray's earliest "comprehension test" mentioned is, not surprisingly, very illuminating. It was that given by G. J. Romanes in England, reported in Romanes' *Mental Evolution in Animals* in 1884. (James had quoted Romanes extensively in his *Principles of Psychology*.) As discussed previously, Romanes tested adults on silent reading speed and comprehension. While Cattell was in England in 1886 and 1887, he must have known Romanes from the Aristotelian Society, at which both Cattell and Romanes gave addresses. (See Michael M. Sokal's *An Education in Psychology*, James McKeen Cattell's *Journal and Letters from Germany and England, 1880-1888*, the MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1981:, pages 230, 234 and 239.) Cattell's continued interest in the topic is suggested by the fact that a few of Cattell's students later did "rate" research, as shown by Gray's bibliography.

Gray listed the first silent reading "rate and comprehension" test ever done in America, and it was apparently done by an undergraduate girl at Wellesley, to judge from letters in the Cattell manuscript files in the Library of Congress from Mary Whiton Calkins to Cattell in the summer of 1894. Cattell apparently had questioned the value of such undergraduate research as Calkins was carrying out in her classes at Wellesley. At any rate, as Gray's bibliography showed, *Educational Review*, October, 1894, published Adelaide M. Abell's study on 41 Wellesley students, "Rapid Reading: Advantages and Methods."

Mary Whiton Calkins' initiation into psychology had taken place only four years before, as she said on page 31 of her short autobiography in *A History of Psychology in Autobiography*, Volume I, edited by Carl Murchison, originally published in 1930 apparently by Clark University Press and republished by Russell & Russell, New York, in 1961:

"I began the serious study of psychology with William James. Most unhappily for them and most fortunately for me, the other members of his seminary in psychology dropped away in the early weeks of the fall of 1890; and James and I were left not, as in Garfield's vision of Mark Hopkins and himself, at either end of a log but quite literally at either side of a library fire. The *Principles of Psychology*" was warm from the press...."

This clearly places another tie between William James and reading theory: that his solitary 1890 student should, only four years later, have one of her students perform the very first silent reading rate and reading comprehension test in this country, and apparently only the second one on record in the world. The first was Romanes' some time before 1884. In his 1890 psychology book, James had quoted Romanes at length concerning that test, so James obviously considered it to be of importance. James obviously also considered Cattell's 1880's reading experiments to be important, since he discussed them at length in his 1890 psychology book. It should be mentioned again that, by some time before 1893, the two very early "experimental" psychologists, James and Cattell, had become close personal friends, as demonstrated by the intimate tone of the 1893 letter mentioned earlier.

But it was not until 1914 that the first real silent reading comprehension tests appeared in print, as shown by Gray's 1917 bibliography. The tests were coming from a tightly knit group associated with the early experimental psychologists. Daniel Starch of the University of Wisconsin produced one. The head of the psychology department at the University of Wisconsin was Joseph Jastrow, one of Cattell's reading experiment subjects while a fellow student at Johns Hopkins in 1883. (See Sokal's reference.) S. A. Courtis, who had worked on the Hanus New York school survey about 1911 and who studied under the psychologist, Thorndike, in 1919, wrote another reading comprehension test. The famous Thorndike, of course, was James' and Cattell's ex-student and friend, Karl D. Waldo did a master's thesis on reading comprehension at the University of Chicago in 1914, probably under the psychologist, Judd, who had been Thorndike's fellow student at Wesleyan. (See the February, 1926, Thorndike honorary issue of the *Teachers College Record* for the 1919 paper Courtis did under Thorndike, and the May issue for Judd's anecdotes concerning his relationship with Thorndike.)

Significantly, it was also in 1914 that a report on Thorndike's silent reading comprehension test first appeared in print, and it included a report on Gray's oral reading tests prepared as Gray's master's thesis at Columbia directly under Thorndike. That material is listed in the annotated Thorndike bibliography in the February, 1926, Teachers College Record. It was titled "The Measurement of Ability in Reading," by E. L. Thorndike, and had appeared in Teachers College Record XV, September, 1914.

Obviously, with Gray's oral reading tests and Thorndike's silent reading tests given to the same children, it would be possible for the first time efficiently to compare oral reading accuracy to silent reading comprehension. It was most probably that same academic year, 1913-1914, under Thorndike, that Gray formed the opinion about oral reading accuracy that he expressed in Chicago many years later, about 1940. Gray's comments, as reported by Mitford Mathews, have been cited earlier.

Before these tests were given, it seems likely that the "experts" would have expected consistency in the testing: the sight-word children would score lower on oral word accuracy, but consistently much higher on silent reading comprehension, while the phonics children would score higher on oral word accuracy and consistently lower on silent reading comprehension. The psychologists were apparently anticipating nice, neat relationships. Yet it should be clearly noted that their method, up to this point, might be presumed to be justified by Cattell's objective scientific experiments from 1883 to 1885. It was only the psychologists' interpretation of these experiments that was wrong. Their philosophical and religious biases seemed to have had no bearing on the deaf-mute reading method they were endorsing. In 1913 and 1914, it seems apparent that James' disciples, Thorndike, Judd and probably Cattell (James had died in 1910) truly thought they could improve reading ability with their deaf-mute approach. (At that point, Dewey does not seem to have shared Thorndike's, Judd's, and probably Cattell's aims in reading instruction, since Dewey discounted the relative value of literacy itself as early as the turn of the century, considering "socialization" to be the primary purpose of the schools.)

However, it is evident that by 1915 these movers and shakers in education had stumbled across what could be called the Miss Middleton Effect. They obviously misinterpreted it, not on scientific grounds this time, but on narrow philosophical and religious grounds, exactly the kind which the United States Constitution establishes as out-of-bounds in such places as government schools. (However, the Constitution, of course, never authorized the existence of government schools.)

Miss Middleton had a combined third- and fourth-grade class, which was tested on silent reading comprehension in the fall of 1913 and in the spring of 1914. What makes her scores so interesting is that they were reported individually by Karl Douglas Waldo in the January, 1915, Elementary School Journal (previously called Elementary School Teacher) of the University of Chicago, so that it was possible to compare each child's fall score to his score in the spring. (Children could read orally with great accuracy at that time, as later quotations will show, and as can be confirmed by the extraordinarily high spelling scores the Ayres' scale registered in 84 American cities in 1914 and 1915.)

Some of Miss Middleton's children who scored very high in "reading comprehension" in the fall scored very low in the spring, and some who scored very low in the fall scored very high in the spring. Almost none scored the same, but either went up or down, often way up or way down.

Any reasonable person might conclude that those high-scoring children in Miss Middleton's class who later scored very low in "reading comprehension" were simply not paying attention, as we can sometimes read the newspaper vacantly and not know what we read.

But you have to believe in consciousness before you can believe in true attention, because it is consciousness that pays attention. Furthermore, you have to believe in a free human will before you can



decide that anyone can voluntarily choose to pay attention. Yet neither consciousness nor free will existed for most of the turn-of-the century psychologists. Therefore, on philosophical and religious grounds, they had to reject the explanation for the Miss Middleton Effect which would have satisfied most other Americans. That satisfactory explanation would be that the reading comprehension tests had confirmed that children taught by phonics could, indeed, read very well when they concentrated, and they therefore had no need for the deaf-mute method to improve their reading comprehension.

How could presumably educated persons deny the existence of consciousness and free will? The answer, of course, is to be found in their materialistic “education.” All of these psychologists had been enormously influenced by the materialistic psychology of Wilhelm Wundt of Germany. James was the first to seek him out in 1868. Quoted on page 93 of the biography of Thorndike, *The Sane Positivist*, by Geraldine S. Joncich, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut: 1968, was a letter that James wrote on May 5, 1868. James wrote that letter while he was traveling in Europe, during which time young 26-year-old James apparently imagined himself to be sick. In 1868, Wundt was still the famous Helmholtz’s assistant, although Wundt had already published his first book on psychology in 1862, based on his university lectures. It is probable that James had seen Wundt’s 1862 book. In his 1868 letter, James said he was going to Heidelberg, since both Helmholtz and Wundt were there. James then said that he thought that, without too much physical effort, he might find out from Wundt something about psychology in relation to the senses, which knowledge James might later use.

G. Stanley Hall followed, studying with Wundt when Wundt had gone on to Leipzig, and before Hall received his Ph.D. under James at Harvard. As discussed earlier, Hall had been an instructor at Harvard in 1876 and a friend of James just before going to Leipzig in 1877. Immediately after returning, Hall continued his studies under James to receive his doctorate from Harvard in 1878. Hall had studied in Germany previously but not under Wundt. Therefore, it seems probable James sent Hall back to Germany to study under Wundt before Hall received his Harvard doctorate.

From 1883 to 1886, James McKeen Cattell studied with Wundt in Leipzig. In Leipzig, Cattell continued the reading perception experiments he had begun at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore on St. Patrick’s Day in 1883, in which both his professor, G. Stanley Hall, and fellow graduate student, John Dewey, were two of his subjects. Cattell’s experiments have been cited ever since as the classic “proof” that sight-words are the correct approach for teaching beginning reading. Cattell’s experiments were obviously inspired by the reports of Cattell’s professor at Johns Hopkins, G. Stanley Hall, concerning Wundt’s similar perception experiments. Hall had been a subject in Wundt’s perception experiments while studying under Wundt in Germany.

Anthony C. Sutton reported a curious fact concerning Wundt’s paternal grandfather, who died many years before Wundt’s birth. Sutton wrote the following on page 86 of his book, *America’s Secret Establishment*, published by Liberty House Press in Billings, Montana in 1986:

“Wundt’s grandfather on the paternal side is of significant interest: Kirchenrat Karl Kasimir Wundt (1744-84) was Professor at Heidelberg University in the history and geography of Baden and pastor of the church at Wieblingen, a small neighborhood town.

“The Illuminati Order documents show that ‘Raphael’ in the Illuminati is identified as this same Professor Karl Kasimir Wundt and is referred to in the Illuminati Provincial Report from Utica (i.e., Heidelberg) dated September, 1782.”

Sutton cited as his source for this information page 269 of *Der Geheimbund Der Illuminaten*, by Richard van Dulman, Stuttgart, 1977. Sutton said that Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) was the son of Maximilian Wundt who was also a minister like his father and Wilhelm Wundt’s grandfather, K. K.

Wundt (1744-84). Wilhelm Wundt of Leipzig was born in 1832 long after his “Illuminati” grandfather’s death in 1784, so there was no contact between them, but he may have inherited activist traditions.

Many other American students after James, Hall and Cattell also made the pilgrimage to Wundt. Even those who did not themselves go to Germany were indirectly influenced by Wundt, such as Thorndike who studied with James and Cattell. What Wundt endorsed was pure materialism.

William James, Thorndike’s professor about 1896 at Harvard, had been ambivalent on the subject of pure materialism, but eventually wrote a famous essay in 1904, “Does Consciousness Exist?” and concluded that it did not. William James wrote in 1904:

“The word consciousness is just a loose way of indicating that certain sensory occurrences form part of my life history.”

Concerning free will, for a 1908 book, *Essays Philosophical and Psychological in Honor of William James*, Thorndike wrote a chapter, “A Pragmatic Substitute for Free Will.” Thorndike discussed free will in terms of instinctive responses and habits built on them.

Obviously, these views should be filed under “religious beliefs” and not under “education,” and should not, as said before, be allowed to have any influence on curriculum meant for government schools, where sectarian religious beliefs can have no place, according to the Constitution.

These psychologists more or less agreed with one another. In Cattell’s journal on March 22, 1886 at the age of 25, while in Leipzig studying under Wilhelm Wundt, Cattell wrote, as recorded in Michael M. Sokal’s book, *An Education in Psychology*:

“I am at the foundation a sceptic - the whole of my philosophy is 0. In the first story I have some metaphysical ideas, but don’t think them worth working out. The sum of them is God, the world and I are one and the same. I really live in the second story and call myself a scientist. Here I am an atheist, a fatalist and a socialist, and make the world a logical whole albeit built on nothing.”

In his “first story,” Cattell was obviously a pantheist, but he “lived” in the “second story,” as an atheistic materialist and socialist. All of these views were very fashionable, intellectually, in the 1880’s. Many people, particularly students, have toyed with such silly philosophies in their youth but then rejected them as they matured and grew wiser. Yet Cattell apparently did not change his views with age. Cattell was President of the International Congress of Psychology at Yale in 1929, an exceedingly influential meeting to which the famous psychologist, Pavlov, of the Soviet Union and luminaries from other countries came. The *New York Times* reported on September 3, 1929:

“Dr. J. McKeen Cattell in his presidential address (said the) objects of the sciences were more ideal than the objects of the churches.... The practices of the scientists, he added, are more Christian than those of the churches.... ‘When in the fullness of time there is a family of the nations, when each will give according to its ability and receive according to its needs... this will be due in no small measure to cooperation among scientific men of all nations in their common work. And it may be that psychology...shall lead them. It is the object of psychology to describe, to understand, and to control human conduct....’”

The phrase, “to control human conduct,” sheds considerable light on Cattell’s probable views on free will. It should also be noted that the socialist Owenites in 1826 believed, as Karl Marx and Cattell did later, that “each” should “give according to its ability and receive according to its needs,” and the

Owenites also shared Cattell's conviction that "science" could save the world. Yet to hold such a belief about "science" today would be ingenuous - or even simple minded.

It is worth while at this point to give some background on Cattell and on those of his contemporaries who were like him. They were trying to influence American education. Yet their world-view, including their materialistic philosophy, was very much out of step with mainstream America. Despite that fact, it was the children of mainstream America they were trying to influence through what they euphemistically called "education."

Many of these "educators" were associated with the General Education Board, funded by the Rockefeller fortune. Rockefeller money was to a very large extent the cause of the mushrooming growth of Columbia and the University of Chicago from about the turn of the century. These two universities have had an enormous influence on American education ever since, and were the home bases for Cattell, Thorndike, Dewey, Judd, and hosts of other change-agent "educators." The General Education Board and the Carnegie group were under scrutiny in the Congress in January and February of 1917. Abraham Flexner's paper, *A Modern School*, published by the General Education Board in New York in 1916 (Occasional Papers, No. 3), had resulted in this editorial in *The New York Times* on January 21, 1917:

"Unblushing materialism finds its crowning triumph in the theory of the modern school. In the whole plan there is not a spiritual thought, not an idea that rises above the need of finding money for the pocket and food for the belly.... It is a matter of instant inquiry, for very sober consideration, whether the General Education Board, indeed, may not with the immense funds at its disposal be able to shape to its will practically all the institutions in which the youth of the country are trained.

"If this experiment bears the expected fruit, we shall see imposed upon the country a system of education born of the theories of one or two men...."

The above quotation appeared on pages 80 and 81 of the late Lance J. Klass's critically important book, *The Leipzig Connection*, which he wrote with Paolo Lionni and which was published by Heron Books, Portland, Oregon, in 1981. The book documented the enormous influence of Wundtian materialistic psychology on American education. The influence was achieved by Wundt's American students and their proteges who used almost bottomless foundation moneys from the Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations. This also appeared in *The Leipzig Connection* by Klass and Lionni, in connection with the above comments from *The New York Times*:

"The dam broke into a national outcry against the General Education Board and its attempts to control and alter American education.... The debate continued onto the floor of the United States Senate, with Senator Chamberlain of Oregon leading the attack on the General Education Board."

For the record, the late Lance Klass wrote me that in his original book he had found fault with the sight-word method, but that, when the book was revised with Paolo Lionni, the objection was removed. Klass published a newsletter, *Save Our Schools*, for a period of time, but he found the financial cost overwhelming and had to cease publication. The newsletters were remarkably informative.

The following was not in Klass's and Lionni's book, but is from about page 2928 of the *Congressional Record* about February 8, 1917. Chamberlain said:

"Mr. President, I desire to disclaim any opposition to the Carnegie Foundation or to the Rockefeller Foundation. I have no objection to their private and charitable activities.... What I

objected to the other day, and what I object to now, is that they should become so aligned with the Government itself that emanations from their brain and from the brains of their agents shall have, as it were, the Government's stamp upon them so that they go to the people as the doctrines and principles enunciated by the Government itself.

“There are some men connected with these institutions, Mr. President, who do not respect the American ideals at all. They are far out of touch with the opinions... of the people of this country and expressions that come from them ought not to go out with the stamp of governmental approval.”

As shown below, Judd was one of the Government's dollar-a-year men and was also carrying out long-term research funded by the General Education Board. It is worth mentioning here that the work from 1915 to 1918 described in Judd's highly influential 1918 report on reading, which included William Scott Gray's doctoral work on oral reading tests, was funded by the General Education Board. The report was titled, *Reading: Its Nature and Development*, Supplementary Educational Monographs Vol. 2, No. 4, by Charles Hubbard Judd et al, and was published by The University of Chicago Press in 1918.

Obviously it was the intent of Judd and the group including Gray who prepared that report to influence the teaching of reading in America, although no one had ever given them the authority to do so. It was only after the publication of Judd's 1918 report funded by the General Education Board that American literacy began to drop again. It did so catastrophically after Gray's 1930 Dick and Jane deaf-mute-method readers blanketed America.

Page 2843 of the 1917 Congressional Record printed a long list of these dollar-a-year-men, the kind of outside agents about whose educational activities the Congressional inquiry was taking place. It included some very familiar names: Appointed on January 15, 1914, was Charles H. Judd of the University of Chicago. Those appointed on March 25, 1914, included Ellwood P. Cubberley, the “expert's” historian of education; Paul H. Hanus of Harvard; G. D. Strayer, possibly at that date at Columbia Teachers College; and Frank Ellsworth Spaulding, then Superintendent of Schools in Minneapolis and co-author with Catherine T. Bryce of the massively used 1907-1909 Aldine “sentence-method” readers.

Spaulding, born in 1860, had been a superintendent of schools in Ware, Massachusetts, in 1897, and in Passaic, New Jersey, from 1897 until 1904, where he had written *The Passaic Primer* with Bryce, the precursor to the enormously influential Aldine readers. Spaulding went on to become superintendent of schools in Newton, Massachusetts from 1904 until 1914, in Minneapolis from 1914 to 1917, and Cleveland from 1917 to 1920. In addition, Spaulding participated in many of the school surveys of the period, such as the massive Cleveland survey. He had studied in Leipzig, presumably under Wundt, in 1891-1892 and received his Ph. D. there, and studied at the Sorbonne in 1892-1893. He ended his highly influential career as a graduate professor of education at Yale from 1920 to 1939. Spaulding went from being one of the dollar-a-year men from 1914 to 1917 who were under fire in the United States Congress to become a member of the General Education Board from 1917 to 1920.

Page 2827 of the Congressional Record concerned the comments in the Senate on February 8, 1917, in opposition to the influence on the United States Government of such people as the dollar-a-year-men whose main salaries were paid by the General Education Board. Senator Kenyon of Iowa proposed an amendment to an agricultural bill, specifically referring to the General Education Board or others like it:

“Nor shall any person paid in whole or in part by any such corporation for services rendered by him be employed by the Government or become or remain an officer of the Government. Any person violating this or any or either of the terms of this provision shall be deemed guilty of a

misdemeanor... punished by a fine of not less than \$1,000 or by imprisonment as the court may determine.”

Senator Kenyon had raised this question in a resolution as long ago as 1914 and said:

“A large number of those who were on the rolls of the Department of Agriculture were paid a nominal sum by the department and their main salaries were paid by the General Education Board, which is a part of the Rockefeller Foundation.”

Page 2928 had the following comments by Senator Works:

“Mr. President, there is something a good deal more important involved in this question than the mere matter of money or the use of the franking privilege.... We are permitting these outside influences to come into the departments and bureaus of the Government and absolutely control its policies, and the doctrines that go out from the departments. I think it is an evil that ought to be curbed, an evil that ought to be suppressed. I am very glad that the Senator from Oregon has raised the question. We have attempted to do that heretofore in connection with another bill, where an attempt was made to influence education in a strict sense in this country, which I think ought not to be allowed.”

Therefore, testimony on the floor of the United States Senate establishes beyond any possible doubt that some United States senators in 1917, and at least one senator as early as 1914, were convinced that some activists had made illicit attempts from at least 1914 to 1917 to shape American education. One senator even introduced a bill in 1917 to CRIMINALIZE some of those activities. I wonder what those old senators would think today if they could return to see the influence the unelected Carnegie foundation is presently exerting on American education.

However, America went into World War I in the spring of 1917 and the Congressional inquiry most naturally was stalled concerning the presumed illicit influence on American education of the Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations. Yet it is surely of interest that William Scott Gray, the father of the 1930 Dick and Jane deaf-mute-method readers most responsible for plunging America into the sea of functional illiteracy, was working with Judd on reading under a grant from one of those foundations at the exact time of that Congressional inquiry in 1917.

It was also in 1917 that Arthur Irving Gates, who wrote the other deaf-mute-method reading series introduced in 1930, received his doctorate from Columbia Teachers College. For a time in 1917, Gates lived with the Cattell family in Garrison on Hudson, while working with James McKeen Cattell. As Geraldine Joncich stated in her biography of E. L. Thorndike, Gates lost his draft exemption in the fall of 1917 presumably because of his close association with Cattell, but E. L. Thorndike had Gates' exemption re-instated.

Cattell made the New York Times headline only about six months after the 1917 Congressional inquiry into what were believed to be the illicit activities in American education of foundations like the Carnegie and Rockefeller groups. The New York Times headline (of October 2 or 3, 1917) reported that Cattell had been fired from Columbia for opposing the draft during wartime. The Times headline read:

“Columbia Ousts Two Professors, Foes of War Plans.”

The other professor was young Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, the grandson of the poet, Longfellow, and the journalist, Dana.

Presumably, it had been to people like Cattell and Dana that Senator Chamberlain had referred the previous February, when he said in Congress that some men did not have American ideals and were out of touch with the opinions of the people of this country. For instance, there was almost no sympathy in America in late 1917 or 1918 for Lenin's Bolsheviks. Yet the socialist Cattell was clearly in sympathy with the Bolsheviks in late 1917 or 1918 as shown, among other things, by his handwritten article in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, entitled "The Red Flag." It was apparently intended for the New York Post and it objected to their coverage of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, presumably being written either late in 1917 or in 1918. In it, Cattell said:

"The red flag is for socialists the symbol of the brotherhood of the world's workers. Its suppression is exactly comparable to the suppression of the cross by the Roman Empire. Empires may again fall to ruin, while a symbol conquers the world."

There have been as many varieties of socialists as there have been of any other intellectual point of view. Moderate twentieth century socialists would be very startled by Cattell's statement, and would hardly agree with it. Cattell's view is, of course, radical. Young Dana, who was fired with Cattell, was presumably also a radical socialist at that time as he was apparently a leftist radical many years afterwards, when a Harvard professor in 1932. That Dana was a leftist radical at that time is implied by his having been a scheduled speaker at a Soviet-sponsored "peace" rally in 1932, referred to on pages 467-470 of *On A Field of Red*, by Anthony Cave Brown and Charles B. MacDonald, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1981.

That "peace" conference in Amsterdam, The World Conference Against War, opened August 27, 1932, and its real sponsor was the Soviet Union. (Presumably, there were many other "educators" from various countries, since August was a time when universities and schools were generally closed.) The authors, Brown and MacDonald, quoted a report telling of what had obviously been a staged emotional announcement at the conference. The announcement was of the arrival of a seaman who was supposed to have risked dangers to bring greetings from his fellow workers and to tell of their support of the conference. Concerning the atmosphere of this extravaganza to which Dana of Harvard lent his name and his talents, after the seaman's emotional announcement, the source that Brown and MacDonald quoted said:

"Instantly the Congress was on its feet as one man, and the Internationale rang out from thousands of throats."

A reference by President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia to "Bolsheviks" was apparently directed at Dana and Cattell, among others. An article in the New York Times about December 11, 1917 (I do not have the exact date on my photocopy) was headed, "Butler Condemns College Bolsheviks," and quoted the following from Butler's annual report of 1917:

"That economic determinism which is confuted every time a human heart beats in sympathy and which all history throws to the winds has in recent years obtained much influence among those who, for lack of a more accurate term, call themselves intellectuals. These are for the most part men who know so many things which are not so that they make ignorance appear to be not only interesting but positively important. They abound just now in the lower and more salable forms of literary production, and they are not without representation in academic societies.

"The time has not yet come, however, when rational persons can contemplate with satisfaction the rule of the literary and academic Bolsheviks or permit them to seize responsibility for the intellectual life of the nation."

Since Butler's 1917 report was issued only about a month after Lenin and his Bolsheviks hijacked the Russian Revolution, Butler's comment probably made Dana and Cattell the very first Americans to have been accused in print (by inference, it is true) of being fellow travelers. It was shortly after the Times headline about the firing of Cattell and Dana that Gates lost his draft exemption, presumably because of his close association with Cattell. However, as has been mentioned, Thorndike had Gates' draft exemption reinstated, as stated in the biography of Thorndike, *The Sane Positivist*, by Geraldine S. Joncich, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut: 1968, page 379.

Concerning Dewey's world view, he was reportedly also a socialist. Dewey made a pilgrimage to the Soviet Union with Cattell and apparently others in 1928, Cattell having made the arrangements with the Soviet government. (The source for this information is partly correspondence from Dewey to Cattell in the manuscript files of the Library of Congress. Cattell later referred to their 1928 trip to the Soviet Union in a talk he gave at a dinner in Dewey's honor at the Aristogenic Society in 1933. Cattell's talk at this dinner is also in the manuscript files of the Library of Congress.) In *John Dewey, His Thought and Influence*, edited by John Blewett, S. J., on page 34, Blewett told of Dewey's account to a friend, sixty years after it happened, of what could best be described as an emotional conversion experience to materialism. Dewey had said,

“I've never had any doubts since then,... nor any beliefs.  
To me, faith means not worrying.”

These “experts” had a Constitutional right to their beliefs or lack of them, including a right to their socialism, and a right to their devotion to Wundtian materialism. Yet, as said before, they were forbidden by the Constitution to shape a curriculum in reading or in anything else which was based on specific religious beliefs and then to promote such a sectarian program through government schools. This is, unfortunately, exactly what they appear to have done. No longer was their motivation for backing the deaf-mute reading method for hearing children to be based solely on perception experiments. To continue to endorse it, they would have to explain away the “Miss Middleton Effect.” That meant they were now building their case on philosophical and religious grounds, and not on scientific ones, by rejecting consciousness and free will as the probable explanation for the fluctuating scores.

Nor should this be considered a too-extreme view of their behavior, unless William James be considered too extreme in his views. On page 291 of his *Principles of Psychology* written in 1890, before he dismissed the possibility of true consciousness, James wrote the following. I have capitalized the most pertinent portion. However, like Dugald Stewart, William James was wrong in equating the will with attention, but he nevertheless clearly stated that the discussion of free will belonged in the “metaphysical” and not “scientific” category, since it concerned the possibility of “such a principle of spiritual activity.” Therefore, William James himself identified the discussion of free will as a religious, spiritual question.

“...when we see (as in the chapter on the will we shall see) that volition is nothing but attention; .....we must admit that the question whether attention involves such a principle of spiritual activity or not is metaphysical as well as psychological, and is well worthy of all the pains we can bestow on its solution. It is in fact the pivotal question of metaphysics, the very hinge on which our picture of the world shall swing from materialism, fatalism, monism, towards spiritualism, freedom, pluralism, - or else the other way....

“WHOEVER AFFIRMS EITHER CONCEPTION TO BE TRUE MUST DO SO ON METAPHYSICAL OR UNIVERSAL RATHER THAN ON SCIENTIFIC OR PARTICULAR GROUNDS.”

The foregoing, however, should not be considered an openness by James to traditional religion. On page 653, in his chapter, "The Perception of Reality," he said in a section headed, "The Influence of Emotion and Active Impulse on Belief":

"The reason of the belief is undoubtedly the bodily commotion which the exciting idea sets up. 'Nothing which I can feel like that can be false.' All our religious and supernatural beliefs are of this order."

In this second statement, William James defined faith as the product of a "bodily commotion" only different in its type from severe indigestion. It is also curious that, in this second statement, James contradicted his first statement. "All our religious and supernatural beliefs..." obviously fall into a "metaphysical or universal" category, and not a "scientific or particular" category. Therefore, as such, according to James' first statement concerning "metaphysical or universal" categories, the subject of "religious and supernatural beliefs" cannot be treated "scientifically" as he so ineptly attempted to do. Yet by the time James got around to making his second statement on page 653 about "bodily commotions" and "supernatural beliefs," he had forgotten all about his first statement on page 291 which had outlawed, in principle, the making of that second statement.

These early materialistic psychologists such as James, Dewey, Cattell and others are presented in the literature as the most rational of men. To understand them properly, however, they should be identified as implacable (and irrational) enemies of religion. Grave Constitutional questions are raised because of the enormous influence they and their followers have had on American school curriculum in all areas. This enormous influence has affected captive government school populations required by law to attend government schools in the absence of government-approved private facilities.

Metaphysical categories, however, should have been a problem for James on other grounds, since he had said:

"Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events."

In referring to the kind of philosophies on which James built that conclusion - the philosophies of men like Comte, Taine, Spencer, and Mill - Walter F. Cunningham, S. J., said on pages 67 and 69 of Notes on Epistemology, Fordham University Press, New York, 1930:

"There is a certain phase of Relativism which is at variance with our conception of truth, the phase, namely, that the human intellect cannot know anything that is fixed or absolute....

"Relativism, therefore, destroys all certitude and leads to universal scepticism; for it denies the absolute value of any principles; even metaphysical principles. Hence, no certitude, for all certitude, metaphysical, physical and moral, is based upon metaphysical principles or laws.... Consequently, Relativism is destructive of all science."

But William James, the Pragmatist, had said "Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events." Yet by James' time, in the late nineteenth century, Descartes' seventeenth-century sentence, "I think, therefore I am," had atrophied so badly that the only thing left for William James in that sentence was "think." From it, James built his idea of the undulating "stream of consciousness" that contained both the ideas to be proven true and the "events" to be used to prove the idea true.

James clearly did not understand attention, either, any more than he did "truth." S. J. Samuels has pointed out that research has shown the brain to be a "single channel processor," which means that our attention can only be on one thing at a time. In other words, consciousness is indivisible. That this



consciousness, or attention, can be free-floating, however, and is not determined, or automatic, or machine-like, has been quite clearly demonstrated by the results of research by Eric Klinger of the University of Minnesota. He has done research on what people are concentrating on at any given time, and done it in an ingenious way. His students carried “beepers” which, when they sounded, signaled the students to write down whatever they happened to be thinking about at that instant. A Discover article of November, 1980, stated:

“After analyzing hundreds of questionnaires, Klinger concluded that a great deal of thought is unrelated to the task at hand. It ranges from fantasy... to mundane considerations.... ‘If you define daydreaming as undirected thought, you could say that a third of our waking time we daydream,’ notes Klinger. ‘In fact, as I read the evidence, it may be our normal mode of thought. When we direct our thoughts, the remaining two-thirds of the time - that is, work with our heads in some deliberate, goal-oriented fashion - we have to make a special effort to do so,’”

So, we have to make a special effort, something we do with our wills, to direct our attention!

Yet these early twentieth-century psychologists denied free will and the possibility of free attention. When these psychologists had to produce an explanation for the startling and, apparently, unexpected scores like Miss Middleton’s wildly gyrating “silent reading comprehension scores,” they could not conclude that careless voluntary attention was the cause. If there were no such things as consciousness and free will, there could be no such thing as VOLUNTARY attention. They did discuss involuntary attention - simply the response to stimuli.

Dismissing the possibility of voluntary attention, they must have concluded the Miss Middleton Effect involved such involuntary attention. Their explanation for the effect most probably was that it happened because of two contradictory sets of materialistic “bonds” for printed words. The defective set of “phonic” bonds was the result of “unfortunate” phonic drill when the children were first taught to read, but the “correct” set of “meaning” bonds had also been established in the beginning, depending on how much time was spent on “reading for meaning.” Because of these mutually contradictory “bonds,” the children’s involuntary attention at upper grades while reading was presumed to be alternating between reading words sometimes for their meaning but sometimes only as sound. The “experts” would have had a scientific explanation for this: Thorndike<sup>39</sup> was supposed to have shown that there is no such thing as “transfer of training,” so that all of the phonic drill in the early grades would not have “transferred” to reading for meaning, but would only spasmodically rear its head at upper grades to short-circuit reading whole texts for their meaning.

Therefore, to cancel the “Miss Middleton Effect” of this constantly alternating attention which presumably interfered with “silent reading comprehension,” the “experts” would have to guarantee constant attention to meaning by using their deaf-mute method which forced attention to meaning by context-guessing from whole, meaning-bearing words, and which never dealt with isolated sounds.

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<sup>39</sup> Thorndike wrote three articles in 1917 on reading comprehension. Reading them is to some extent like reading warmed-over James: James had said on page 184 of his Principles of Psychology, in his chapter, “The Stream of Thought,” “(Consciousness) is always interested more in one part of its object (thought) than in another, and welcomes and rejects, or chooses, all the while it thinks...” Thorndike’s 1917 article, “The Psychology of Thinking in the Case of Reading,” sounds much like the above quotation from James after “bonds” took the place of their out-dated concept of consciousness: “These welcomings and rejectings, retainings and letting go are, however, themselves nothing more than situation-response bonds, when the response is attending to or turning from, cherishing, repeating, saying yes or no to, or the like...” Note that both men used variations of the words, “welcome” and “reject” and used the same idea of selection when thinking. Wrongful selection is Thorndike’s explanation for low reading comprehension and is the theme of all three articles. The articles are obviously refinements of ideas he originally learned from James.

Unfortunately for them, some phonics had to be used at that time even in the University of Chicago experimental school. That was because new vocabulary in reading books above the beginning level could not be reduced enough to do away with the need for phonics. For the method to be perfected, the vocabulary would have to be reduced enough so that true phonics could be dropped. It would be necessary to use only whole sight-word comparisons (“intrinsic phonics”) at least through the first three grades until a sufficient sight vocabulary was established of one or two thousand of the highest frequency words, but first they would have to identify those highest frequency words. Even at that time, it was known that a relatively small number of words probably composed the bulk of almost any selection.

It was confirmed by 1915 that only one thousand words compose about ninety per cent of most common material. The following is from Leonard Ayres’ 1915 work, *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling*, (pages 10-11) published by the Russell Sage Foundation and recently republished by Mott Media, Milford, Michigan:

“Thus the first of these figures shows that the 50 commonest words are repeated so frequently that with their repetitions they constitute nearly half of all the words we write. The first 300 words make up more than three-fourths of all writing of this kind and the 1,000 words with their repetitions constitute more than nine-tenths of this sort of written material.”

Therefore, anyone who knows the thousand highest-frequency words as “sight words” can score at 90%, or above the frustration level, when reading almost anything orally, even if incapable of reading any other words.

Mitford Mathews, in his book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, University of Chicago Press, 1966, page 155, referred to word frequency studies. His source was a 1959 article, “Spelling As A School Subject: A Brief History,” *National Elementary Principal*, XXXVIII (May 1959), pages 8-23, by Jean S. and Paul R. Hanna, which I have not been able to locate. Mathews said:

“From these studies there resulted a basic list of about three thousand words which comprise ninety-eight per cent of those used by children, and by adults in writing.”

The fact that only a surprisingly few words, out of the approximately half-million or so in English, compose about 98 per cent of most texts should have become very evident to Thorndike long before he completed his personally conducted, painstaking and boring ten-year-long count of words in literature, which resulted in his book of the ten thousand commonest words in 1921. The Hanna material, referred to earlier, showed that about 3,000 words compose some 98 per cent of most texts. Thorndike’s material when analyzed shows that some 9,000 words compose about 98 per cent of most texts, although Thorndike in no way openly referred to that fact. Yet, in comparison to the approximately half-million words in English, the difference between the Hanna 3,000 figure and the Thorndike 9,000 figure is relatively small.

It must also have been obvious to the “experts” like Thorndike and his clique, long before 1921, that only 2,000 words of those 3,000 (or 9,000) words could provide more than enough context for readers to “guess” the meaning of the remaining words in almost any reading selection. After all, that same “guessing” method had been used in the deaf-mute method for centuries but with a far smaller sight-word vocabulary. The remaining printed words, of course, from the half-million or so words in English above the level of the first 2,000 sight-words with the highest frequency, would have to be memorized later and gradually for their meaning to the extent that they were “important.” (The preface to Thorndike’s *The Teacher’s Word Book of 30,000 Words*, prepared in 1944 with Irving Lorge and published by Teachers College Press, New York, referred to teaching words on the basis of their “importance.”)

Thorndike wrote an article, "Improving the Ability to Read," for the Teachers College Record of October, 1934, which actually made the general intent of the "intrinsic phonics" method very clear, although he made no reference to that term. Thorndike said children entering fourth grade should:

"...see words as totals composed of such and such sequences of letters, so as to identify them and distinguish cart from cast, came from come, its from sit, hard from hark, bleed from bled, curtain from certain, and the like, with certainty and reasonable speed."

Thorndike said beginning fourth-graders should:

"...know two thousand or more printed words in the sense that they are able to say the words when they see them and to understand their meaning and to understand the meaning of any printed sentences restricted to these words which they could understand when heard. They can, when they see a word, outside these two thousand or more, infer its approximate sound well enough to enable them to say it with few exceptions, if it is a word which they already know as a heard word. The exceptions are of course words whose spelling [gives] very little help or is actually misleading concerning their [composition] or sounds (ache, acre, aid, anchor, and so forth). This ability to infer the meaning of words not seen before is the product not only of phonic habits but also of all sorts of experiences, habits and analogies dealing with words, sounds, and meanings."

The "phonic habits" he was talking about were nothing more nor less than Gates' "intrinsic phonics," or two-step whole-word phony phonics with context guessing. Note Thorndike's illuminating reference to words as "totals." The right side of the brain handles "totals" or "wholes" which are spatial, but it is the left side of the brain which handles language, and language is sequential. Long before 1934, psychologists certainly had that information about the right and left brain. Notice further that Thorndike said fourth-grade children should be able to distinguish its from sit. Phonically-trained children can do that before Halloween at the end of October in first grade, unless they are dyslexic. Incredibly, Thorndike said the word "aid" was difficult for fourth graders! Long before Christmas of first grade, phonically taught children can read pages of such regularly formed long vowel words like "aid"! Nor should "ache" or "anchor" give much difficulty to first graders by winter, once they have been taught the three sounds for "ch" (chin, Chicago, Christmas). For instance, exceedingly few phonically taught first-graders cannot read the word "Christmas" by Christmas and many of them can spell it, as well.

Therefore, Thorndike outlined "skills" for fourth graders who had "intrinsic phonics" which would have been barely passing at the first-grade level for properly taught synthetic phonics classes. (The great majority of children in good phonic first-grade programs have learned to read 2,000 words by June, and have the decoding abilities to read almost anything in print, unlike Thorndike's fourth-graders, who would only have acquired about 2,000 words.) Yet Thorndike scrupulously avoided any reference to the teaching of reading in the first three grades, actually opening the article with the sentence, "This discussion is not concerned with the teaching of reading in Grades 1 to 3." This was, to say the least, exceedingly strange, particularly since his two ex-students, Gates and Gray, had written the first-grade deaf-mute-method readers which by that time, 1934, were blanketing the entire United States.

That the Columbia-based "experts" were consciously working after 1911 for a change in methods to teach beginning reading is confirmed beyond any question by Henry Suzzallo's remarks quoted below and by H. A. Brown's remarks to be quoted shortly. Suzzallo had been Thorndike's admiring graduate student at Columbia Teachers College about 1901, as he stated in his talk contributed to the February, 1926, Thorndike honorary issue of Teachers College Record. Suzzallo received his doctorate at Teachers College in 1905. From that time (or possibly only from 1909), Suzzallo taught at Teachers College, being

Professor of the Philosophy of Education there from 1909 to 1915, when Suzzallo became president of the University of Washington, until he was fired by the Governor of the state of Washington in 1926, reportedly for too-aggressive fund-raising, according to Oehles' biography. After that, Suzzallo was associated with the Carnegie foundation until his death in 1933.

Suzzallo wrote the article, "Teaching Beginners to Read," in the 1913 Volume III of the *Cyclopedia of Education*. In it, he illustrated and discussed the "reading triangle." (That is my term, however. Suzzallo's illustration of that triangle is reproduced in Appendix A.) Suzzallo's illustration and his article establish that by 1913 his associates and he had a clear understanding of a fact which was later buried. That fact is that there are two different kinds of readers, one of whom uses the direct (subjective) approach, and the other the indirect (objective) approach to decoding the meaning of alphabetic print. The terms, "objective" and "subjective" were used by Oskar Messmer in Germany in 1903 to describe the types he had found through his perception experiments. One type read alphabetic print by the meaning of whole words and conscious guessing (subjectively), and the other type read alphabetic print by its syllables, without guessing (objectively).

Suzzallo's triangle had its points labeled: the lower right hand corner was labeled, "visual," the lower left hand corner, "sound," and the top of the triangle was labeled "meaning." Suzzallo made no reference to Messmer, but it is obvious Messmer's "subjective" readers made only one step from "visual," the sight of the print, directly to "meaning," and only later made a second step to sound. (Of course, badly taught deaf-mutes do not make the second step to sound, but stop at "meaning.") However, Messmer's "objective" readers would make two steps: one from "visual," the sight of the print, to "sound," the sound of the syllables, and only then make a second step to "meaning," obviously using an indirect approach.

Suzzallo felt that "meaning" was impaired by the longer, indirect, objective route (visual to sound to meaning) but protected by the shorter, direct, subjective route (visual to meaning, with sound appearing afterwards as an afterthought). The direct route, of course, is the deaf-mute sight-word method, where "sound" does not have to appear at all. Gallaudet's students all read that way, picking up sight-word meanings, but never producing any sound.

Suzzallo was a professor at Columbia in 1913, at which time its faculty included the psychologists, Dewey, Cattell and Thorndike. Their close friend, the psychologist, William James who taught at Harvard, had died in 1910. Similar diagrams to Suzzallo's "reading triangle" had appeared in 1890 in William James' psychology text to illustrate other sequences of thought (associations, in which one thought triggers another). Therefore, the reading triangle is obviously a psychological diagram. The 1913 "reading triangle" must have originated with the early psychologists such as James, Cattell, Dewey and Thorndike. Those four early psychologists, James, Cattell, Dewey and Thorndike, were closely associated for years, and it was apparently through his association with them that Suzzallo received the "reading triangle" theory.

Suzzallo said in his 1913 *Cyclopedia* article on reading:

"The most active battleground in the reform of school teaching is found in the primary grades, particularly in the first school year where beginners are taught to read.... A discussion of the problem of teaching beginners to read is, therefore, crucial."

By 1911, Thorndike had already begun work on the uncontrolled vocabulary problem which had made true phonics ("sound") necessary above first grade. When Thorndike completed his almost ten-years-long study to identify the 10,000 commonest words in English in 1921, it was possible for the first time to write the first true deaf-mute "meaning" readers to grade four with strictly controlled vocabulary for hearing children. Such reading books to grade 4 used only about two thousand of the

highest frequency words, plus a scattering of words above that level. Additional words above the 2,000 level could be introduced beginning at about grade four to the extent that the words were “important” (i.e., generally among the 10,000 commonest).

In 1911-1912 at Columbia, Thorndike had given for the first time his course, “Psychology of the Elementary School Subjects,” and it was on June 13, 1912, that H. A. Brown received his master’s degree from Columbia. It seems highly likely that Brown had been Thorndike’s graduate student, and Thorndike is known to have worked very closely with his graduate students, as shown by the bibliography of Thorndike’s work in the February, 1926, issue of Teachers College Record. Brown’s comments in the June, 1914, Elementary School Teacher concerning silent reading comprehension tests in New Hampshire strongly suggest a tie to Thorndike. That is particularly so since 1913-1914 was the first school year that Gray’s oral reading tests, prepared under Thorndike’s direct supervision, and Thorndike’s silent reading comprehension tests were ever used. It is interesting that what is probably the most famous paragraph from Thorndike’s 1914 silent reading comprehension test, Paragraph J, seemed to suggest possible heavy snowstorms in a town called Franklin, and Franklin in Brown’s New Hampshire is certainly subject to snowstorms. Paragraph J read:

“In Franklin, attendance upon school is required of every child between the ages of seven and fourteen on every day when school is in session unless the child is so ill as to be unable to go to school or some person in his house is ill with a contagious disease or the roads are impassable.”

In one of Thorndike’s 1917 articles on reading comprehension, he said of this paragraph:

“Thus Franklin in the paragraph quoted (J) varies from its exact meaning as a local unit through degrees of vagueness to meaning a man’s name....”

So the Franklin of this paragraph where the roads might be “impassable” must be a place where it snows very heavily in the winter, a place like Franklin, New Hampshire. Also, Thorndike obviously expected the children taking this test initially to perceive Franklin at the beginning of the paragraph in “its exact meaning as a local unit.” It is unlikely that San Francisco would be perceived as a “local unit” for children reading its name in New York City. The children taking the test must have lived in or near a place called Franklin where it snowed so heavily in the winter that the roads could be impassable. That certainly sounds like Franklin, New Hampshire.

It is this writer’s contention that the Columbia experts, Thorndike and his graduate student for the 1913-1914 year, W. S. Gray, who returned to Judd’s University of Chicago the following year, first worked out their new oral reading and reading comprehension tests in 1913-1914 in an “experimental” town. It is contended that this was probably a school district in which the printed word, “Franklin,” could be perceived by children as “a local unit,” in comparison to the names of other towns. The 1915 tests by Currier and Duguid to be described later strongly suggest that school district was either Tilton or Franklin, New Hampshire.

By 1914, Brown was Deputy State Superintendent of New Hampshire and wrote the following concerning the results of his own reading comprehension tests that had been given in many school districts in New Hampshire:

“It is entirely evident that these children are the kind so often seen who can read readily as far as mere word pronunciation goes but who do not apperceive, assimilate and retain the content of what is read in anything like an efficient manner.... The writer recently visited a school in which the reading appeared to be highly efficient. The children could stand and read a page with the utmost APPARENT ease and fluency.... It ... often happens that reading of this kind is in reality

of low grade.... It cannot be pointed out too often that reading is more than mere word-pronunciation. It is feared that some of our prevailing methods of instruction in primary reading are faulty for the reason that undue emphasis is placed on too rapid and too complete mastery of the difficulties of word pronunciation in the earliest stages of reading... this type of teaching produces a confirmed habit of reading words instead of thoughts... which the pupil never completely outgrows....

“The data which have grown out of these tests suggest emphatically that the prevailing pedagogy of primary reading is in need of thoroughgoing reconsideration.... a new and more correct pedagogy of primary reading must be constructed, based upon the known laws of the learning process.”

On the opposite page from the end of Brown’s article in that June, 1914, issue of the *Elementary School Teacher* of the University of Chicago was the review of Thorndike’s book on educational psychology, which was, of course, full of “known laws of the learning process,” the kind to which Brown had so approvingly referred. The placement of the Thorndike review hardly seems accidental.

Brown had referred to “The data which have grown out of these tests.” That data certainly sounded interesting, since it was presumed to have suggested so emphatically a necessity to make a change in methods for teaching beginning reading. So I went to look for a later article from Brown which might have included such fascinating data. If it had existed, Gray should certainly have included it in his 1925 research summary. Gray’s 1925 summary did show Brown’s 1914 article, but nothing further from Brown on that topic. Brown apparently never wrote a further article with that fascinating “data.”

Still wishing to see this “data,” I called the New Hampshire State Library. There was no such “data” there, either, though they did have a copy of Brown’s 1915 reading test, and sent me a photocopy.

Then I called the New Hampshire state archives. Did they have anything on tests given in 1912-1913, and 1913-1914? The archives also had nothing, but referred me to an administrator in another office, where they would have annual bound volumes on shelves with the title, *New Hampshire School Report*. There, I was assured, they would have the books lined up on the shelves reporting on New Hampshire education - one book for each year.

Apparently, I had found the right source. I telephoned that office and asked about the volumes for the academic years 1912-1913 and 1913-1914, the apparent years of Brown’s testing activity. The very kind woman on the other end of the phone offered to check the shelf for me for the years 1912-1913 and 1913-1914 to confirm those volumes were there before I traveled to New Hampshire to consult them. Yet I knew what she was going to tell me before she came back to the telephone, because it had happened to me often before in my research. She reported that the annual volumes for 1911-1912 and before were there, and so were the ones for 1914-1915 and afterwards. But the two volumes in between those years that I had asked for were missing.

Actually, I considered their absence to be a confirmation that really big events concerning reading instruction DID take place in New Hampshire in those years. I had received that same negative confirmation before in my library research, that I had turned up a reference to some critical material. The most notable instance was the missing Ayres scale in the Library of Congress, on which only the cover remained, inside which other material had been inserted.

The occurrence of New Hampshire, and, in particular, Franklin in connection with the names of the Columbia Teachers College experts in the years from 1912 to 1914 is the reason a famous article in the *Elementary School Journal* in 1916 is of particular interest. Lillian Beatrice Currier and Olive C. Duguid

of Franklin, New Hampshire wrote the 1916 article, "Phonics or No Phonics?" concerning first-grade classrooms in Tilton, New Hampshire, adjacent to Franklin, New Hampshire. Children in those Tilton first grades:

"...had no knowledge whatever of phonics. Words were developed by quick-perception and sense-content methods.... the classes having no phonics were found to enjoy reading....From the story they got the sense-content. They were less careful and less correct than the phonic classes in regard to word pronunciation. Keeping the sense in mind, they often substituted words from their own vocabulary for difficult or unfamiliar words in the text.... Fatigue was reduced, because curiosity in the story held the interest and caused the attention to be focused upon the outcome of the story...."

Those Tilton first-grade classrooms about 1915 were following the "expert" reading methods endorsed by the "experts" like Thorndike, Suzzallo and Brown. The psychology in use in those Tilton first grades was to take over most reading instruction in America by the early 1930's. It eventually produced a massive functional illiteracy problem in America. It also produced, beneath that visible obvious functional illiteracy, a severe crippling of literacy in much of the rest of the population, resulting in a widespread inability to profit adequately from higher education.

It certainly does not seem accidental that Thorndike's two graduate students, William Scott Gray and Arthur Irving Gates, with both of whom he had worked on a close, personal basis, produced the deaf-mute-method readers based on "correct" pedagogy in 1930. That was only 16 years after Thorndike gave one of the first silent reading comprehension tests in the world and was able to compare his scores to Gray's oral reading accuracy test scores. Gray had prepared his oral reading tests under Thorndike's direct supervision. Not long after the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method readers appeared in 1930, they and their imitators made a clean sweep of American schools. It should be clearly recognized that this is something that NO textbook, including Webster's and McGuffey's, had ever done before that, which, of course, raises questions on the improper and massive use of "influence."

There are additional unanswered questions concerning the interval between 1915, when the psychologists' apparently misinterpreted the Miss Middleton Effect, and 1930, when the true deaf-mute-method readers triumphantly arrived.

In the interval from 1915 to 1930, sight-word methods which were, however, forced to use some supplemental phonics above the first-grade level were adopted with increasing frequency all over the United States, although they remained in a minority. The many massive city school surveys carried out from about 1911 to 1920 which have themselves dropped into oblivion must have turned up distressing test data on the relative failure of such heavily "meaning"-oriented programs in comparison to the heavily "sound"-oriented programs. Certainly, by the 1920's, reading failure was rampant in places in Iowa which were using sight-word "meaning" methods, and it was these failures which caused the neurologist, Dr. Samuel T. Orton, to become involved in the reading controversy.

As the history demonstrates, the early psychologists were intimately associated originally with the deaf-mute sight-word "meaning" method, but their names are never associated with beginning reading instruction in the literature published after about 1920. That is why so much of the data in this history has had to be drawn from original sources.

It seems apparent from William Scott Gray's comments about 1940 in a Bloomfield-method first grade classroom, which comments were cited by Mathews in *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, that Gray retained his belief in the correctness of the deaf-mute method. However, it seems very unlikely that Gray's more sophisticated associates could have retained such a belief after 1920. (It was in the

experimental Lincoln School at Columbia Teachers College in New York in the 1920's, for instance, that Nelson Rockefeller and his brother acquired their "dyslexia," the same kind of thing that Dr. Orton was finding popping up all over Iowa, and the Lincoln School taught beginning reading by "meaning." In this connection, see the comments on Laura Zirbe's writings in Appendix D.)

The early psychologists Cattell, Thorndike, Dewey and Judd (all close friends) drew back after 1920 from public discussion of the sight-word method. (The psychologist, William James, had died in 1910.) Yet the evidence makes it clear that Cattell, Thorndike and Judd actively promoted the method through their students and later associates, Gates, Gray, Courtis, Buswell and others. (It is presumed Buswell had been Judd's student at the University of Chicago, where Judd and Buswell worked together for years.) Dewey had promoted the sight-word method implicitly by his writings before the turn of the century. Dewey denied the need to teach beginning reading formally, calling the emphasis on reading in the primary grades a "fetich."

Cattell, Thorndike, Dewey and Judd remained strangely silent on the deaf-mute sight-word method when it made a clean sweep in American schools after 1930. Nor did they speak out against the deaf-mute sight-word method when it became clear by the late 1930's that it was plunging a once-literate America into semi-literacy. Their silence raises questions beyond the scope of this history.

Three important questions, however, do need to be considered here. Did Cattell, Thorndike, Dewey, and their associates actually have enough influence to have altered the methods of teaching in American schools; were they, actually, very close associates; and, lastly, was their thinking so very much out of step with mainstream America at that time?

The record gives a clear "yes" to all three questions.

The last question can be considered first, concerning whether their thinking was very much out of step with mainstream America at that time. Cattell and John Dewey visited Russia in the summer of 1928, as previously mentioned. At a dinner for John Dewey at the University Club, New York, given by the Aristogenic Society on May 17, 1933, Cattell said:

"At the invitation of the Soviet government I was asked to organize and lead a party to visit that modern purgatory, half way between heaven and hell. When we got there I was nowhere for St. John was worshipped every where." [Ed.: meaning John Dewey].

How many Americans in 1928 would have been asked by the Soviet government to do anything? How many would have been willing to go to the Soviet Union, particularly if invited to do so? (It is true that Will Rogers, the beloved actor, made what was probably an unofficial visit, but he was an unusual man.) How many Americans, for instance, would have visited Hitler's Nazi Germany in the 1930's if they received a formal invitation from Adolf Hitler? To mainstream America, an officially-sponsored visit to Soviet Russia in the 1920's was, emotionally speaking, very like an officially-sponsored visit to Nazi Germany in the 1930's. By visiting the Soviet Union in 1928 "at the invitation of the Soviet government," Cattell and Dewey certainly demonstrated they were out of step with mainstream America, because mainstream America greatly disapproved of the Soviet Union. It was many years before the United States even granted diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Union, obviously because of public opinion.

The second question concerned whether the people who are charged with having jointly shaped American education to their liking were actually closely associated with each other. Three of the most influential were Cattell, Thorndike and Dewey. Cattell is generally acknowledged to have been one of the principal founders of experimental psychology in America, and to have been an influential publisher. Thorndike has generally been acknowledged as the leader in American educational thought in the



psychological sense for most of the fifty years in the first half of the twentieth century. Certainly Dewey was the educational leader in the philosophical sense in the first half of the twentieth century.

According to Sokal in his fine book on Cattell, *An Education in Psychology*, both Thorndike and Dewey visited Cattell at his home after Cattell had been fired from Columbia in 1917, when Cattell was in great disrepute with the general public because of his opposition to the draft in wartime. (Opposition to the war was a characteristic position of radical socialists at the time.) However, Thorndike's and Dewey's emotional support for Cattell at this very difficult time for Cattell is understandable and even praiseworthy, but it also confirms that a close personal relationship existed among the three of them in 1917. They all, of course, had been on the faculty of Columbia for many years.

Dewey's move from the University of Chicago to Columbia had been arranged by Cattell in 1904, as Cattell stated on the draft copy of his Aristogenic Society talk on Dewey in 1933, although Cattell had crossed that comment out on that draft copy which is now in the Library of Congress manuscript files. Cattell and Dewey had been friends since 1883 at Johns Hopkins University, where Dewey had been one of the subjects in Cattell's famous but ill-starred sight-word experiments (also cited by Sokal). Thorndike had been Cattell's student at Columbia before the turn of the century, immediately after having been William James' student at Harvard, where Thorndike kept his experimental chickens in the basement of William James' home, proving an exceedingly close relationship with James. (Joncich cited that last fact in her biography of Thorndike.)

The first question concerned whether these people had enough influence to have altered the methods of teaching in American schools. Cattell must have had enormous influence as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science from 1924 to at least 1941, and possibly to his death in 1944. Of course, he owned their magazine, *Science* from the 1890's until his death. He founded and published the major educational magazine, *School and Society*, and published many other materials, including the directory of leaders in science and the directory of leaders in education, both of which latter publications he also founded. (For men to be listed or omitted, and the type of listing given, obviously affected their subsequent careers in both science and education.) As has already been mentioned, Cattell was President of the International Congress of Psychology at Yale in 1929, an exceedingly influential meeting to which the famous psychologist, Pavlov, of the Soviet Union and luminaries from other countries came. Cattell was a cofounder of the Psychological Corporation (and probably the prime mover). The very large Cattell manuscript files in the Library of Congress, containing most of his correspondence and other papers, confirm that Cattell was an organizer and a wielder of influence, par excellence. Obviously, the Library of Congress does not accept the overflowing file drawers of just any deceased American but only accepts manuscript material which has great historical significance.

For instance, a most interesting series of letters in the Library of Congress are those from Edmund Burke Huey to Cattell. The first powerfully suggests that Huey was recruited to psychology by Cattell himself and possibly was his protege at Clark University under G. Stanley Hall. Huey's famous and enormously influential 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, may have been written in payment of such a debt to Cattell for his help in furthering Huey's career in psychology. After writing that 1908 book, Huey immediately dissociated himself from any further connection with reading instruction, which strange occurrence has been noted by many. The first letter in the manuscript files from Huey to Cattell was dated June 8, 1897, and was from the academy at which Huey taught Latin, where he said he had just handed in his resignation:

"I have finally decided to try to begin in earnest with psychology next fall.... I will only have about \$150 to begin with next fall. If it seems possible for me to earn my way at Columbia I

would like to begin there.... Is it possible for me to get a scholarship at this late day? I did not feel free to apply for one before. Am afraid I cannot enter if have tuition to pay.

“If I am not troubling you too much, would you let me know about the possibilities for a scholarship, and what would be the best (or a possible) means of earning money in the University? Am willing to do anything.

“Have been much interested in the little book by Jastrow and hope you will pardon me if I keep it just a little longer.”

Jastrow had been one of Cattell’s subjects in his reading experiments in 1883, and was later at the University of Wisconsin (from which Starch came, who worked on reading comprehension tests in 1914). The book may have been Jastrow’s *Aspects of Modern Psychology*, part of a publication, *Epitomes of Three Sciences*, 1890. The reference to Jastrow’s book which Cattell had obviously lent to Huey suggests Cattell was recruiting the Latin teacher to the field of psychology. Huey had graduated from Lafayette, Cattell’s alma mater and the school where Cattell’s father had been president for years, but apparently before Huey arrived. When Huey had said in 1897, “Am willing to do anything,” was the “anything” ultimately the writing of the famous 1908 book implicitly endorsing “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading, which endorsement was based partly on Cattell’s experiments?

In Lance Klass’s book written with Paolo Lionni, *The Leipzig Connection*, he said on page 67 that the first contact between the newly formed General Education Board in 1902, largely funded by Rockefeller money, and the “educators” came with a request for funds from Dr. James E. Russell, Dean of Columbia University’s Teachers’ College. Yet a considerably earlier and probably successful contact between the “educators” and the almost bottomless Rockefeller money had occurred before, and it was initiated solely by Cattell. The Cattell manuscript files in the Library of Congress show this interesting typewritten letter from Cattell to John D. Rockefeller, dated February 3, 1899, written from Cattell’s home in Garrison-on-Hudson on the letterhead of “Columbia University in the City of New York, Department of Psychology”:

“I venture to ask you to endow a chair on a lectureship in psychology in Columbia University. I do this assuming that you may be interested in our work in psychology owing to Mr. Strong’s connection with it.... I should prefer not to have it mentioned to Mr. Strong.”

Cattell had met the American, Strong, at Cambridge, England, in 1887 and had said, “He is one of the best men I know,” in a letter of May 14, 1887, quoted by Sokal. Strong later became John D. Rockefeller’s son-in-law. Strong obviously would have been embarrassed to have his father-in-law asked, in effect, to pay his salary at Columbia. Yet Cattell used the relationship anyway, without Strong’s knowledge, and probably succeeded at that time in raising a considerable sum of money for Columbia. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., answered Cattell on February 6, 1899, on a letterhead with only 26 Broadway, New York printed at the top. Rockefeller said that Strong was still out of the country, but that he did not want to deal with the matter until Strong returned, although he would not mention that anyone from the university had been in contact with him on the subject.

Cattell answered on February 8 and said:

“I am therefore grateful to you for the assurance that my name will not be mentioned in this connection....”

More correspondence, not to be seen by Strong, took place. Then, more than thirty years later, on January 17, 1931, Cattell wrote John D. Rockefeller, Jr., once again:

“You may remember that some thirty years ago, after a conversation we had in your office, Mr. Rockefeller gave \$100,000 to Columbia University to enlarge the work in psychology.”

In Cattell’s 1931 letter to John D. Rockefeller, he claimed he had not again asked for money after that \$100,000. The Cattell manuscript files show that Cattell approached Rockefeller for some financial support for the Psychology Department in 1901 and 1902, so the \$100,000 he referred to in 1931 must have been received in answer to those requests. By that time, presumably the initial support for Strong had also been received. The probability is that foundation moneys after the advent of Rockefeller’s General Education Board in 1902 made any further direct request from Cattell for funds unnecessary, which would explain why he did not again ask for money.

Yet Cattell presumably got what he asked for in 1899, and managed to use Strong without Strong’s knowledge. Cattell seemed to like to operate like that, in the shadows. A very curious letter of February 6, 1899, was sent to Cattell by Alexander Graham Bell, who sincerely congratulated Cattell on the success he was having with the magazine *Science*, which Bell had much earlier managed with a “Mr. Hubbard,” presumably Bell’s father-in-law. Cattell’s ownership of *Science* is clearly indicated in reference works today as dating from the mid-1890’s. With that fact in mind concerning the date of Cattell’s actually acquiring ownership of *Science*, note Alexander Graham Bell’s confusion as late as 1899 concerning the question of who actually owned *Science*. That was despite the fact that Bell and Hubbard had run the magazine just before Cattell. Note also that Bell not only exhibited no hostility to Cattell but actually sent Cattell \$500 for a bill Bell was supposed to have owed for many years, of which debt Bell had absolutely no knowledge! To be able to have any degree of influence with Alexander Graham Bell, as well as the John D. Rockefellers, senior and junior, was no ordinary accomplishment. This achievement is underscored by the fact that, at the time of these activities in 1899, the 39-year-old Cattell had no particularly high standing, but had just been a psychology professor at Columbia for less than ten years and was a budding publisher. Even Thorndike’s letters to his wife, (quoted in Joncich’s biography) before the Thorndikes’ marriage, concerning his contacts with Cattell when he first arrived at Columbia in 1897, suggest that Thorndike viewed Cattell as just one of the professors, and not a notable.

Bell’s remarkable letter of February 6, 1899, to Cattell read:

“Your note of the 3rd instant received. I have never fully understood the arrangement under which *Science* passed under your management. I simply had an understanding with Mr. Hubbard that I would help the Journal “*Science*” in such ways as he recommended. I don’t remember of receiving any letter from him on the subject, and we never discussed the matter personally, so that it is a surprise to me now to know that any promised subscription of ours had not been paid. I have been under the impression for the last few years that the Journal had been taken over by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and that any further contributions towards its support on our part were entirely unnecessary. Indeed I feel quite mortified at the discovery that an obligation on our part of five hundred dollars towards the expense of “*Science*” has been standing so long unpaid, and I hasten to enclose a check for the amount.

“I do this the more readily because I recognize that *Science* has been very ably conducted since it passed into your hands, and that it has become, under your management, the representative American journal for which Mr. Hubbard and I worked.

“As the matter has heretofore been entirely in Mr. Hubbard’s hands and I do not know the condition *Science* is in, don’t know who owns it, how it is supported or anything about it, I would be very glad of any information.

“Wishing you and Science every success, I am, my dear sir,

“Yours sincerely,  
Alexander Graham Bell”

Whether “Mr. Hubbard” was the same Hubbard who had worked on founding the first deaf-mute school in Massachusetts which taught the deaf to speak, and who was later Bell’s father-in-law, is not confirmed but appears probable.

It was only after Cattell’s death that the ownership of Science went to American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Some impressive testimony was given in 1902 that Cattell knew how to get contributions from such foundations as the General Education Board. That testimony came from a highly reliable source, considering the history of education in America in the twentieth century. The Cattell manuscript files contain a remarkable letter of July 17, 1902, from John Dewey, then Director of the School of Education at the University of Chicago. It is interesting that directly under the words, “The University of Chicago,” on Dewey’s letterhead with Dewey’s title appeared the words, “Founded by John D. Rockefeller.” Furthermore, Dewey’s typewritten letter had Cattell’s name misspelled as “Cattel” at the top and at the bottom. According to Cattell in the talk he gave at the Aristogenic Society in Dewey’s honor in 1933, Dewey read very rapidly. Dewey was probably a psycholinguistic reader incapable of proofreading his typist’s work. He certainly should have known how to spell Cattell’s correctly name since Dewey had known him at least since 1882, twenty years before at Johns Hopkins.

Dewey’s July 17, 1902 letter asked Cattell about Dewey’s chances for getting a grant from the Carnegie Institute Funds for work on anthropology for someone he would recommend, and that work on anthropology was meant to be applied to the education of children. Dewey enclosed a letter from a Miss Dopp<sup>40</sup>, who had just received her doctorate there, and who was the one he had in mind to do the work. Her letter outlined its nature. Dewey said he was also interested in applying for a grant himself to work with several people on a child psychology topic. He said he felt it was somewhat forward of him to send these proposals to Cattell to review, but he then made the remarkable comment that he felt Cattell would be better able to evaluate his chances on these research proposals than any other person he knew. Dewey obviously recognized Cattell’s abilities on the profitable use of “influence.”

Those letters from Huey, the Rockefellers, Alexander Graham Bell, John Dewey, and Cattell himself really do seem to make quite a court case to the effect that Cattell knew how to make very effective use of influence. The letters establish that, in the early years of the twentieth century, the movers-and-shakers around him, his close friends Dewey and Thorndike, could be the beneficiaries of Cattell’s talents in exerting influence through organizing and publishing activities. Thorndike and Dewey are generally acknowledged today in reference works as primary authorities in education in the first half of the twentieth century. I suspect that Cattell’s activities, particularly in publishing, probably had a great deal to do with establishing the reputations of Thorndike and Dewey.

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<sup>40</sup> An advertisement for Venezky’s fairly recent microfilm collection of primers, (which I have not seen), showed a text which also appeared in the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932. It was also reviewed and dated to 1916 by W. S. Gray in the 1917-1918 Elementary School Journal, page 382. The text was entitled Betty and Bobby at Home, A Primer, by Katharine Elizabeth Dopp. Dopp is an uncommon name. If she were the “Miss Dopp” to whom Dewey referred, that fact would place a possible tie between Dewey and the preparation of beginning reading materials. Dopp’s materials are discussed in Appendix C, under Rand, McNally.

The first question can therefore be answered in the affirmative: these people certainly had enough influence to change the course of American education.

## **Chapter 51**

### **The Baleful Effects of the 1930 Deaf-Mute Method Could Have Been Revealed by the 1915 Ayres Spelling Scale, So It Disappeared, Just as the Primary School Records in Boston Mysteriously Disappeared Over the Summer Vacation of 1878, Six Months After the “Meaning” Activists Had Grabbed Control of the Boston Schools Which Had Been Using Highly Successful Leigh Phonics.**

After 1930, children could no longer read with that “utmost ease” which had so displeased Brown in 1914, but, because their attention was involuntarily forced by the sight-word “guessing” method of reading, silent reading comprehension scores stabilized. Silent reading comprehension scores no longer fluctuated with the wild abandon that is sometimes seen when children possess truly automatic conditioned reflexes and have free, not forced, attention. The school administrators apparently thought the stable scores proved how bad phonics had been and how good the deaf-mute guessing method was by comparison, even when phonics classes which had been encouraged to pay close attention to reading comprehension tests scored far better than the deaf-mute-method sight-word classes.

The “experts” saw to it that, after the arrival of the deaf-mute-method readers in 1930, group tests of oral reading accuracy and group tests of written spelling accuracy were no longer used. Obviously, such tests would have made public the catastrophic drop in real achievement. The damage the deaf-mute sight-word method was doing was therefore conveniently hidden. The fake reading comprehension tests which took the place of the meaningful oral reading tests and written spelling tests do not really test reading, as discussed elsewhere. The French psychologist, Binet, used a reading comprehension test in 1908 to test basic intelligence, and so the early psychologists certainly knew that reading comprehension tests are a test of intelligence. Curiously, Thorndike implicitly admitted that fact in a famous series of articles he wrote on reading comprehension in 1917, listed in Appendix E, a bibliography of general reference materials on education history.

That such reading comprehension tests largely do, indeed, test inborn intelligence instead of learned skills is demonstrated by the kind of graph produced when large numbers of individual reading comprehension test scores are graphed. A bell curve usually results, which is the characteristic curve when inborn qualities in a population are measured. In contrast, a skewed curve is usually produced when taught skills in a population are measured.

Of course, psychologists such as Thorndike had such a flawed conception of the nature of the human mind that they undoubtedly could not properly handle the distinction between inborn and learned behaviors, although they certainly knew of their existence. The failure to handle that distinction properly arose because those psychologists made no distinction between the mind and the brain. They saw the intellect simply as an enormous collection of stimulus-response bonds embedded in the brain’s tissue, with consciousness resulting as a kind of accidental emanation.

That view is still very much with us, as demonstrated by the movie, 2,001 - A Space Odyssey, with its fascinating and malevolent character, Hal, who is nothing more nor less than a computer with consciousness; by Star Wars, and its amusing robot character, R2D2; and by Isaac Asimov’s numerous and highly entertaining robot stories. Such imaginative tales about conscious computers and conscious robots are a great deal of fun, but they are in the same scientific category as Cinderella with its fairy godmother, or The Wizard of Oz with its Wicked Witch of the West.

That such science fiction is also in the same literary category as well as in the same scientific category is emphasized by the fact that the same people who like fantasy, such as fairy tales or The Twilight Zone TV series, also like “scientific” Star Trek episodes and “scientific” robot stories. I am numbered among such enthusiasts and so speak from experience. Yet psychologists such as Thorndike saw nothing “unscientific” about their conviction that consciousness is some accidental kind of thing that somehow leaks out from the brain’s machinery. Nevertheless, it is that “unscientific” idea that has been the rationale for “robot” stories. The concept of the genie leaping out of Aladdin’s lamp, and only when the lamp has been rubbed, is, narratively speaking, based on a far more recognizable cause-effect foundation.

Nothing would have revealed the drop in reading achievement more than Leonard P. Ayres’ A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling, Russell Sage Foundation, 1915, which was still in print in 1928, according to The United States Catalog, Books in Print, January 1, 1928. From the 1928 price of 10c, this probably was the large paper scale itself, which sold for 5 cents when it was published in 1915, and not Part I, the book, which explained how the scale was made. The scale was the product of written spelling tests on the 1,000 commonest words in English, which tests were given to 70,000 children in grades 2 through 8 in 84 American cities during 1914 and 1915. The 1915 Ayres’ spelling scale demonstrated the astonishingly good spelling of American children in 1914-1915 (which also means astonishingly good reading). In addition to the fact that phonically-based spelling had come back to most American schools at second grade and above by the late 1880’s, since about 1900, American children at first grade had been taught to read by “sound” through heavy supplementary phonics drill. That was despite the fact that the first-grade reading books, like the apparently dominant Aldine readers, were usually sight-word sentence-method books. As a result of learning to read by “sound,” American children in 1914-1915 could read - and therefore spell - very well indeed. The fact that American children could spell and read very well in 1915 is scientifically confirmed by the existence of the Ayres spelling scale.

In 1914, a year before A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling was published by the Russell Sage Foundation, New York, the same foundation published The Public Schools of Springfield, which reported on a school survey in Springfield. One of the volumes contained Ayres’ report on the use of his spelling tests in 1914 in Springfield from grades two to eight. Ayres said:

“In all, 3,612 children were tested with words that children in other cities on the average spell 70 per cent correctly, and the result was that the final average for the Springfield children was also 70 per cent. It was found, however, that there was variation in the results for the different grades and schools.”

However, even the greatest differences between these smaller groups in Springfield in 1914 were not large, results varying roughly only about fifteen per cent above or below the 70 average.

Ayres’ spelling tests were used in other cities after his scale was published, and those results not only confirmed his 1914-1915 data, but suggested spelling might even be improving. Such tests were mentioned in an article which appeared in the Elementary School Journal in 1918 by Joseph P. O’Hern, who was Superintendent of Schools of Rochester, New York. O’Hern quoted the Ayres average of 70 for Springfield and then reported for comparison that Rochester averaged 82; Butte, Montana, 80; Oakland, California, 77; and Salt Lake City, Utah, 86.

Four copies of Part I of the 1915 Ayres work, the book, all of which copies probably originally included the folded Part II sheet, which is the scale itself, are currently available at the University of Chicago library. (Part II is apparently no longer in the library, unless I missed seeing it. All the statistical data is, however, also in the book.)

Guy T. Buswell (presumably a psychologist) and the psychologist Charles Hubbard Judd taught at the University of Chicago and were prominent reading “experts” along with William Scott Gray of the University of Chicago. Judd had been Thorndike’s classmate and was Cattell’s correspondent and close associate for many years (as shown by letters in the Library of Congress manuscript files). After Gray received his master’s degree under Thorndike at Columbia in 1914 for his work on oral reading accuracy tests, at which time Thorndike did his first work on silent reading comprehension tests, Gray went to the University of Chicago for his doctorate in 1917, which he received on the oral reading accuracy tests he had begun under Judd’s ex-classmate, Thorndike. From about 1915 to 1918, both Judd and Gray (and others) did research at the University of Chicago on oral reading accuracy and reading comprehension, which work had been funded by the Rockefeller’s General Education Board. That work was reported in Charles Hubbard Judd’s 1918 book, *Reading: Its Nature and Development*, The University of Chicago Press. Judd later worked closely with Buswell, publishing joint works with Buswell, as he had done with Gray.

Guy T. Buswell (1891-?) received his doctorate at the University of Chicago in 1920, and taught there from October, 1920, until October, 1949, after which he went to the University of California. Buswell became the principal author of the nationally used Ginn arithmetic series for elementary grades from at least 1938 into the 1960’s. The Library of Congress has over 50 cards for Buswell in its card catalog. Buswell’s writings concerned for the most part the teaching of reading and arithmetic, as well as the teaching of foreign languages and other topics, Yet apparently NONE of the Buswell entries were on spelling, despite Buswell’s (and Judd’s) great use between January, 1935, and 1947 of the four surviving copies of the Ayres scale at the University of Chicago.

To judge from the list of people after 1932 who signed their names at the back of the Ayres copies when borrowing those copies from the University of Chicago library, the greatest users by far of those four copies of the Ayres’ book (from which the inserted paper scale is now missing), were Buswell and Judd (or their subordinates who signed the materials out under Buswell’s and Judd’s names). After 1946, (Buswell left in 1949), Buswell’s name no longer appeared on the check out sheets. (Judd had left, apparently, in 1938, and his name last appeared in 1937.)

The check-out entries from 1930 to 1947, and the long gaps of time with few other names appearing besides Buswell’s and Judd’s, (or their students/subordinates, who entered Buswell’s and Judd’s names followed by their own initials) suggest that these University of Chicago copies may have been held in reserve by Buswell and Judd, or their associates. (Some other names also show a recurring pattern, such as Irene Carpenter from 1930.) If so, copies of the Ayres scale would not have been on the University of Chicago open library shelves from after 1930 until about 1947.

Furthermore, these copies were numbered. Copy 2 is dated 1929, so Copy 1, which is missing, must have been purchased earlier. Copy 3 shows its first probable date as 1932. Copy 5 shows its first date as 1935. Therefore, Copy 4 which is missing was dated between 1932 and 1935. The unnumbered copy is the last one, and is dated to the beginning of 1939. It seems apparent that the library had difficulty retaining copies, and so put new copies on the shelves over the years. Yet the actual use of the copies, which tabulation is given below, was relatively light. Therefore, why did the library find it necessary over a period of some ten years to buy six copies of a publication which had such light use, unless those copies kept eluding the librarians during shelf checks so that they kept ordering more?

Even if the copies were on the open shelves and not held in reserve for use only by Buswell and Judd or their students/subordinates or associates, their check-out dates confirm, almost beyond the slightest shadow of a doubt, that both Buswell and Judd had to know that American spelling achievement had plummeted to an absolutely astonishing degree after 1930, after the spread of the Dick and Jane



deaf-mute-method readers, in comparison to the excellent spelling achievement that had been scientifically obtained by Ayres all over America in 1915 and then recorded on his scale.

The four surviving copies in the University of Chicago library in the summer of 1985 were Copy 2, Copy 3, Copy 5, and the apparently newest copy which carried no number. Copy 1 and Copy 4 must have disappeared. A few of the entries were blurred and difficult to read. The check-outs on Copy 2 read:

5/1/29: Reserve. 2/3/30: Madge Trout; 2/4/30-2/5/30: Alvin Fishman; 5/15/30-5/15/30: I. Carpenter; ?/20/?-4/23/31: Irene Carpenter; 3/17/33?: C. Graybill; 1/24/35-1/29-35, C. H. Judd - M. D.; 7/10/35-7/11/35: C. H. Judd E. L.; 11/29/35-12/20/35 C. H. Judd - M. D; 4/18/36-4/18/36: F. S?. B....(Breed?); 1/19/37 G. T. Buswell; 11/16-11/17/39: G. T. Buswell (G. B.)

Copy 3 had an undecipherable entry which suggests it was first used by someone whose name cannot be read on April 23, 193-, probably 1932. That entry appeared only on the dark-colored card apparently retained by the library, but not on the white card which apparently remained in the book. The white card had only these three entries, terminating in 1935:

3/23/33-3/23/33: F. Burris, Fac. Ex.; (no date): I. Carpenter, #30; 5/20/35-5/25/35: I. Carpenter, 6027 Woodlawn.

The check-outs on Copy 5, which must have arrived in 1935, read:

3/15/35-5/1/35: C. H. Judd - M. D.; 5/1/35-(not clear): Bindery; 11/26/35-12??/9/35: G. T. Buswell; ?/3/36-5/28/36: C. H. Judd - M. D.; 10/20/36-10/21/36: W. J. Davis (Desk 44 crossed out, address given: 5825 Maryland Ave.; 10/21/36-10/22/36: Wallace J. Davis, Desk 44; 11/6/36: J. F. Mayer, 6126 Dorcheser Ave.; 11/17/36: (no name, just a large check mark); 6/7/37-9?/26/37: C. H. Judd (M. D.); 1/13/38-1/13/38: G. T. Buswell D. H.; 3/8/38-3/9/38: G. T. Buswell G. B.; (a name crossed out, without a check-out date); 10/24/40-?/2/41: W. Putzke, Fac. Ex.; (next space: only 6/10/41); 2/3/42-2/4/42: M. ?Tona?, 1020 Oakdale; 10/4/46-12/10/46: I. Catline Mortz, Faculty box #195; 7/10/53, Myra Vickery, Int. House.

The check-outs on the unnumbered copy which must have arrived in 1939 read:

2/5/39-2/7/39: Alfred Schempf, 1615 Cleveland; 10/2/39-1/9/40: H. E. Richardson, Fac. Ex.; 12/9/40-12/10/40: G. T. Buswell; 3/12/41-3/13/41: G. T. Buswell, Fac.; 9/30/41-(?) H. E. Richardson, Faculty; 7/5/45-7/10/45: G. T. Buswell by M. S. Dobbins(?); 2/14/46-3/2/46: G. T. Buswell - B. H. Carlton (?); 2/5/47-2/5/47: E. Kruse? Mr. Harris? (undecipherable), Grad. Ed. ?324?; 1/28/56-2/9/56: Phyllis Tedesco, 1340 Hyde Park.

Therefore, at least four copies survive at the University of Chicago Library, where they were used most by Buswell and Judd..

However, at Teachers College, Columbia, where Judd's ex-classmate E. L. Thorndike had been located (and J. M. Cattell's ex-classmate John Dewey had been at Columbia), no copy of the 1915 Ayres scale was available under its proper name when I requested it by interlibrary loan. One copy was finally located filed under a wrong title, and with 1934 the first date shown on the check-out sheet pasted in the back of the book. The book, therefore, was presumably new to the library there in 1934. That was the only copy of the Ayres spelling scale which survived at Columbia Teachers College. That was despite the fact that Dr. Burdette Ross Buckingham of Columbia Teachers College, who had written *Spelling Ability, Its Measurement and Distribution*, published at Teachers College, Columbia, University in 1913, presumably his doctoral dissertation, had published a sequel to the Ayres' scale in 1919. That certainly

indicated a real interest by some people from Columbia Teachers College in Ayres' work as late as 1919. So the library there must once have had copies earlier than 1934.

That Columbia Teachers College Library surviving copy with the pasted-in check-out sheet showing the first date of check-out as August 2, 1934, also had a check-out card in the pocket at the back of the book. However, both the check-out card, which presumably at one time was retained in the library when the book was checked out, and the pocket to hold the card, showed that they had been erased and mislabeled. They both read incorrectly Ayres' Spelling Scale instead of A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling, and neither showed the author's name, Leonard P. Ayres. The call number had also been erased and written in as 370.8, R. 91, No. 139. It seems very possible that a discarded check-out sheet and card for some other book were re-used for this book.

"No. 139" was the Russell Sage Foundation number for that publication, so possibly the copy had been made part of Columbia Teachers College Library's total Russell Sage collection in 1934. However, why did the check-out card and the card pocket not show the correct title, and why did they omit the author's name? The local librarian who requested the inter-library loan for me told me that the Teachers College Library had trouble finding the copy, which is hardly surprising.

Furthermore, no user's name appeared on the erased and re-labeled check-out card to correspond to that August 2, 1934, first check-out date on the pasted-in check-out sheet opposite the card's pocket. That copy remained unused for another year and so therefore may not have been on the shelves of the Columbia Teachers College library for that year. The next check-out dates on the card in the pocket at the back of the book did show the names of the users, which they wrote in themselves, to correspond with the check-out dates stamped on the pasted-in check-out sheet opposite the card's pocket. Those dates were August 12, 1935; July 28, 1936; August 32, 1938; and January 16, 1939, followed by occasional use until 1971, when the library apparently stopped using that check-out sheet and card system but left the old check-out card with the record of the book's use in the pocket at the back of the book, along with the corresponding check-out sheet pasted on the leaf opposite it.

Since a card for the library's card catalog, if it existed, would presumably match the check-out card in the back of the book, it would therefore not have been filed under the correct title, A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling, nor under the author's name, "Ayres, Leonard P." Therefore, it could not have been turned up by checking the card catalog under those correct entries. It is my opinion that the surviving copy of the Ayres spelling material at Columbia Teachers College which was put on the shelves under the wrong name some time after 1934 was very probably put there to defeat someone else's prior efforts to remove copies of the Ayres' material from the Columbia Teachers College Library.

In this connection, in Charles F. Heartman's third edition of his *Bibliographical Check-List of the New England Primer* which was published in 1934, he remarked on the:

"...most curious fact [that some primers could no longer be located] probably due to the crime wave which spread, a few years ago, over all the libraries in the country."

Similar disappearances of library books had not, however, registered as a crime in the Soviet Union. In Robert H. McNeal's biography of Lenin's wife, Krupskaya, *Bride of the Revolution*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan: 1972, he told of her penchant for carrying out such periodic sweeps of Soviet libraries in the 1920's to remove "objectionable" books.

To obtain the Ayres spelling scale today in the New York Public Library, the card catalog states, "Copy only words underlined and classmark." This produces only the following on the call slip: "SA (Russell) Russell Sage Foundation Recreation (and Education) Departments. (Publ.) No. 139." That is

also what appears on the binding of the book, and that also means that is how it is filed. Therefore, the only surviving copy of the Ayres scale in the New York Public Library is part of their complete Russell Sage Foundation set of publications. An internal stamp on that copy shows they received it in 1915, and it presumably was bound and added to the previous 138 Russell Sage Foundation publications, or was received in that unusual bound fashion directly from the foundation to add to an existing set. That copy would presumably be placed on a shelf with all the rest of the Russell Sage material instead of being placed with other spelling texts on a shelf for spelling material. Without the use of today's card catalog listing Ayres, the actual contents of the New York Public Library copy could only be found by either knowing the call number, SA (Russell) No. 139, or by opening all 139 plus volumes in the series on the shelves, since the binding tells nothing of the contents beyond the call number. Yet presumably, at one time, the New York Public Library must have had another copy or copies of the Ayres spelling scale filed under spelling.

When I requested the Ayres spelling scale at the Library of Congress in Washington, the only thing the clerks could find to send down to me was the cover of the Ayres spelling scale with the Ayres handwriting scale inserted instead of the spelling scale. I was therefore later permitted to look myself at the shelf stacks in the Adams Building of the Library of Congress to see if I could locate the spelling scale. I found that only that cover of the Ayres spelling scale was on the shelf assigned to it. Ayres' handwriting scale was inside that cover, not his spelling scale, and its binding showed where the original material had been ripped out, leaving several broken stitches. Multiple copies of Ayres' handwriting scale were on shelves nearby. Someone obviously had meddled with the Library of Congress material some time in the past. Since multiple copies of the Ayres' handwriting scale are in their collection now, it is reasonable to assume they should once have had multiple copies of his spelling scale, and not just its cover, with a copy of the Ayres handwriting scale inserted to fill it up to make it look natural during any shelf checks.

No copy of the Ayres scale is available at the British Library in London, or any of Leonard Ayres' work at the Russell Sage Foundation, but other writings of Ayres are listed in their card catalog.

Harvard's wonderful collection of textbooks is unparalleled in America, so it is not surprising that they also have copies of the Ayres' scale, as well as copies of Gallaudet's primer, Worcester's primer, Keagy's primer, the Franklin Primers (all three versions) and much other rare material so essential to an understanding of the history of the teaching of beginning reading in America. After the death of William James in 1910 and despite Dana's presence there as a professor in 1932, Harvard seems to have been somewhat outside the "experts'" circle and more immune to their meddling than many other universities. However, the filing system that Harvard used at that time may also have provided some protection. It is my understanding that education materials were not handled in a separate library building at Harvard in the early 1930's as they are now, but were mixed in with Harvard's vast collections, so presumably education materials would have been less accessible at that time. As an auditing student in the summer of 1986, I had regular access to most of Harvard's huge stacks spread over many library floors in the main library, (and they have other libraries, as well, including the education library) and found that the vastness of Harvard's collections is breathtaking.

The Union Catalog shows a few copies of the Ayres' book and scale in some other American libraries. It should also turn up from time to time in used book stores since the book, Part I, was in print for years from 1915 to some time before 1928, and the paper scale itself, Part II, was still on sale in 1928. The book with the scale included (in a different printed set-up than the original separate paper scale) has recently been republished by Mott Media, Inc., Milford, Michigan. However, their preface attributed to me was not written by me. It was their attempt to digest a long history I sent them at their request to be used as a preface, and it is inaccurate in some places.

It seems apparent that an effort was made by persons at the University of Chicago and Columbia Teachers College to remove the 1915 Ayres book and scale from open circulation about 1932 because they could be used to demonstrate the drop in achievement caused by the deaf-mute method readers that were in use after 1930. The drop in achievement must have been becoming very evident in the primary grades by 1932. If publicity had ever appeared comparing the spelling scores from the deaf-mute-method readers in 1932 to Ayres' second-grade scores in 1915, that could have been a death blow to the deaf-mute-method readers. Therefore, the "experts" certainly had a powerful motive to bury the Ayres' scale by using all the influence available to them.

Ayres had demonstrated elsewhere that children were seldom more than two years below grade level in 1909, and city children had to stay in school till about fourteen years of age or older in 1914 and 1915. Therefore, spelling scores for fifth-grade city children in 1914 and 1915 represented spelling scores for almost ALL American children of fifth-grade age or older. Ayres' scores on his scale therefore provide irrefutable proof that virtually 100 percent of American city children of fifth-grade age or older were literate in 1915, including Blacks and foreign-born. No "adult illiteracy" resulted in those years for children attending American schools because they were taught to read by "sound." The Ayres 1915 scores would have provided a startling contrast to the kind of results achieved by the 1930 deaf-mute-method readers, and such results must have already been showing up at second and third grade in 1932.

Perhaps no group has been hurt by the deaf-mute method more than Blacks, as, in contrast to today, city Black students in America demonstrated virtually no illiteracy in 1915, as proven by the Ayres scale. Since so many Blacks are gifted in music and speech ("sound"), they appear to have been hurt worse than other people by the 1930 deaf-mute beginning reading method which dispensed with true phonics ("sound"). Yet, not surprisingly, as demonstrated by Marva Collins' extraordinary results in teaching true literature to city Black children today after having taught them to read by true phonics, Black children achieve better than average results on literature and language when they are taught by true phonics. (I remember the comment of my dear cousin-in-law, the late Duryea Breslin, who went to school in Jersey City in the 1920's, when phonics was the norm: "The Black kids were always the smart ones.") A slogan for a group supporting scholarships for Black students is, roughly, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." The waste of so many minds, particularly Black minds, since the arrival of the deaf-mute beginning reading method in 1930 is so enormous that it is incomprehensible.

Students who scored so high on the 1915 Ayres' scale are quite a contrast to the flood of adult illiterates we have today who were taught how NOT to read by the deaf-mute "meaning" method after 1930 in our benighted government schools. That method was introduced in 1930 by Arthur I. Gates of Columbia Teachers College and William Scott Gray of the University of Chicago, the proteges of the psychologists, Thorndike and Judd of those universities. It was in the libraries of those schools that the Ayres' scale was so curiously mishandled, after about 1932, and in the University of Chicago by Judd himself.

The suggestion that activists of various and unrelated species may have had hidden game plans for a very long time is rejected by liberals and conservatives alike, being regarded as a delusion of the mentally unbalanced. That attitude has served as a great protection for some activists, as when President Harry S. Truman rejected as madness the idea that the United States Government could have been infiltrated with any subversives. Yet J. P. Morgan's remark, quoted previously, "A man always has two reasons for doing anything - a good reason and the real reason." certainly applied to some people who were in the government at that time. Alger Hiss was not the only subversive.

The "real reason" for the disappearance of the Ayres scale from libraries and from the literature was almost certainly not a gradual loss of interest in that material. It is far more probable (in fact, almost

certain) that there was a coordinated effort to bury the incriminating testimony so baldly given by the Ayres scale concerning the drop in literacy caused by the deaf-mute-method readers.

The burying of past history may well have concerned other materials besides the Ayres scale. The huge catalog at the New York Public Library entitled *American Book Publishing Record - Cumulative 1879-1949*, R. Bowker, Co., 1980, lists many pre-1879 texts which almost certainly were not in print in 1879. This is puzzling but helpful to a researcher. (I may have missed some explanation on why pre-1879 texts were included.) However, this massive catalog is grossly defective, showing signs of tampering. It could obviously have been subject to such tampering by the employees charged with preparing it without the knowledge of its publishers, R. Bowker Company. (Presumably, there were earlier editions used to prepare the 1980 edition, so that the tampering might have been done many years ago.)

For instance, while the catalog lists various school texts of the very large and important Appleton company in the nineteenth century, it leaves out the highly important Appleton reading series of 1878. Furthermore, of the three authors who compiled the Appleton reading series, no listing of the series is given under their names. One was William Torrey Harris, superintendent of schools in St. Louis in 1878 and later United States Commissioner of Education; another was Mark Bailey, professor of elocution at Yale University; and the third was Andrew J. Rickoff, Superintendent of Schools in Cleveland, Ohio. The series' principal author, the enormously important figure in education, William Torrey Harris, has only ONE entry shown under his name, on something he wrote concerning Hegel, although Harris was a prolific author.

The highly successful Appleton series of 1878 with its phony phonics was the series which crowded out Leigh pronouncing print which had begun to take over American schools in the 1870's. Edwin Leigh and his pronouncing print introduced in his 1864 book were once so famous that most popular reading series in America by 1875 had available editions in Leigh print for their beginning reading books. Leigh won a prize at the world's fair in Vienna, Austria, in 1873. Yet Leigh is almost anonymous in *The American Book Publishing Record*, the only entry for Leigh being a very obscure one in 1872, *The New Guide to Modern Conversation in Various Languages Edited in Pronouncing Orthography*. (The catalog does show that some earlier reading series than Appleton's were available in Leigh print, however.)

Nor can the critically important 1873 Franklin Primer be tracked down in *The American Book Publishing Record*. Under titles, an entry does appear for the Franklin series, but I could not locate it in the section given. Under the name of one of its authors, Campbell, no mention was made of the series. Unless I missed something, under the name of the senior author, Hillard, only his first series and the first series he wrote with Campbell are listed, but not the Franklin series.

If the history were known concerning the widespread use of the Appleton readers (as well as the Franklin readers) and concerning Leigh and the nature of his print, the McGuffey Myth would be destroyed. That is the probable reason for the tampering which appears to have been done at some time in the past on *The American Book Publishing Record*. If the true history were known, the blanketing of America after 1930 with the deaf-mute-method "Dick and Jane" readers would have appeared as weird as it actually was, instead of being in the fake "tradition" of McGuffey's. That fake "tradition," manufactured by November, 1927, with the publication of the Saturday Evening Post article, "That Guy McGuffey," was that eight out of ten (and later nine out of ten) Americans in the nineteenth century were supposed to have learned to read with the McGuffey Readers. (A secondary reason, as mentioned in the discussion of Reeder's history and elsewhere, was probably to erase the Quincy/Boston/Cambridge and Franklin series/Appleton series 1870's story concerning the organized opposition to Leigh's phonics.)

Furthermore, the truly phonic 1879-1881 McGuffey's edition is often cited to show that America learned largely by phonics in the nineteenth century. Yet the original McGuffey's before 1879, with

completely different books up the fourth grade level, was published in Leigh print in the beginning books from the late 1860's. If the nature of Leigh print were widely known, the publishing of these earlier McGuffey books in Leigh print would certainly be questioned, since they were supposed to be phonic books and therefore would have had no need for special phonic editions. (They were, of course, not phonic texts.)

Nila Banton Smith in her so-called "history," written originally about 1932 at the height of the promotion of the deaf-mute method readers, mentioned neither Appleton's nor Leigh print, although she gave great prominence to the McGuffey Myth, quoting the "nine-out-of-ten- Americans" figure published by Sullivan in 1928. (In her much later revision, she did mention the use of a phonetic print in St. Louis, apparently because a much later article by John Downing, the promoter of ITA print, had done so, but she did not identify it as Leigh print. Yet, on the same page 394, she listed Leigh print as among expanded alphabets used between 1870 and 1920: Leigh, Shearer, Funk and Wagnell, and Ward.) As previously discussed, she produced an absolute hash of confusion concerning the Franklin Primers, "accidentally," of course. This tends to confirm that "experts" about 1932 were dropping the Appleton series, the Franklin series and Leigh print into education's black hole in order to safeguard the McGuffey Myth. This was in addition to obliterating the Ayres' 1915 scale and its scores, which scores would have been very embarrassing if compared to the results obtained with the 1930 "Dick and Jane" readers.

Besides the omission of the Appleton readers and much else that is meaningful in that massive catalog of many volumes, American Book Publishing Record - Cumulative 1879-1949, something else is noticeable about the series. Anyone wishing thoroughly to research reading instruction history would find those volumes virtually useless unless he knew ahead of time the names of the books and authors he wished to research. Yet no reliable list has ever existed of reading books published in America.

All such gross defects, of course, are shrugged off by most sane people like Harry Truman as coincidences. Are they coincidences, or do they represent conscious tampering?

As mentioned earlier, I once held in my hands the cover of the sole Library of Congress copy of Ayres' A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling. That cover had once held the book, Part I, and probably the scale, Part II. With my own eyes, I saw the broken stitches on its inside binding where the original contents had been ripped out.

A loose copy of Ayres' handwriting scale material had been inserted to fill it up. Many Ayres' handwriting scale texts were on a shelf nearby. While it is possible, it appears highly unlikely that a librarian found a handwriting scale text which inexplicably lacked its binding and then mindlessly inserted it into the inexplicably empty binding which had once held the sole remaining copy in the Library of Congress of the Ayres spelling scale material. I personally do not consider it to be mindless vandalism or simple theft that the Ayres' spelling scale material was ripped out of that only surviving copy in the Library of Congress and that Ayres' handwriting scale material was inserted in its place, where it was then returned to the shelves to masquerade as the Ayres' spelling scale material with no one the wiser, even when the librarians made periodic shelf checks.

If it were simply theft, would a thief have gone to the trouble to insert Ayres' handwriting material in place of Ayres' spelling material? No check is made at the Library of Congress when books are returned. An empty spelling scale cover after the scale was ripped out could therefore have been placed on the return shelf in the middle of a pile of other books or simply left in a pile of books on one of the hosts of readers' desks. No clerk would have noticed that the cover was empty until the thief had safely disappeared. Yet it was obviously not such a simple theft of the scale that the thief was attempting, but a deliberate subterfuge. By inserting the handwriting scale which was very similar in appearance inside the spelling cover, the clerks would not be aware that anything was actually missing. After all, the Library of

Congress certainly could not attempt to replace the missing spelling scale if its clerks did not even know that it had been stolen.

Beyond any possibility of doubt, those missing spelling scale contents had given massive statistical proof that American students had been almost universally literate in 1915. My conclusion is that it was no ordinary thief who ripped the contents out of that sole surviving copy in the Library of Congress of Ayres' A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling and then inserted a handwriting scale to hide his theft from the clerks who were returning the books to their shelves.

## **Chapter 52**

### **A Discussion of “Expert” Reference Works in Contrast to More Reliable Texts**

Almost the only periodical education publications available after 1900 in most libraries are Columbia’s Teachers College Record and the University of Chicago’s Elementary School Journal. As publications of the very universities where the baleful “experts” were located, these materials most naturally must be consulted with the greatest of caution. Another periodical source is James McKeen Cattell’s School and Society, the title for which Cattell took from one of the books of his close friend, John Dewey. Needless to say, anything published by Cattell should be carefully examined.

About the turn of the century, a society of the Herbartians had turned into the National Society for the Study of Education. Paper never refuses ink, and a lot of paper and ink were used up printing the Yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education, the worst of which was probably the 24th in 1925, to which Gray contributed. The Yearbooks are of interest because whatever confusions the “experts” were peddling in any given year seem always to turn up in the Yearbooks for that year. Therefore, these Yearbooks are an excellent resource for twentieth century education in America.

Since American education has been dominated by “experts” for about one hundred and seventy years, it is to be regretted that such historically useful Yearbooks only date from the twentieth century. Those of most interest are shown in Appendix D. Appendix D is a heavily annotated listing of all the texts I have been able to locate concerning reading instruction which were published from the early nineteenth century until about 1930. It is intended as a guide to actual classroom practices in the teaching of reading during those years.

However, probably the single most reliable indicator to teaching methods in actual use are the reading texts published during any period, but, as indicated elsewhere, such texts cannot be considered in isolation. Appendix B to this book is a heavily annotated list of American reading texts known to me from the seventeenth century to 1880, listed in chronological order. In addition, the attached Appendix C to this book is a very long and heavily annotated bibliography of reading texts known to me published from 1880 until today, but arranged chronologically under publishers’ names, and not simply chronologically. The publishers’ entries themselves are arranged chronologically, with the oldest appearing first, and the others in the order of their appearance in the records. The oldest publishers, of course, also had books published before 1880, and therefore such materials are listed again under the publishers’ names in Appendix C, even though they had already been listed in the purely chronological entries in Appendix B which ended at 1880.

Even though incomplete (and I believe it would be an impossibility to compile complete appendices), Appendices B, C, and D should provide a usable background on the history of reading instruction in America. Although Appendix B and Appendix C to this book only list reading texts known to me, the very bulk of its nineteenth century material should make evident how ludicrous is the McGuffey Myth, with its claim that nine out of ten Americans in the nineteenth century learned to read with the McGuffey readers.

Appendix E lists many publications which provide useful information concerning the history contained in this text, many of which were drawn upon in the writing of this text.



The appendices certainly are not presented as complete, but simply as an honest effort to prepare a representative list of materials which is, so far as I know, available no where else. To depend instead on presently available reference works concerning reading instruction history results in misunderstanding. Histories of reading instruction are generally very faulty, particularly Nila Banton Smith's "history," on which so many other writers have depended, even initially Rudolf Flesch, himself.

However, Nila Banton Smith correctly listed some "supervision" texts, and the titles she gave are also included in Appendix D since they concern methods. After all, the "new" methods after 1925 would have to be "supervised." After 1930, it has been said that grade school teachers sometimes closed their doors and pulled down their window shades if they wanted to teach real phonics. Dr. Hilde L. Mosse reported on page 121, Volume I, of *The Complete Handbook of Children's Reading Disorders*, The Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York, 1982:

"I have myself experienced how much fighting rages about the whole-word method. In May 1960, I attended the Congress of the International Reading Association. Teachers, reading specialists, school principals, and administrators were present in our discussion group. But no discussion got started. I finally said that as a psychiatrist I felt I could discuss something they seemed so anxious to avoid. I spoke about the whole-word method as a cause for reading, writing, and spelling disorders. The reaction was astonishing. It was as though a floodgate had opened, and teachers and others spoke freely, openly and passionately. They described how they (especially the older teachers) had been aware of the great harmfulness of the whole-word method for a long time, but that they had been completely helpless and powerless since they were being forced to use this method. Those teachers who in desperation had the courage to teach phonetics had to do so secretly. Some even had to tell the children to do something else quickly whenever someone entered the room."

Beyond any doubt, however, most teachers accepted the psychological jargon justifying the deaf-mute-method readers when they first arrived. If there had been a mass rebellion among primary grade teachers at that time, the materials would have failed. Those primary grade teachers who saw through the snake-oil sales talk were obviously in the minority, just as Mae Carden was a tiny minority among the graduate students at Columbia Teachers College in the early 1930's. Also, it is apparent that virtually none of the school administrators about 1930 were able to anticipate the harm the materials would do, because nothing appears in the records concerning any opposition to the deaf-mute-method readers from school administrators. Of course, the readers were not called the deaf-mute-method readers as they should have been because that would certainly have aroused grave suspicions among the administrators. Instead, they were described as readers using the new "intrinsic" phonics.

I began teaching in September, 1963, at the age of 37. Yet the teachers in my building were almost all younger than I, so that they had themselves learned to read well after 1930 by sight-words, and they had heard about nothing else in their teachers' colleges. That is because they had only been exposed in their training and subsequent professional literature to reference works by "experts." I therefore found no such reaction with these younger teachers as Dr. Mosse found in the 1960 discussion group she described which was composed probably of older teachers. Although these younger teachers were required to use the same Scott, Foresman and Ginn readers which outraged me, they seemed completely unaware of the appalling, non-phonetic nature of the materials. I gravely doubt that any of these younger teachers had ever read Rudolf Flesch's 1955 *Why Johnny Can't Read* and most probably had never heard of it.

Those few teachers who had trained as reading specialists accepted unquestioningly the whole sight-word philosophy, and had been conditioned to reject anything concerning phonics. I remember one reading specialist who said, in real sincerity, that the thing to read were the reviews on Dr. Chall's book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*, instead of the book, itself! Another reacted with distress at the very

mention of the word, “Carden.” Yet Mae Carden was astonishingly successful with her phonic materials. See The Saturday Evening Post article of September 9, 1961, “These Children Love to Read,” by Frances Rummel, about Mae Carden’s enormous success in teaching reading by phonics.

There was no malice on the part of these teachers and specialists, of course. They were themselves simply the victims of thought-control exercised through the teachers’ colleges which had “certified” them to teach reading. When I took courses at William Paterson Teachers’ College in Wayne, New Jersey, in 1976, I found the library did not even have a copy of Rudolf Flesch’s famous 1955 *Why Johnny Can’t Read*, and Jean Chall’s *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* was never available, despite repeated requests at the desk and despite the fact that, unlike Flesch’s book, it was at least in the card catalog. No student there who relied on the library could be “damaged” by the heretical views in either book.

As a salesman for Dr. Walcutt’s phonic Lippincott readers said to me about 1986, “The phonics battle has been fought and lost.” It was fought and lost a long time ago, because thought control works, particularly when it is tied to “certification” of teachers by the government. Therefore, Nila Banton Smith’s “supervision” texts for teaching of sight reading are not needed any more, because the phonics battle in the government schools has been over for a long time. Except for a very few mavericks, teachers do what they were “certified” to do. They follow the sight-word manuals written by “experts.”

Nila Banton Smith’s “history” is almost totally misleading, despite its inclusion of some actual titles of textbooks and manuals for teachers after 1900 which are helpful. Yet her “history” remains the standard reference work on the history of the teaching of reading in our country, where the teaching of reading has been under the rigid control of wrongheaded “experts” since 1930.

The meddling with the teaching of reading by these wrongheaded “experts” originated primarily at two universities after the turn of the century: Teachers College of Columbia University, where Nila Banton Smith’s “history” was her doctoral dissertation, and the University of Chicago, the home base of William Scott Gray, whose 1930 *Dick-and-Jane* readers turned a once-literate America into a semi-literate nation. Thorndike produced and supervised “expert” writings from Columbia Teachers College, as his and Cattell’s close friend, Judd, did at the University of Chicago. The superfunds used to promote the errors of these men were foundation moneys.

Judd produced the report, *Reading: Its Nature and Development*, at the University of Chicago in 1918. A major contributor to Judd’s 1918 report was the father of the 1930 “Dick and Jane” readers, William Scott Gray, who had been Judd’s and Thorndike’s graduate student. The cost of that report was underwritten by a foundation supported by Rockefeller money, the General Education Board. That 1918 report, based on work for three years, was a critically influential one. As already discussed, the activities of such foundations as the General Education Board and the “experts” associated with them became so suspect just before World War I that an outcry against them came up in Congress but the inquiry foundered because of the advent of World War I.

For the period from 1910 to 1935, Nila Banton Smith said:

“Nowhere else is the emphasis upon silent reading more marked than in the professional books which came from the press during this period. J. A. O’Brien was the first to make a contribution of this type. In 1921 he published his *Silent Reading, with Special Reference to Speed*.”

The “literature” emphasis in reading books which dated back to Henry Cabot Lodge’s collection of chapbook stories for the Boston schools in 1879 had dominated reading series until the enormous re-emphasis on silent reading began about 1918. However, the silent reading emphasis was for all grade

levels after 1918 (not 1910), not just for beginners as had originally been the case. Silent reading for beginners had, of course, originated with Farnsworth's sentence method in 1870 and had spread widely through Colonel Parker's influence after 1875, but its emphasis faded after 1900. Yet silent reading after 1918 was used through all the grades, not just in the first grade, and oral reading in upper grades was sharply reduced. The result, of course, was to mask reading failures because the teachers could not hear the children stumbling over words. In Appendix D, that change in emphasis in teachers' literature to silent reading about 1918 is evident.

However, the literature-emphasis or silent-reading-emphasis reading series for children were NOT the materials with which those children were usually being taught to read after 1900. Such reading series simply provided the proper curtsy to "meaning" which children used after they finished their supplementary "sound" lessons. It was these supplementary phonics lessons which actually taught the children to read. It was in order to displace all such supplementary "sound" materials that the "intrinsic phonics" deaf-mute readers were published in 1930.

Note the built-in disability mechanisms in the two "expert" methods being promoted for beginners after 1918: silent reading and speed reading. "Silent reading" for beginners is lethal to the development of proper "sound" conditioned reflexes. Furthermore, emphasis on "speed" for children who do not yet have proper conditioned reflexes can turn out permanent skimmers instead of readers, and speed reading, like silent reading, was encouraged after 1918. (However, having taken a course in speed reading at New York University in the late 1950's without any permanent change in my reading habits, I gravely doubt the long-term utility of speed reading courses for older readers.)

I was amazed recently to hear a comment on TV that speaking speed is usually about 120 words a minute, but that we can "listen" at about 475 words a minute. If true, what does that say about speed reading at a thousand or more words a minute? What good can speed reading be at 1,000 words a minute if a reader cannot really "listen" to what he is reading at a speed greater than 475 words a minute? (Although the early psychologists thought otherwise, modern research has shown that we are, indeed, turning print into words even in silent reading.)

What is most peculiar in Nila Banton Smith's "history" is that she omitted her OWN 100 Ways of Teaching Silent Reading, as well as her Picture Story Reading Lessons, both still in print by World Book Company in 1928, (who published Thorndike's spellers in 1929). Yet she wrote copiously in her "history" about the use of silent reading by OTHER authors in the 1920's and mentioned other material she, herself, had written.

Why did she choose to do these things? William James was the apparent fountain-head for Farnham's silent reading method of 1870, publicized as the "new improvement" after 1918. The explanation may therefore very well lie in the fact that to list her two early works revealed a close connection between Thorndike, James' one-time student and friend, and the move after 1918 to silent reading.

Nila Banton Smith and S. A. Courtis had been the first to make use of Thorndike's list of the commonest words in 1920 in the writing of Picture Story Reading Lessons (the deaf-mute method for beginners), and Courtis had collaborated on an arithmetic text with Thorndike just about that time. Since Nila Banton Smith came up with 100 ways to teach silent reading some time before 1925 (and "silent reading" is the way little deaf mutes are often taught), it suggested that the "new methods" were, indeed, coming from a particular tiny group of people and were anything but a "natural development."

Thorndike's prize students, Gates and Gray, were making great waves in the 1920's in favor of the "new" methods. Yet, in the literature, it is rare to find any mention made of the connection between Gates and Thorndike, and impossible to find any mention made of the connection between Gray and Thorndike,

even though Gray was closely associated with Thorndike as his student in 1913-1914 and wrote his original oral reading tests under Thorndike's direction. The Scott, Foresman "Dick and Jane" series written by Gray of the University of Chicago was more widely promoted than the Macmillan series by Gates of Columbia Teachers College. That may have been a deliberate attempt to deflect attention away from the source of the "new" method: the psychologist, Thorndike, of Columbia Teachers College, and, before him, the psychologists, Cattell and James.

Therefore, for Nila Banton Smith to distance herself from Thorndike might be expected. In Smith's second edition in 1965, she did not hesitate to mention other materials which she had written, including a reading series, but omitted her two earliest works concerned with silent reading and high-frequency sight words. She apparently attempted to distance herself from the "movers and shakers" and at the same time to suggest an aura of objectivity which her history clearly did not have.

Other standard reference sources than Smith's book are also unsatisfactory. An example is the inadequate treatment of the Heart of Oak series in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*. It was not shown under "Readers" or "Primers" but under "English Language Studies," and then only the second and third books were listed. Yet Book One was in the Department of Education Library in Washington, the source for *Early American Textbooks*, when I visited there in 1981 but was overlooked in the 1985 summary. Admittedly, it was not the intent of *Early American Textbooks* to show every book in the Department of Education library but only representative examples of the most important. Yet Book One of Heart of Oak was very important, and Heart of Oak was very important in reading history. Neither of these facts could be picked up from this inadequate 1985 Government source.

Another example of the inadequacy of standard research sources on reading instruction comes from this Government publication. Only one text written by James H. Fassett appeared in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985. Under "Primers," on page 69, this source listed Fassett's *The Beacon Primer*, but wrongly gave its date as 1875. Yet the Beacon reading series was published first in 1912 and was revised in 1921-1922. It was also a very important series, even having been used in England and Canada. It therefore certainly should also have been shown under the section, "Readers," with the correct dates as were other important series. The inadequate treatment of the Beacon series in this source, *Early American Textbooks*, would mislead a researcher not only into thinking the Beacon texts were of little importance but that they were in use some fifty years earlier than was actually the case.

Experimental reading research summaries held an important place in the "experts'" literature, and still do so today. Information from experimental reading research is seldom used effectively, although Dr. Patrick Groff of San Diego University certainly has done so with that reading research which has value. However, much of the vast amount of experimental reading research done since 1917 is worthless.

William Scott Gray, in the bibliography to his doctoral dissertation at the University of Chicago in 1917, included all previous research in reading in which he knew. The list was small, indeed, and effectively only dated from 1914. Yet by 1925 research in reading had exploded. Gray compiled a report in that year on all such research to 1925, but in his 1925 report altered his admittedly vague 1917 description of the critical Sholty research of 1911 into a false and misleading description. By doing so, he effectively buried the critical Sholty research. (Sholty's research confirmed that beginning reading instruction can, in fact, turn out two different kinds of readers. It was Gray's clearer description in his 1917 report which led me to look up the critical Sholty report, but I would not have done so if I had only seen the false description he gave in the 1925 report.)

Gray's 1925 report on research studies was periodically updated in later years to cover the massive quantities of reading research carried out after 1925. The reports were meant to function as a guide to

such research. The worthlessness of most of the research before about 1975 is disturbing but hardly surprising, although in more recent years there has been some improvement, as Dr. Groff's excellent research summaries demonstrate. (Dr. Jean Chall's excellent book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*, summarizes a good portion of the valid research before 1967.) Yet it has largely been the pro-sight-word "experts" through their influence at universities and in foundations who have been in control not only of most experimental reading research but of most summaries of reading research.

One research finding from the early 1920's is referred to even today. That is Grace Fernald's work on "kinesthetic" approaches. Even dedicated phonics proponents endorse "multi-sensory" approaches to the teaching of reading, but I powerfully suspect such approaches are wrong, if "multi-sensory" means simultaneously using several senses on the same object to achieve a single impression. That sounds powerfully like the establishment of conflicting conditioned reflexes. After all, we do not normally "look" at music, or "listen" to a picture, except for a few unusual people whose sense impressions "leak" from one to another, and who describe some fascinating and pleasant subjective impressions, until their unusual "gift" fades with aging). I certainly do not "see" the keyboard as I touch type.

The facts certainly suggest that single-sensory activities should be taught as single-sensory activities, and not as multi-sensory activities, despite the almost unanimous endorsement of Fernald's findings that reading should be taught by touch as well as by sight. Reading does have to be taught by touch as a single-sensory activity in the case of one class of unfortunate persons, the blind, but seeing children certainly should not learn to read through the avenue of touch.

Obviously there is a sequence in reading: from the sight of the syllables to the sound of the syllables, and in writing, from the sight of the letters to the manual forming of the letters, involving different senses in turn, but apparently such necessary "sequence" is not what most people mean when they speak of "multi-sensory." They apparently mean that individual steps, such as letter recognition, should be taught by SIMULTANEOUSLY using several senses, and this is certainly what Grace Fernald meant, and, apparently, what was meant even by Dr. Samuel Orton, one of the greatest of crusaders for the teaching of real phonics.

Grace Fernald wrote a paper on kinaesthetic factors in reading which was published in the *Journal of Educational Research*, Volume 4, No. 5, December, 1921. It was the first of a three-part series. No. 2 was on first-grade children and No. 3 was on spelling. In Fernald's work on "kinaesthetic factors," she had children trace letters manually, and "touch" was heavily used in the teaching of reading. Fernald's work has been spoken of approvingly for many years by "experts."

Yet writing (which is obviously a "kinaesthetic" activity) can manifestly be a different goal from reading since some aphasics retain the ability to write while losing the ability to read, and presumably vice-versa. Such writing is apparently not "multi-sensory." I know from my own experience in typing that "touch" did not transfer to "sight." My typing has been anything but "multi-sensory" since I was amazed to learn after some forty years as a rapid typist that I did not know much of the keyboard "visually" and had to "reach" for a letter with my fingers before I could "remember" visually where it was on the keyboard. Montessori schools teach children to remember letters visually by sandpaper touching at age 3. Yet Bender-Gestalt norms show the majority of three-year-olds have not matured enough to distinguish visually between these letters which they are memorizing by touch. I think this sandpaper "touching" practice may well result in establishing life-long "touch" reflexes when reading, and these reflexes may conflict with proper "visual" reflexes. The rather weak spelling (but good reading) I saw at a post-Montessori school at the third-grade level may have resulted from such interference. I later heard of other Montessori-trained children who had some difficulty with spelling (but not reading).

It may well be true that it is harmful to use “multi-sensory” approaches in teaching an activity that is meant to be performed primarily by one sense only (presuming no disability exists in that sense mandating the use of some other avenue). If such “multi-sensory” approaches can develop harmful conflicting reflexes in healthy persons, then our attention is called once again to the early psychologists. Fernald’s “kinaesthetic” work which was so respectfully received dates from the early 1920’s, the Pavlov/Thorndike et al era. Did these early psychologists know whether or not using multi-sensory drill on an essentially single-sensory activity can develop harmful conflicting reflexes?

The academic niceties of footnotes are used in such “expert” references as Smith’s to establish scholarly auras and to give the impression of objectivity. Their wide use has already been cited in connection with the McGuffey Myth. In Nila Banton Smith’s footnote on page 164 of her “history,” she referred to page 6 of Harry Grove Wheat’s *The Teaching of Reading*, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1923, and said:

“Society insists that reading be taught in order to meet certain definite social needs....’ Wheat then asks, ‘What are the needs of society with respect to the teaching of reading and the outcomes of reading instruction?’

“Following this question, he gives Professor S. C. Parker’s answer and his chief arguments.

“(1) The social needs of former days required the teaching of expressive oral reading; (2) the social needs of the present require the teaching of effective rapid silent reading.

The Former Need for Expressive Oral Reading

1. Reading material was scarce.
2. Only a few were able to read.
3. Communication was very slow.
4. Spoken language was the chief means of communication.

The Present Need for Effective Rapid Silent Reading

1. Reading material is abundant.
2. Reading is universal, only a few are unable to read.
3. Communication is very rapid.
4. Written language is the chief means of communication.”

Smith stated further:

“After discussing these contrasted social needs for reading, Wheat states as his conclusion that ‘the aim of reading instruction which should now prevail is to develop ability in effective rapid silent reading.’”

Note the admission by three “experts” in 1923 that almost everyone in 1923 was able to read, and, furthermore, to understand what they read! This was before the “experts” created our massive adult functional illiteracy problem with the deaf-mute-method readers published in 1930.

The famous professor, S. C. Parker, thought he knew enough to write copiously about teaching reading. Harry Grove Wheat chose to quote Parker and also thought he knew enough to write a book about teaching reading. Nila Banton Smith is commonly presumed to have known enough to write a history of reading. Yet these people were totally ignorant of (or chose to veil) the almost universal literacy

in America before 1830, as well as the massive distribution of printed materials in America in those years. John Adams, who was later our highly respected President, said in 1765:

“(A) native of America who cannot read or write is as rare an appearance... as a comet or an earthquake,” (quoted in *Parents’ Rights* by John W. Whitehead, Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois, 1985, page 78).

Some other original source material confirming the virtually universal literacy in America before 1830 (but obviously excluding the unfortunate people in the South who were still in slavery) has already been quoted elsewhere in this history. Yet all these “experts” accepted the mindbogglingly ignorant statement that in the past in America, “Only a few were able to read.”

It was during the literate 1920’s in America that the “experts” laid the groundwork for the change from almost universal literacy to American functional illiteracy. The “Preface” to *Everyday Reading Book One* (an advanced reader for fourth grade) published by American Book Company and copyrighted in 1927, helped to show how “expert” all the work was:

“Recent investigations and scientific studies show that reading is a highly specialized process; that there are numerous types of reading, for the best development of which special training is necessary; and that fully ninety per cent of all reading is done silently.”

Yet there are not “numerous types of reading.” At least less is heard of that fallacy these days, on which Gates spent so much of his time. E. L. Thorndike’s son, R. L. Thorndike, demolished that fallacy, as described in Albert J. Harris’ and Edward R. Sipay’s *How to Increase Reading Ability*, Sixth Edition, 1975, David McKay Company, Inc., New York (pages 472-473). That text said that in 1969 and 1971 F. B. Davis had decided, through factor analysis studies on reading comprehension, that there were separate subskills which could be identified: word meanings, inferences, details, etc. R. L. Thorndike worked over that data and decided it showed the existence of a word-knowledge factor but that all the rest of the skills could simply be called “reasoning in reading.”

Since reasoning cannot be taught, R. L. Thorndike’s work also confirmed that reading comprehension cannot be taught, apart from knowledge of the language being read and knowledge of the subject matter on which a reading selection is based.

Also, no one ever needed any “scientific studies” to find out that most reading is done silently. My impression is that considerably more than ninety - perhaps over ninety-nine per cent of all reading is done silently.

But the “expertise” was just so much snake-oil sales talk. “Recent investigations and scientific studies” had done no such things as those listed in that 1927 book, though such “studies” were being ground out with increasing regularity. It is scandalous and disgraceful that “experts” such as those Nila Banton Smith quoted were and are permitted to shape American education.

E. L. Thorndike wrote an article in 1920 stating that we should have ALL our thinking done by such “experts.” In this article, Thorndike referred to eugenics. One of the nastier enthusiasms of J. M. Cattell and E. L. Thorndike (and probably John Dewey) was eugenics. Adolf Hitler later carried eugenics to its hideous logical end, but it should be noted that the early twentieth century American eugenicists were reading the same philosophies as those on which Hitler built his hideous delusions. E. L. Thorndike made a bow to eugenics - the calculated breeding of human beings like dogs and cattle - in the following comment:

“Pseudo-thinking must probably be endured to a considerable extent until a far better human race is bred. Some of it, however, can be cured. The cure is twofold, consisting of the displacement of pseudo-thinking by real expertness on the one hand or by intelligent refusal to think on the other.”

These comments of Professor Edward L. Thorndike of Teachers College, Columbia, appeared in his article, *The Psychology of the Half-Educated Man*, Harper’s Magazine, 1920. Thorndike concluded that almost all of us were half-educated! He said:

“In the face of the details and complexities of modern science and technology and art, it is the fate of all to be half-educated in the sense of having large areas of mind uncultivated, many problems answered only by a question mark. And such has always been the fate of the great majority of men. There is nothing new, and no great public danger in this. We have only in such cases to turn to the doctor, lawyer, engineer, priest, or other specialist who does know.”

Thorndike said, though, that the man who has an incompetent mind “is likely to try (and fail) to understand the specialist instead of obeying him. He does not ‘know his place’ intellectually....”

That was a curious expression: “obeying....” Speaking for myself, as an adult, I only “obey” the laws of religion and government. I do not “obey” anyone for whose services I pay. Any “specialist” who does not satisfy me intellectually concerning his competence and treatment has lost a client.

Thorndike said further:

“Expert thinking cannot be expected of many men outside of a limited field.... In his special field, the size and character of which will vary with his talents, a man may be made a competent thinker. The educated man should be taught to think with approximately 100 per cent efficiency in his share of the world’s job.

“Outside that field the intelligent procedure for most of us is to refuse to think, spending our energy rather in finding the expert in the case and learning from him. That is what sagacious men already do almost universally in matters like surgery, chemistry, mathematics, or seismology. They are doing it widely in such less recognized fields of expertness as building construction, philanthropy, advertising, and education. They are beginning to do it in fields that not long ago were supposed to be problems anybody could properly think out, such as the selection of one’s employees, the choice of occupation for one’s children, the planning of a city’s government, the tariff, the expenditure of public money, or the regulation of public morals.

“Wherever there is the expert - the man or woman who has mastered the facts and principles on which the best present practice in a certain field is based, and who can adapt this best present practice to special circumstances ingeniously - should we not let him be our guide? Should we not, in fact, let him do our thinking for us in that field? Thought is too precious to be wasted in dilettantism; the issues of the twentieth century are too complex and difficult to be played with by amateurs. The general common sense that was admirable for the tasks of the town meeting of our fathers is hopelessly inadequate for the municipal problems of to-day. It is likely to be an easy prey to the selfishness of politicians, the seductiveness of salesmen, and the enthusiasm of fanatics. Our thought, if we trust it too far, will in fact not be our thinking, but only the ready-made conclusions that have been sold to us by somebody. The question is whether we shall buy from somebody who will play on our vanity and prejudices or from a reputable dealer. The educated man should know when not to think and where to buy the thinking he needs.”



Where was the “educated man” to “buy the thinking he needs”? Obviously, he would “buy” it from someone who had what I have heard described as “impeccable credentials.” (At the time that phrase was used in a conversation with me, the apparent intended inference was that I did not have such “impeccable credentials.”) “Impeccable credentials” had to come from from an accrediting institution such as Teachers College, Columbia, where Thorndike and his cohorts decided what was needed for accrediting in education. Only those they “accredited” moved on to positions of real influence, and American education went down the drain.

The point is that “impeccable credentials” can be only be obtained from some group which thinks it has the necessary wisdom to grant credentials, but it is logically impossible to confirm that any group DOES have the wisdom it claims to have. Before that could be done, a special group of “experts” would be needed to certify the competence of the credential-granting “experts,” and then a higher group of “experts” would have to approve that special group of “experts” who were certifying the credential-granting “experts,” and so on infinitely.

E. L. Thorndike commented that people turn to doctors, lawyers, engineers and priests when they need specialized help, but he failed to add that they turn to PARTICULAR doctors, lawyers, engineers, and even particular priests. “Public acclamation,” the kind of thing on which the confirmation of sainthood was largely based for about the first thousand years of Christianity, is still very much in operation when people choose their doctors, their lawyers, their engineers, and even their priests. Normally, they do not choose them because they are graduates of particular law or medical schools or universities. Even if people do so initially, they quickly move on to other professionals if they are dissatisfied with the work done. “Doctor So-and-So did a wonderful job with Uncle Willie....” is the kind of reason that Doctor So-and-So has a jammed waiting room, not the fact that Doctor So-and-So graduated from Impeccable Credentials Medical School.

Where there is no open market in which choice freely operates, it is highly probable that abuses will enter. Yet no open market has existed in American education since shortly after 1826, and control has been greatly intensified since the end of World War I. American education has been infested with “experts” who have been given a free rein in our government schools. The poisoned well fallacy has completely taken over American education, and the reason it has is that people accepted the argument that they should depend on “experts” to do their thinking about education for them. These “experts” have been the only ones authorized to grant “impeccable credentials” in education, and they certainly did not grant them to anyone who questioned their expertise, like Mae Carden at Columbia in the early 1930’s. Because so many of the “experts”“ opponents lack “impeccable credentials,” anything such opponents have to say is automatically dropped into logic’s poisoned well from which nothing can be drawn. The arguments of most of the “experts”“ opponents therefore are never heard by those who follow Thorndike’s rule: “The educated man should know when not to think and where to buy the thinking he needs.”

With his 1920 article, E. L. Thorndike helped to legitimize the Plague of Experts and their reference works under whose control American culture has been ever since. America has been very like Gulliver at the low point in his Travels. Gulliver was held immobile, flat on the ground, by a multitude of little threads put in place by the tiniest of midgits. That kind of imprisonment is what America has received for refusing to depend on its own common sense.

A remark made by William F. Buckley can be applied to this situation very nicely, since it is anti-“expert” and shows Buckley’s faith in the balanced common sense of ordinary people, those Thorndike would have called “half-educated men.” Buckley said that he would rather be governed by the people listed on the first two pages of the Boston telephone directory than by the whole faculty of Harvard.

When consulting reference works, therefore, the “expertise” of authors is not the issue. The quality of the works, themselves, and the reader’s evaluation of that quality are the only things that matter.

## Chapter 53

### Bypassing the “Experts” to Get at the Facts

“Expert” writings and activities, taken alone, can be misleading as an historical source concerning actual reading methods in use, and the degree of literacy which resulted. For instance, in Germany in the 1970’s, the overwhelming majority of “experts” favored the global sight-word approach, as shown by Franz Biglmaier’s article in John Downing’s *Comparative Reading*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1973. Yet, when I spoke to eight first-grade and second-grade teachers in Hamburg, Germany, in November, 1977, seven of the eight favored a strict Code 10 analytic-synthetic approach to the teaching of reading, used in the excellent German text, *Bunte Fibel*.

In France, the first-grade book, *Remi et Colette* was a “mixte method” global-plus-phonics approach in 1977, and not a straight phonics approach. Yet I saw a first-grade Avignon teacher adapt it to a heavily phonic syllabic approach. Germany and France, therefore, had teachers who were using real phonics (“sound”) even though their experts and, in the case of France, even their textbooks favored “meaning.” To evaluate first-grade reading approaches and their relative degrees of success, additional information is usually necessary besides copies of the children’s readers. The prefaces to such books, the teacher’s guides, the comments of contemporaries, and the comments on the resultant literacy are all needed to clarify actual practices.

Evidence on the resultant literacy can sometimes come from surprising sources. One such American source is the fact of the enormous popularity of the silent movies until 1930. American children at second grade and above from about 1889 to about 1900 had learned to spell by “sound,” and not by “meaning,” and, at first grade from about 1900 to 1930, American children had learned initially to read by “sound” and not by “meaning” through supplemental phonics lessons. As a result, America had become a very literate place once again after the beginning of the twentieth century, and the popularity of the silent movies with their written subtitles proved it.

In America before 1930, the silent movies’ sub-titles narrated the story line and reported the conversations of the actors. Therefore, to go to the silent movies was almost an implicit admission of literacy. Yet silent movies were contemptuously regarded by “intellectuals” as very “low-brow” and so did not cater to “intellectuals” of the period but to the mass audience: the ordinary people in mainstream America. The businessmen running the movies were acutely aware of public likes and dislikes, and tailored their productions accordingly so that their movies would be sure to sell tickets. The first movie with some soundtrack, which still for the most part used written subtitles, was Al Jolson’s *Jazz Singer* in 1927. Below is one of its subtitles which those realist movie producers felt was not above the reading abilities of the average American teen-agers or adults in 1927 who were jamming the movie houses:

“Grief, stalking the world, had paused at the house of Rabinowitz.”

It would be interesting to try that allegorical sentence, those low-frequency words, and those phonically difficult spellings on the average American today who was trained in the “Dick and Jane” type of deaf-mute-method readers after 1930. Also, what percentage of Americans who learned to read after 1930 could sound out “Rabinowitz” with their “intrinsic phonics?” Notice also the complex poetic syntax: the phrase inserted between the noun and the verb. America was obviously a very different place, culturally speaking, before 1930.

Because of the need for reliable facts instead of “expert” smoke, I obtained some comments from teachers who were actually in American schools in the late 1920’s and early 1930’s. Two of these

teachers specifically mentioned supplementary phonics charts. The Education Mafia (someone else's happy phrase, but I don't recall whose) recognized the real nature of supplementary phonics charts. They knew such charts were concentrating on "sound" with their unmeaning word lists, and not on "meaning." That is why Gates invented "intrinsic phonics" to replace supplementary phonics so that "meaning" could never be omitted in beginning reading instruction. That is why the supplementary phonics charts (such as were distributed by the state of New Jersey) were gone from most classrooms by about 1932 after the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method readers with "intrinsic phonics" had entered the classrooms.

Two retired Lyndhurst teachers who taught in the 1920's told me of the standard use of supplementary phonics charts before 1932. Sometimes the chart was mounted inside a window shade. In first and second grade, the shade was pulled down each morning, and the children recited from the chart. Such supplementary phonics charts were blissfully empty of "meaning."

About August 17, 1982, I telephoned these two retired teachers who had taught in Lyndhurst, New Jersey, and asked them for their memories concerning methods for teaching beginning reading about 1930. The first retired teacher was the late Ann Kohler Wimmer, who said, concerning practices about 1930:

"Every room had a phonics chart, published by the state. When you started your phonics you gave a phonics drill.... (However) when I (began) in 1928, all the schools did not have them, but you were required to give sounds. You had an alphabet around the room and you had to make sounds."

Mrs. Wimmer left teaching in 1935 for a period of years, and said:

"... that would make it 1935, that I think it was, you were not demanded the phonics deal any more...."

The late Jean Crankshaw Ferrara also referred to the phonic "chart on the window shade." She remembered that as a child she had been taught phonics, and said, "When I was a child I can remember having to go through a lot of words: the 'at' family," etc. She mentioned there still was a Winston Reader in her family. (As shown in Appendix C, the Winston series was a low-code phony phonics series, but so much heavy supplementary phonics was used in classrooms at that time that the phony phonics effect was dissipated.) She said she originally had taught second grade in Franklin School and River Road School in Lyndhurst. Since she started teaching in 1926, probably at about twenty years of age, that would have placed the date of her beginning school, and getting "the 'at' family" at about 1912, indicating phonics was used at that time. Mrs. Ferrara said:

"I taught primary (in) 1926. As I recall, we had a great deal of phonics in 1926... I was more interested in supervision and administration and I was especially interested in supervision of special education.... As I went into special education... I went to Newark to teach, and we used the Brinkerhoff method... we had a great big chart and the children learned the words and... could go to the chart - sound c a t and put them together. Children with IQs of 60 (or) 70 learned to read with that method..."

The Blumenfeld Education Letter, November, 1991, page 8, carried an interesting corroboration of Mrs. Ferrara's last statement. That issue published a letter dated October 2, 1991, from Jeanette Metzger of Goshen, Indiana, to Samuel Blumenfeld, the author of the reading program, Alpha Phonics:

"Thank you for Alpha-Phonics!"

“We have a 14-year-old son who has Downs Syndrome. He began his formal ‘education’ at age of three. After 10 years of special education in the public school system, he had a reading vocabulary of 76 words. His teachers used a sight-word recognition system and considered that a ‘good score.’ He was very frustrated with his inability to read, so he would copy his siblings by pretending to read.

“I began to search for a reading program. In reading through the home-school book section at the library, I found a recommendation for the book *How to Tutor*. After reading that book, I started our son on the phonics program immediately. Within one month, he could read over 100 words - more than he had learned in 10 years of schooling!!! I was thrilled and so was he.

“We spent about a half hour a day after school, and he continued his progress slowly, but surely. Many of the words were unfamiliar to him, such as ‘rap’ and ‘jab,’ so I explained the meanings and his vocabulary expanded. We have seen a remarkable change in his articulation. When he learned the ‘th’ sound and saw that ‘bath’ ended with ‘th,’ he stopped saying ‘baf.’ His speech is much clearer and his sentences are more complete.

“It has been a year since we started the Alpha-Phonics program and he is finishing the last pages. He is so pleased to be able to read library books, sing along with the hymns at church, and inform the driver what the signs along the road say. Our son does not have a very high I.Q., but he was able to learn to read using phonics. I am sure there are many children in special education programs that could also learn using this system, and I would highly recommend it to other parents.

“Thank you for Alpha-Phonics!”

When children start to take pleasure in reading aloud the signs along highways, that is a highly reliable indication that the point has been reached at which they are really beginning to read. The parents of my first-grade students often told me how delighted they were that the little ones were reading highway signs aloud as they passed them in the family car. When I taught real phonics to my third graders who had been in sight-word basal readers since first grade and so presumably had already been taught how to read (but had not) , some third-grade parents told me the same thing. Their children were just beginning to read highway signs aloud to them! These children obviously had been unable really to read before then, despite their having been “successful” in their first- and second-grade deaf-mute-method sight-word readers.

Retired teachers who were actually in the schools at the time the deaf-mute method was introduced, like the late Jean Crankshaw Ferrara and the late Ann Kohler Wimmer, were unassailable witnesses to changes in methods. Because of this fact, I surveyed in 1982 members of the New Jersey Schoolwomen’s Club who might have been teaching about 1930. I sent out fifty questionnaires to women whose dates for joining the Club, given in the membership roster which I received when I was a member at that time, suggested that they might have been teaching about 1930. I was aware, of course, that the majority would not have been in the primary grades. Of the fifty questionnaires I sent out, twenty were returned. That was a fairly large return for a questionnaire from a stranger like me, who was simply an unknown member of a large organization. Ten respondents disqualified themselves as they said they had no knowledge of methods in the primary grades, but ten said they did have such knowledge. Those ten provided the answers for my survey, which I report below in percentages. However, two of those who disqualified themselves from answering my specific questions did make some general comments of interest, which are also mentioned below.

The first item on my 1982 questionnaire to teachers who might have been teaching about 1930 read:

“Were you personally aware that there was a change in the method of teaching beginning reading after 1930?”

Ninety percent answered, “Yes.”

The second question read:

“Were you aware that the 1930 and 1931 Scott, Foresman and Macmillan readers dispensed with traditional phonics?”

Eighty per cent answered, “Yes.”

The third question read:

“Were you personally aware or have you heard of any coercion on the part of the administration forcing teachers to use the new 1930 and 1931 “improved” method or to face disapproval or disciplinary action? Please explain.”

Eighty per cent said, “No.” The two who answered that they knew of coercion had both answered “Yes” to questions one and two. One of them said:

“I have heard of insistence to use the ‘new method.’ Some teachers still taught phonics. As an upper grade teacher I was not yet involved.”

The other said:

“Yes, teachers were definitely told not to stress phonics, but instruct as needed.”

My fourth question asked for any information they had on promotional methods. One said Scott, Foresman gave several demonstrations of the new method. Another said:

“I really have no information on the promotional methods used. I recall that they were ‘high powered.’ I do not recall when we started using the Scott, Foresman books but it was soon after I started to work in N. J. (1934)... In 1930 I was working in my home state - Vermont. I have tried to recall what we used as a basic primary reader - believe it was the old Aldine. I do recall a heavy emphasis on phonics.”

My fifth question asked in part:

“Can you recall (or have you heard about) the reactions of either teachers or parents concerning the drop in spelling ability?”

Eighty percent answered “Yes.” Yet when I asked if they had any information on the dropping of objective dictated spelling tests like Ayres’ 1915 scales, eighty percent answered “No.” One teacher commented:

“I do recall a drop in spelling ability.... As I recall we began to hear about serious disabilities in the late forties and early fifties - about the time results from the intrinsic method began to show up.”

The sixth question asked:

“When did you first hear about... serious reading disabilities?”

Answers were varied from “always” to the last ten years, but most clustered about the 1950’s. One teacher of French who did not feel able to answer the questionnaire volunteered the information that about 1956 an exchange teacher from California was entertained at her college club:

“She insisted that she was very happy to find that her students in Hoboken grades knew how to read!!! What about California!!!”

Another said:

“A whole sixth grade class could not read. About 1950. I’m not sure of the date.”

One teacher who also felt not qualified to answer any of the questions nevertheless wrote:

“I’m sorry I’m not of much use to you during this period as I did not teach at that time. When I taught up to 1927 we used the so called sight method. I was not very happy with it because results were so poor.

“When I resumed teaching in 1940 our system was still using the same method with continued poor results. As far as I know teachers used the method introduced by their Boards of Education whether they approved or not.”

She certainly had given testimony, after all, on why there were “remedial cases” before the arrival of the Gates and Gray readers! Yet the bulk of the testimony established that phonics was dominant before 1930 but effectively gone shortly after 1930.

Yet not all the teachers implied dissatisfaction with that change. For instance, one wrote:

“Scott, Foresman gave several demonstrations of the new method. Accent - to develop the ‘love for reading.’ Highly acceptable. (My own system 1960 - coercion to return to phonics, exclusively.)”

These teachers were dedicated, trusting women, trying to do their best. When some of them, such as the woman just quoted, willingly promoted the “meaning” method over the “sound” method after 1930, they did so because the “experts” told them it was superior. Such teachers were very badly misled by giving unquestioning trust to “authorities” instead of depending on their own common sense.

Other sources may provide additional documentation for the switch in reading methods after 1930, by contrasting children’s pre-1930 reading materials to post-1930 reading materials.

One such source is listed at the Library of Congress which might be very illuminating although I was not able to locate it on July 19, 1989. My request slip was returned, like so many others for old books concerning beginning reading, with the too-familiar notation, “Not on Shelf.” The book I was trying to find concerned children’s books in libraries at the time the switch in methods was made in beginning reading. Its reference is call number Z 5817.A52, Easy Reading Books of the Reader and Primer Type and Readers for the First Three Grades, American Library Association, Chicago, 1933. Another potentially very interesting item which I was not able to locate at the Library of Congress was the list on which this material had been at least partially based. That earlier material, apparently listing 31 such texts,

had been compiled for the ALA Catalog for the period 1926-1931 by Marion Horton, on which publication Gladys English was listed as Chairman.

Surviving copies of reading textbook requisitions still in Boards of Education files across the country could also provide interesting documentation for the wholesale move to “Dick and Jane” and their companions after 1930.

Dr. Hilde L. Mosse wrote the two-volume *The Complete Handbook of Children’s Reading Disorders*, The Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York, 1982, and it is a matchless source for real information on the teaching of reading and on true reading disabilities. It also includes anecdotes about the actual state of reading instruction in America for over fifty years. Dr. Mosse wrote on page 266:

“As early as 1950 experienced teachers and psychologists who had been teachers told me that all the children they had personally taught years ago used to be able to read by the age of 8, except for those who were definitely mentally defective, and that this had changed. They related it to the deformed program which had been started in the New York City public schools and in most other school systems throughout the nation in about 1935. This new curriculum brought with it the sight-word method of teaching reading....

“Evidence of the decline of school children’s reading ability came to me also from other sources. Librarians and teachers responsible for ordering books told me that third- and fourth-year books were being requested for sixth-graders. Schoolbook salesmen reported that publishing companies had done their own research about reading levels on different grades and had found that they were declining.

“A department chairman of an exclusive Eastern prep school told me that remedial reading specialists were being employed for the first time in the school’s history because too many 14-year-old freshmen could not read properly. This was in 1954....”

The onset of reading disabilities from the deaf-mute method readers, however, considerably preceded the 1950’s. Personal anecdotes, too long to cite here, demonstrate that the reading problem showed up shortly after the deaf-mute-method readers reached first grade in force about 1931. The first large group of children to be harmed by them reached second grade in 1932 and third grade in 1933 (and eighth grade in 1938). However, many upper-grade teachers and parents were more adept at helping children overcome that harm for some ten years or so after 1931 than they were later, when the memory of how to teach reading properly began to fade and when the pre-1930 materials for teaching reading properly simply fell apart from old age.

Dr. Mosse also reported that she had encountered coercion. She wrote the following on page 273, under the heading, “Suppression of Critical Studies”:

“The mere mention of the fact that the teaching of phonics had helped one of my patients, for instance, was cut out of an article on “Creativity and Mental Health,” a curriculum journal had asked me to write in 1959....

“Another example is the experience of a guidance counselor and an assistant principal with special expertise in reading disorders. They were charged with investigating the reading difficulties of all the children who attended special remedial reading classes during the summer. They found that all of them had one reading defect in common: they did not know phonics. Their report was never published. They were called to their supervisors and asked how they dared go against the theory of the Associate Superintendent.”



Dr. Mosse said on page 261:

“Statistical evidence is overwhelming that millions of American children, including those graduating from high school, cannot read. When a disorder affects so many people, one calls it an epidemic. An epidemic is always caused by external forces, not by defects in the individual. This applies to psychologic disorders as much as to physical diseases. When so many children are affected by the same disorder, the explanation cannot possibly be individual psychopathology. Adverse social forces must be investigated, as the common cause....”

Dr. Mosse also provided a scientific description for children such as Memorus Wordswell, the little human reading machine who was belittled in a story in the Introduction to the American Common-School Reader and Speaker, by William Russell and John Goldsbury, Boston: Charles Tappan, 1845, which was quoted at length by Nila Banton Smith on pages 102 and 103 of her “history,” American Reading Instruction. William Russell, of course, was the famed Scottish elocutionist/ activist who had been the first editor in 1826 of the change-agent American Journal of Education. That journal had no connection with Barnard’s later highly important American Journal of Education published for so many years in the nineteenth century, which, astonishingly, is not even mentioned in Nila Banton Smith’s bibliography!

However, Smith took the time to quote William Russell’s belittling of “sound” in the teaching of reading, from the last volume in Russell’s reading series in 1845. Smith said the story “points out rather vividly the new trend of paying some attention to meanings, and withal has a refreshing touch of humor.” Paying attention to meanings in 1845 certainly represented no new trend. Almost twenty years before, that activist, William Russell, had successfully promoted the “meaning” method in his 1826 American Journal of Education, as quoted earlier. Yet Smith credited the 1845 period with having dominantly a phonic emphasis and what she called an “ABC” emphasis, even though “sound” had been traded in for “meaning” in America long before, by 1830.

The excerpt from Russell’s (and Goldsbury’s book) read in part:

“The most extraordinary spelling, and, indeed, reading machine, in our school, was a boy whom I shall call Memorus Wordswell. He was mighty and wonderful in the acquisition and remembrance of words, of signs without the ideas signified. The alphabet he acquired at home before he was two years old. What exultation of parents, what exclamation from admiring visitors! ‘There was never anything like it!’ He had almost accomplished his Abs before he was thought old enough for school. At an earlier age than usual, however, he was sent; and then he went from Ache to Abomination, in half the summers and winters it took the rest of us to go over the same space.”

The author was not referring to a single list of “A” words at the beginning of the speller, as a reader today might surmise. Instead, the author meant Memorus went from the beginning of the speller which dealt with one syllable words like “Ache” to the end of the speller which dealt with five-syllable words like “Abomination.” Russell continued:

“Astonishing how quickly he mastered column after column, section after section, of obstinate orthographies!... Memorus might have said, in respect to the hosts of the spelling-book, ‘I came, I saw, I conquered.’ He generally stood at the head of a class, each one of whom was two years his elder....

“At the public examination of his first winter, the people of the district, and even the minister, thought it marvelous, that such monstrous great words should be mastered by ‘such a leetle mite

of a boy!' Memorus was mighty also in saying those after-spelling matters, the Key, the Abbreviations, the Punctuation, &c. These things were deemed of great account to be laid up in remembrance, although they were all very imperfectly understood, and some of them not understood at all....

"...I would have my readers of the rising generation know what mighty labors we little creatures of five, six, and seven years old were set to perform."

The author's remark, of course, confirms that by 1845 the practices that were standard before 1826 had become obsolete, and also confirms that children before 1826 could read the whole of Webster's speller by the time they were seven years old!

"...But all this was nothing, as it were, to Memorus Wordwell. He was a very Hercules in this wilderness of words.

"Master Wordwell was a remarkable reader too. He could rattle off a word as extensive as the name of a Russian noble, when he was but five years old, as easily as the schoolmaster himself. 'He can read the hardest chapters of the Testament as fast ag'in as I can,' said his mother.... But I have said enough of this prodigy. I have said thus much, because, although he was thought to be surpassingly bright, he was the most decided ninny in the school.

"The fact is, he did not know what the sounds he uttered meant. It never entered his head, nor the heads of his parents, and the most of his teachers, that words and sentences were written, and should be read, only to be understood...."

Note the offensively sneering tone the author used in putting the words in the mouth of the defective child's poor mother, and the author's arrogant dismissal of the intelligence of the mother's neighbors. Yet he was clearly writing about the kind of rural New Englanders who had more than earned the title, "Yankee Horse Traders." It would probably be hard to find a shrewder group.

In the museum in the old seaport of Salem, Massachusetts, can be seen the piercing, alert eyes in the portraits of the old ship captains. Those old Yankee captains must have been very formidable men. Yet they came from the same kind of people and had been pupils in the same kind of schools as those in Russell's anecdote. For the Scot immigrant, Russell, to characterize any group of old Yankees as a group of fools is terribly unconvincing.

However, Russell was propagandizing the same idea in 1845 that he had been busy selling in 1826: the presumed desirability of teaching beginning reading by "meaning" instead of by "sound." Russell therefore found it necessary to belittle past practices associated with teaching by sound and to belittle the people who had endorsed those practices. With Russell's last sentence about reading for understanding, his 1845 material clearly emerged as change-agent rhetoric.

It is inconceivable that "meaning" was of no importance to those people. The probability is that the parents of poor Memorus and their neighbors knew very well that something was very wrong with Memorus long before he reached five years old. However, the intent of Russell's change-agent rhetoric was to promote "meaning" over "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading, so his rhetoric fitted in very nicely with Nila Banton Smith's biases, which is undoubtedly why she quoted Russell at such length.

Dr. Hilde L. Mosse, a psychiatrist/physician, who wrote *The Complete Handbook of Children's Reading Disorders*, described children like Memorus. The following excerpts from her books concern two

different types of aphasias, or language disorders. Although Dr. Mosse did not say so, from other literature I have seen, it seems to me that one of the two types she described may result from some defect in Broca's area in the left brain which is concerned with the making of syllable sounds. The other type of aphasia she described, it seems to me, may result from some defect in Wernicke's area in the left brain which attaches learned meanings to syllable sounds. Poor Memorus may have had a Wernicke's-area type "meaning" aphasia so that he could not learn the meaning of words although he could make (Broca-area) syllable sounds perfectly. The other aphasic type cannot make syllable sounds so can never learn to speak (and so presumably has a Broca-area type of aphasia), but potentially can learn word meanings (Wernicke's area) through non-speech avenues, and so can develop normally mentally.

Dr. Mosse said that childhood aphasias had been reported by the neuropathologist and psychiatrist, Lise Gellner, based on her clinical and pathological observations in England and America (Mosse, p. 95, and 381, following). A portion of Gellner's childhood aphasics fell into two distinct groups. Gellner found one of those two groups of child aphasics with what she termed "word-sound deafness." Although their hearing was normal, they could not distinguish differences in word sounds. The other of those two groups had what she called "word-meaning deafness." Although they could hear sound, they could not understand speech.

Concerning some of the word-meaning deaf children, Dr. Mosse said:

"They learn to speak very early and have an excellent rote memory. They can pronounce and remember the most difficult words that children normally do not use. They learn to recite passages from Shakespeare and other poets long before they are of school age, and their parents understandably think that their child is a genius. It soon becomes clear, however, that the child does not really understand what he says. He does not answer even simple questions and only repeats what is said to him. These children belong to the group called "idiots savants." (page 393)

"Word-meaning deaf children are so severely handicapped that they need supervision and care all of their lives. They seldom can be taught to read because they need a visual approach that has not yet been developed." (page 394)

Yet Dr. Mosse made it clear that some of this group did learn to read, as well as to speak. Poor Memorus fell into that category. However, most probably he was not so totally disabled as any of the children Dr. Mosse described, since Memorus apparently was able to function at least to some degree in a normal fashion.

Dr. Mosse described those in a group of aphasics who had been studied who could only read, and a few who could read and speak:

"A small group of children have a peculiar reading symptom that we do not yet understand. Their disorder certainly belongs to the aphasias. Their cerebral speech and reading apparatuses are disordered in such a way that they can read but cannot speak spontaneously. They only speak when they read. Some such children read very early, before the age of 3, and no one remembers ever having taught reading to them. They often read words, including foreign words, that they could not possibly have heard their parents or other people use in their conversations. They pronounce these words, which are sometimes long and complicated, correctly. It remains a mystery what organic and psychologic mechanism enables them to do this." (page 396)

"An important study involving the largest number of hyperlexic children ever recorded was done by the neurologists Mehegan and Dreifull (1972). They studied 12 children (11 boys, 1 girl) ages 5 to 9; two of these children read before the age of 3, 10 by the age of 5. Only three of the

children had any spontaneous speech, but only one of these could use words meaningfully. Two children also had hypercalculia.... The authors observed further that most could handle material from The New Yorker and Newsweek with 60 to 70 percent accuracy.” (page 396)

These children had somehow acquired the conditioned reflexes necessary to turn print into sound, and were doing so with something approaching the efficiency of my 99% accurate First-Byte software on my Tandy computer. However, just as my Tandy computer cannot understand what it is saying, neither can these pathetic little reading machines understand what they are saying - nor what anyone else is saying.

It is a very different matter with the second group of aphasics Dr. Mosse discussed, the word-sound-deaf children, because they can be trained. (There is nothing wrong with their hearing, but just their ability to distinguish between sounds.) Dr. Mosse considered those children with word-sound deafness to be the only class of children who should be taught with the pure sight-word method, reading “by meaning,” since distinguishing between syllable sounds was impossible for them, even though they could hear them as noises. Such children can, with the “meaning” sight-word method, learn to read whole words for “meaning” and eventually be taught to speak through visual lip-reading methods (and presumably to lip-read the speech of others, obviously again bypassing any need to distinguish between heard syllable sounds). Therefore, such children can become self-sufficient. However, it is of great interest that Dr. Mosse obviously did NOT endorse the “meaning” method for teaching beginning reading to the truly deaf!

So it is possible to bypass the “experts” to get at the facts, if a source like Dr. Mosse’s work is consulted. However, with the mania for “whole language” afflicting American education today, it is depressingly clear that our government school administrators are certainly not reading Dr. Mosse’s two enormously scholarly and professional volumes.

It is also possible to get at the facts by consulting testimony given by some of the teachers who were in the schools in the 1930’s, and by checking Board of Education requisition files. Such historical sources are reliable, unlike the vast majority of books which pass as “expert” reference works today.

## **Chapter 54**

### **The Reduction of Vocabulary, Oversimplification of Syntax, And Banishing of True Phonics**

The record of reading texts which were published after 1925 confirms that the push after 1925 was emphatically on first grade and primary reading, and on the enormous reduction of vocabulary in primary-grade reading books. Of the seventeen series Smith listed as post-1925 series, eight covered only the first three grades. As Smith was not the slightest bit embarrassed to make very clear, the size of the vocabulary lists in those books had dropped sharply after 1925. It is an astonishing fact that, by 1934 when her book first appeared in print, the reduction of vocabulary in primary-grade books of which she boasted had actually been sold to gullible government school administrators as an “improvement.”

When the teaching of real phonics had returned to American first grades after 1900, the need to control vocabulary had largely vanished. Therefore, the size of the vocabulary in reading books had become considerably greater by 1918 than it had been in 1900 when rigid vocabulary control was still customary except in “natural” method readers like Heart of Oak. The syntax in such “natural” method readers had also been more complex. With the increase in vocabulary after 1900 came more complex syntax in other readers as well, although little conscious attention seems to have been directed to the subject of syntax in children’s reading texts. However, the vocabulary in first grade books had often been printed at their ends in the early 1900’s, except in books based on the “natural” method. Those vocabulary lists demonstrated that heavy vocabulary control at first grade had still been in place in the early 1900’s.

After 1918, a systematic attempt was again made to reduce vocabulary. In addition, real phonics began to be downgraded by “experts” like Gates and Gray, and the sight-word method appeared in some places like “dyslexic” Nelson Rockefeller’s first grade in Columbia’s Lincoln School and in Dr. Orton’s Iowa. It was followed immediately after with rampant “reading disabilities.”

Was Nelson perhaps the little fellow Gates told about who “hid behind the piano,” and blurted, “I hate that old game” when his teacher tried to give him sight-word reading lessons? Of course, Gates said the teacher knew how to overcome that little fellow’s reluctance, if you can believe Gates, in his article, “The Supplementary Device Versus the Intrinsic Method of Teaching Reading,” from the Elementary School Journal in June, 1925. That is the article in which Gates first introduced the “intrinsic” phonics of the deaf-mute readers which succeeded in throwing real supplementary phonics out of almost all American classrooms after 1930.

By 1930, vocabulary at first grade had been enormously reduced in the rash of new series appearing after 1925. Such series made the Gates and Gray deaf-mute readers with their vocabulary paucity not too startling when they finally arrived in 1930.

After 1921, the reduction of vocabulary had been largely based on Thorndike’s *The Teacher’s Word Book*, Teachers College Press, published in 1921, which provided the first guide to the ten thousand highest-frequency words. For the first time, with the use of that book, it was possible to reduce vocabulary systematically in reading texts through the third or fourth grades. (Gates used Thorndike’s list and a few other sources shortly afterwards to produce his own “authoritative” list for the early grades, as described in Gates’ article, “The Construction of a Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades,” in the March, 1926, issue of *Teachers College Record*.) Thorndike had spent ten years counting words in children’s literature to determine the ten thousand most frequent. Eventually, only about the two thousand words with the highest frequency of occurrence were taught by fourth grade in the deaf-mute-method

basal readers put out by Thorndike's ex-students, Gates and Gray, and their followers. (Naturally, texts had to use a sprinkling of some words with a lower frequency, but such words were not to be given the same emphasis in "teaching.")

It was this use only of sight-words and phony-phonics context-guessing through third grade which turned most Americans into subjective, psycholinguistically guessing readers, instead of objective, automatic readers. It also produced America's huge and tragic crop of functional illiterates.

Complex syntax was also removed from materials, but very deliberately in the 1920's, in the name of reducing "readability" levels. Without exposure to such complex syntax in reading materials to provide necessary practice in its use, the ability of American students to handle complex syntax has dropped. This is demonstrated by their weak written compositions.

On page 216, Smith referred to the sharp reduction of words in primers and first readers between 1922 and 1928, and the even greater reduction by 1931. In 1922, nine of twelve had vocabularies ranging from 377 up to 630. In 1931, none ranged that high. Instead, the highest of the seven was 333, and the lowest 274.

That the reduction of vocabulary was a major aim of the "experts" is shown by the inclusion of the topic in *The Twenty Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I*, Bloomington, Illinois, Public School Publishing Co., 1925. This "spontaneous" publication engineered by "experts" to serve as a sounding-board for their ideas included an article by H. W. Kircher, "Analysis of The Vocabulary of Thirty-Seven Primers and First Readers," which was shown in Smith's bibliography (page 434).

It was critically important to have succeeded in reducing vocabulary greatly before the 1930 arrival of the true deaf-mute-method reading books. Since these books were to use a total vocabulary of less than two thousand words by the fourth grade, their nature would have been too great a shock if the way had not been paved for them ahead of time. The work on word reduction for beginners first began in earnest in 1922 with E. Selke's and G. A. Selke's study counting the different words in each of twelve primers ("A Study of the Vocabulary of Beginning Books in Twelve Reading Methods," *Elementary School Journal*, University of Chicago, June, 1922). That the propaganda favoring vocabulary reduction was well under way by 1925 is shown by Kircher's article in the 1925 Yearbook.

It is absolutely mind-boggling that the harmful proposals of vocabulary reduction, oversimplification of syntax, and the removal of real phonics from first grade instruction were actually sold to ingenuous government school superintendents as improvements! If the authority for curriculum had rested with American parents in the 1920's and 1930's instead of the government school superintendents who were taking courses that amounted to brainwashing at places like Teachers College, Columbia, the "experts" never could have succeeded in pushing out true phonics from first grade reading. Nor could they have succeeded in reducing vocabulary and syntax to a moronic level (or, more probably, to far below a true moronic level).

The deaf-mute method of 1930 was still firmly in place in America in 1962. On page 350 of the revised edition of her "history," Nila Banton Smith referred to the Columbia-Carnegie Study of Reading Research and Its Communication by Allen Barton and David Wilder, as discussed in *Proceedings of the International Reading Association* in 1962 (pages 172-174). The Barton and Wilder study had confirmed that basal readers were used by ninety percent of first grade teachers on all or most days of the school year. As Jean Chall's bibliography to *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967) shows, none of the basal series in 1962 were phonics series and all used the sight-word method. Using that fact in

combination with the Barton and Wilder study indicates that at least ninety percent of first grade teachers in America were using the deaf-mute method to teach beginning reading about 1962.

Concerning the question of when the learning of letter sounds or phonics should begin, the International Reading Association article reported that first grade teachers about 1962 replied as follows:

- 11% “before they start learning actual words”
- 40% “at the same time as they learn their first words”
- 41% “after they have learned to recognize 50-100 words as wholes”
- 4% “after they have learned to recognize several hundred words as wholes”
- 0% “not at all during the primary grades”
- 4% were undecided or made no answer

This study was carried out about seven years after Rudolf Flesch’s 1955 best-seller which endorsed true phonics. Therefore, it might seem something like cause/effect that 40% of the first-grade teachers approved of teaching letter sounds along with the first sight words by about 1962 (and 11% before the introduction of whole words) . Of course, teachers would have had to teach those letter sounds outside the basal-reader materials, by using specially purchased workbooks or material they had made themselves, since no reading series at that time taught letter sounds until after a basic sight-word vocabulary was covered. (The Lippincott phonic series was not published until 1963, and the phonic Open Court series also was published in 1963.)

Most such teachers would have used commercially prepared workbooks that they bought themselves. Yet almost all of the so-called phonic workbooks available in 1962 did not teach isolated letter sounds, which is true phonics, but instead used the approach of comparing meaning-bearing whole sight words to each other (bat to boy, but never pronouncing “b” in isolation). That is what “teaching letter sounds” would have meant to the teachers in this study. That is the same kind of phony, two-step, “echo” phonics as eventually turned up in the basal readers, dealing only with meaning-bearing whole sight words, and absolutely never with isolated letter sounds. Yet learning isolated letter sounds is mandatory for the use of one-step sounding-and-blending, Pascal-type, synthetic phonics.. With the use of such phony phonics workbooks, teachers would obviously not have been using real phonics. Any positive effect on the practices of such teachers from Dr. Flesch’s 1955 book would be non-existent.

The IRA article which Smith was quoting put the above comments in quotation marks, so the comments obviously were from the original Barton and Wilder report. However, the following comments after the above which Smith quoted were not in quotations so obviously were the IRA article’s own comments on the Barton and Wilder report.

“Furthermore, the advocacy of starting phonics without first developing a sight vocabulary was higher among the more recently trained teachers.

“There does not seem to be any trend in the textbook literature which matches the trend among teachers; the books in all periods but the earliest are overwhelmingly in favor of developing an initial sight vocabulary (about half specifying 50 or more words, the rest vague things like ‘an adequate number’).”

The Barton and Wilder study confirmed that about 1962, despite the influence of Rudolf Flesch’s *Why Johnny Can’t Read* published in 1955, the vast majority of American children were still learning to read by the deaf-mute, whole-word, jig-saw-puzzle-pieces, phony-phonics method in sight-word basal readers, and most probably by phony-phonics workbooks.

The claims for the use of phonics made for such basal reading series are commonly ridiculous. For instance, on page 358 of her reading history, Nila Banton Smith claimed that the 1965 Macmillan series on which Albert J. Harris was senior editor introduced phonics from the very beginning, with directions for children “to find significant likenesses and differences” between the first two words. Yet the comparing of two whole sight words is manifestly a jig-saw-puzzle, sight-word-pieces, phony-phonics approach, and not real phonics!

A remark I heard a first-grade teacher make concerning the Macmillan series about 1978 in the early fall confirms that it was being used as a true sight-word approach. She spoke, very unself-consciously, of asking her first-graders to study the whole words at home so they could tell them apart, because the children were having so much difficulty.

On October 21, 1983, I made the following note in my records, concerning a second grader I had taught a few years before who had attended first-grade in another town which used Harris’s Macmillan series, in contrast to my first-graders whom I had been teaching with true phonics for about six weeks:

“My little first graders can’t read yet, but they can sound out and spell words. They (most of them) easily handle ‘frog.’ Yet at second grade, I had a boy trained in Macmillan, with excellent scores on their tests, who read fluently in its ‘controlled vocabulary’ materials. Yet he looked at the word, ‘frog,’ and said he could not read it, as it was too hard. Indeed, it was - for a Macmillan-trained child.”

The boy had been taught no real phonics, despite the phony phonics in first grade in the Macmillan series.

Also, not long before that, I had another little second-grade transferred student whose mother was appalled by the reading difficulties the little girl had as a result of having been given Harris’s Macmillan series in first grade. By using real phonics, I taught the little girl to read very successfully in second grade.

That little girl’s first-grade school had recently thrown out the Open Court truly phonic Code 10 series, apparently because the assistant superintendent of schools was concerned by what he considered unsatisfactory “reading comprehension” scores at fourth grade.

The fallacy of using “reading comprehension scores” as an index of reading ability has been discussed elsewhere in this history, but it is worth repeating at this point. Stable, fairly high reading-comprehension-score averages for classes at fourth grade and above are a strong indication that the children in those classes have not achieved automaticity in reading but instead are disabled readers. Such stable class scores suggest an artificially controlled attention. The attention of disabled sight-word, context-guessing readers is not free but must be used to figure out the print or they cannot read at all. Their attention switches back and forth between figuring out the words and getting the message of the selection. However, because it is not free it cannot wander and produce accidentally scores.

By contrast, children who have attained automaticity in their reading do not need to pay attention to figuring out the words. They can read very accurately (“recite,” silently or aloud) with or without any attention at all to the message contained in the selection. Their comprehension scores can therefore fluctuate wildly, since their attention to the message can fluctuate wildly, depending on whether or not they feel like concentrating. However, they also can read with maximum reading comprehension when they do they freely choose to pay attention to the message, and can then score very well.

Yet, since the disabled readers have a constant but divided attention, part to figuring out the words and only what is left over to getting the message, they can never read with maximum reading



comprehension. Therefore, the truth is that the “meaning” method permanently damages the ability to read with maximum comprehension, while the “sound” method protects that ability.

The following confirms the success of the previously used phonic program in the school the little girl attended which had switched to Macmillan because of the assistant superintendent’s concern about reading comprehension scores in the fourth grade. The librarian who had been in that school when it used the Open Court series told me that virtually all the children in the school when it used the Open Court phonic readers learned to read extremely well! As a librarian who constantly witnessed the children’s taste in independent reading from grade one through grade six, and who was in constant contact with all the teachers of all the children, that librarian certainly was in a position to evaluate reading achievement, far more so than the “standardized” California or Iowa “reading comprehension tests.”

Nila Banton Smith’s claim that the 1965 Macmillan series used meaningful phonics at the beginning of first grade is simply false. Second-grade children who are unable to read “new” words like “frog” certainly have not been given real phonics. The cruelty to little children which is the result of such sight-word materials should also be duly noted.

## **Chapter 55**

### **The Banishing of Real Tests Based on Real Learning (Conditioning) and Their Replacement by Fake Tests Which Could Be Passed By Intelligent Guessing, Masking Massive Failures**

If second-graders were routinely tested on their oral reading accuracy on progressively more difficult word lists, the failure of series like Macmillan's to teach children by second grade to read simple "new" words like "frog" would become very evident.

I witnessed that kind of failure for years at third grade when children tried orally to read material other than their sight-word basal readers. One bright third grade girl, for instance, was absolutely flabbergasted by the new but phonically regular word, "picnic," and spluttered unrelated sounds. To pronounce the phonically regular new word, "pencil" independently was absolutely beyond third graders, unless they had been taught it previously.

The specific problems on these two words ("picnic" and "pencil") for children who had been taught to read only whole words for "meaning" were their inability to use short vowels except in memorized parts of whole-words, their inability to syllabicate, and their inability to apply the knowledge of the two sounds of "c" as in cat and cent (if, indeed, they even had such knowledge). Yet most first graders taught with good phonic programs possess these abilities before spring of first grade. Most such first-graders can read AND SPELL words like "picnic" and "pencil" with ease.

Almost endless examples could be given of simple words which the great majority of phonically-taught first-graders read with ease, but which almost all "meaning" taught third-graders are incapable of reading. I remember how my third-graders in the so-called "top group" were incapable of "reading" the phonically regular poem in the Ginn reader which began:

"Timothy Tiggs and Tomothy Toggs both got stuck in the bogothy bogs."

Phonically taught first graders handle such materials easily, since it concerns "sound" and not "meaning." Of course, most third graders learned to recite the poem eventually, apparently by auditory memory, not by "reading" it.

Yet most third grade teachers do not even know there is a real problem. If a child stumbles over a lower frequency word which has not already been taught, the teachers pronounce it and think the problem is solved, because most children can read their controlled-vocabulary sight-word reading books very well and score very well on the phony standardized "reading comprehension" tests given annually. That is, of course, because only 1,000 words of the highest frequency compose about ninety per cent of most reading materials. Once children know those 1,000 highest-frequency words (which account for about 90 per cent of almost any material), they are automatically reading above the frustration level on most reading comprehension test materials. They are therefore able to guess the meaning of most of the unknown words in the remaining 10 per cent from the context of the selection, particularly if those words are already in their spoken vocabularies, and they can therefore guess the answers to the questions.

Their inability to read independently only shows up on oral word list tests which lack a written context from which to guess the words, or on demanding materials which contain difficult unknown, low-frequency words, well beyond the 10,000 commonest words.. Such reading disabled children (and most American elementary school children are reading-disabled) cannot pronounce, and therefore "hear,"

low-frequency words because they are not already in their spoken vocabularies, even when they can guess the “meaning” of low-frequency words from the context of a selection.

The sounds of words are really only labels for the ideas being named. If the sound of a word cannot be resurrected from memory when it is needed, then the idea behind that word is rendered useless. When reading-disabled children encounter unknown low-frequency words, they may be able to guess their meanings, but the low-frequency words will lack a “sound” hook with which the children could have filed the word in their memories for future use, and with which hook they could have retrieved the word in the future. As a result, instead of accumulating their vocabulary through their reading, as healthy readers can do, reading disabled children cannot increase their vocabulary in a normal fashion, any more than badly taught deaf-mutes can. The stunted vocabularies of reading-disabled children are the real reason for the low so-called “reading comprehension” scores that show up so consistently today at the high school and college levels.

If the assistant superintendent in the school system which switched from the phonic Open Court reading series to the sight-word Macmillan reading series had meaningful oral reading test results available in his central office instead of “silent reading comprehension tests,” he would very quickly have seen the rank failure produced by the Macmillan “meaning” series when the Open Court “sound” series was thrown out. Yet such oral word tests are almost non-existent today.

In the 1928 U. S. Catalog and the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932, no listing is shown under reading for the Gates or Gray oral reading accuracy tests (or for any oral reading accuracy tests). This proves, of course, that group oral reading accuracy tests went out of use in America before 1928, since they were not even in print by 1928, though “silent reading comprehension” tests were massively in print, including Gates’, such as the Gates’ Primary Reading Tests and Gates’ Silent Reading Tests. Yet, anyone checking this 1928 source would receive no hint of the history concerning the suppression of group oral-reading-accuracy tests. Such researchers would not receive even a hint that such tests had once existed, or the astonishing fact that oral reading accuracy tests had been written and had been massively used by the very first deaf-mute-method reading textbook authors, Gates and Gray. It is self-evident that group oral-reading-accuracy tests were suppressed by “expert” consensus by 1928. Gates, Gray and the whole Education Mafia knew very well that oral reading accuracy tests would have statistically revealed in the most glaring manner the failure of the deaf-mute reading method to be foisted on America in 1930.

However, since the U. S. Catalog in 1928, a primary research source, could give no background on oral reading tests, it might mislead an uninformed researcher so that he was ignorant of the existence of oral reading tests and would believe that the “reading comprehension tests” which replaced them were valid.

“Oral reading” can be done with nearly 100% accuracy by an inexpensive computer with very inexpensive software. If this paragraph were typed using Firstbyt Smoothtalker software, my Radio Shack Tandy computer could read it back to me with perfect or near perfect accuracy. The human-sounding voice even has intonation, and it pauses at commas and periods. Yet the computer and its software obviously have “zero” comprehension of the paragraph’s meaning. However, the computer and software are only doing what the human brain does when “reading” has become an automatic conditioned reflex, which is what healthy reading should be.

The part of the brain which “stores” such conditioned learning, very much as it is “stored” on software, has no consciousness. The famed neurosurgeon, Dr. Wilder Penfield, in his book, *The Mystery of the Mind*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey: 1975, called that part of the brain the “automatic sensory motor mechanism.”

Dr. Penfield said the “automatic sensory motor mechanism” is connected at the higher brain stem with the part of the brain holding our consciousness, which portion of the brain he called the “higher brain mechanism,” occupying very roughly the front portions of the two halves of the brain. Research has shown that attention can be focused on only one thing at a time. Research has also shown that consciousness, which must also be unitary since its attention is unitary, arises from below the two halves of the brain at the unitary higher brain stem and then spreads into the front part of the two halves of the brain, where all reasoning takes place. Much talk lately of the brain’s containing “two consciousnesses” obviously only came because of the differences that result when unitary consciousness looks out at reality from either the left or the right side of the brain. By analogy, using the right side might be compared to looking out at the churchyard through a pink glass window, and using the left side might be compared to looking out at the same church yard through a blue glass window. It is the same churchyard, and the same solitary observer, but the impressions are different because different mediums are used.

According to Dr. Penfield, a connection between the brain’s computer, the “automatic sensory motor mechanism,” which occupies very roughly the back part of the two halves of the brain, is situated at the higher brain stem. It is through the use of something like a “switch” at the higher brain stem that consciousness calls on the brain’s computer, the “automatic sensory motor mechanism,” as needed. Consciousness can either listen to the computer’s activity, change its activity, or permit it to operate on “automatic” while consciousness thinks about other matters.

According to the psychiatrist/pediatrician, the late Dr. Hilde Mosse, author of *The Complete Handbook of Reading Disorders*, healthy reading is an automatic conditioned reflex, which means it can be done with or without conscious attention focused on the actual decoding of the print. She said that, for comprehension to be maximum, no conscious attention should be focused on the reading act itself, so that consciousness is left totally free to concentrate on the meaning of the material. This obviously rules out anything which approaches “psycholinguistic guessing” in reading. Since “psycholinguistic guessing” of words in a selection is done with consciousness, and not automatically, consciousness is NOT left totally free to concentrate on the meaning of the material. Attention is divided, switching back and forth from word identification to the message of the selection, and real “comprehension” must therefore drop accordingly.

However, the very term, “reading comprehension,” is an oxymoron. Healthy reading should be a conditioned reflex, taking place in that part of the brain which has no comprehension, the brain’s computer. Comprehension takes place in that part of the brain which cannot be conditioned and which holds consciousness, and to be maximum should focus no attention whatsoever on the act of reading. Therefore, since the higher brain mechanism cannot be conditioned or taught, it is obviously impossible to “teach” reading comprehension.

Yet the strongest arguments against the validity of “reading comprehension” tests are not just the facts that the very term, “reading comprehension,” is an oxymoron, and that “psycholinguistic reading” makes it impossible, by definition, to concentrate totally on the meaning of the material being read. The strongest argument comes from the kind of statistical curves produced by “reading comprehension” tests, which prove that what is being tested is not learned material but inborn ability.

Any inborn trait in a population produces what is called a “bell curve.” Taking the case of women’s shoe sizes, if a graph is produced of the sizes of women’s shoes of perhaps ten thousand women in a New Jersey town, some few will have tiny feet with size four shoes, and some few will have very large feet with size twelve shoes, but most of the ten thousand will cluster around shoe sizes seven, eight and nine. If a line is drawn from the top of the tiny column over the size four, over the increasingly larger columns for sizes five and six, to the top of the very large columns for sizes seven, eight, and nine, and then dropped to the increasingly smaller columns for sizes ten, eleven and twelve, it will be seen that the

connecting line over the top of the columns forms the shape of a bell: curved on each side and very high in the middle. The same kind of bell curve is produced on intelligence tests, which, with some exceptions, largely measure inborn intelligence.

Neither shoe sizes nor inborn intelligence have anything to do with the kind of graphs produced by conditioned reflexes. Conditioned reflexes are nothing more nor less than learning. Something which has been learned, or “conditioned,” in that group of ten thousand women in a New Jersey town is the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag, recited daily in New Jersey schools and learned by heart by most American children. (However, the laudable addition some years ago of the words, “under God,” makes it more difficult for older people to recite the Pledge from memory without some slight stumbling at the point of that addition.) If a graph is produced of how much of the Pledge is still known by those ten thousand adult women, some tiny portion (probably foreign born) would know none of it, some slightly larger portion who are perhaps mentally defective would know almost none of it, some would remember increasingly larger portions of it, but the largest number would know it perfectly. The columns would therefore be very tiny over those who knew 0%, very slightly increasing over those who knew 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70 percent, and increasing considerably more over those who knew 80 and 90 percent. But probably a large majority of the ten thousand would know 100 percent of the Pledge, and the column for 100 per cent would be very high.

That kind of piling up of scores at the end of a graph is typical for any learned or “conditioned” material. When a line is drawn over the top of such scores, it produces a very gentle rise until the very end, when it abruptly shoots up to a huge cliff. If the same test were given to ten thousand women in London, the curve would be reversed: the vast majority would know zero percent, but some few American expatriates would know 100 per cent. The scores in London would pile up at zero percent. Whether the scores pile up at one end of the scale or the other, such piled-up scores are produced when any “conditioned” or learned material is tested.

Yet American “reading comprehension” scores do not pile up, as is normally true when learned or “conditioned” material is graphed, but instead produce a beautiful bell curve. Therefore, something inborn is obviously being measured. What is being measured is inborn intelligence, since it has to be used by sight-word trained people in “psycholinguistically guessing” the answers to “reading comprehension tests.” Ergo, reading comprehension tests do not primarily test “learning” but primarily test the inborn trait of intelligence. They are fallacious as shown by the curves produced by their statistical results.

“Reading comprehension tests” cannot even measure much of inborn intelligence for those who were severely disabled by the sight-word approach since they cannot read enough sight words to guess accurately, nor can they score well on ordinary intelligence tests because such tests require some ability to read. This severely disabled group would probably include most people who are pronounced auditory types, as are probably many Black people, instead of visual types. As mentioned elsewhere in this history, since many Black people show great talent in music and speech, the deaf-mute method may be more lethal for such Black people than other people and the phonic method correspondingly more beneficial for such Black people than other people. That this is so is suggested by Marva Collins’ extraordinary results with Black inner city children. She teaches heavy phonics and then follows it with teaching true literature. The writing abilities her Black students show later on their compositions are breathtaking.

What is curious is that the bell curve, reflecting inborn intelligence, is also sometimes distorted when children who read phonically are tested. This is because such children can read WITH attention to meaning or WITHOUT attention since reading has become, for them, an automatic conditioned reflex. Two things are therefore being tested: their degree of attention, and their ability to read with understanding. When they choose to pay attention, they read with maximum reading comprehension, far exceeding the crippled psycholinguistic readers who have divided attention, reading by guessing, and who

cannot read at all without paying attention. Yet, when phonically-trained children take “reading comprehension tests” in school, they may let their attention wander and read thoughtlessly, something the “guessing” deaf-mute-method readers are incapable of doing because they read with forced attention.

This was the cause of the sometimes lower reading comprehension scores from the Open Court readers about which the school administrator was “concerned.” He could not recognize that such scores confirmed that, at fourth grade in that school, Open Court texts had produced truly automatic conditioned reflexes. To improve the meaningless “reading comprehension scores,” the administrator moved out the successful Open Court program and moved in the harmful Macmillan program. In the central office, he only dealt with computer print-outs of standardized reading comprehension test scores and never listened to little children trying to read out loud, and stumbling because of Macmillan’s inadequacy. He was probably congratulating himself on the statistical “improvement” on the “silent reading comprehension tests” from the use of Macmillan’s series at the very same time that the mother of the little girl in my second grade class was frantic with worry about her child’s failure because of that series.

In Nila Banton Smith’s *American Reading Instruction*, (page 190), she said that such school superintendents from about 1920 to 1924 were “appalled to find that large numbers of children were deficient in reading” when they first gave standardized silent reading tests. Almost all school superintendents were and are astonishingly naive and have been led around by “experts” since the turn of the century, possibly because they lack confidence in their own judgments. (If school superintendents were not so astonishingly naive, they could not have been manipulated so easily today into their almost wholesale acceptance of the “whole language” juggernaut. Its relatively sudden size and intensity, blanketing America, Australia and elsewhere in the English-speaking world, should certainly have aroused their suspicions that it was the public relations work of some largely behind-the-scenes group of “experts” with massive influence.)

When children’s reading comprehension scores in 1920 to 1924 produced something like a bell curve, with 50 percent of the school population scoring below “average,” school superintendents should have KNOWN they were not testing a teachable skill (“reading”) but only something inborn and essentially immune from schooling. If, instead of a bell curve, they sometimes got the totally random scores produced by Miss Middleton’s class in 1915, they should equally have known they were not testing a skill, because, if they were, scores would have piled up toward 100% (if taught) or toward 0% (if not taught). Her bizarre scores resulted from the testing of TWO things: intelligence and the degree of wandering attention.

Yet silent reading comprehension scores were used as the rationale for moving the deaf-mute-method readers into American schools. They have been kept there by abandoning oral reading and spelling accuracy tests which could reveal their failure and by continued use instead of the fallacious “silent reading comprehension tests.” Those “comprehension tests” have splendidly masked the failure of the deaf-mute reading approach for over sixty years.

## Chapter 56

### **Since It Was the “Experts” Themselves Who Wrote New Spellers After 1928, Phonics Could Not Return Once Again Through the Spelling Door As It Had in the Late 1880’s**

“Experts” had been writing on spelling for a very, very long time before 1928, as this history has shown, probably beginning with Andrew Bell’s “improvements” in India and Great Britain described in his 1808 text. The work by American “experts” after about 1900 has already been discussed, but it did not stop there. For instance, in 1918, Dr. Leta Stetter(?) Hollingworth (1886-?), who received her training as a psychologist at Columbia, wrote *The Psychology of Special Disability in Spelling*. She was mentioned in Cattell’s article in the 1926 Thorndike honorary issue of *Teachers College Record*:

“Thorndike established a colony in view from my house where, among others, have lived in the summer or through the year Woodworth, Woodbridge, the Hollingworths, Poffenberger, and Keppel....”

It was in this article that Cattell said:

“My relations with Thorndike have been more intimate than with any other, except (perhaps) Boas and Woodworth. Our interests and viewpoints... have coincided to an unusual degree....”

The point, of course, is that Dr. Hollingworth’s “viewpoints” on the psychology of spelling probably also “coincided to an unusual degree” with the mutually-held viewpoints of Cattell and Thorndike.

The following remark appeared on an entry on E. L. Thorndike in *Current Biography*, H. W. Wilson Co., New York, 1941:

“A colleague at Teachers College remarked that Thorndike has always been a center of controversy.”

However, not joining Thorndike in controversy, presumably, were the men who received their doctorates, presumably under Thorndike, at Columbia Teachers College. Many contributed reviews or articles to the February, 1926, *Teachers College Record* Thorndike honorary issue. Contributors included J. F. Hosis, who received his Ph. D. from Columbia in 1920, Henry Suzzallo, who received his from Columbia Teachers College in 1905, Arthur Irving Gates, who received his at Columbia Teachers College in 1917, and many others. Gates wrote the tome mentioned below on the teaching of spelling, but Suzzallo, Hosis and Thorndike all wrote spelling books which were meant to be used directly by little children.

In 1922, Arthur I. Gates, who had been Thorndike’s student and was Thorndike’s and Cattell’s associate, wrote *The Psychology of Reading and Spelling*, at Columbia Teachers College, New York. Dr. Burdette Ross Buckingham had written *Spelling Ability, Its Measurement and Distribution*, published at Teachers College, Columbia, University in 1913, and it presumably was his doctoral dissertation. In 1919, he wrote the Buckingham Extension of the Ayres Spelling Scale. Much other material undoubtedly could be cited, such as E. L. Thorndike’ article on spelling about 1900 in *Teachers College Record*, Henry Suzzallo’s article on spelling in the 1913 *Cyclopedia of Education*, and O. P. Cornman’s *Spelling in the Elementary School*, Boston, 1902. Cornman’s work is available at the Library of Congress and is cited by

Suzzallo and elsewhere. These materials concerned “theory,” of course, and were not intended to reach the hands of children.

Studies of the most frequently used words in spelling, reading and speech date back many years. Dr. O’Mathuna referred to Father Bathe’s word studies in the seventeenth century, mentioned elsewhere in this history. Word frequencies must have been of some interest by the mid-nineteenth century in America, as established by the high-frequency words listed in Leavitt’s reader, quoted previously. In 1925, the National Education Association’s Department of Superintendence produced a summary of 33 more recent studies concerning what words were suitable for spelling study (Research in Constructing the Elementary School Curriculum, Third Yearbook, Department of Superintendence, 1925, pp. 110 - 151).

Ernest A. Horn also produced in 1926 A Basic Writing Vocabulary, University of Iowa Monographs in Education, First Series, No. 4, University of Iowa. In Germany in 1898, a man named Laeding sampled a large amount of German literature, 10,910,777 running words and 238,173 different words. The NEA publication cited word studies by Chancellor in 1910 on the commonest words used in writing, and by Ayres in 1913 on words used in personal and business letters. Ayres’ 1913 samples totaled about 24,000 running words with about 2,000 different words. In 1914, Ayres compiled his list of the thousand most common words in writing, based on four previous studies, and described his work in doing so in his 1915 text. Thorndike’s study of the 10,000 commonest words appeared in 1921, and more minor word studies continued for some years after that.

Spelling had obviously been a great subject for “study” also in the years immediately before 1932, as the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932, showed that bibliographies had been prepared on such spelling studies. The entries below were given in the Index at the end of the “Spelling” entries, under “Bibliography” and “Examinations”:

“Foran, T: G: and Rock, R. T: Annotated bibliography of studies relating to spelling; supplement no. 1. pa 35c ‘30 Catholic educ.”

“Saelinger, Sister Mary Irmina, and others. Annotated bibliography of studies relating to spelling. pa 35c ‘28 Catholic educ. press”

“Foran, T: G: Form of spelling tests. pa 35c ‘29 Catholic educ. press”

If these three works could be located today, they might make interesting reading.

However, what is most startling about the change-agents’ work on spelling after 1928 is the extent to which they concerned themselves with writing the actual spelling books the children were to use. Numbers of spelling texts by “experts” are listed in the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932.

The numbers of “expert” psychologists and other “experts” who appear as the authors of children’s spellers between 1928 and 1932, the critical change-agent dates, includes B. Skinner, (with L. F. Cowan), Horn and Ashbaugh, Hosic and O’Shea, W. C. Bagley (with James H. Smith), Daniel Starch (with G. A. Mirick), H. Suzzallo (“and others”), E. L. Thorndike (and J. H. Wohlfarth, 1929) and even F. J. Schonell, England’s sight-word expert, who wrote a book on spelling published by Macmillan in England in 1932, two years after Macmillan<sup>41</sup> in America began publishing Gates’ 1930 deaf-mute-method readers.

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<sup>41</sup> The 1965 Macmillan series was by Albert J. Harris and Mae Knight Clark. Harris was also the author of How to Increase Reading Ability, a standard work for postgraduate courses in the teaching of reading. First copyrighted in 1940, it had a revised sixth edition written with Edward R. Sipay and published by David McKay Company,



A background check on leading “experts” who wrote spellers between 1928 and 1932 is in order: Skinner, Horn, Hosis, Bagley, Starch, Mirick, Suzzallo, Thorndike and Schonell.

Henry Suzzallo (1875-1933) had written with Henry C. Pearson (1871-?) what was probably a change-agent speller about 1911, since Suzzallo’s views on reading and spelling in his articles in the 1913 *Cyclopedia of Education* endorsed “meaning” in opposition to “sound.” At that time, Suzzallo taught at Columbia where he had studied under Thorndike about 1901. As discussed elsewhere in this history, Suzzallo’s spellers published by American Book Company had been adopted by the state of Texas and were involved in a textbook bid scandal in 1925. Shortly afterwards, reportedly for too aggressive fund-raising according to Oehles’ biography, Suzzallo was fired from his position as President of the University of Washington by the Governor of the state of Washington. Suzzallo then went to work for the Carnegie Foundation, and died in 1933.

Suzzallo had apparently been the first well-connected “expert” to write a speller long before 1928, as early as 1911. It is true, however, that Dr. Joseph Mayer Rice had written a spelling program in the late 1890’s, and Henry F. Harrington wrote a spelling book in 1880. School superintendents like Harrington not infrequently wrote textbooks, but Rice and the school superintendents (and possibly, but not probably, Harrington) were not insiders in the change-agent cliques. Yet Suzzallo most certainly was an insider, and so were many of those who wrote the spellers after 1928. Some were well-known psychologists.

With publication dates of 1931 and 1936, the New York Public Library catalog shows Henry Suzzallo (1875 - 1933) as a co-author of *Everyday Spelling for Boys and Girls, First Book and Second Book*, written with Henry Carr Pearson (1871-?) and Milo B. Hillegas (1872-?) and published by American Book Company. The 1936 edition appeared three years after Suzzallo’s death. The 1931 and 1936 speller was apparently a revision of Suzzallo and Pearson’s earlier material. It is of interest that Nila Banton Smith in her “Preface” thanked Dr. Milo B. Hillegas, presumably still at Columbia and who had worked on Suzzallo’s last speller, for Hillegas’ “encouragement, helpful advice, and aids of many kinds” in the writing of her “history.” No matter where one turns in researching the history of reading and spelling misinstruction in this country after about 1900, all roads seem to lead back to people at Columbia Teachers College in New York City.

In February, 1982, I requested the First Book of the Suzzallo speller at the New York Public Library, since I felt it would confirm a “meaning” instead of a “sound” approach. The First Book was not available, but only the Second Book. That was the pattern to which I had become accustomed in my library work on reading series. In the minority of cases when any part of a series was available at all, the beginning books in reading series were almost always not available, but only the upper-level books. In February, 1982, I had also tried to get the beginning book of Suzzallo’s 1930 reading series, written with others and published by American Book in 1930. All the New York Public Library could find to send down to me was Book 4 of that series.

The same thing had been true at the New York Public Library a year or two before when I requested the 1924 Bobbs-Merrill Readers, written by George Herbert Betts, Clara Belle Baker and Edna D. Baker. All that the New York Public Library clerks could send down to me was an upper-level book. Later, in 1986, I found the first-grade manual of the Bobbs-Merrill series in the Harvard Library, where I found most of the rest of the material on reading series which I have used to write this history. If it had not been for Harvard’s remarkable collection of textbooks, which appears to have been free from outside influences, I could never have written this history.

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Inc., New York, in 1975. In my opinion, both the 1965 Macmillan series and the Harris and Sipay teacher’s 1975 text are unacceptable.

The famous name, Skinner, was listed as the co-author of a speller between 1928 and 1932, appearing as “B. Skinner.” This may well have been B. F. Skinner, the controversial psychologist who recently died, and who wrote the book, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, Bantam Books, New York: 1971, 1980. Its thesis was that we can no longer afford freedom but must submit to rule by “experts,” presumably of which he would have been one. I once read (I believe in a newspaper article, and possibly in Skinner’s obituary, but unfortunately I made no record at the time) that Skinner reported that at his very advanced age he found pornography to be therapeutically stimulating. Most civilized people would not have selected a man with a mentality like that as an “expert” guardian even of the town dump.

James F. Hosis was another author of a speller published between 1928 and 1932. Hosis had received his Ph. D. in 1920 and was at Columbia Teachers College in February, 1926, when he was one of those working on Professor E. L. Thorndike’s annotated bibliography in the February, 1926, issue of *Teachers College Record* honoring Thorndike. (Among others contributing essays or reviews honoring Thorndike for this special issue in February were Cattell, Curtis, Gates, Stone, Suzzallo and Briggs. Briggs wrote a book in 1911 on teaching reading, referred to in Appendix D. He had received his doctorate in 1913 and was a professor of education at Columbia Teachers College in 1926. Judd also contributed an article honoring Thorndike, but it was not published until the May issue.)

Of all the experts, Thorndike was one of the most important and influential, so the fact that he was among those “experts” writing spellers between 1928 and 1932 is very interesting, indeed. Thorndike was one of the authors on a speller published in 1929 by World Book Company. That was the same company which had published Nila Banton Smith’s and Curtis’s *Picture Story Reading Lessons* based on Thorndike’s list of the commonest words, and which used the pure deaf-mute-method to teach beginners to read.

So many of Thorndike’s ideas were disturbing. In the February, 1926, honorary issue of *Teachers College Record*, one bibliographical entry showed Thorndike had written an article in November, 1906, “A Sociological Theory of Education.” The review stated that the article:

“Criticizes Professor Ward’s advocacy of all knowledge for all men. Suggests that more rational than increasing opportunity haphazardly for all, would be giving added opportunities to the gifted, training the less gifted in the arts and industries, and improving society through eugenics.”

Who would decide who was “gifted” and what “improving society” should entail (leaving out of the discussion the outrage against human freedom and dignity which is implicit in the very idea of human eugenics)? Presumably, it would be men like Thorndike who would set up this nightmare rule by those who presume they are more intelligent than the next man. (As mentioned, the psychologist, B. F. Skinner, actually had the audacity to make a similar recommendation for rule by “experts” in his 1971 book, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*.)

As a footnote concerning psychologists’ deciding who is “gifted,” it should be added that Thorndike’s followers “estimated” his IQ at 200, but his biographers recorded that Thorndike spent many free hours trying unsuccessfully to master calculus, which every graduate engineer in America has had to do or he would have failed to graduate. The estimate of an IQ of 200 sounds more like the expression of a sycophant than a professional.

What strikes me when reading anything written by these “experts” is that none of them seems to be very intelligent, particularly in comparison to their opponents. Yet I have read (though I cannot locate it now) that about two-thirds of America’s superintendents of schools for a long period of time either

received degrees from Columbia Teachers College, where some of the most prestigious “experts” were located, or from those who had themselves received degrees from Columbia Teacher’s College.

W. F. Bagley of Columbia Teachers College was another author with James H. Smith of a speller, *Mastery Speller*. (It was not available in either the Library of Congress nor the New York Public Library, so I have not seen it.) Bagley was a major member of the Education Mafia, and was an editor for James McKeen Cattell on one of his publications for some time. It would be difficult to find any man who was more of an insider with the change-agents than W. F. Bagley.

England had its own crop of reading “experts” after 1930, but no name seems to recur more frequently in the literature than that of F. J. Schonell. It is very interesting that Schonell was one of those writing a new speller between 1928 and 1932, listed in the *Cumulative Book Index* for those years. (Schonell’s 1946 guide to the teaching of reading is listed at the end of Appendix D in this history.)

Professor Daniel Starch was a co-author of a speller published between 1928 and 1932. Starch was from the University of Wisconsin, where J. M. Cattell’s and John Dewey’s fellow graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, the psychologist, Joseph Jastrow, had been located for many years. Jastrow and Dewey had been among the subjects in Cattell’s benighted sight-word experiments, used for almost a century to justify sight words (*An Education in Psychology: James McKeen Cattell’s Journal and Letters from Germany and England, 1880 - 1888*, Edited by Michael M. Sokal, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1981, page 70).

These initial sight-word experiments involving Cattell, Dewey, Jastrow, G. Stanley Hall, and others were done on St. Patrick’s night, March 17, 1883, the same date the more auspicious Brooklyn Bridge was completed. Starch wrote one of the first “reading comprehension tests” in 1914, *The Measurement of Efficiency in Reading, Writing, Spelling and English*, College Book Store, Madison, Wisconsin. Quantz’s material, referred to earlier, was also prepared at Jastrow’s University of Wisconsin. Starch’s co-author on his *Test and Study Speller* published between 1928 and 1932 was G. A. Mirick.

According to Nila Banton Smith (page 124) George A. Mirick, the co-author with Starch of a speller between 1928 and 1932, wrote *Teaching to Read. N. J. State Course in 1914*. Mirick’s book was out of print by 1928.

The fact that an “expert” who shaped New Jersey’s official government reading course in 1914 collaborated with Starch, an “expert” with shining credentials, to produce a “speller” at the very time that American spelling ability was being sabotaged, suggests how pervasively the content of American education was being quietly manipulated by a tiny group of wrong-headed people. Consider the numbers involved and the clear indication of control from the top: In a nation of close to 123,000,000 people in 1930, which without control from the top would have produced numerous and unrelated “spellers” from each section of the country, a large number of the “new” spellers came from a tiny, interlocking group of “experts.” They had the authority through their university positions to decree what was “right” and what was “wrong” in teaching reading and spelling in government schools in America.

To “get along” in that climate, one had to “go along.” Mae Carden, who opposed the “experts” at Columbia Teachers College in the 1930’s, was ostracized and made no appreciable impact in the early 1930’s, any more than did the neurologist from Iowa, Dr. Samuel T. Orton, who had dealt with the reading problem in Iowa by the 1920’s which was caused by the sight-word method. (Concerning Mae Carden’s incredibly successful reading program and the baffling opposition to it, see the article by Frances V. Rummell, “These Children Love to Read,” from *The Saturday Evening Post*, September 9, 1961.) The sight-word method had been promoted in Dr. Orton’s Iowa by George Herbert Betts, who had studied under John Dewey about 1904 and who wrote *Outlines for Schools in Iowa* in 1915. The rampant

reading disabilities in Iowa by the 1920's from the sight-word method suggests a possible cause-effect relationship with Betts' influence.

Horn wrote one of the spellers listed above which were published between 1928 and 1932. Horn was at the University of Iowa and also wrote a text on reading referred to elsewhere in this history. Betts' and Horn's Iowa is where Orton began to fight the sight-word method.

Both Carden in the East and Orton of Iowa had produced remarkably effective reading programs but were unable to exercise influence because the plague of "experts" had produced a dictatorial academic "machine" which silenced opposition through control of academic careers. With their control of American education, the "experts" dictatorial "machine" managed to turn a literate America into an America where a large percentage are "functionally illiterate." (i.e., they cannot really read).

The "experts" had made sure by writing new spelling texts by 1932 that teachers would not be able to use old phonic spelling texts to compensate for the harm caused by the 1930 new deaf-mute-method readers. Therefore, no longer would teachers be able to use phonic spelling texts to overcome reading disabilities, as had been done once before in America, in the 1890's. The record certainly suggests that the "experts" knew their reading instruction history very well indeed.

## Chapter 57

### The State of Reading Instruction After 1930

The blanketing effect of “expert” influence in the United States after 1930 appeared to leave very few areas of the country untouched. Some few areas may have existed. Certainly an entry under “Readers” in the 1928-1932 Cumulative Book Index suggests some part of the American South may have escaped. Instead of obscuring history, the book may have clarified history:

“Robinson, R. R. Two centuries of change in the content of school readers. pa \$1.60 ‘30  
George Peabody college”

George Peabody College was comfortably far away from Columbia Teachers College and the University of Chicago. Possibly its students and faculty were marching to a different drummer in 1930.

However, at the end of the section, “Readers,” in the 1928-1932 Cumulative Book Index, appeared “About readers,” a very unusual section, and it contained these entries which were very possibly influenced by the “experts”:

“Minnich, H. C. William Holmes McGuffey and the peerless pioneer McGuffey readers. pa  
25c ‘28 Miami univ.”

“Saelinger, Sister Mary Irmina. Evaluation of the vocabulary content of twelve series of  
primary readers. pa 35c ‘29 Catholic educ. press.”

As discussed elsewhere, Minnich’s book appearing in 1928 was a convenient prop to the McGuffey Myth, so necessary if America were not to question the unprecedented and almost wholesale invasion of American schools by the “Dick and Jane” deaf-mute-method readers after 1930. (If the invasion had not been wholesale, all the “Dick and Jane” jokes and cartoons over the past fifty years or so would have fallen awfully flat.)

What Sister Mary Irmina Saelinger thought about vocabulary content and control is unknown, but she should certainly have questioned the very concept of control, though it is very unlikely that she did so. Almost all of America was marching to the superbly publicized drummers of Columbia Teachers College, and she probably agreed with them. Sisters frequently were “certified” by attending schools run by “experts,” so they often (at least initially) were no more immune than government school teachers. It is doubtful that she reflected at all on the fact that no one had worried about the “vocabulary content” of the Psalms a thousand years or so before, at which time little seven-year-old beginning readers started the task of memorizing the Psalms in Latin, and not even in the vernacular.

It is almost impossible to find any area in America from about 1932 to the late 1960’s in which Gray’s “Dick and Jane” Scott, Foresman series was not at least one of the series in use. In most places Gray’s series appears to have been the primary series. A. I. Gates deaf-mute-method 1930 McMillan series may have been the secondary series until after World War II, at which time other “meaning” series were published in considerable numbers. The blanketing effect on the teaching of reading by the W. S. Gray “Dick and Jane” deaf-mute-method series is something that had never occurred before in the history of America.

The fables on the use of The New England Primer and McGuffey’s have been discussed elsewhere in this work. Even the vastly used Webster’s speller never achieved the blanketing effect at the first grade

level before 1826 that was achieved by “Dick and Jane,” because at no time did Webster’s speller control most of the market. After 1826, when spellers were no longer used for beginning reading, the continued wide use of the Webster speller at higher levels above the beginning level was apparently largely due to the fact that it was so cheap.

Nila Banton Smith omitted mentioning other reading series in the 1930’s, probably because Gates and Gray had little competition through the 1930’s, although Mae Carden’s phonic texts date from the 1930’s. Smith did what is probably an adequate job of describing sight-word series from 1940 to 1960.

The extent to which W. S. Gray’s Scott, Foresman was used in American schools between 1930 and 1967 has never been treated statistically. (This astonishing fact should cause future historians to shake their heads in near disbelief.) Yet, as late as 1967, Jean Chall recognized Scott, Foresman as the dominant series in America, when she used this phrase in a footnote on page 23 of *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*, referring to the 1962 Scott, Foresman edition:

“The 1962 edition of the leading basal-reading series (the Scott, Foresman Reading Series....”

“Sound” or phonic alternatives to the “meaning” series were almost unavailable until long after 1930, apart from Mae Carden’s phonic materials. However, *Reading With Phonics* by Julie Hay and Charles Wingo became available in 1948. It was published by the J. B. Lippincott Company in 1954, and possibly also in 1948. When Dr. Rudolf Flesch wrote *Why Johnny Can’t Read* in 1955, he said:

“To my knowledge, it is the only available American phonetic primer. (You can also get the Beacon materials from Ginn & Company in England....”

Dr. Flesch was almost right about the unavailability of phonic materials in America in 1955, although he obviously did not know that Mae Carden’s excellent phonic materials were still on the American market in that year, and they were still on the market in 1994, although they may no longer be. However, it is very doubtful that the Beacon materials were still available in England as late as 1955. However, apparently as a result of Dr. Flesch’s best-selling 1955 book, phonic materials began to arrive on the market by 1963. Yet none of the post-1930 materials which endorsed “sound” to a greater or lesser extent ever had an appreciable portion of the market.

Linguistic readers appeared in the 1960’s. Their results were poor, because, as Pollard said back in the 1880’s, “meaning” and “sound” cannot be successfully taught simultaneously to beginners, and linguistic readers attempt to do precisely that. The i.t.a. phonetic print was briefly successful in the 1960’s, but reportedly largely disappeared for the same reason as the earlier Pitman print: it interfered with spelling. Charles C. Walcutt’s Lippincott readers, which he wrote with Glenn McCracken, arrived in 1963. Although they were weak phonic readers, they were far better than the basal reader series then on the market. The Open Court readers arriving in 1963 did a superb job with phonics at first grade. Other series with phonic books in the lower levels, but with readers for grades one to about grade six or eight, appeared after 1963. Yet at no time did such phonic reading series capture more than a small fraction of the market, nor did they ever receive the approval of the vast majority of professors at teachers’ colleges. Most such reading series have now largely disappeared or have been “revised” into phonic uselessness, except for Open Court and a few others.

However, some fine phonic materials meant only for the critical first grade are still on the market. *Sing, Spell, Read and Write* of St. Petersburg, Florida, can do an excellent first-grade job in the 1990’s, as can *Professor Phonics Gives Sound Advice* by Sister Monica Folzer, Charlotte Lockhart’s fine program, Samuel Blumenfeld’s fine program, Phyllis Schlafly’s excellent First Reader System, and some few others. *Mona McNee’s* is a fine program from England. (All are listed in Appendix C.)

Information on Mae Carden and some other supporters of “sound” in reading, including J. C. Daniels’s and Hunter Diack’s English series, The Royal Road Readers, can be obtained from Jean Chall’s *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*, McGraw Hill, New York: 1967 (second and third editions 1983 and 1996, Forth Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace). Chall’s book also covered most major reading series in use by 1967 (except Open Court), and, together with Nila Banton Smith’s listing of post-1940 series, provides a listing of most major American reading series for the period 1940-1967. Information on many reading programs available in 1967 can also be obtained from “The Cooperative Research Program in First-Grade Reading Instruction,” written in 1967 by Guy L. Bond and Robert Dykstra, in the *Reading Research Quarterly*, 2, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware. Excellent information on reading series available in 1973 can be obtained from Samuel Blumenfeld’s *The New Illiterates* (1973). To bring the listing up to 1981, Rudolf Flesch’s *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read* provides a listing of the major series in print in 1981. Also in 1981, *The Basal Reader Approach to Reading* by R. C. Akerman was published by John Wiley, New York. According to Dr. Patrick Groff on page 167 of *Preventing Reading Failure, An Examination of the Myths of Reading Instruction*, National Book Company, Portland, Oregon, 1987, Ackerman’s book analyzes the content of basal readers up to 1981. I have not seen Ackerman’s book, but it is obviously an excellent guide to relatively recent reading series. Dr. Patrick Groff has himself written many excellent books in which he discussed current reading materials and recently has discussed “whole language” materials at length. In 1988, *The New Big Book of Home Learning, The Basic Guide to Everything Educational for You & Your Children, (Revised Edition)* by Mary Pride was published by Crossway Books, A Division of Good News Publishers, Westchester, Illinois. This remarkable encyclopedia of presently available general educational materials also lists and describes many fine “sound”-oriented reading programs.

In 1993, the Office of Research of the U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., published *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, an evaluation of costs and contents of many materials on the American market in 1993. While it does contain much helpful current information and information on many current programs, its users should be aware that it omits many widely used programs such as IBM’s computer-assisted materials, the widely used Scribner revision of Charles C. Walcutt’s old Lippincott phonic series, Samuel Blumenfeld’s phonic materials, Sister Monica Folzer’s phonic materials, Charlotte Lockhart’s phonic materials, Mae Carden’s phonic materials, the Coleman’s phonic materials, and even the unsatisfactory but massively advertised *Hooked on Phonics*.

It is true that many phonic programs do not contain reading books to practice the decoding skills in the order in which they are introduced, and do not include general reading books above that beginning level. Nevertheless, the 1993 study’s conclusion that no program does it “all,” teaching decoding and providing reading books, is clearly wrong. Open Court’s, McQueen’s, Mae Carden’s, the Coleman’s *Homestead Readers* and probably a few others provide excellent decoding instruction while also providing basal readers through most of the grade school. The 1879 phonic edition of McGuffey’s is reportedly still on the market, and that certainly does it “all.” Sue Dickson’s *Sing, Spell, Read and Write* provides decoding instruction plus 17 little basal readers to practice sequential phonetic skills. The 17 little books are meant to be read in the critical first grade, after which children can (and should) be moved into real literature, so “basal readers” are unnecessary anyway above the first grade. Phyllis Schlafly’s new material also provides the necessary practice reading materials at first grade, after which basal reading books are no longer necessary, and children can be given real literature.

However, the beautifully illustrated “meaning”-approach basal readers for grades one to eight which are on the market, and which the 1993 study implies are worth while, should NEVER be used for children in isolation (and it would be better not to use them at all). Children are dependent on their reading for most of their vocabulary growth and their growth in the ability to handle complex syntax. Yet the

“meaning”-approach reading books are so grievously flawed by their use of controlled vocabulary and unnaturally simplified syntax that they stunt the normal language development of children.

Furthermore, the content of these readers is all too often disagreeable and objectionable, so that these reading books are hardly likely to promote healthy character-formation. Yet the wish to promote healthy characters in children of school age by giving them wholesome materials to read is absolutely NOT limited to religious-minded people. Even the ancient Roman, Quintilian, suggested that little children practice their handwriting by copying famous moral maxims as an aid in developing their characters. Quintilian even stated that the content of such materials would stay with the little children into their old age!

Despite the availability of relatively cheap and successful phonic “sound” reading materials for first grade, phonic reading materials are not used in the vast majority of American government schools. The vast majority of government schools are using those “meaning” reading series which damage or destroy children’s decoding abilities as well as stunt their normal language development, thereby lowering the children’s functioning intelligence. In addition, the reading series do little or nothing to enrich children’s characters, and are sometimes actually harmful to healthy character development.

Error in reading instruction, and in many more areas as well, has become institutionalized in government schools. Those schools are firmly under the control of “experts,” whose “literature” is all that virtually 100 per cent of school superintendents and their supervisory staffs ever read, if they read even that much material. A very large possibility exists that numbers of school superintendents and their supervisory staffs may themselves be so reading disabled that they are forced to limit the quantity and quality of their own reading, just as Nelson Rockefeller and so many other reading-disabled people have done.

At present, the market is saturated with whole-language abominations, and the “how-to” texts concern “whole language” and the “spontaneous” growth of interest in it. “Whole language” is an utterly stupid and halfwitted phrase, worse even than “psycholinguistic reading,” but it comes from the same change-agents. They are, admittedly, magnificently successful propagandists who obviously have great financial resources and powerful influence at their disposal, since the “whole language” method has criminally (and I DO mean criminally) damaged beginning reading instruction in England, New Zealand and Australia, as well as America, and has done so in an extraordinarily short period of time. Samuel Blumenfeld told of the great harm done in Australia in his September, 1991, The Blumenfeld Education Letter. After a five-week tour of Australia, he devoted the entire issue to his article, “The Scandalous State of Reading Instruction in Australia.”

The current plague is “whole language.” Reading the recent press releases of its highly publicized gurus in so-called educational journals should help to bring any interested reader up to date on its tidal-wave progress, if the reader has the constitutional grit that it takes to wade through such stuff.

However, this history is not primarily concerned with American reading materials published after 1930 since most are covered very well in the reference texts listed above. It can be said in summary that, despite hard work by phonics advocates since Dr. Flesch’s book was published in 1955, most school personnel today still agree with the “reading experts,” that reading should be taught by William James’ “meaning” and not by Noah Webster’s “sound.” The latest lunacy, “whole language,” and the eighty-year-old fakery of the silent reading comprehension test remain triumphantly in place, not only in the United States, but all across the English-speaking world.



## **Chapter 58**

### **The War Between “Sound” and “Meaning” Damaged European and South American Schools, Has Affected the Teaching of Chinese and Japanese Scripts, Has Affected the Teaching of the Deaf, and Has Even Appeared to Have Affected the Teaching of Typing and Shorthand.**

The emphasis in this history has been on the teaching of reading in English. The teaching of reading in English has world-wide importance, as English has become a second language the world over, and it is now the customary language by which people from different countries communicate. The crippling of the teaching of reading in English, therefore, potentially affects not just literacy in English-speaking countries, but literacy all over the world.

However, although the emphasis in this history is on the roots and the status of teaching of reading in English, it is very pertinent to mention the European use of the global sight-word “meaning” method, which the intellectual H. I. Marrou praised, as mentioned earlier. Because of the global method, many Europeans have been crippled in the reading and writing of their native languages.

Before 1920 and since early in the century, a modified “global” or whole-word “meaning” method had some small use in Europe by followers of Ovide Decroly of Belgium, a medical doctor who had originally used the method with retarded children. An analysis of his work (*The Decroly Class*, by Amelie Hamaide, E. P. Dutton, New York: 1924?) shows children had been taught all the sounds and were working with syllables only three months after the beginning of first grade, so his was not a true sight-word approach, but almost the German analytic/synthetic approach. Decroly also used an “experience chart” whole-word “meaning” approach, (such as “Today we visited a farm and saw...”). The “experience chart” whole-word “meaning” method probably spread through European visitors to the 1893 Chicago world’s fair. Such visitors would have had the chance to see the “experience chart” approach used at Colonel Francis W. Parker’s famous Chicago school. Yet it was only after World War I that the true “global” sight-word method was really promoted in Europe, and it was a disaster.

William Scott Gray in *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, 1956, page 107, refers to J. E. Seegers’ *La psychologie de la lecture et l’initiation a la lecture par la methode globale*. Anvers, De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1939, pp. 360-362:

“Seegers makes the following comments: ‘As already pointed out by Simon, the results of children who have learned to read by the global method are completely different from those who learn to read by the synthetic method. We even admit that we have frequently been most embarrassed to evaluate these results, and we have preferred not to point out those referring to time spent and pauses during reading. Here are the reasons - our subjects used to recognizing known words by their ensemble (general configuration, gestalt) make little effort to decipher meaningless syllables and words alien to their vocabulary. During the reading of sentences they omit unknown words.... One could consider this fact as a grievance against the global method, but we think with Vaney that the child learns to read only after several years.’”

The Simon he referred to was Dr. Theophile Simon who wrote *Pedagogie Experimentale*, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris, 1924, and who had worked with the French psychologist Alfred Binet earlier. In his 1924 book, Simon compared the two methods of “meaning” vs. “sound,” and, like a typical intellectual of the period such as Marrou, endorsed the global “meaning” method. Vaney had published a scale for oral reading in 1907, referred to on pages 114 and following of Simon’s 1924 book.

Since Vaney's scale had implicitly agreed with Quintilian, that reading should be accurate before it is fast, Seegers' citing a remark by Vaney that it took years to learn to read (when learning by "sound" is rapid) would suggest that Vaney had changed sides in the meaning-sound war, joining W. S. Gray's erroneous "meaning" side.

In 1965, Robert Dottrens of Switzerland wrote *Au Seuil de la Culture*, Les Editions de Scarabee, Paris, defending the global method as he understood it (which was with heavy analytic phonics), and as he claimed to have used it in the experimental school at Mail in Geneva, where he eventually became the director. He said, however, the global method had not been authorized in Geneva since 1955. Dottrens admitted a real difference existed in the two methods (global whole-word "meaning" vs. synthetic phonics "sound"), and said, with his version of the global method, a "danger" could be avoided which was present in others:

"...the temptation the children have to invent when they do not know. Some of them are past masters in this art.

"To avoid this fault, which is grave, it is absolutely necessary that the exercises with sight words and the work of analysis be executed in a rigorous manner and that - I could not repeat it enough - the inspection of all that the children read orally be impeccable and without any laxity."

Concerning the "awful" effects of straight phonics, however, he went on to say:

"To have learned to read by the letters and the combinations of syllables is to have acquired a mechanism in which comprehension (has no part - rough translation) and it is probably the most grave reproach that one can address to the synthetic method. A child can learn to read rapidly without understanding." (p. 136)

Both Dottrens in 1965 and Seegers in 1939, therefore, joined Gray about 1940 (quoted by Mitford Mathews in his *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*) in admitting that children who are taught by phonics learn to read far faster than children who learn by global ("whole") sight-words. The Boston school report of 1883 which has been discussed earlier made the same admission. Yet these are the ONLY admissions I have ever found in the literature except by defenders of phonic programs about this fact which was so evident to me in teaching primary grades: that children with true phonics learn to read far faster and to read far more accurately. The very tests which could prove it (large group dictated spelling and oral reading accuracy tests) have been abolished in taxpayer-supported testing programs like that of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Dottrens was obviously endorsing the analytic phonics "global method," not Kenneth Goodman's and Frank Smith's psycholinguistic guessing which reduces the reading of printed words to Chinese-like characters, and which currently has been recycled as "whole language," usually with the addition of a few teaspoons or so of "phony phonics."

The most famous European "global" sight-word promoter, however, was Celestin Freinet, a French socialist and school teacher who ran an open-classroom-like school beginning in 1920. Freinet made a great fuss over the children's use of a printing press, but, according to Elise Freinet, the "Boscher" phonics charts were left in a corner showing the "contempt" in which they were held. (Mathurin Boscher [1875-1915], wrote *Methode Boscher*, a 1946 copy of which is listed in the Library of Congress catalog as published by Loudeac, France. It was not available when I requested it in 1980.)

One of Freinet's books was *La methode naturelle, I. L'apprentissage de la langue*, published by Delachaux & Niestle, Neuchatel, Switzerland, in 1969 under the auspices of the Institut J. J. Rousseau in Geneva. I carefully waded through a large portion of that book some fourteen years ago, and made the summary note at the time that Freinet was:

“a pseudo-intellectual mouthing a hash of psychological ideas, poorly tied together and unsupported by data on his ‘conclusions,’ which are only flights of literary fancy.... He admits the fact that children taught by a mixed global method have severe reading problems, but says his is built on interest, so is not a house on sand....”

Some of Freinet's exceedingly boring writings were published by Delachaux & Niestle, Neuchatel, Switzerland, and some by other publishers. His most interesting publisher, however, was probably the Francois Maspero company in Paris. Elise Freinet, most probably Celestin Freinet's wife, wrote *Naissance d'une pedagogie populaire* in 1949. It was being published in 1978 by that Francois Maspero company, which also published *La Sante mentale de l'enfant* by Celestin Freinet. A 1978 copy of the latter book, published after Celestin Freinet's death, has a foreword by Elise Freinet. In her foreword, she said:

“The health of the child was the fundamental end of the change in teaching to which [Freinet] was consecrated since 1923.”

She said it had been the theme proposed by Freinet at the 16th Congress of the Modern School in Avignon in 1960.

On page 5 of Elise Freinet's foreword appeared the intriguing phrase:

“...de toute la societe capitaliste d'exploitation humaine.....”

The Francois Maspero press which published in 1978 the 1949 and 1978 books, and some others, about and by Celestin Freinet, also specialized in publishing Communist literature, to judge from its 1978 appended very long list of authors and book titles in its *La Petite Collection Maspero*. The list included Che Guevera, Castro, Marx, Trotsky, and authors writing of Vietnamese Communism. A host of other authors on that list of 210 books whose names were unfamiliar were shown with book titles which implied those materials were also Communistic. An interesting title was number 85, *Le petit livre rouge des ecoliers et lyceens* “(interdit par le gouvernement francais)” [The Little Red Book of Schoolchildren and Secondary School Students “(Prohibited by the French Government)”. To give the general flavor of that Maspero book list with entries concerning every continent on earth but Antarctica, it is worth while to cite the last two titles: title 209, Patrick Tissier, *L'education en Chine et la pensee de Mao Tse-Toung*, and title 210, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Sur Malthus*.

On pages 48-50 of her 1949 book, *Naissance d'une pedagogie populaire*, Elise described how Celestin's class looked when she arrived in 1926. She described the room as “beautiful disorder” but floating on top of it was an “inextinguishable enthusiasm.” Books were strewn everywhere. The room had a “biological laboratory” containing tadpoles, snails, slugs, “innumerable insects,” butterflies, a “garden of plants” and brook water with vegetables and rose petals in which the insects could “frolic.” The “altar” was the printing press. (Translation: the place was a noisy, probably dirty, mess. Worthwhile open classrooms are NEVER “disordered,” dirty or noisy.)

Celestin Freinet was a “syndicalist” and his kind of teacher is discussed in the article from *The Saturday Review*, London, England, September 13, 1924, by Ernest Dimnet, “Radical School Teachers in France,” which article also touches on the history of French schools. (I regret I no longer recall the printed

source which directed me to this article.) Elise Freinet reported (pages 46-47) on Celestin Freinet's accompanying in 1925 the first group of European teachers to visit the U.S.S.R. and the groups' happy meeting with Krupskaya, Lenin's widow. Krupskaya received them at the Kremlin, where they:

“...all ate apples offered with simplicity...”

This was probably, I assume, because in the Soviet near-famine conditions Krupskaya had nothing much else to give them to eat!

Celestin Freinet wrote dreary, interminable works which are a fine match for the kind our “experts” have been churning out since 1918, but he and Decroly, the other European sight-word luminary, actually have government schools named after them all over Europe. At least we do not have any named after James, Cattell, Thorndike, Dewey, Judd, Gray or Gates, so far as I know.

The “global” sight-word method was being promoted in most of Europe, including France, after 1920. Yet, while the Soviet Union reportedly had used the sight-word approach briefly in the 1920's, it reverted to the phonic approach by 1932, according to the article, “Primer,” in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, Volume 4, 1974. The Library of Congress has a copy in Russian of V. P. Bogdanov's 1974 *Ot Azbukilvana Fedorovado Sovremennaug Bukvaria*, which is a history of Russian primers from 1574 to 1974, and it seems to confirm that statement, illustrating actual primer pages. Another source for information on Soviet methods is Gertrude Hildreth's article, “How Russian Children Learn to Read,” in *The Reading Teacher* for December, 1959. Yet her remarks suggest that Soviet children had been learning to read by phonics (“sound”) since at least 1930, not 1932, because she said that syllables had been separated on a 1930 beginning reading book which she saw. Separating the syllables in words is done only if the teaching emphasis is on “sound” and not “meaning.”

The curious fact is that in all the Communist sphere, “sound” or phonics has been the method used to teach reading, at least since about 1930. Franz Biglmaier of Pädagogische Hochschule, Berlin (obviously a teachers' college) on page 349 of his article in John Downing's *Comparative Reading*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1973, said that the method used in East Germany to teach beginning reading was phonics, but that the West German “experts” endorsed the global (sight-word “meaning”) method.

Even in Castro's Cuba the method used was phonics (“sound”), according to a very interesting article in *The National Review*, September 30, 1983, on the teaching of reading in Cuba. Tom Bethell's article was entitled, “But Can Juanito Really Read?” (pages 1996-1199). Bethell said:

“A big reported increase in the national literacy rate is one of the absolutely predictable aftermaths of all Communist revolutions, wherever they may occur....”

He cited Vietnam, Ethiopia and Nicaragua as some of “the latest triumphs of literacy.” Yet he reported that the content of the primers being used to teach reading in Nicaragua was highly political and amounted to indoctrination.

Bethell quoted what Lenin said in 1919:

“An illiterate man is non-political. First he must be taught to read.”

Bethell said that in the Soviet literacy campaign of the early 1920's, one slogan was, “Literacy is the road to Communism,” and in 1980, billboards in Nicaragua read, “Literacy is liberation!” Yet Bethell added that Lenin had said in 1922:

“In general, as you probably know, I do not have much sympathy for the intelligentsia, and our slogan “liquidate illiteracy” is in no way to be interpreted as being aimed at the creation of a new intelligentsia. The purpose of “liquidate illiteracy” is only that every peasant should be able to read by himself, without help, our decrees, orders, and proclamations. The aim is completely practical. No more.”

Concerning reading achievement in the Soviet Union in 1977, the Russian M. Kashin made the following statements in his report, “Concerning the Results of the Soviet Schools’ Adoption of the New Curriculum” (from M. E. Sharpe’s May, 1977, periodical, Soviet Education):

“By the end of the third grade, the vast majority of pupils read fluently and expressively, and correctly understand what they read.”

Kashin said that promotion rates in Russia were 98.7% in the first grade, 99.2 in the second grade and 99.4 in the third.

The most recent victim of the “meaning” fallacy in the teaching of beginning reading appears to be Japan. The effects may not have shown up there yet, but they may any day now. Japan’s justifiable pride in its twentieth-century literacy can be expressed as a paraphrase of the proud remark of John Adams in eighteenth-century America: to meet a Japanese who cannot read is as rare an occurrence, almost, as a comet or an earthquake. Yet some ominous information on fairly recent Japanese teaching practices which may still be in effect today and which threaten Japanese literacy is contained in a 1978 article, “Beginning Reading in Japan,” from *Beginning Reading Instruction in Different Countries*, “Selected Papers, Seventh IRA World Congress on Reading, Hamburg, August 1-3, 1978,” published by the International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, in 1978.

As discussed previously, Japanese script is composed of two kinds of characters, the Kana sound-bearing characters and the Kanji meaning-bearing characters. Very roughly, the Kana are about two-thirds and the Kanji about one-third of adult material. For little children, however, it has been customary in the past only to use the Kana sound-bearing characters. However, the 1978 paper contained the interesting fact that “experts” have been at work in Japan since 1968, pushing the teaching of the Kanji characters (meaning-bearing signs) to little three-year-olds. Yet the brains of the majority of three-year-olds have not matured enough to store characters, as shown by the Bender-Gestalt test norms on geometric designs.

Japanese four- and five-year-olds used to start to learn the 71 sound-bearing Kana (or Hiragana) syllable characters at home informally, and only finished learning Kana sound-bearing characters in first grade. Formerly, the learning of the 1,850 basic Kanji meaning-bearing characters was spread out gradually over the nine years of compulsory education, but now the “experts” want children to learn hundreds of Kanji in kindergarten!

The paper reported a second interesting fact. Picture books for three-year-olds in Japan used to be just picture books, with very little print - not reading texts. That reportedly had begun to change by 1975, presumably also with the endorsement of “experts.” By 1975, toddlers’ books were no longer just picture books with occasional print, but many were story books in Kana syllables, even though previous research showed little pre-schoolers only knew some of the Kana characters and so obviously could not have read connected stories without guessing unknown characters.

I do not know whether there has been any meaningful resistance to these changes, but they are ominous. The first change is the deliberate teaching of Kanji meaning-bearing-characters to three-year-olds before most are mature enough to distinguish differences in geometric designs, according

to the Bender-Gestalt norms. Those who became hopelessly confused would be incipient dyslexics. The second change is giving toddlers stories printed in Kana syllables when they only know some of the syllables, so that the toddlers are forced to guess the other syllable characters “psycholinguistically” with the help of the pictures and the context. Obviously, this poses the risk of turning toddlers into subjective readers of Japanese.

The 1978 article from which I obtained this data did say some people objected to too-early teaching of reading, but not for the reasons I gave above, and whether their objections were effective, I do not know. The article also said that many kindergartens were involved in the teaching of Kanji starting in 1968, and an “expert” was quoted who claimed that an average child could learn 500 Kanji meaning-bearing characters before school age! That is one of the silliest statements I have ever read. If these “improvements” remained in place in Japan after 1978, we may begin to hear about reading disabilities there any day, now.

Some Japanese industrialists have regarded American functional illiteracy with great disdain, according to fairly recent newspaper reports. I wonder what they will say when the functional illiteracy chickens arrive at their own homes to roost. Will they admit then that they have been just as negligent and gullible in Japan in permitting “experts” to damage their children’s beginning reading instruction as we in America have been?

Highly organized government schools are firmly in place in Japan, so the organizational pipeline with control from the top certainly exists there, as here, for almost immediate implementation of any “improvements” in education desired by “experts.” Concerning whether such “improvements” have possibly been under way for some time in Japan, an interesting comment was made at a very large meeting on January 18, 1992, at Hauppauge, Long Island, New York, which was sponsored by The Literacy Council, TaxPac, and others on the theme, “What Business Can Do to Improve Education.”

The speakers were Charles M. Richardson of Educational Engineering and John Gatto, New York State Teacher of the Year for 1991. At this meeting, the remark was made that the achievement scores from the much-praised Japanese schools were currently being surpassed by schools in free-market Asian areas such as Taiwan and Hong Kong, though such statistics never seem to reach the newspapers here. That Japanese schools were being surpassed elsewhere in Asia suggests that more than reading instruction may already have been “improved” in Japan, of which probable fact the self-satisfied Japanese industrialists seem to be ignorant.

For over two thousand years, the Chinese have had a “meaning” writing system. It is composed of thousands of characters, and is obviously difficult to learn, but Chinese students were given many years in which to learn the characters, during which time they made much use of writing to memorize the forms. This age-old writing system in China was altered by the Communist Chinese not long after 1949, very much for the better. Furthermore, relatively recent practices in teaching beginning reading in Communist China have been the exact reverse of recent Japanese practices. Not long after taking control of the country, the Communist Chinese installed the “pinyin” sound-bearing alphabet in schools. These sound-bearing letters are used first to teach beginners who are about seven years of age to read. Only later are the children taught the meaning-bearing Chinese characters.

Curiously, this exactly reverses what the “experts” have relatively recently been trying to do in Japan, where “experts” have recommended teaching the meaning-bearing characters first instead of the sound-bearing characters. Furthermore, in China, the teaching of reading is delayed until the late age of about seven, when the Bender-Gestalt norms show most children can distinguish among geometric shapes, while in Japan “experts” have been trying to force the teaching of meaning-bearing characters to three-year-olds, the majority of whose brains have not matured sufficiently to distinguish one character

from another, according to the Bender-Gestalt norms! However, the quality of the resultant Chinese scholarship from the Chinese Communist methods of teaching beginning reading by “sound” instead of “meaning” cannot be seriously questioned. We all remember Tiananmen Square and the global computer links that the accomplished Chinese scholars there used to get their news out to the rest of the world.

According to Franz Biglmaier of Pädagogische Hochschule, Berlin, on page 349 of his article in John Downing’s *Comparative Reading*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1973, headlines appeared in German newspapers and magazines in the mid-1960’s referring to the global sight-word “meaning” method in these outraged terms:

“Stupid Children or Stupid Methods?  
The Downgraded Global Method.  
The Thalidomide Case of Education.  
Attack Against Global Method.”

Biglmaier said that 74 per cent of the sixty-one available German primers in 1964 used the global approach. On page 351, he described his own materials published in 1972. From his description, they are two-step, phony-phonics Code 3 materials, very comparable to our sight-word basal readers. Yet when I was in Hamburg in November, 1977, where teachers were permitted to choose their reading texts, of the eight first-grade and second-grade teachers with whom I spoke, seven endorsed a heavily phonic Code 10 reading program (Bunte Fibel). The eighth teacher, a young man, was using a sight-word program from Berlin which appeared to rate Code 3 or less. Most of these classroom teachers in Hamburg in 1977, therefore, were diametrically opposed to the “reading experts” of Germany. A friend of mine who has relatives in the north of Germany whom she regularly visits gave me copies about a year ago of workbook pages from the Bunte Fibel that had been used about 1992 by a little first-grade relative. Therefore, the Code 10 series appears to continue to prosper in the north of Germany.

In Sweden in 1977, I found the schools were required to use an excellent Code 10 phonic text, Nu Laser. However, as discussed in Appendix D, the effect was watered down in some schools by the use of experience charts. The experience chart approach, called “LTG,” was currently being highly praised in Swedish teachers’ journals as something new!

In Amsterdam in the Netherlands in 1977, the dominant series was apparently a very poor series which began with “meaning” and did not introduce phonics until far too late, in the mid-term. One school I visited, however, did use a heavily phonic series, and another was using a new phonic series by Dr. Kooreman which he had adapted from materials he saw in the Soviet Union.

In Innsbruck, Austria, in 1977, I saw an excellent Code 10 phonic series in use. A school administrator in the Innsbruck administrative offices with whom I spoke, however, appeared to be very aware of the “sound” vs. “meaning” controversy in the teaching of reading. The installation of that excellent Austrian program may well have come as a result of such a controversy in Austria.

In the French schools I visited in 1977, none used a program lower than Code 6. The reader, *Remi et Colette*, appeared to be required material, and it was a weak “mixte method” approach, starting with sight words and then introducing phonics. However, individual teachers greatly strengthened the material by their classroom materials which were largely (and astonishingly) experience chart stories used to teach real phonics! Therefore, Freinet’s “meaning” experience-chart influence lived on, but in “sound” adaptations that he would vehemently deplore!

In France, despite the churning out of books in French defending the global method, it had been in enormous trouble by the 1950’s. In *La querella de los metodos en la ensenanza de la lectura* (The Dispute

Over Methods in the Teaching of Reading) (Editorial Kapelus, S.A., Buenos Aires, Argentina: 1962) by Berta Perelstein de Braslavsky of Argentina, she said (page 15):

“In a paper published in 1950, Madame Roudinesco, Trelat and Trelat state that despite the inadequacies of their statistics, they were able to determine that (schools) using methods of synthetic operation had 2 per cent dyslexics ‘while 20 per cent of the children had typical disturbance patterns in the new schools where only the total method was used.’”

This paper, “Etude de Quarante Cas de Dyslexie d’Evolution,” appeared in the French magazine *Enfance* for January-February, 1950. The only “inadequacy” to which it referred was that the group of reading disabled children with which the authors had worked was relatively small. Then, in 1951, a flood of articles supporting the “meaning” global method appeared in *Enfance*. Their appearance in *Enfance* in 1951 certainly suggests a cause-effect relationship with the pro-“sound” 1950 article in the same periodical. One of those 1951 articles was written by Suzanne Borel-Maissonny, and in it appeared, for the first time as far as I know, the word “psycho-linguistique,” made famous for so-called reading instruction much later by Kenneth Goodman in his American writings.

Concerning practices in Communist-dominated countries before 1983, see the article in the *National Review* of September 30, 1983, “But Can Juanito Really Read?” by Tom Bethell, which was mentioned earlier and which is reviewed further in Appendix E.

In de Braslavsky’s article in John Downing’s *Comparative Reading*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1973, she said (page 273-274):

“When the ‘global’, ‘ideovisual,’ or ‘natural’ method was at its zenith in Europe in the 1930’s, one of the most orthodox variations of its ‘pure’ form was elaborated in Argentina.... this method was anything but a success. An increasing number of children showed signs of difficulty in reading, writing, and spelling, both in primary school and, even worse, in alarming numbers in secondary school....”

De Braslavsky reported it was not the first time Argentina had been poisoned by academic imports. In the 1870’s, Argentina and Uruguay had imported the German analytic-synthetic phonics method. It undoubtedly worked well, because, properly taught as in *Bunte Fibel* which I saw used in Hamburg a hundred years later in the 1970’s, it is a Code 10 method. Unfortunately, she said Argentina and Uruguay in the 1870’s also imported the whole-word method from the United States:

“The ‘word method’ arrived precociously in ... Uruguay and... Argentina... probably thanks to the Spaniard Jose Maria Torres and the North American teachers engaged for the first Normal School in Parana.... In Montevideo, in about 1874, Romero prepared placards on which words were illustrated with pictures, together with an explanatory booklet. This was severely criticized by Berra, who advocated the ... analytic-synthetic method.”

So, the “movers and shakers” in America in the 1870’s even exported their errors to unlucky South America!

#### Other Invasions by “Meaning”

The war between “sound” and “meaning” did more than jump national boundaries. It jumped the boundaries between disciplines, and even affected typing and shorthand, and continued to affect the teaching of the deaf.



Short vowels, present in Gregg shorthand manuals before 1918, were not present in shorthand manuals after that date but only unmarked vowels which could be either long or short. As a stenographer of Gregg shorthand who learned it at the age of sixteen without the use of the critically important short vowels, I can assure anyone that transcribing such Gregg shorthand, with its additional reliance on “brief forms” (a kind of sight word) can only be done with heavy, conscious, context guessing. Although I have taken shorthand rapidly and quite accurately for over fifty years, I find transcribing it requires conscious judgments (“psycholinguistic guessing”) and is therefore unpleasant. I much prefer to use longhand to take notes because I can read it automatically and avoid unpleasant conscious decoding. I pity those who must read all printed matter “psycholinguistically.” It is no wonder they prefer to watch television.

Testimony to the discomfort of reading “psycholinguistically” as must be done with Gregg shorthand, instead of automatically, was given in an address at the Reading Reform Convention in Princeton in 1979, “Deafness and Reading, A New Approach,” reported in *The Reading Informer*, Scottsdale, Arizona, October, 1979. At the time of his talk, the speaker, Dr. R. Orin Cornett, was Research Professor and Director of the Cued Speech Program at Gallaudet College, Washington, D. C., and had formerly been U. S. Commissioner of Education and the Director of the Division of Higher Education, U. S. Office of Education. Cornett said that, while he was the Director in that U. S. Office of Education division, he had read reports from Gallaudet College. Cornett said two comments from those reports struck him in particular. He reported:

“The average IQ of students at Gallaudet College (the world’s only separate college specifically for deaf persons) is probably higher than that in any other institution of higher education in the world....

“Eighty percent of the students at Gallaudet College never read for pleasure, and three fourths of the 20% who do were not born deaf.

“It was the second statement that aroused my interest in deafness. I was horrified....

“Reading is the only hope of the deaf for learning about the world and what is happening in it. The average reading level of 19-year-olds in schools and programs for the deaf in the United States is about that of a nine-year-old hearing child.... It was this shocking fact that caused me to begin learning about the problems of deaf persons and in 1965 to accept a position at Gallaudet College.....”

Cornett said he confronted the problem of reading for the deaf where the problem originated, which was that they had insufficient knowledge of spoken language.

“What I did was to develop the first practical way to convey spoken language visually, face-to-face. Called Cued Speech, it utilizes eight hand shapes in four places near the face to supplement the visual information provided on the face, so that the combination makes clear each spoken sound.... If Cued Speech is used consistently by hearing parents with a young deaf child, that child can learn the spoken language naturally, through the usual communication of the family....

“A deaf child who knows the spoken language in this visual representation, Cued Speech, can use it as a base for reading, just as does the normal child.”

Although Dr. Cornett is aware of and disapproves of the sight-word method to teach reading, Dr. Cornett apparently believes that hearing children nevertheless learn to read sight-words with far more emphasis on “sound” than deaf children. The hearing children’s knowledge of the vocabulary and syntax

of spoken language certainly helps them to learn more sight words by “meaning,” since the hearing children already know them as spoken words, but most hearing children today nevertheless read with primary emphasis on “meaning,” just like sight-word-trained deaf children.

This is confirmed by a remark by Roger W. Shuy, Professor of Linguistics, Georgetown University, Washington, D. C., in the February-March, 1981, *Today's Education*, published by the National Education Association, Washington, D. C. Shuy was reviewing *All Our Children Learning: A Primer for Parents, Teachers and Other Educators*, by Benjamin S. Bloom, and indicated in his review that he thought the teaching of phonics was of little practical use. Shuy said:

“...many teachers complain that their students can read with comprehension but cannot attain the objectives for decoding. Of what use are the presumed steps - such as decoding - toward comprehension if students can achieve comprehension without them?”

Therefore Shuy confirmed that many sight-word-trained hearing students today could not identify out of context many of the words on the pages in front of them. They are guessing at their meaning from the context, just like sight-word-trained deaf students. They are helped in their guessing, of course, by the fact that the hearing children know the syntax of English better than deaf children trained in sign language. Yet such guessing at unknown words is fraught with error, so the hearing children's teachers are apparently not demanding very much in the way of “comprehension.” That decoding skills are absolutely necessary to achieve maximum reading comprehension is proven by the average reading level for deaf students in the United States: that of a nine-year-old hearing child.

Shuy did not mention, of course, that reading “psycholinguistically” must be done consciously and is therefore very unpleasant, and undoubtedly is the primary reason that 80% of the brilliant students at Gallaudet College never read for pleasure. That, obviously, must also be the case with many hearing students who were taught to read like the deaf-students, by “psycholinguistic” guessing: they avoid reading, too.

Dr. Cornett mentioned the fact that signed language does not have English syntax, but has a peculiar syntax of its own. Obviously, a deaf child learning the syntax of normal language with Cued Speech is far ahead of a deaf child who learns signed language, since signed language not only lacks English syntax but is a conflicting system.

In his 1979 talk, Cornett told of a little child born deaf in one of the most isolated parts of Australia, whose parents had taught her from infancy with his Cued Speech. Her speech developed absolutely normally, and at the same age as a hearing child's speech develops, and even included the use of intonation! Yet, when a convention for educators of the deaf was being held in a Washington, D. C., hotel near which I was staying a year or two ago, there was no indication in any of the literature being distributed outside the meeting room, some twenty years after Cornett's brilliant work at Gallaudet College, Washington, D. C., that any change had been made in the signing and sight-word methods for teaching the deaf. The “meaning” approach apparently still reigns supreme in the teaching of the deaf, despite the work of Samuel Heinecke, Abbe Deschamps, Alexander Graham Bell, Dr. R. Orin Cornett and presumably hosts of others over the centuries since the ill-starred appearance of the Abbe de l'Epee who began teaching the deaf in Paris about 1760.

“Meaning” has even invaded the teaching of typing. When I learned to type in 1942, the typing manuals used in the Washington School for Secretaries in Newark, New Jersey, gave heavy finger practice, very like the finger drill given for centuries to those learning to play the piano. First the index fingers were drilled on touching the appropriate letters for those fingers: for the left index finger resting on the home position of f: f<sub>g</sub>f, f<sub>r</sub>f, f<sub>t</sub>f, f<sub>v</sub>f, f<sub>b</sub>f; and for the right index finger resting on the home position

of j: jhj, juj, jyj, jmj, jnj. Then the next fingers received similar practice from their home positions, each finger in turn being drilled on all its correct positions. During this practice, the eyes were averted to the paper containing the printed letter patterns so that purely touch typing could be learned and the need to look at the keyboard removed. After, and only after, such reflexes had been set up, associating all letters with appropriate finger positions, were words introduced.

I was appalled recently to find that typing manuals dating from as long ago as the 1950's had dropped this effective finger practice. For instance, one beginning lesson in one manual kept hammering only on all home positions: fff, ddd, sss, and then immediately introduced WHOLE WORDS! It appears that "experts" have been hard at work since at least the early 1950's, and possibly before, damaging the teaching of typing in America. (Whether current manuals are any better than those I saw from the 1950's, I do not know.) "Experts" interfered with proper conditioned reflexes in typing skills by replacing practice on "sound" letters with practice on "meaning" whole words. Who were those people (presumably psychologists) who were initially responsible for recommending such a harmful "meaning" method in the teaching of typing?

## Chapter 59

### Conclusion

Not everyone agrees with the “experts,” and those who disagree have terrible stories to tell about reading failures. My own special memory on the long-term cost of the 1930 deaf-mute method concerns the back row of young men, probably most ex-servicemen, in Fairleigh Dickinson University’s evening-college English class in Rutherford, New Jersey, in the fall of 1958. They could not read anything out loud without hopeless, inaccurate stumbling. Later, I remember a young man who told me about his sixth grade class, in the early 1960’s. Children being asked to read aloud sometimes missed so many words that they put their heads down on their desks and cried. But they should not really have cried, for most of them were probably scoring acceptably on their “silent reading comprehension tests.” At the very least, the “class average” was probably “at the national norm” and that is always a very nice statistic to publish in the local paper. The young man said that he had always considered himself to be one of the good readers until he reached high school and was put in a remedial reading class.

With the increased emphasis on “phony phonics,” and the constantly decreasing vocabulary in all school books, fewer such abject failures in reading occur now, so that sixth graders can mask their disabilities better. (This will no longer be true when the “whole language” cripples from present first-grade malpractice reach sixth grade in a few years!) It is at the high school level that deafness to print finally shows up today, where we are told the problem is with “reading comprehension.” The scandal is that we believe that explanation, or that we believe anything at all told to us by the education establishment, even if it concerns only the time of day. The education establishment, at all levels from nursery school to graduate school, has become a very nasty joke. (Obviously, a very great many individual teachers and professors are very fine professionals, but they are themselves prisoners of the system. I, myself, was such a prisoner for almost 23 years.)

The education establishment will remain a very nasty joke until a Constitutional amendment forbids all education control from above, however it is exercised. That includes any control by teacher and professor unions. It includes any government control, whether exercised through licenses, certification, the setting up of curriculum, the choosing of textbooks or any other kind of regulation whatsoever. What should MOST EMPHATICALLY be forbidden is national (and state) testing, because it is testing which drives the choice of curriculum, and those who control tests therefore control the curriculum. Actually, government control of curriculum and textbooks are violations of the free-speech provision of the Bill of Rights, and might be declared un-Constitutional if the issue could reach the Supreme Court.

Since educational money vouchers may become available to parents, that Constitutional amendment or that Constitutional finding should forbid any government control through such vouchers of the three T’s: Teachers, Texts, or Tests in the schools which parents choose for their children. Furthermore, attempts to control these areas for the whole country by private groups such as foundations, through “teacher certification” or in any other way, should be specifically outlawed, and subject to criminal penalties. Could anything really be more criminal than interfering in the upbringing of other people’s children, and then harming their children? It would not be the first time that legislation outlawing the control of American education by foundations was considered. As mentioned earlier, it was discussed in Congress in 1917 but the issue was dropped because of the advent of World War I.

Remember Edmund Burke’s adage: power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Governmental control of American education through strings attached to money vouchers would amount to “absolute power” over private education as well as over public education. Corruption could be anticipated in its wake. Such control would give the government (or more precisely the activist

bureaucrats in control of the government machinery) the potential power to form the minds of Americas future citizens. It could spell the death of freedom and result in the ultimate triumph of Big Brother.

Education must be returned to the consumers: to the parents of school children, or to adult students seeking an education, who should be free to choose those schools which meet their needs. With consumers having that ultimate power, those schools which meet the needs of America will prosper; those which do not, will fail. Free-market forces (“enlightened self-interest”) will then make short work of our education problems, including our functional illiteracy.

We should never forget that the disease of “functional illiteracy” came in with the push for government schools in 1826. That disease will only disappear when the government schools which created it disappear by being given back totally to their users, with NO strings of ANY kind attached.

**Geraldine E. Rodgers**

August 15, 2000



## Autobiographical Note

My summary on the history of methods of teaching beginning reading is based on my teaching experience in the primary grades from 1963 to 1986 (in Wayne, New Jersey, public schools to December 31, 1985, when I retired, and in St. Anthony's School in Kearny, New Jersey, from January to June of 1986. Until November, 1962, I had worked as an executive secretary at Exxon's chemical subsidiary, Enjay Chemical Company, and I had been employed at Exxon since 1944.)

My history is also based on my visits to beginning classes in England in 1971, and my visits to first and second grades in the United States, Luxembourg, Holland, Sweden, Germany, Austria and France in 1977-1978, as well as my review of some available beginning reading texts for those countries and Belgium and Russia.

In 1976 and 1977, I completed about half of the credits necessary for a master's degree in reading instruction in New Jersey, but dropped out of the program because of its faulty content. (I already had a master's degree in natural history.)

Since 1976, I have done extensive reading and corresponded with specialists and libraries here and abroad on the subject of beginning reading. My teaching experience in the primary grades gave me the necessary background to evaluate teaching methods, but my history is the result primarily of extensive personal research at the New York Public Library; the Library of Congress; the U. S. Department of Education Library in Washington, D. C.; New York University Library; the Syracuse University Library; the Syracuse Public Library; the nineteenth century school records of Syracuse, New York; Boston, Massachusetts; and Lyndhurst, New Jersey; the library of the University of Chicago; and the American Antiquarian Society Library at Worcester, Massachusetts. In addition, I spent a little over a week researching at the British Library in London, England, in March, 1991, and the summer of 1986 researching at the libraries of Harvard University. My work at Harvard was primarily on its 19th century reading textbook collection, the largest single collection of reading textbooks in America.

I was granted a six-months' salary-paid sabbatical leave from the schools of Wayne, New Jersey in 1977-1978, during which I observed first grade classes and tested second grade classes in Europe and in the United States at my own expense. I was also granted a two-weeks salary-paid leave from the Wayne schools in 1971 to visit Open Classroom schools in England with other Wayne teachers at our own expense. Apart from these two instances in which my salary was not suspended while doing research, and apart from some tuition reimbursement for after-hour courses taken on the teaching of reading in 1976 and 1977, none of my research on which this history is based has been supported by any kind of government or foundation grant.

For sixty years, Nila Banton Smith's appalling disinformation has remained as the primary historical reference on reading in America. During all that time, education has been dominated by government bureaucracies and a Niagara Falls of tax dollars has been poured into "improving" education, but no acceptable history of reading instruction has ever been written. (Mitford Mathews well-meant but misleading history, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, University of Chicago Press, 1966, in which he effectively repeated much of Nila Banton Smith's disinformation, was a private effort. As a philologist instead of a primary-grades teacher, Mathews did not have the background to deal with the disinformation.)

Our education establishment has mindlessly accepted Nila Banton Smith's "history" over all these long years, despite the Government's almost bottomless fund of tax dollars with which to underwrite a proper history. That fact is just one more proof of the education establishment's incompetence.

Nila Banton Smith's harmful disinformation therefore remained essentially unchallenged for sixty years until, as a retired primary-grades teacher and private citizen and with only personal funds and no help of any kind, I chose to challenge it.



**The History of Beginning Reading  
From Teaching by “Sound” to Teaching by “Meaning”**

**By Geraldine E. Rodgers  
August 15, 2000**

**APPENDIX A  
Illustrative Attachments**

**Table of Contents**

1. Excerpt from *The American Teacher*, The New England Publishing Company, Boston, Massachusetts: 1884, page 278 (probably May), quoting a parody in an English newspaper on English school inspections.
2. Excerpt from *The School Bulletin*, Syracuse, New York, June, 1878, pages 155, 156, and 157, taken from the novel *Roderick Hume*, by C. W. Bardeen, Chapter XVII, “A Change of Text-Books,” a parody on the textbook wars in the glutted American textbook market of the 1870’s. This 1878 material demonstrates that it is inconceivable that McGuffey’s could have been the dominant reading text in America.
3. Excerpt from *The School Bulletin*, Syracuse, New York, May, 1876, Vol. II, No. 21, reproducing a circular which advertised a teachers’ institute at Wethersfield Springs, New York, on October 18, 1843.

The knowledge has been lost of the existence of these once enormously influential “institutes.” From before 1843, in a different form, and until well after 1900, institutes were the primary pipeline for transmitting “expert” opinion to schools all over rural America, since most teachers at that time did not attend the normal schools. Institutes, like the normal schools, endorsed “meaning” instead of “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading.

4. Reproduction of an illustration from a 1508 edition of *Margarita Philosophica* of Gregory de Reisch, originally published in the fifteenth century, which reproduction and comments were taken from page 154 of *The History of Education* by Elwood P. Cubberley, Houghton, Mifflin Company: 1920. It demonstrates the standard curriculum in the fifteenth century and before.
5. Excerpts from *History of the Horn Book*, Andrew W. Tuer, 1897. Arno Press, A New York Times Co., New York: 1979. The excerpts include:
  - A. The first page of a possibly pre-1534 printed ABC in Latin.
  - B. The beautiful sixteenth-century “hornbook” given by Queen Elizabeth I to Lord Chancellor Egerton and preserved by his family.
  - C. The *Royal Battledore*, printed by John Newbery, London, in the eighteenth century.

6. *Tabulae Abcdariae Pueriles*, Leipzig, 1530? Reproduced, with permission, from a copy held by the Rare Books & Manuscripts Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, New York, New York This single sheet contains alphabets and an elaborate and unusual syllable table, as well as the customary Pater Noster used in European ABC's.
7. The Levels of Reading and Speech
8. The Suzzallo reading triangle, from his article on the teaching of reading in the *Cyclopedia of Education* of 1913, and comments concerning its nature.
9. A list of the great number of different spelling books in print in America in 1839, from a copy held by the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. Webster's publishers claimed sales of a million a year not long afterwards, which may or may not have been true. However, as this list makes obvious, in no way could Webster's have almost totally blanketed the market, as is usually assumed.
10. List of education periodicals to 1893, taken from page 22 of the October, 1895, issue of *The School Bulletin*, Syracuse, New York, compiled by the unsung and remarkable historian, C. W. Bardeen, Editor.
11. Testimony before the National Education Association annual meeting by A. L. E. Crouter, based on thirty years of experience in the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, where Crouter was Superintendent, that the signing method for teaching the deaf is an acute failure in comparison to the oral method. Crouter's remarks appeared in the July 28, 1900, issue of *The School Journal*, New York City.
12. Concerning the Different and Opposite Conditioned Reflexes in Reading, and Their Brain-Based Origin (With Illustrations Taken from Very Old Sources)
13. *Whole Language: Emancipatory Pedagogy or Socialist Nonsense?*, by Dr. Patrick Groff. Reprinted, with permission, from *Ideas on Liberty*, July 2000, published by the Foundation for Economic Education, Irvington-on-Hudson, New York. Dr. Groff, Professor of Education Emeritus at San Diego State University, is the well-known and highly respected author of many other articles and books on reading instruction theory, reading research, and research summaries.

THE GLORY OF TEACHING A·B·C.

Possibly it may serve to encourage us who toil on *this* side of the Atlantic, to know that our co-workers on the *other* side experience rather more difficulties, and toil under less favorable circumstances, than do we. The following was clipped from a recent copy of an English paper. F.

We have received from an eminent member of a provincial school board the following notes of an "examination day":

Mixed girls' and infants' school. Time fixed for examination sharp 9 A.M. At 10.15 H.M.'s Inspector enters hastily; children stand. H.M.'s Inspector leisurely divests himself of coat, hat, etc., which he deposits on the girls' needlework, and throws his bag on the harmonium. Puts on coat again. "This school-room is much too cold; shut all the doors and windows." Proceeds to examine registers, summary, logbook, etc., with his back to the children, turning round occasionally with, "There's a child there not attending to me," or "If that girl with a squint looks about her any more I won't examine her." At eleven o'clock: "Oh? how many pupil-teachers have you? Four, eh? Well, let them all give a collective lesson to the whole school; subject, a cocked hat, or a pair of garters; or if they don't know what *they* are, the great sea-serpent, or Barnum's white elephant. Whoever finishes first shall have extra marks." About 11.30 begins to examine the school; gives dictation to Standard II. in a low and rapid tone so that they do not catch half he says,— "As a fierce lion was prowling about in search of prey. At the same time he reads from a card a sum for another class,— "If 17 couple of fat ducks sell for 3s. 6d. each, and I lose 9s. 0½d., what shall I have left?" The second standard get puzzled, and write down, "As 17 fierce ducks were prowling about, trying to sell a fat lion who had lost 9s. 0½d?" The sum was taken down something like this: "If 17 couple of lions lose 3s. 6d. each, how much prowling would be left

out of 9s. 0½d.?" He "fails" them all, turns to mistress, "Your children are perfect idiots." Mistress weeps copiously. H.M.I. goes on to next class. Takes reading: "Now, boy! I'm not deaf." Children have been specially implored to "speak up for the inspector." "Now, that girl,—no, not you, the one next but five,—tell me the meaning of a concatenation of events? Now don't be a week over it." Girl doesn't know. "Then you're a stupid dolt! Can't you tell me anything about it? Is it about a cat or a nation, or what?" "Please, sir: yes, sir." "Now which do you mean?" *Girl*: "Please, sir: no, sir!" "Fails" her. Takes a class in geography: "Now all stand,—oh! you were standing,—and look at me. That girl with red hair, tell me the exact distance in English miles from Dan to Beersheba." *Girl*: "Please, sir, it's the other class learns the colonies,—not us." Mistress mentally resolves to give her "what for" presently.

Twelve o'clock strikes. *H.M.I.*, cheerfully: "Now I'll examine the infants." (*sotto voce*: "I almost think I shall catch that train.") *Mistress*: "Please, sir, they're all crying, sir, they're so tired of standing." *H.M.I.*: "I can't help that; let them sing, 'Oh, how we love inspection day!' and meanwhile show me your 'appropriate and varied occupations.' How many girls have you among the elder infants who can turn topple-tail *accurately*? and how many boys who answer to the name Mary, and can knit comforters? What proportion of this class brings pocket-handkerchiefs, and how many, if any, use them, except to clean their slates? How many books have the three-year-olds read through this week, and can the whole school do Swiss darning?" *Mistress*: "Please, sir" — *H.M.I.*: "Now, I don't want any opinion from you. I'm here to inspect this school, not to hear what *you* think about it." (Song ended.) "Well, that's fairly good; only I can make out neither words nor tune. Can they all say, 'A little cock-robin sat on a tree,' and 'A storm in a teapot,' and all 'Thompson's Seasons,' and 'Meddlesome Mattie' from beginning to end without a mistake? Oh! if they can't do *that* I shall recommend the withdrawal of one-half of the grant;" (*sotto voce* :) "I shall catch the 12.35 train, I do believe." Exit, forgetting to take away any of the papers, and to examine the needlework, writing, and singing.

## **Concerning the Falsity of the McGuffey Myth**

The following chapter from an 1875 novel, printed in 1878 in a newspaper which was published for school personnel, demonstrates the falsity of the ludicrous McGuffey Myth. The McGuffey Myth states: (a) that eight or nine of every ten American children in the nineteenth century learned from the McGuffey Readers, and (b) that the publishers of McGuffey's were the largest textbook-publishing firm in the world.

For the very first occurrences of misstatement (a), see the November, 1927, Saturday Evening Post Article, "That Guy McGuffey," (citing eight of ten children) and the 1928 book, *America Finding Herself*, which was the second volume of the *Our Times* series by Mark Sullivan (citing nine of ten American children). Sullivan's false claim was quoted in the 1934 book, revised in 1965, by Nila Banton Smith, *American Reading Instruction*.

For misstatement (b), which apparently grew out of misstatement (a), see page xiii of the Introduction to *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, published by OERI, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Washington, D. C., 1985. A monumentally false claim was made on that page concerning the largely regional publishers of the McGuffey reading series, whose market at all times was largely limited to the American Midwest and to some parts of the American South. This statement was made on page xiii, "By the 1870's, the company W. B. Smith had founded was the largest textbook publishing company in the world."

The excerpt which follows from an 1875 novel was printed in *The School Bulletin*, June, 1878, Vol. IV, No. 46, Syracuse, New York. Concerning the story's use of the title, "Principal," that title in the nineteenth century usually meant the "principal teacher" in a school, who was the one with authority. Principal Hume, therefore, was not only a school principal but was an active teacher in what was apparently the only school in the fictional village of Norway, N. Y.

Some of the publishers' names given by the story's author, C. W. Bardeen, are obviously meant only as a joke, but some come close to being paraphrases of real publishing company names. For instance, instead of naming the major publishing company, D. Appleton & Co, Bardeen referred to D. Peachpound & Co.

The word-method "Hypothetical Readers" as described by "Mr. Cockrell" in the following story are obviously the John Russell Webb Word-Method "Normal" readers of circa 1846 and later which did change publishers many times, as Cockrell said of the Hypothetical Readers, but which was not true of most other series. The Webb series threw out the reciting of letters as children were memorizing new sight-words, which is what was meant by the "word method." Nevertheless, in contrast to Cockrell's description of the Hypothetical Readers' "word method," the J. R. Webb series did use some phony phonics above the beginning levels.

However, the author of this story, C. W. Bardeen, who edited and published *The School Bulletin* until 1920, and who was a highly competent judge in most areas, never seemed to have any real understanding of reading methods or even any interest in them. That is despite the fact that Bardeen became the publisher of Farnham's book on the sentence method in 1881. Instead of shedding light on reading methods, what Bardeen's story set in 1875 and printed in 1878 does is to prove that there were massive numbers of books in all subject categories before 1875, and massive numbers of book agents and publishers before 1875. Those facts alone demonstrate that the McGuffey Myth is sheer nonsense.

**RODERICK HUME; The Story of a New York Teacher.**  
**Chapter XVII.**  
**A Change of Textbooks.**

Not long after the opening of the term, Roderick was accosted on his way home from school by a man who rushed out of the hotel and asked breathlessly -

“Is this Professor Hume?”

“My name is Hume,” replied Roderick.

“I am so lucky to have caught you, as I am obliged to leave by the five o’clock train. My name is Whittlebe, and I represent the firm of Gilpinth, Burden & Co., of Philadelphia. Can you give me five minutes in the parlor of the hotel?”

“Certainly,” said Roderick; and followed him.

Mr. Whittlebe nervously unstrapped a bundle of books, saying as he did so:

“What text-books are you using here, Mr. Hume?”

“If you have only five minutes, Mr. Whittlebe, you had better ask me what text books we don’t use, for I could tell you quicker. Several series have been adopted in part, and there is a change of author with almost every grade.”

“Then of course you are intending to introduce some new and uniform series?”

“I have thought some of it, but it seemed wise to get thoroughly introduced myself before I began to introduce new books.”

“Very prudent, very prudent, Mr. Hume, especially as it gives you an opportunity to examine these books of ours, which are the freshest, handsomest and altogether the best now printed. Here are Womanrow’s Readers: just look at those engravings, and see how interesting to children are these continued stories running through the first books. Ishmael’s Arithmetics, too: aren’t they handsome? So simple, too; useless matter left out; half the time saved. Of course you know Prof. Ishmael? Principal of the Engedi Normal School. Then here are White’s Grammars: these of course are the standard; but I must hurry, because I want to show you this new edition of Rabbit’s Geographies. I wish I had a cent for every copy of those books sold. All the large cities use them exclusively. They have just been re-adopted in Boston, and when Smintheus’s tried to displace us in Hong Kong, we not only held them in there, but drove out theirs for ours in Yang tsi Kiang. Now I mustn’t stop to go into these books more than to run through the pages in this hast[y] way; but I am sure you will enjoy studying them. I can’t give you this set, for it is the last I have, and I am going to stop off at Utica and make Rome howl; but I will send you a set by express, charges paid, and I hope you will like them well enough to introduce them at once. Our terms are very liberal,” (here the train whistled, and Mr. Whittlebe started on a run, but talked back over his shoulder,) “and I know you will like them. All the best schools - - - :” and his voice died away in the distance.

“I wish he had brought another set with him,” said Roderick to himself. He thought a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush, and doubted whether the glib agent would remember his promise. He got better acquainted with the glib agent afterward. The glib agent not only sent the book[s], but sent a long letter with them, and sent letters every week thereafter for several months, invited Roderick to come down to the city and spend a week with him, suggested to Roderick possible vacancies in other places at higher salaries, in case he was willing to leave Norway, and in general manifested an interest in his welfare and that of the school, which was simply amazing.

“Considering that there are thirty thousand of us teachers in this State,” said Roderick to himself, a year or two afterward, as he finished reading Mr. Whittlebe’s thirty-ninth letter, just as carefully, and kindly, and skilfully, and hopefully written as the first, though not a book of his had yet been introduced, “It strikes me that we must keep Mr. Whittlebe tolerably busy.” And he made a place for White’s Grammars, as being on the whole not much worse than the rest, merely as a tribute to Mr. Whittlebe’s persistence.

Roderick opened the package from Mr. Whittlebe with considerable gratification. They were the first books he ever got without paying for them, and they were certainly worth owning. He examined them carefully, and asked Mr. Dormouse whether it would not be well to recommend the geographies to the Board.

“How do they compare with Smintheus’s?” asked Mr. Dormouse.

“I have never seen Smintheus’s,” said Roderick.

Mr. Dormouse pulled out from under the counter a package containing with other books Smintheus’s geographies.

“These were sent me the other day” he said; “you had better take them and look them over.”

This suggested to Roderick that it might be well to send to all the leading publishers for specimen books. Evidently they were freely distributed, and Roderick was honest in his intention to examine them carefully and impartially. So he got what addresses he could find from the advertisements in a school journal which had been sent him, and wrote to each a letter reading somewhat as follows:

Norway, N. Y., April 20, 1875.

Messrs. \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_:

Gentlemen-

As we are proposing to adopt a uniform series of text-books for our public schools, we would suggest that you send us whatever books on your list you desire to have examined. They may be sent at our expense, and will be returned if you so desire. We shall compare carefully all books presented, and shall be ready to give our reasons for whatever selection we make.

Respectfully yours,

RODERICK HUME,  
Superintendent of Schools.

Precisely why Roderick, who had protested so sarcastically against being called “Professor,” chose to call himself “Superintendent,” instead of “Principal,” I don’t know. That word “Principal,” which is so entirely satisfactory to the president of a Scotland University is somehow not regarded as ornamental by American pedagogues.

The return mail brought these letters:

Dear Sir -

In reply to yr. letter of 20, we enclose catalogues of our pubs., and shall be glad to send you any books you wish to examine on receipt of price.

Y’rs respect’y,  
SMITH, JONES & CO.

Dear Sir -

Replying to your esteemed favor of the 20<sup>th</sup> inst... we take pleasure in sending you a selection from our latest editions. We bill them at one-half price and will deduct the charge for any book which you may decide to introduce. You can hardly hesitate over our readers, arithmetics and geographies, but we hope that you will also adopt our grammars and writing books. Indeed, we doubt very much whether you can do better than to introduce our entire series, which will thus give you the latest, the best and most widely used. Awaiting an early response, we are,

Yours truly,  
O. X. SHEDD & CO.

Dear Sir-

As requested in your letter of the 20<sup>th</sup>, we forward you specimens of such of our books as you are likely to need. Please accept them with our compliments. Should you like them, we shall be glad to introduce them on liberal terms.

Yours respectfully,  
MARK & HARDCLAY



Dear Sir-

We are delighted to get your letter, intimating that at last you are prepared to adopt a uniform set of books. News of your remarkable success at Norway had already reached us, and we have been hoping that our Mr. Hook would find time to call upon you. Don't fail to come and see us, the first time that you visit the city. Our establishment turns out fifteen million books an hour, and you would be interested to see the various processes to which each volume is subjected.

The city schools, too, would interest you, if you have never visited them. The office of the Superintendents is close by, and any of them will be glad to take us through some of the representative buildings.

As to text-books, we hardly know what to send you, as you do not specify the branches taught in your higher departments. We make up a little package of fifty of those most universally used, and send them, express paid. We send also our complete catalogue. Please look it over and check anything you would like to see, no matter whether you think of using it or not. We consider it a favor to have an intelligent teacher accept our books. He may not want to use them now, but he is sure to like them, and if he does not some time use them himself, he will suggest them to somebody else who will. We need more men of your stamp in this State, Mr. Hume, and we trust that you will be deaf to any tempting offers which may come to you from abroad. There is room here for those who are fit to be at the top, and whenever you want a little backing, call on us. Our publications are used in all the best schools, and we are thus in friendly relations with those who control matters. You have a good field to start from, and we look to see you occupying the place you have already shown yourself fitted to fill.

As to our books, we venture no argument, trusting them entirely to your judgment. Most of them are in such universal use that you may feel under obligation to adopt them, because children who move into or out of your village will thus have the same books which are already in use. But we do not urge this consideration, preferring to put the books entirely upon their merits.

Let us know when we can do anything for you. Many of our friends in the interior entrust us with little commissions to make purchases, etc. Any favor of this kind, or any other, will be a pleasure to us.

With great regard, we are,

Your[s] truly,

HIREHISSON, BREAKHIMIN, NAILHER & CO.

Other letters flowed in, followed by express packages, till Roderick's shelves, and table, and floor, were successively over-flowed. He plunged into the comparison with enthusiasm, made tables of details, and marked each book in each particular on a scale of ten, till he became entirely muddled and hardly knew the best series from the poorest.

At this state of the examination, he was called to the door of the school-room one morning. The visitor presented a card, saying:

"'Tis her brothers, Sorrell & Co., publishers, New York; I'm Sorrell, but I'm not sorry to meet you."

"And I am glad to see you; come in," said Roderick, wondering how many times Mr. Sorrell had repeated his feeble pun, and how it sounded to him after the hundredth attempt.

Mr. Sorrell was exact in dress, had a quizzical face, and united the assurance of George Francis Train with the humor of a gentleman. The trade ranked him among the most successful agents in the field.

“Are you busy just now, Mr. Hume?” he asked.

“No,” replied Roderick; “you came at a fortunate time. It is half an hour before my next class.”

“Then let us plunge right into business, Mr. Hume. Are you thinking of putting out our Hypothetical Readers?”

“We are comparing other readers with them, Mr. Sorrell, to see if we can gain by a change.”

“Then you are not particularly dissatisfied with the Hypothetical?”

“In some respects, we are. We find them too much subject to material analysis. The binding is not as strong as it should be.”

“Great Heavens!” cried Mr. Sorrell. Then stretching forth his hand, he grasped Roderick’s and exclaimed: “Mr. Hume, I am under great obligation to you. The main objection to our business is its monotony. We have to listen to the same complaints and meet the same arguments, day after day, till in the course of four or five years they become an old story. Now, if you had urged that our readers were too easy, or too difficult, or prudish, or immoral, or sectarian, or atheistic, or radical, or copper-headish, and so on, I should have waited calmly till you got through, and then I should quietly and politely have selected and spoken my little piece entirely refuting the objection, and convincing you that from your own point of view the Hypothetical Readers were a thing of beauty and a joy forever. These declamations are all very pretty and convincing, but I have got rather tired of them, and I yawned in mind at the prospect of having to deliver one of them for your benefit. But you have given me a genuine sensation. For once, I am taken unawares and have no little piece ready. Why, Mr. Hume, our worst enemies have admitted that our binding was unassailable, and have even gone so far as to claim that it was a disadvantage, since our books never wore out and therefore grew so dirty by generations of constant handling as to be a source of danger to the primary departments. And you think they are not bound strongly enough! Mr. Hume, show me some of those feeble books, and let me face my misery at once.”

So they started down stairs to the primary department. On their way, Mr. Sorrell stopped to tie his shoe.

“These are English shoes, “ he said; “genuine Waukenphasts.”

“I have seen them advertised,” said Roderick; “of course that isn’t the real name of the maker.”

“No,” replied Mr. Sorrell, “only a *nomme de cuir*.”

“Very queer,” said Roderick. He wondered whether that pun, too, was another of Mr. Sorrell’s old soldiers and whether he had loosened the string before he entered the building.

Reaching the lowest room they had some conference with the teacher.

The fairest way will be to examine a book or two chosen at random,” said Roderick. “Here Willie Smith and Willie Thompson, bring your readers to the desk.”

“I see you follow the circus-posters,” said Mr. Sorrell.

“How?” asked Roderick.

“For particulars, see small Bills,”“ replied Mr. Sorrell.

Roderick looked at him long and gravely.

“On the whole,” he said at length, “I believe that was original, Mr. Sorrell. I thought your other puns were part of your stock in trade, like your ‘Commendations from distinguished educators.’ But I am willing to accept the ‘Small Bills’ as impromptu, and as you have thus established your reputation, you won’t need to try any more. By the way, now that I scan your features more closely I think I can tell you something about yourself.”

“Go on,” said Mr. Sorrell; “I shall be glad to peer into my future.”

“No, I am going back. You were once a scholar at Lawrence Academy.”

“Yes, and- “

“You once walked four miles on a muddy spring night to attend a sociable at Pepperell.”

“Now, I - “

“Two other boys walked over with you, and all three of you hung around the walls of the church vestry because you were too bashful to be introduced.”

“Now hold on - “

“Then all three of you walked home again, four miles in the mud, and dragged yourselves to bed about two o’clock in the morning.”:

“And you - “

“The same. Shake.”

“That massive brow, those Jovian locks,” cried Mr. Sorrell, “how could I have forgotten the name? But those beard[s]?”

“A modern improvement,” said Roderick. “But I want to ask a question or two. You graduated somewhere?”

“Yes.”

“And went into the book-business?”

“Yes.”

“And began on the Hypothetical readers?”

“Yes.”

“So that you got all your business training from those books?”

“Yes.”

“Very good. Now, Sorrell, I’m glad to see you, and I want you to stay here and visit with me as long as you can. But I tell you, frankly, your business here is ended. If the Hypothetical Readers have transformed a boy too bashful to be introduced to a giggling country deacon’s daughter into - well, into a gentleman of your present characteristics, they shall stay in this school as long as I do. It is one of my doctrines that success in life depends upon a stiff upper lip, and I will trust to the Hypothetical Readers to provide it.”

In his next letter to his partners, Mr. Sorrell wrote:

I had a stroke of luck at Norway. The new principal was going to put out our readers, but I chaffed him till I got him good-natured, and then discovered that he was an old school-mate of mine at Groton, though he left about the time I entered. He shook hands to keep our books in, and spoke as positively as though nobody else had anything to say about it. So I dropped in on a few members of the board, and found that he is not very secure in his own position. But I was assured by two or three men who spoke as if they knew that no change would be made in opposition to his wishes. So I think we are all right for this term.

A day or two after, Roderick was passing through one of the lower rooms, when he saw a pudgy little man with red whiskers puffing up the merits of a big parcel of books he had laid on the table. Although it was in school hours, all three of the teachers were gathered about the new-comer, giggling at him and at each other. Roderick approached rather haughtily, and asked him his name and business.

“Cockrell, sir, Cockrell; agent of the publishing house of O. X. Shedd & Co., sir. Just showing your lady-teachers our new readers, sir, the Inconsecutive, sir. Just look at that picture, sir. And now compare it with the botchwork in these wretched Hypotheticals.”

Here Mr. Cockrell seized a Third Reader, and apparently at random, but really with skill born of long practice, plunged his stubbed thumb between the two leaves that contained the very worst wood cuts in the whole Hypothetical series.

“Now compare,” he said, holding up the two books.

“Just see,” cried the women; and Roderick had to admit that the contrast was striking.

“But after all, that an’t the point,” continued Mr. Cockrell, with amazing volubility, “this Hypothetical is a cheap got up series and has changed hands three or four times already. Nobody dares to put any money into it because it’s built on a scaly plan. ‘The Word Method,’ they call it, you know. That is, a child shouldn’t spell a word by letters, but he should learn the whole word, and keep learnin’ em. Now what nonsense that is! Here is Shakspeare with twenty thousan’ words in ‘im; do you s’pose the child is goin’ to learn every one o’ them twenty thousand words seperit? Not by a darn sight. An’ here’s Webster’s dictionary, with a hundred and twenty thousan’ words in ‘im, ‘n what blarsted fool is goin’ to

say these children mus' go to work 'n learn every one o' them hundred 'n twenty thousn' words each one all alone seperite by itself? Ye see it only needs a little common sense to show up the folly o' such talk, 'n yet here's folks goin on 'n teach'n year after year by "The Word Method." Of course such teachers as these here: bright, smart, active, handsome gals twenty years old, 'n full o' snap n' fire 'n ingenuity can get pretty tol'able results even out 'o these books; but give 'em such books as that (and he held up an Inconsecutive Reader and gazed at it admiringly) , give 'em such books as that, 'n these here gals could learn these scholars to read the roof off 'o the school-house."

The gals, none of whom was under thirty seven, were highly edified, but Roderick suggested that as the course of study apportioned no time to book-agents, it might be as well to go on with the day's work and let Mr. Cockrell do his talking at recess. In fact, he assured this worthy individual that it was highly improbable that any change would be made in readers, and accepted a set for examination only under protest.

Mr. Cockrell wrote to his firm:

You made a big mistake in not sending a complete set of our books all around to Hume. The rest of em did, and he felt. [...]. about it. I've got all the women solid for the Inconsecutive and I'll bet you we fetch the board with em. One of em [was] struck with em, and says he thinks they'll go in. His name is Abrahams, Jacob, and he has checked some things on [our] price list that he would like to have you send him. It will [pay] to treat him well for he knows all about our books and [has] always preferred em to any others. Ime coming back here [as soon] as I fix things at Oxford, and Abrahams will telegraph ... if anything comes up sudden.

Roderick's next visitor wore a stove-pipe hat, sported a cane, and presented the following card:

S. L. Umber,  
2816 Mortgage St.,  
New York.

With  
Willy Winkle & Co.

"I suppose you've heard of me," he remarked.

"Possibly, though I do not recall the name," said Roderick.

"Then you can't have many book-agents around," continued Mr. Umber. "Lord, how they hate me."

"Indeed? And why?"

"O I've swept out their books everywhere., Why... look here. I left New York Tuesday morning, [and] it's now Friday noon: three days and a half. Now, sir, in those three days and a half, how many cities do you suppose I've carried?"

"I really couldn't guess."

"Nineteen, sir, nineteen. I carried the eighteenth [last] night, and I was going to be satisfied with a [dozen] and a half. But I found by my time-table [that] I could get in three-quarters of an hour at Albany, and, by Jove, I stopped off there this morning, and carried the city for our Arithmetics. What do you think of that?"

"Quick work, surely," said Roderick.

"Why every time I get back to the office and look over my introduction account, I am amazed, " continued Mr. Umber.

"Places that I have forgotten all about come rolling in for readers, or histories or grammars, till, I vow, I believe we get almost as [many] orders at our branch office in Mortgage St. as does the house itself at Crimecrimehorrid. Why, sir, our cash receipts for copy-books alone, first introduction, last month, were over seventeen thousand dollars."

"You must be a profitable agent, Mr. Umber."

“I think the house are satisfied,” replied Mr. Umber, modestly. “They have doubled my salary five times since I begun with them, and they write me very pleasant letters, very pleasant letters. Why, a friend of mine implored me, on his knees almost, to open a cigar store with him, offering me a tip-top thing. But I said to him, ‘No, sir,’ I said, ‘Willy Winkle & Co. stuck by me when I was learning my business and wasn’t worth much to them, and now that I have some *little* value, I propose to stick by Willy Winkle & Co.’”

“That was creditable in you, Mr. Umber.”

“Well, sir, the fact is, a man has to sacrifice something for principle, Mr. Hume. Why often and often my friends have said to me, ‘See here, Umber,’ they would say, ‘why don’t you just tell Willy Winkle & Co. you’ve been an agent long enough, and that they must either take you into the firm, or you’ll draw out and start a rival concern.’ But I tell them, ‘No, sir,’ I tell them, ‘Willy Winkle & Co. have treated me well, and I won’t go back on them. If they by and by decide that my experience and my acquaintance and my knowledge of books makes it worth while for them to take me in as an even partner, my brains against their capital, why I’ll consider the matter,’ I say, ‘I’ll consider the matter. But I can wait, I can wait. And, by Jove, I’ll never go back on the firm.’”

“How long have you been an agent?” asked Roderick.

“Since the first day of January,” replied Mr. Umber, rather confusedly; “but then I did a good deal of indirect work while I was teaching.”

“Well, Mr. Umber, it is now time for school to begin, and you have interested me so much in yourself that I shall have no time to examine your books. But you can call on the members of the board, if you choose. I rather think Mr. Abrahams will give you encouragement,” added Roderick, slyly.

Mr. Umber did not see Roderick again, but he left a set of books for him, and wrote to his firm:

We’ve got Norway, dead as a door-nail. The new principal, Hume, said to me, said he, “I don’t care to examine your books, Umber, all I want is to know you. You may depend upon it, I’ll do all I can for them, because you’re a good fellow, Umber, and by Jove, I like you.” He recommended me to Abrahams, and Abrahams and I fixed the thing right up. I enclose a memorandum. See that the Cyclopaedia is sent right off, for we want to make things sure while we’ve got ‘em easy.

Other agents followed, sometimes two or three a day. There was Bismark, for D. Peachpound & Co., a quiet, unassuming man, who would point out every flaw in his opponent’s books and every merit in his own, and clinch the argument by leaving behind him the impression of a thoroughly good fellow. There was little Turbid, for Scribbler, Biceps & Co., who never said an unkind word of any body else’s books, but was always eager to defend and display his own. There was Rollin Stone, for Mark & Hardclay, who considered his books so far superior that argument was superfluous, but who went off contented as soon as he got Roderick’s subscription to the Monthly Blackboard, a new school journal of unknown parentage and mysterious purposes. There was Theodore Hook, the right-hand man of Hirehisson, Breakhimin, Nailher & Co., who planned further ahead and won more victories than any other agent in the State. He said very little about his books to Roderick, but he took deep interest in his school, visited every department, threw out many useful hints, expressed considerable suspicion of Captain Stone and his wife, warning Roderick to beware of them, and engaged Roderick, at a liberal compensation, to correct the proof-sheets of a forthcoming text-book.

“It isn’t for me to talk books to you,” he said to Roderick. “You know what books are as well as I do, and you know what this particular school wants better than I do. Only, there is this much about it: you are perfectly safe in putting in our books. They are used everywhere, and if you adopt them, why you follow plenty of good examples, and cannot be held personally responsible, as you could for an untried book which proved a failure.”

This argument had weight with Roderick, who had become convinced of the futility of the sort of comparison he had first undertaken. So he made out a list, largely from Mr. Hook's list, and was about to present it to the board. But Mr. Dormouse heard of it, and came to see him.

"Take my advice," he said: "don't get mixed up with text-books. They have cost many a strong teacher his place, and they would unseat you in a month. Let me keep this list, and we will follow you as far as we can. But let the book-agents do the work, as they are paid to."

This advice was certainly self-sacrificing on Mr. Dormouse's part, for it brought upon him, as upon the rest of the board, a daily swarm of agents. Every member had arithmetics for breakfast, grammars for dinner, geographies for tea, and copybooks to sleep on. At last, a special meeting was called for a Friday evening. Seven houses were represented, and each agent was allowed ten minutes to present his claims. No decision was reached, and the board adjourned to meet at ten the next morning, and conclude the matter.

The agents all stopped at the same hotel, and as there was really nothing more to do but to await the decision, they spent the rest of the evening together, and gave the occupants of adjoining rooms the impression of a jolly crowd.

Only six of them were there, however. The seventh, a new man named E. Riker, who represented Rummond Health, of Boston, had arrived upon the ground too late to make any impression. He was a gentlemanly fellow, a pleasant talker and full of enthusiasm; but Norway was tired of book-agents and nobody would listen to him, so he had gone from the board-meeting to his room, despondent.

"I wonder what the blank Riker is up to, exclaimed Umber, during a break in the stories. He left the room, crossed the entry to Riker's door, and listened a moment. Then he rushed back, stifled with laughter.

"By Jove, fellows, keep quiet; O Lord! I shall burst; just come out here and listen a minute; O jimminy, this is the richest thing yet."

Wondering what caused this exhilaration, the others followed Umber to Riker's door, and listened.

Riker was kneeling in fervent prayer.

"O lord," he plead[ed], thou knowest how important it is to me to carry this place, and thou knowest that we have the best books, especially the geographies. O Lord, wilt thou not soften the stony hearts of the board, that they may listen to argument and be guided wisely in this matter. O Lord, thou has all power, and now, even now, thou canst bring to naught the designs of the enemy. O Lord, hear me and succor me, for I am in sore distress. And the glory shall be thine, forever."

It was with difficulty that the six got back to their room, and inextinguishable, indeed, were the peals of laughter that arose.

"I say, fellows," said Umber, "let's put up a job on Riker. Come over to Jim Dormouse's, two or three of you, and we'll build up the biggest joke of the season."

He outlined his plot, which was approved and elaborated, and at once carried into effect. Mr. Dormouse was just leaving the shop, when the three agents came rushing in.

"By Jove, Jim," said Umber, who made it a point to be familiar with common people - 'they like it, because it is condescending;' "by Jove, Jim, we've got up the biggest joke of the season. Now we want you to get up at the meeting to-morrow, and say that at about half-past ten, to-night, you were suddenly impressed with the idea that the best geography for use in this school is 'Our Oblate Spheroid,' Riker's book. He'll think that it is in answer to his prayer, you know, and we'll let him tell the story a dozen times before we let out on him. By Jove, won't it be rich?"

"That would be something of a joke," said Mr. Dormouse, his little black eyes twinkling; 'you fellows had better go to work now and convince me, so that I shall be honest to-morrow morning, when I say that just at this time I suddenly thought it was best to introduce Our Oblate Spheroid.'

“Well,” said Umber, entering into the humor of Mr. Dormouse’s suggestion; “that is easily done. The fact is, Mr. Dormouse, we are paid to advocate other books, but when you come down to our own real opinions, we have to own up that Our Oblate Spheroid is really the only book published which makes geography a pleasant and profitable study.”

“To tell the truth;” put in Mr. Stone, since the Oblate Spheroid was issued, the other publishers have stopped making geographies, and are eager to carry places only to get rid of their old stock.”

“Why, jest see ‘here,” added Cockrell, “our folks in the firm hires a boy fur nothin else but to cut all notices of the Spheroid out o’ the noospapers before the ol’ man sees ‘em. Ef he sh’d lay eyes on this book his conscience never ‘d let ‘im sell another copy of Hillteeth’s, fur he’s a diggun in the Presbyterian church.”

Then they all three laughed uproariously. What a rich joke it was, to be sure!

“I think that will do, gentlemen,” said Mr. Dormouse, his eyes still twinkling; “I see that you are skilful and experienced agents, and you may depend on having your little joke carried out.”

\* \* \* \* \*

The next morning, Mr. Dormouse rose at the meeting and said:

“Mr. Chairman, when we adjourned last evening it seemed to be pretty certain that the Collected geographies, Inconsecutive readers and Apdidymus’s arithmetics, would be adopted this morning.

“I was myself opposed to any change, but the board stood four to four, and I understand that Mr. Blarston, who has just returned to town and is present, is prepared to vote for this list of books. But, Mr. Chairman, about half-past ten, last evening, I was suddenly persuaded that it was best for us to examine more closely the Oblate Spheroid series, and I am convinced that it is best for us to adopt them. I therefore move that they be substituted for the series now in use.”

Mr. Baker seconded the motion and the roll was called. Messrs. Angell and Abrahams voted “No.” Mr. Baker voted “Yes.” Mr. Blarston said:

“I’ve just got back and don’t know anything about this thing, and there’s only one thing I want to know, and that is what Mr. Hume thinks. We’ve got a man in charge of this school that understands his business, and I believe in letting him run it.”

Roderick replied that he considered the Spheroid series satisfactory, and Mr. Blarston voted “Yes.” Roderick looked gratified, and exchanged a glance with Mr. Dormouse.

The vote stood 6 to 3 in favor of the Spheroid. Mr. Umber began to think the joke was going a little too far, when Mr. Dormouse rose and moved a reconsideration.

“That’s more like it,” whispered Umber to Cockrell. He winked at Mr. Dormouse, but that gentleman did not respond.

To Mr. Umber’s consternation, the vote was carried again by precisely the same majority.

“What the blank does that mean?” he whispered to Cockrell.

“Go home and consult your Cushing’s Manual,” growled that worthy, intensely disgusted.

Then Mr. Dormouse moved that, in view of the approaching election and the close of the year, all further changes be postponed to the fall term. This vote also was carried, was reconsidered, and was carried again.,

\* \* \* \* \*

Three humiliated agents, and three others, who had stood no chance and were on the whole rather gratified at the turn things had taken, were gathered at the hotel.

“All we’ve got out of this is the joke,” said Umber, at length; “let’s make the most of that, anyway.”

So he called to Riker, who was skipping up to his room.

“Riker,” said he, “how the blank did the board come to swing around to your books?”

“Why, the fact is,” said Mr. Riker, innocently, “I had about given the thing up, when a message came for me at eleven o’clock last night. I went over to Mr. Dormouse’s shop, where I met Mr. Baker and Mr.

Marvin. We spent an hour comparing the Spheroid with the Collected, and they decided to go for my book.”

“By Jove, that wasn’t fair,” cried UMBER; “Why didn’t they call me in and hear my side?”

“Why, Mr. Dormouse said you acknowledged that your book was in every way inferior.”

“Yes, but that was a joke —”

“Mr. UMBER, let me give you a little advice. Not to question your taste in eavesdropping at my door and making sport of my private devotions, I would call your attention to the fact that it was only through your doing just what you did that my prayer was answered. When you try to put up a job on the Lord Almighty, you are likely to find yourself following your nose into the very pit you are digging.”

“But one thing puzzles me,” said UMBER, crestfallen; “I thought Jim Dormouse was a free-thinker and would fall right into this.”

“Don’t judge from appearances,” said RIKER. “A man may dress plainly and talk quietly and yet have money and influence; he may listen without expressing any opinion to your absurdest talk, and yet keep up a tremendous thinking all the while; and he may be, as Mr. Dormouse is, the leading trustee of the Presbyterian church.”

“See here,” said STONE, “we’re beaten, and we give in. Now be generous and let the story stop right here.”

“All right,” said RIKER, “shake.”

They shook: and that is why it has never before been told how the geographies in the Norway high school were put in by prayer.



# The School Bulletin

## AND NEW YORK STATE EDUCATIONAL JOURNAL.

Journal, Vol. IV., No. 41.]

SYRACUSE, N. Y., MAY, 1876.

[Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 21.

### A R E L I C.

We have received from Hon. John H. French, J.L. D., late State Superintendent in Vermont and well known throughout this State as an Institute instructor, and as author of the N.Y. State Gazetteer and Map, the call to what was probably the second Teachers' Institute ever held in this country. Our printers have reproduced this call in almost exact *fac simile*. The State is not mentioned, but is of course, New York. The original is upon yellow paper, which somebody seems to have cut in two, removed a sentence, and pasted together again. Whether this was done to all the copies issued or only to this one we have no means of knowing. At any rate, the hand-bill is a curiosity.

# MEETING OF Common School TEACHERS.

## A Teachers' Institute will be opened in the village

of Wethersfield Springs, on WEDNESDAY, THE 18TH DAY OF OCTOBER INST., at nine o'clock, A. M., and continue ten days. The object of the Institute is improvement in the greatest of all arts, the art of Teaching. It is expected that every person, male or female, proposing or intending to teach a Common School in the county of Wyoming the ensuing winter, will attend the Teachers' Institute.

Instruction will be given in the various branches taught in Common Schools, viz., Orthography, the analysis of words, their signification, the import of sentences, and the authors' meaning; English Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, and the System of Outline Maps. Particular attention will be paid to Mental Arithmetic and the use of the slate and black-board. Lectures will be delivered on the best mode of school government and discipline; the best manner of instructing children according to their age and ability, together with the most successful methods of developing the intellectual powers and arousing the mind to vigorous action, in the exercise of its thinking and discriminating powers. Gentlemen of the best qualifications will be engaged as Instructors of the Institute. Mr. LEONARD HOSKINS is engaged in the department of Arithmetic and Mathematics. He is an experienced teacher and where he is known nothing need be said of his qualifications; there is not probably his equal in western New York, in Mental Arithmetic and Fractions. Mr. HUNTINGTON, of the Perry Centre Institute, will give instruction in Geography and in the use of the Globes and Outline Maps. Other gentlemen equally well qualified, will be engaged in teaching and lecturing upon Elocution, Orthography, Analysis, English Grammar, Penmanship, &c.

Several Clergymen who have been Teachers, have already volunteered to give lectures on School Government and other subjects. The Town Superintendents will be present most of the time. Trustees are invited to be present, and especially during the last days of the term, as they will then have an opportunity to find good teachers. As it is proposed by the Town Superintendents to defer the examination of teachers until the meeting of the Institute, they can be examined there. Teachers will thus have an opportunity for free interchange of views among themselves, connected with their own experience, and the proposal of such questions as any may choose to offer. They will also become acquainted with each other, the knowledge and experience of all will be imparted to each, and the best methods of teaching and governing will be adopted by all; and thus teaching may be reduced somewhat to a system of uniformity. Lectures will be given upon the subject of building and repairing school houses. In short every thing will be done to render the exercises interesting and useful; to create a more lively interest upon the subject of education throughout the county, and to raise the standard of common schools and common school teachers. Blackboards and other apparatus will be provided. It is expected that teachers will bring books for reading. The expense for boarding and incidental expenses will not exceed \$3 each. Teachers for the next summer school are invited also to attend. A Visiting Committee for each town will be appointed. Citizens generally are invited to attend.

A. S. STEVENS, Superintendent of Common Schools, Wyoming County, with the concurrence of the following Town Superintendents.

E. BISHOP, *Allora*,  
R. TOLLIES, *Bennington*,  
W. H. CONKLIN, *Castile*,  
JOHN SMITH, *China*,

J. DURFEE, *Cornington*,  
R. WHITNEY, *Gainesville*,  
L. C. WARD, *Java*,  
Middlebury,

C. A. HUNTINGTON, *Perry*,  
M. A. HINMAN, *Sheldon*,  
A. HOLLEY, *Warsaw*,  
B. BANCROFT, *Wethersfield*.

OCTOBER 9, 1843:

*P. McNeill, Orangeville.*

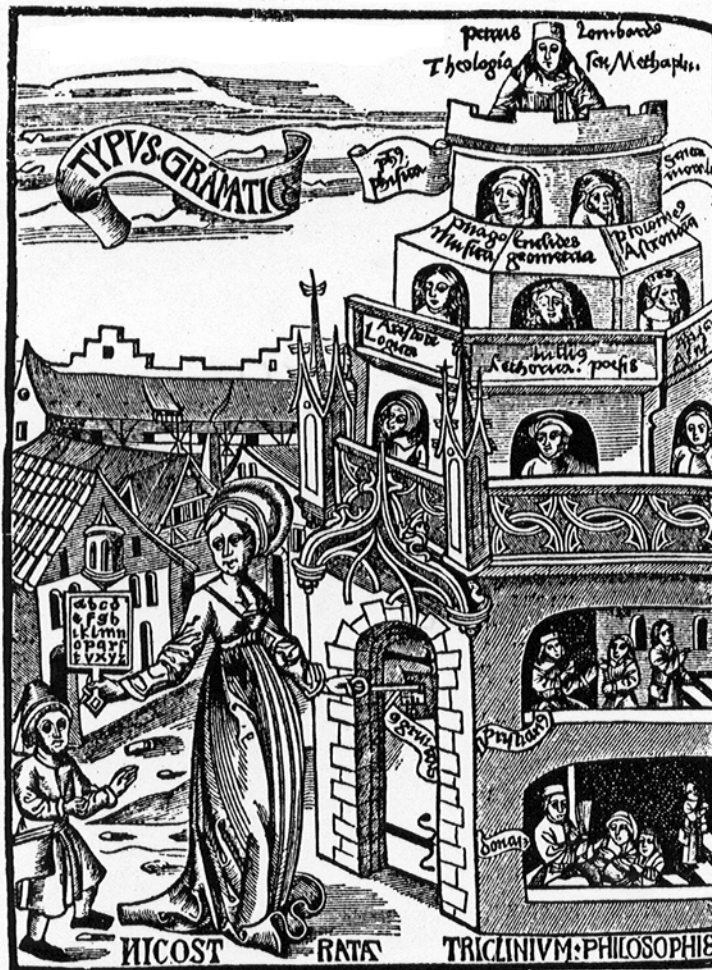


FIG. 44. THE MEDIEVAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION SUMMARIZED

Allegorical representation of the progress and degrees of education, from an illuminated picture in the 1508 (Basel) edition of the *Margarita Philosophica* of Gregory de Reisch.

The youth, having mastered the Hornbook (ABC's) and the rudiments of learning (reading, writing, and the beginnings of music and numbers), advances toward the temple of knowledge. Wisdom is about to place the key in the lock of the door of the temple. On the door is written the word *congruitas*, signifying Grammar. ("Gramaire first hath for to teche to speke upon congruite.") On the first and second floors of the temple he studies the Grammar of Donatus, and of Priscian, and at the first stage at the left on the third floor he studies the Logic of Aristotle, followed by the Rhetoric and Poetry of Tully, thus completing the *Trivium*. The Arithmetic of Boethius also appears on the third floor. On the fourth floor he completes the studies of the *Quadrivium*, taking in order the Music of Pythagoras, Euclid's Geometry, and Ptolemy's Astronomy. The student now advances to the study of Philosophy, studying successively Physics, Seneca's Morals, and the Theology (or Metaphysics) of Peter Lombard, the last being the goal toward which all has been directed.

**✠** A.a.b.c.d.e.f.g.h.i.k.l.m.n.o.p.q.  
 r.z.s.t.v.u.x.y.z.ā.ē.ī.ō.ū.  
**I**n noīe p̄cis & filij & spiritusacti. Amē.

a e i o u a e i o u  
 Q::Q abebibobub ba bebibobu Q::Q  
 ac ec ic oc uc ca ce ci co cu  
 Q::Q ad ed id od ud da de di do du Q::Q  
 af ef if of uf fa fe fi fo fu  
 Q::Q ag eg ig og ug ga ge gi go gu Q::Q

**C** Orationis dominicalis.



**P**ater noster qui es in celis: sa-  
 ctificetur nomē tuum. Adue-  
 niat regnum tuū. Fiat volū-  
 tas tua: sicut ī celo & in terrā.

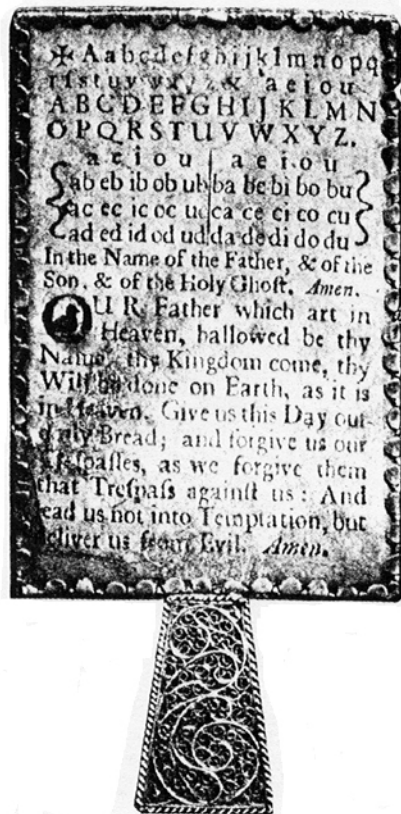
Danem nostrum quotidianuz da nobis  
 hodie. Et dimitte nobis debita nostra  
 sicut & nos dimittimus debitoribus no-  
 stris. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem  
 Sed libera nos a malo. amen.

**A**ve maria grā plena, dñs tecum  
 bñdicta tu in mulierib⁹: & bñdi-  
 ct⁹ fruct⁹ ventris tui Ies⁹ christ⁹. amen

**C**redo ī deū patrē oipotētē creatō-  
 rē celi & terre. Et in iesū christū fi-  
 liū ei⁹ vnicū dñm nrm. Qui conceptus

**Saz.**

A Beautiful "Hornbook" With the Back Made of Silver Filigree Over Red Silk Covered with Transparent Talc and the Front Covered with Transparent Talc, Not Horn. Reputed to Have Been a Gift from Elizabeth I to Lord Chancellor Egerton, and Preserved by His Family. From Pages 43 and 44 of History of the Horn Book, Andrew W. Tuer, 1897. Arno Press, A New York Times Co., New York: 1979.



Cut 19.



# TABVLÆ ABCDARIÆ

PVERILES.

A B C D E F G H I K L M N O  
P Q R S T V X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r s t u v x y z.

a b c d e f g h i k l m n o p q r s t u x y z.

VOCALES QVINQVE, a e i o u & Græca y.

DIPHTHONGI QVINQVE, æ œ au eu ei.

CONSONANTES XVII. b c d f g h k l m n p q r s t x z.

# TABVLA SYLLABARVM

b. l. r.	b. s.
p. h. l. n. r. s. t.	p. s.
c. h. l. n. r.	c
f. l. n. r.	g
qu.	d
g. l. n. r.	t
ch. l. r.	f
i.	h
d. r.	l. s. p.
t. h. l. r.	m. s.
f. l. r.	n. s. t. p.
ph. l. r.	r. s. bo. ps.
v.	s. t.
h.	ae
l.	oe
m. n.	au
n.	eu
r. h.	ei
s. c. ch. cr. p. r. t. th. tr.	
z.	
x.	

## ORATIO DOMINICA.

**P**ater/noster/qui/  
es/in coelis/San-  
cti/ fi ce tur / no-  
men/ tu um / De-  
ni at / re gnum /  
tu um / Si at / vo lun tas / tu a /  
si cut / in coe lo / et / in ter ra /  
Pa nem / no strum / quo ti di a-  
num / da / no bis / ho die / et / re-  
mit te / no bis / de bi ta / no stra /  
si cut / et / nos / re mit ti mus / de  
bi to ri bus / no stris / Et / ne / nos  
in du cas / in ten ta ti o nem /  
Sed / li be ra / nos / a ma lo /  
A M E N.

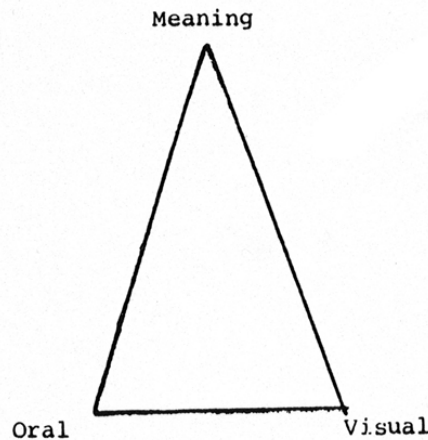
## THE LEVELS OF READING AND SPEECH

Requires Conscious Attention	( ( <u>Level 3 - Consciousness of Meaning</u> (
Automatic Levels Not Requiring Conscious Attention	( ( <u>Level 2 - Syntax-Generating-Words</u> ( ( <u>Level 1 - Syllables</u> (

If conscious attention is focused on automatic Levels 1 or 2, the result in speech can be stammering and stuttering, and in reading a divided and therefore reduced attention to meaning at Level 3. Correspondingly, if conscious attention is focused on the automatic action of walking, the result can be an altered gait and stumbling.

### THE READING TRIANGLE

From an Article by Dr. Henry Suzzallo



Source: Article Entitled, "Reading, Teaching Beginners," on page 118 of the 1913 volume of A Cyclopedia of Education, Edited by Paul Monroe, Columbia University. Suzzallo was also with Columbia, at Teachers College, and had been a student of E. L. Thorndike about 1901.

### Comments on the Suzzallo Reading Triangle

Henry Suzzallo's 1913 *Cyclopedia of Education* article and its triangle illustration prove that the "experts" at Columbia in 1913, where Suzzallo was then a professor, knew of the existence of two mutually exclusive and contradictory kinds of reading, or mixtures of the kinds. One of those two kinds is to read by the "meaning" of print, and the other is to read by the "sound" of print.

In William James' 1890 psychology text, James reproduced diagram illustrations similar to the Suzzallo triangle diagram. Such diagrams were used at that time by psychologists to demonstrate the paths followed in the association of ideas. The topic, the "association of ideas" was of interest to the psychologists. Even as early as March, 1880, James published in the *Popular Science Monthly* an article with the title, "The Association of Ideas."

Yet what is extremely unusual about Suzzallo's triangle is that Suzzallo did not discuss just one path in the association of ideas to be followed in a specific activity, which was the case for the other diagrams in James' 1890 text. Instead, Suzzallo showed two opposite paths on the same diagram for the same activity. Since the two paths obviously contradict each other in the carrying out of that activity, they cannot be used simultaneously.

The corners of the Suzzallo triangle diagram are labeled, the lower right corner standing for "visual," or the sight of print, the lower left corner standing for "sound," or the sound produced by print. The top point of the triangle stands for "meaning," or the meaning of print. Furthermore, the line connecting the two bottom corners between "visual" and "sound" is short and suggests a path involving a simple response. Yet the lines reaching to the top, either from "visual" at the right-hand bottom corner to "meaning" at the top, or from "sound" at the left-hand bottom corner to "meaning" at the top, are about twice as long as the line between the two bottom corners. That obviously suggests that a more complex response is involved in going from "visual" to "meaning," or in going from "sound" to "meaning," than in going from "visual" to "sound." Obviously, the reflex should be quicker in the bottom and shorter path (from "visual" to "sound"), than in the longer paths to the top (either from "visual" at the bottom to "meaning" at the top, or from "sound" at the bottom to "meaning" at the top).

Statements made by Herbert Austin Brown in his article, "The Measurement of the Efficiency of Instruction in Reading," *Elementary School Journal*, University of Chicago, June, 1914, mentioned earlier in this history and again in Appendix E, establish clearly that the "experts" knew before 1914 that children taught to read by the "sound" of print learn to read very rapidly, but the "experts" discounted that achievement because they thought that children were not getting the "meaning" of print but were only reciting the "sound" of print. Yet the "experts" also had to know that children taught to read by the "meaning" of print instead of by its "sound" learned to read very slowly. The relative length of the lines on the Suzzallo triangle obviously provides the "experts'" explanation for that observed difference in the speed of learning to read to which Brown obviously referred. (Brown had received his master's degree from Columbia Teachers College on June 13, 1912, where the psychologist, Edward L. Thorndike, William James' former student, was a professor. In 1912 Henry Suzzallo was at Columbia Teachers College and the psychologists, James McKeen Cattell and John Dewey, were at Columbia University)

On Suzzallo's triangle diagram, a clockwise path begins at "visual" (meaning at the sight of print) at the lower right-hand triangle corner, stopping at "sound" first at the lower left-hand triangle corner, and then only secondarily moving to "meaning" at the triangle top. Suzzallo's contradictory counterclockwise path also begins at "visual" (meaning at the sight of print) at the lower right-hand triangle corner, but goes immediately to "meaning" at the triangle top, and then only secondarily moves on down to "sound" at the lower left-hand triangle corner.

It is evident that the clockwise path on the triangle describes the phonics "sound" approach in the teaching of reading, and the counter-clockwise path on the triangle describes the whole-sight-word "meaning" approach in the teaching of reading.

James McKeen Cattell's and William James' comments on perception suggest that they wrongly concluded that only one stop on such perceptual routes as that shown on the Suzzallo triangle could be done automatically, but that secondary stops had to be performed consciously. Obviously, therefore, if



that had been true, it would then have been “correct” to teach children to read whole sight-words automatically as the first stop, for their “meaning,” even though it took longer. However, it would presumably have been incorrect to teach children to read print first for its “sound,” automatically, even though it took far less time, because children might fail to make the conscious effort that Cattell and James apparently considered necessary to make the second stop, and the second stop for children taught by “sound” concerned critically important “meaning.” Therefore, the Suzzallo triangle supported the teaching of children to read by “meaning,” but it discredited the teaching of children to read by “sound.” The diagram also clearly proposed the existence of two different and opposite perceptual types, even though Suzzallo’s article which contained the triangle did not do so but only discussed paths that could be followed in reading.

However, the showing of two such contradictory paths on the same illustration for the association of ideas was quite extraordinary. Very possibly, Suzzallo’s triangle was the first “conflict” diagram ever drawn in psychology. It is also highly probable that Suzzallo received it in his close association with Thorndike, and that Thorndike had received it in his close association with William James, whom I consider to be its probable author.

## **A LIST OF SPELLING BOOKS REPORTEDLY IN USE IN AMERICA IN 1842, AND SOME OTHER CONTEMPORARY DATA**

The following list of spelling books available in America in 1842 is excerpted from an original copy held by the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. That original 32-page-long copy is entitled:

The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge -  
Report of the Committee on the Subject of Spelling Books.  
Published by the Executive Committee, January, 1843.  
New York: Hopkins & Jennings, Printers. 1843.

The column listing the spelling book titles is next to three other columns, one headed 1804, one headed 1832, and one headed 1842. The explanation given for those headings reads:

“The following is a Catalogue of the principal Spelling Books now on sale in the country. The indices under the years 1804 and 1832 show what books were included in the Catalogues of American School Books, published in those years. When a book has survived its cotemporaries [sic], it is indicated under the next date.”

The meaning of that last sentence is unknown, and so is the reason why only a few checks were given under the 1842 heading, when the committee stated that all of the 110 books listed were available in 1842. (Ninety of the books on sale in 1842, as discussed below, were in the possession of the committee). For quite a few of the books, no checks at all were shown under any of the three dates, 1804, 1832 or 1842. In addition, there is no consistency in the kind of checks given to some books which are known to have been in print at the earliest date. Therefore, since the “checking” notations under the three dates on the original document appear to be absolutely senseless, they have been omitted below.

The fact that the “checking” on the original document was senseless, however, is not too important, because what is of interest for the purposes of this history is the fact that the document did list many spelling books that were on the American market in 1842, even though it is apparent that the titles on many were not correctly quoted.

It is puzzling that this list has only 112 books, even though the committee made the following claim in this January, 1843, publication:

“There are now on sale in our country not less than one hundred and twenty different spelling Books, about three fourths of which the Committee have collected together.”

Three-quarters of that 120 would total, of course, the figure of 90. Possibly 8 of that 120 did not qualify as among the “principal Spelling Books now on sale in this country,” which was the description the committee gave to its list of 112. Therefore, the titles of the 8 “non-principal” spelling books on sale by January, 1843, which were omitted from the finished list of 112 will probably forever remain unknown.

In addition, so far as is known, no “Catalogues of American School Books” were prepared in 1804 and 1832, so that data (such as it was in the utterly confusing entries) was probably abstracted from some unspecified lists of books in all categories available for sale in those years.

Despite the statistical discrepancies and despite the slipshod manner in which known titles are listed below, which is often incorrectly, this list of spelling books available in America in 1842 is of real historical importance, since it is apparently the only such contemporary list in existence.

The American Spelling Book, Webster's  
The New American Spelling Book, Webster's  
The Elementary Spelling Book, Webster's  
The American Definition Spell. Book, Abner Kneeland  
The American Expositor  
Alden's Columbian Spelling Book  
Alexander's Spelling Book  
Angell's Spelling Book  
Barnum's Series  
" First Primer  
" Second Primer  
" Third Child's Third Book of Spelling [sic]  
Barry's Spelling Book  
Bentley's Spelling Book  
" Pictorial Spelling Book  
" Expositor  
" American Instructor  
Bingham's Child's Companion  
Bolles' Spelling Book  
Brown's Child's First Book  
Butler's [sic: Butter's] Gradations in Reading and Spelling  
Burhan's Spelling Book  
Byerly's New American Spelling Book  
The Child's Spelling Book  
The Child's Guide  
The Child's First Definitions  
The Child's Instructor  
The Child's Assistant  
Chapin's Classical Spelling Book  
Chichester's Spelling Book  
Clagett's Expositor  
Cobb's Spelling Book  
Cobb's New Spelling Book  
Columbian Primer  
Conelly's [sic] Spelling Book  
Common Primer  
Cumming's Spelling Book  
Crandall's Columbian Spelling Book  
Dilworth's Spelling Book  
Easy Lessons  
Easy Primer  
Edinburgh Sessional School Spelling Book  
Emerson's National Spelling Book  
" New National Spelling Book  
" Progressive Primer  
Fellenberg's Spelling Book  
Fiske's New England Spelling Book

First Book of Spelling Lessons  
 Fowle's Rational Guide  
 " Improved Guide  
 Franklin Primer  
 Gallaudet's Mother's Primer  
 Gallaudet and Hooker's Practical Spelling Book  
 Goodrich's Spelling Book  
 Hawes' Spelling Book  
 Hazen's Spelling Book  
 Hazen's Symbolical Primer  
 " Definer  
 Hall's Spelling Book  
 Heaton's Columbian Spelling Book  
 The Intellectual Definer  
 The Introduction to Emerson's National Spelling Book  
 Juvenile Spelling Book  
 Juvenile Primer  
 Kelly's First Primer  
 " Second Primer Spelling Book  
 " American Instructor  
 Leonard's Spelling Book  
 Lee's Spelling Book  
 Marshall's Spelling Book  
 May's Spelling Book  
 McMillin's Spelling Book  
 Mulkey's Spelling Book  
 Murray's Spelling Book  
 My First Spelling Book  
 New England Primer  
 New Pleasing Spelling Book  
 New York Primer  
 New York Spelling Book  
 North American Spelling Book  
 Parley's Spelling Book  
 Parkhurst's First Lessons  
 Parsons' Analytical Spelling Book  
 Pennsylvania Spelling Book  
 Perry's Spelling Book  
 Pestalozzian Primer  
 Picket's Juvenile Spelling Book  
 Prentiss' Maine Spelling Book  
 Prest's Monitorial Primer  
 Primary Instructor  
 Primary Lessons for Schools  
 Progressive Primer  
 Pronouncing Spelling Book  
 Putnam's Spelling Book  
 Sanders' Spelling Book  
 " Primary School Primer  
 Sears' Standard Spelling Book  
 Sequel to the Spelling Book

Smith's Spelling Book  
Snow's Spelling Book  
Spelling and Thinking  
Torrey's Primary Spelling Book  
"    Familiar Spelling Book  
Towne's Spelling Book  
Weed's Spelling Book  
Wiggins' Spelling Book  
Williams' Spelling Book  
Worcester's Primer  
"    First Book  
"    Second Book  
"    Third Book  
"    Sequel

The 1843 document continued:

"The following is a list of foreign spelling books before the Committee:

"Mavor's Spelling Book  
Carpenter's Spelling Book  
Fenning's Spelling Book  
Vyse's Spelling Book  
Cobbins' Spelling Book  
Williams' Spelling Book  
Porney's French Spelling Book.

"The first of these, (Mavor's,) in 1835 had passed through 420 editions in England, and it has been stated, that for many years, the profits on the publication were sufficient to meet all the expenses of the publishing house of Longman & Co., Paternoster Row."

"The following Table shows the variety of Spelling Books used in the State of New York, and the number of towns in which each is introduced. It is compiled from the Abstracts of the School Returns, during the Superintendency of Gen. Dix.

	<u>1827</u>	<u>1830</u>	<u>1833</u>	<u>1834</u>	<u>1836</u>	<u>1837</u>	<u>1838</u>	<u>1839</u>
"Bentley's	16	41	36	32	36	32	35	28
Crandall's	55	62	62	52	42	18	38	36
Marshall's	60	85	61	59	39	35	27	25
Cobb's	59	209	235	234	242	232	270	280
Webster's	302	417	433	418	332	277	265	227
Webster's (Elementary)	-	-	-	-	-	202		
Webster's American S. Book	-	-				3		
Bartlett's						1		
Brigham's						1	1	1
Burhan's	10	4				6	1	1
Child's Guide						3		4
Comly's						1		
Columbian (Crandall's)						34		
Goodrich's						1		1
Hazen's						3		5
The Juvenile Spelling Book						1		
Picket's	10	19				6		9
Sears'	10	14				5		4
Speller and Definer						3		
Williams'						5		1
Murray's								3
Towne's								4
Smith's								1
Sanders' [Ed.: no numbers shown for Sanders' very popular speller, first published in 1838]								
Emerson's								2
Juvenile Spelling Book								7"

A review of its contents reveals that this January, 1843, report is very incompetently done. However, that review not only suggests incompetence on the part of the authors of this paper but also suggests incompleteness in the data from the New York State "School Returns" which it cites.

Note that the last entry, "Juvenile Spelling Book," shows only one figure, under the year 1839, while "The Juvenile Spelling Book," probably the same text, also shows only one entry, under 1837. It is probable that these two should have appeared as only one entry, and that a figure should almost certainly have been given for 1838, as well. Similarly, the degree of use of some of the other less popular titles is almost certainly under-reported.

This January, 1843, paper also reported data for two other states, Michigan and Massachusetts. The Michigan report is dated January, 1841. However, no date was given for the Massachusetts report. Yet the Massachusetts report presumably was later than the New York report, since it showed Sanders' 1838 speller as in use in three towns, while the New York report ending with 1839 only listed Sanders' but gave no figures on its use. The material on Massachusetts is shown below:

“The following Table is compiled from the School Returns in the State of Massachusetts, and exhibits the several books there introduced, and the number of towns in which they are respectively used.

“Emerson’s ‘National’	128
“ ‘New National’	18
Introduction to ‘National’	36
Webster’s	76
Webster’s ‘Elementary’	36
Worcester’s Series	20
Cummings’	27
Lee’s	14
Hazen’s Definer	13
Alger’s Perry	16
North American	9
Franklin Primer	7
Towne’s	6
Leonard’s	4
Sanders’	3
Sears’	3
Parsons’ Analytical Vocabulary	3
Emerson’s Progressive Primer	2
Sequel to Worcester’s	2
Angell’s	2
American Expositor	2
New York Primer	2
Murray’s	1
Parsons’ Analytical Spelling Book	1
Child’s Guide	1
American Primer	1
Cobb’s	1
Marshall’s	1
New York	1
Gallaudet’s Mother’s Primer	1
Improved Guide to Spelling	1
My First Book	1
Rational Guide	1
Easy Primer	1
<i>Dictionaries used as Spelling Books</i>	
Walker’s Dictionary	26
Webster’s Dictionary	25
Worcester’s Dictionary	10
Boston School Dictionary	1

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“The Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Michigan, presented in January, 1841, states that

“Webster’s Elementary Spelling Book is used in 548 Districts					
Cobb’s	“	“	“	62	“
Towne’s	“	“	“	14	“
Emerson’s	“	“	“	2	“

“The other 880 Districts of the State, had made no specific report. The Superintendent remarks, that,

““If the Elementary Spelling Book is used in the same proportion, in the whole 1506 Districts of the State, as it is in the 626 that reported, it is used in *one thousand three hundred and fifty-six* Districts of Michigan!”“

Note that at some unspecified date after 1839 but before January, 1843, the displacement of Webster’s Code 10 speller for lower code spellers was most pronounced in Massachusetts, where the change-agents were most prominent. Yet Webster’s speller was almost unchallenged in far-away Michigan by January, 1841.

The displacement of Webster’s Code 10 speller for lower code spellers was only slightly less pronounced in New York State than in Massachusetts by 1839. Orestes Brownson had testified in later life that in 1829 and 1830 he had worked to promote government schools. As a member of a secret society, Brownson had clandestinely organized education activists all through New York State in 1829 and 1830. (Brownson’s remarks have been quoted elsewhere in this history and were taken from Samuel Blumenfeld’s book, *Is Public Education Necessary?*)

As quoted in this history, Cobb of New York State in an article written about 1826 had attacked Webster’s enormously popular speller and claimed his lower code speller was superior. Note the explosion of sales in New York State for Cobb’s speller after 1827.

Yet the displacement of Webster’s once overwhelmingly dominant Code 10 speller was only slightly underway by 1841 in Michigan. Michigan was then a near-frontier state anapparently spared some of the effects of the activists.

However, Webster’s once vastly-used speller was clearly a target long before January, 1843, when this report was published. The figures for Massachusetts, New York and Michigan reveal that Webster’s had begun to lose its pre-eminence in the East first, and that the loss started about 1827.

Page 27 of this January, 1843, report implicitly confirmed that Webster’s had been dominant in the past:

“During the last forty years, there have been sold in this country, as stated by Dr. Noah Webster, eighteen million of his spelling books, which, at the retail price of twelve and a half cents, has amounted to \$2,250,000. It is not unreasonable to suppose that half that sum has been expended for the hundred other different Spelling Books, in the same period....”

The near market-monopoly of Webster’s since 1783 had been under attack since about 1818 as an undesirable thing. Yet, starting in the late 1820’s, the change-agents’ cry had been for a state-approved monopoly of school books to remove a so-called evil, the “multiplicity of School Books.” State-sponsored monopolies could counter the free-market forces that once had placed Webster’s Code 10 speller in the minds of most Americans not far below the U. S. Constitution in importance.



As has been discussed at length in this history, it was not just Webster's "sound" approach speller which was under attack, but the use of such "sound" approach spellers to teach beginning reading, instead of the "meaning" sight-word primers which began to arrive in 1826, and which pushed spelling books out of the primary grades. However, spelling books at the upper grades continued to be used massively after 1826 until about 1876. Therefore, the fact that Michigan was still using Webster's speller heavily in 1843 in no way guarantees that Webster's speller was being used to teach beginning reading.

Concerning the so-called evil of the "multiplicity of School Books," the following appeared in this January, 1843, report:

"The late Secretary of State, and Superintendent of Common Schools in New York, in his Annual Report, 1840, says,

"This is an evil of the greatest magnitude; yet it is feared from past experience, that our fellow citizens would be unwilling to submit to the prescription by law, or under its authority, of any school books to be used by their children.... The only remedy that has occurred to him, is the organization of some general society, whose members will devote themselves to the selection of the very best books that can be found.... There is an ample field of selection, not only from the productions of our own country, but from those of other countries. The National School Society of Ireland has issued a very excellent series of text-books, which are in use in the schools of that country.'"

The National School Society of Ireland published the Irish Spelling Book, which has been reviewed at length in this history. The Irish Spelling Book, not a commercial but a government-sponsored text, was an exceedingly low-code book. It was certain to cause disabilities in beginning readers. Yet the New York State Superintendent praised, presumably sight-unseen, such productions of the Irish quasi-governmental group. He also referred to past opposition of his American "fellow citizens" to such government prescriptions of text-books as was then being done in Ireland. American opposition to government control of textbooks is specifically discussed in a late 1820's report published in Vermont, which has been quoted at length elsewhere in this history.

As has also been discussed earlier in this history, the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which published this January, 1843, report, was composed of a small group of ambitious men who wished to reap personal profits on such calls for "official" books, as well as on the opposition of the American public to official government interference. As a non-governmental body, they proposed to publish a selection of "acceptable" books, from which they would obviously get the profits. A scathing indictment of the self-serving nature of this group appeared in print in the 1840's, which indictment is discussed elsewhere in this history.

The 1843 report which the "American Society" issued is 32 pages long and makes many (very possibly unfounded) statements about the state of education and textbooks at that time. However, since the "American Society...." was manifestly unreliable, the only portions of the report that are quoted here are excerpts from reports issued by various states, and the "American Society..." list of spelling books that were on the market in 1842. That list was apparently quite reliable, since most of the titles they listed (or their more accurate wording) are presently in American libraries, or are mentioned in American reference works.

**Bibliography of Books on Teaching,**  
VIII.

All books priced I have at least one copy of that I can furnish at the price named; where the price is in parentheses, it is for the whole volume, of which the paper named is only a part. For abbreviations, see BULLETIN for May, 1892.

**Periodicals—History and criticism.**

- Educational Journalism, *C. W. Bardeen*, 8:30. 50  
Syr. 81.  
— *C. G. Rounds*, A. 79.  
— *Homer R. Seerley*, Iowa School Journal, Feb. 93.  
— History of, *T. W. Bicknell*, I. 517-531.  
[Demonstrating that the ed'l history of the world culminates in the New England Journal of Education.]  
— History of in New York, *C. W. Bardeen*, E. 8:45. Syr. 93.  
Beiträge zur Geschichte 1. der Lehrerversammlungen und Lehrvereine; 2. der pädig. Schriften in Schleswig-Holstein; 3. des Kieler Schulwesens, *A. Stolley*, 12:24. Kiel. 78. 1.00  
Ed'l publications in Italy, *Piero Barbera*, g. 8:14. Florence, 83. .25  
Ed'l journals in Pa., *J. T. Webersham* in History of Ed'n in Pa., p. 656.  
Ed'l periodicals, *T. H. Burrows*, q 52.  
— B. I. 188, 413, 656; xv. 383.  
— b. 85-86, 709, 86-87, 973; 87-88, 1005.  
— K. 95-96  
— Common School Journal, Mass., ix. 101, 150  
— Common School Journal, Pa., I. 129.  
— Intelligence, Chicago, May 1, 1891.  
An ed'l periodical in the west. W. 42.  
*Files of journals.*  
[Only the most important American journals are here given. Other American journals of more local interest, and all foreign journals, will be found catalogued under States and foreign countries below. I give prices only where I have entire files for sale. Of all journals here named I can supply sets partially complete, at prices given on application.]  
The Academician, A. & J. W. Pickett, 8:399. N. Y. 20.  
[First American ed'l periodical. Complete, only one volume being published.]  
American Journal of Ed'n, *W. Russell*, I-V. 8:768, each. Bos. 26-30.  
Annals of Ed'n, *W. C. Woodbridge*, I-IX. 8:600, each. Bos. 31-39.  
[A continuation of the American Journal of Ed'n. See B. v. 51-61; J. ix. 312-327.]

Annual Literary Register for 1890, containing statistical views of the common schools in New England and New York; and of the colleges and professional schools throughout the U. S. [Q. II. 220-255; III. 279-314; v. 273-333.]

Quarterly Journal and Register of the Am. Ed'n Society, I-XV. 8:500, each. Andover, 20-43. 25.00  
American Journal of Ed'n and College Review, *Abraham Peters, S. S. Randall*, I. 8:616. N. Y. Aug. 55 to June 56. 15.00

[With this volume are bound Nos. 7, 8, for July and Aug., 1865, probably the last published. Henry Barnard was associated with Dr. Peters for the first two numbers, but as the two could not work together, Dr. Barnard withdrew, and began the journal next mentioned, of which the first two numbers are the same as in this journal.]

American Journal of Ed'n, II: *Barnard*, I-XXIV, XXXV-XXX. 8:800 each. Hartford, 56-79.  
[Of this 29 volumes have been published, I-XXIV, and XXVI-XXX, Vol. XXV never having appeared. Vols. XVI-XXIV are known as the National Series; Vols. XXV-XXX as the International Series. Vol. XXVIII is the American Year Book for 1889; Vol. XIX is a Special Report of the District of Columbia, ordered by Congress; Vol. XX deals entirely with ed'n in foreign countries; Vol. XXI is the Report on Technical Schools ordered by the House of Representatives Jan. 19, 1870; and Vol. XXIX is the Report of the Commissioner of Ed'n for 1877. At present Vols. I, V, VIII, X, XIII, XVI, XVII, XXII, XXIII, XXIX, XXX are in print, and may be had in half-turkey at \$5.60 each. It is hoped that the entire series will be reprinted, as the plates have been preserved. In Vol. XXII are indexes to I-XVI and XVII-XXIV, and individual indexes of VII-XXIV. A history and index of the Journals are given in Vol. XXIV, pp. 649-666, and a documentary history in Vol. XXVI, pp. 8-212.]  
— Classified index, R. 68, 17-40.  
— Analytical index, 8:128. Wash. 92. 1.00  
— Plea for help for Dr. Barnard, *W. T. Harris*, 8:48, 9:84, 10:100.

Education I-XIII, 8:650 each. Bos. 79-93.  
Ed'l Review, *Nicholas Murray Butler*, I-VI. 8:520, each. N. Y. 91-93.  
The Academy, a journal of secondary ed'n, *Geo. A. Bacon*, I-VII. 8:300. Syr. 86-92. 15.00  
College and School, I., *Rufus Greene Huting*, 8:500. Bos. 92.  
The School Review, a journal of secondary ed'n, I., *C. H. Thurber*, 8:690. Hamilton, 93. 1.50  
The Pedagogical Seminary, *G. Stanley Hall*, I-III. 8:300, each. Worcester, 91-93.  
Barnes' Teacher's Monthly, I-VI, 8:400 each. N. Y., 75-80.  
New England Journal of Ed'n, I-XXXVIII. 4:400, each. Bos. 74-93.  
New York School Journal, I-XLVII. 4:400, each. N. Y. 69-93.

Common School Assistant, *J. Oreville Taylor*, I-V. 4:400 each. Syr. and N. Y., 36-40.  
District School Journal, I-XII. 8:400, each. Albany, 40-52.  
Teachers' Advocate, I-VII. 4:600, each. Syr., 45-52.

New York Teacher, I-XVI. 8:300, each. Albany, 52-65.

Am. Ed'l Monthly, I-XIV. 8:384, each. New York, 64-76.

N. Y. State Ed'l Journal, I-III. 8:600, each. Freedom, 72-75.

School Bulletin and N. Y. State Ed'l Journal, I-XIX. 4:144, each. Syr. 74-93.

Common School Journal, *Horace Mann*, I-XIV. 8:400, each. Bos. 39-52.

Mass. Teacher, I-XXVII. 8:400. Bos., 48-74.

Conn. Common School Journal, *Henry Barnard*, I-IV. 4:196, 336, 256, 204. Hartford, 38-42. 10.00

[First series complete, with index to the series. Reissued, 1890.]

— IX. X. 8:412, 516, 54-55. 5.00  
— XIV-XIX. 8:388, 388, 352, 372, 348, 346, 59-64.

Rhode Island Schoolmaster I-XX. 8:384, each. 55-74.

Pa. School Journal, I-XLII. 8:600, each. Lancaster, 52-93.

Ohio Ed'l Monthly, I-XLII. 8:500, each. Akron, 52-93.

Indiana School Journal, I-XXXVIII. Indianapolis, 56-93.

Ed'l Weekly, I-XI. 4:600, each. Chicago, 77-81.

Intelligence, I-XIII. 4:600, each. Chicago, 81-93.

Wis. Journal of Ed'n, I-XXIII, 71-93

Practical Teacher, *F. W. Parker*, I-VIII. 4:173, each. Chicago, 76-83.

Primary Teacher, I-VI. 8:340, each. Bos. 77-83.

American Teacher, I-X. 8:350 each. Bos. 83-93.

Teachers' Institute, I-XVI. N. Y. 87-93.

Popular Educator, I-XI. 4:480 each. Bos. 82-93.

Teachers' World, I-V. 4:480, each. N. Y., 89-93.

Ed'l Notes and Queries, *W. D. Henkle*, I-VII. 8:160, each. Salem, O., 75-81.

Queries, I-IV. 8:300, each. Buffalo, 85-89.

Notes, Queries, and Answers, I-X. 8:240, each. Manchester, N. H., 82-91.

Journal of Christian Ed'n, and Family and Sunday School Visitor, *Benj. O. Peers*, I-IV. 8:380, each. N. Y. 39-42.

Home, the School, and the Church, or the Presbyterian Ed'n Repository, I-X. 8:300, each. Phila. 51-60.

From the July 28, 1900, issue of The School Journal, New York, an abstract of a paper before the Department of Education of Defectives of the National Education Association.

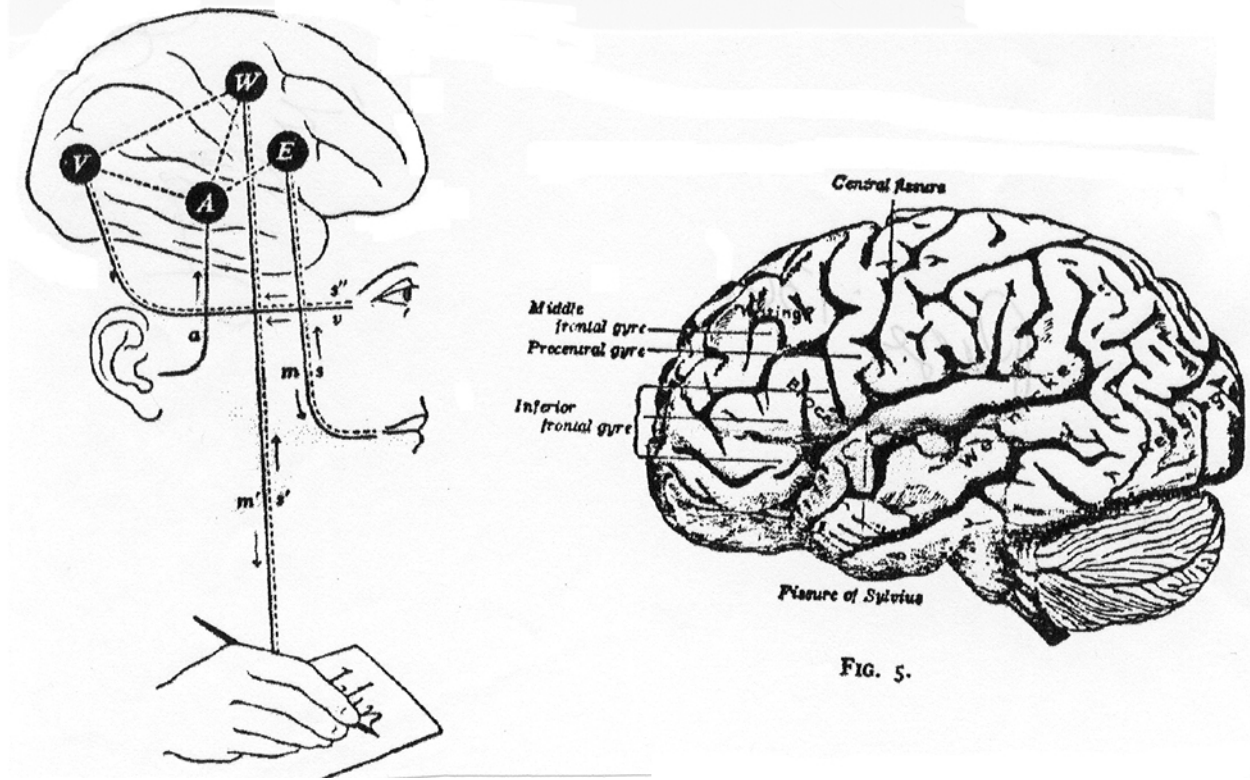
**Teaching Deaf-Mutes**  
**Experience of the Institution at Mount Airy in Changing from Sign Speech to the Oral Method**  
**By Supt. A. L. E. Crouter, LL.D.**

From 1820 to 1870 the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb employed the sign or French method, signs being the basis of all mental development and the principal means of communication. In 1870 articulation teaching was introduced, from thirty to forty-five minutes' instruction daily being given by a special teacher to such pupils as it was thought might be able to learn to speak and read the lips, the rest of the time being devoted to instruction by signs. Experience demonstrated the impossibility of securing the desired results under this method, and in 1881 there was opened a branch school where instruction was given by oral methods exclusively. At the same time two oral classes were formed in the main institution, the pupils of which were taught by oral methods but were permitted to mingle freely with the sign-taught pupils out of school. Practically all approved methods of instructing the deaf were then in operation under the observation of the same officers, by whom comparative tests were made at stated intervals.

In no instance were orally-taught pupils found inferior to the manually taught, and their progress in language was notably better. The work under separate oral instruction was found to be greatly superior to that done in the oral classes whose pupils were allowed to mingle with manual pupils. The speech and lip-reading of the half-hour articulation classes was less and less satisfactory the longer it was compared with that of pupils taught by purely oral methods, and such instruction was finally discontinued in 1888. On the removal of the school to Mt. Airy in 1892, the two oral classes of the main institution were merged with those from the Oral Branch, and since then only two methods have been employed, the pure oral and the pure manual.

The oral method has won its way in competition with the manual by sheer force of merit, so that since the establishment of the separate oral department in 1881, when nearly ninety per cent. were under manual instruction and only a little over ten per cent. under oral, the conditions have gradually reversed themselves until the enrollment for 1899 showed over ninety per cent. in the oral department and less than ten per cent. in the manual. Since 1892, only 20 of the 493 pupils entered under oral instruction here had to be transferred to the manual department because of inability to learn by speech methods, and their subsequent progress has proved that their failure was due not to the method but to defective mental powers.

After twenty years' experimentation with and comparison of methods the school has arrived at the conclusion that proper oral methods - meaning the use of speech and speech reading, writing, pictures, and the free use of books - are fully adequate to the best education of the deaf and that when a deaf child cannot be so educated it is useless to hope for any marked success under any other method.



**Concerning the Different and Opposite Conditioned Reflexes in Reading, and Their Brain-Based Origin**

Reference has been made in this book to the fact that work done on stroke patients had revealed, long before William James wrote his 1890 *Principles of Psychology*, that sound-bearing print is processed through the left angular gyrus area in the back of the brain.

On page 37, in his Figure 18, James reproduced an illustration from an 1887 book, *Aphasia*, by James Ross, which clearly showed the areas in the brain, including the angular gyrus area, which are used sequentially in reading (and writing). The illustration is reproduced above. On the diagram, “A” marked Wernicke’s area (“auditory”), “E” marked Broca’s area (“expressive”), “W” marked writing, and “V” marked the angular gyrus area (“visual”).

James also included on page 25, in his Figure 11, a diagram of the brain with clear labels on the areas known as Broca’s and Wernicke’s, and on page 36, in his Figure 17, a diagram of the brain which showed the “Angular Conv.” (obviously, the angular gyrus area).

Those areas also appeared in a diagram of the brain in the 1911 text, *Elements of Physiological Psychology*, by Ladd and Woodworth. For purposes of illustration, that diagram (labeled Fig. 5. in that text) is also reproduced above.

Summarizing much work that had been done in Europe, William James reported at length on language in his 1890 book, *The Principles of Psychology*. On pages 25, 26, 32,33, 35, 36 and 37, James referred to Broca’s area, first identified by Broca in 1861. Broca’s area is on the lower front lobe of the surface layer of the brain’s cortex and is normally in the left hemisphere. James called the aphasia

resulting from damage to Broca's area "motor aphasia." Those patients might understand speech but not be able to produce it. It seems apparent that Broca's area deals with the production of syllable sounds.

James also reported in 1890 on the effect of damage to Wernicke's area, producing what he called "sensory aphasia" (pages 35, 36, 37). In sensory aphasia, aphasics do not understand the meaning of words, even though they can hear them. James said (page 35):

"Wernicke was the first to discriminate those cases in which the patient can not even understand speech from those in which he can understand, only not talk; and to ascribe the former condition to lesion of the temporal lobe. The condition in question is word-deafness...."

Broca's area must process syllable sounds, but Wernicke's area must process word meanings.

The literature indicates that spoken word meanings are handled through the front of Wernicke's area, and printed word meanings through the back, in the angular gyrus region. (The angular gyrus is now considered part of Wernicke's area, although it was considered to be separate from it in James' day).

It appears self-evident that spoken language has three levels, the first two of which are processed automatically: the syllable level (presumably processed through Broca's area) and the syntax/word level (presumably processed through Wernicke's area). The final level, "meaning," is conscious and is handled in the front of the brain.

At the syntax/word level, it is postulated that it is syntax which generates the words, and not the other way around. Words are, after all, only parts of speech - which is to say, parts of syntax. William H. Calvin, Ph. D., and George A. Ojemann, M. D., in their book, *Inside the Brain*, A Mentor Book, New York, 1980, reported that they found that grammar (syntax) occupied a different site from word meanings in Wernicke's area on the cortex, which appears to support this assumption. Furthermore, Sid J. Segalowitz, in his book, *Two Sides of the Brain*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1983, reported that some aphasic patients, who were incapable of understanding the meaning of speech but who retained the ability to repeat other people's speech, have been found to correct grammar in repeating heard sentences. Obviously, syntax was controlling their production of words, and it was doing so at the automatic, not conscious, level since those patients were incapable of understanding word meanings. That indicates that the automatic production of "syntax" precedes and generates "words."

William James reported on an elaborate study by Naunyn on 71 cases of aphasia (Nothnagel and Naunyn, *Die Localization in den Gehirnkrankheiten*, Wiesbaden, 1887), and quoted other authors on the subject. (It is surprising to find aphasia mentioned so seldom in the literature since then.) James said in 1890 (p. 37):

"Naunyn... plotting out on a diagram of the hemisphere the 71 irreproachable reported cases of aphasia which he was able to collect, finds that the lesions concentrate themselves in three places: first, on Broca's centre; second, on Wernicke's; third on the supramarginal and angular gyri under which those fibres pass which connect the visual centre with the rest of the brain..."

Dr. Wilder Penfield in his book, *The Mystery of the Mind*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey: 1975, and Dr. Calvin and Dr. Ojemann in their book publish illustrations which include James' third section described above (the angular gyrus area) as part of Wernicke's area, rather than showing it separately. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* illustration of the brain, page 76, Volume 4 (1963), shows the same site for the left angular gyrus, although it is not specifically labeled as part of Wernicke's area.

Calvin and Ojemann referred to a patient who had lost his reading ability, but only that portion, apparently, which was sound-bearing. They then included a drawing of the brain showing where a computerized tomographic scan had revealed the location of that patient's stroke. It was clearly in the same area as that labeled the angular gyrus area in the illustrations mentioned above.

Dr. Hilde L. Mosse wrote (page 52, *The Complete Handbook of Reading Disorders*, Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York, 1982):

“The brain does not operate in isolated units but this does not mean that we cannot pin-point anatomically specific areas in the brain that have very specialized functions... damage to certain crucial shunts or sidings invariably causes loss of function. Brodmann's area 39 in the angular gyrus in the parietal lobes, which is located at the center of the reading region, is such a shunt. Any kind of damage to it causes Alexia (complete inability to read), and at least a partial Agraphia (an inability to write). This does not mean that the neurophysiologic basis for reading is located in area 39 exclusively. This area is only one part, even though a crucial one, of the entire cerebral reading apparatus.”

Dr. Mosse referred (page 46) to Norbert Wiener, who originated the scientific method he called cybernetics, and said that others have applied communication engineering to the study of the brain. The most practical results have been in producing a machine to read to the blind, the Kurzweil Reading Machine. Mosse said (p. 46-47)

“The Kurzweil Reading Machine consists of an optical scanner on which printed material is placed, a computer, and a small control unit with 30 buttons. A (small) program tape is inserted.... The scanner searches the page, finds the top line, and moves across the text, line by line. It takes an electronic picture of each word, which the computer analyzes into letters. The letters are then blended according to phonetic rules into spoken words....

“Wiener and McCulloch suggested that the brain might also use a ‘scanning apparatus’....”

Professor Frank Smith, the renowned psycholinguist, who promotes “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading and opposes “sound,” wrote in his book, *Reading Without Nonsense*:

“Skill in reading depends on using the eyes as little as possible (p.9.)

“If you are not making errors when you read, you are probably not reading efficiently. (p.33.)

“The reason phonics does not work for children or for computers is that the links between the letters and sounds cannot be specified.... They are too complex. (p. 51-52.)”

As Dr. Rudolph Flesch pointed out in his 1981 book, *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read* (p. 27), concerning Smith's last statement:

“This would be a splendid argument against phonics except for the awkward fact [of the] Kurzweil Reading Machine.”

A remarkable picture appeared in an article in *Scientific American* (239 (4): 62, 1978). It showed blood flow changes during silent reading. The authors of the article were N. Lassen, D. Ingvar and E. Skinhol, who also recorded blood-flow changes during other activities. That picture was reproduced as a drawing in Calvin and Ojemann's book. Although it showed the activity in various parts of the brain

during the act of silent reading, none of them were labeled. Nevertheless, clearly lit up in that reading “apparatus” were the angular gyrus, Broca’s and Wernicke’s areas.

Before William James wrote his 1890 psychology text, it was known that ALL THREE of these areas concerned language, and that the angular gyrus area was specifically involved in reading. James showed them all in his diagram taken from Ross’s 1887 book. So much of this information was general knowledge in education long before World War I. Where has all this information been since James’ 1890 book and others like it were published, until that blood-flow map in the 1978 Scientific American illustration showed so many of James’ areas lighting up during silent reading, like a string of lights on a Christmas tree, almost a hundred years after James published his book?

In their teachers’ college courses, speech teachers today reportedly do receive information on Broca’s and Wernicke’s areas, but one speech teacher told me, and she is exceptionally competent, that her college courses indicated that the function of the general area of the angular gyrus is not understood, “though it is known to be very important.” That state of affairs is, of course, surpassingly strange.

In the spirit of progress marching backwards, duplicated in a 1912 book written specifically for teachers, *Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading* by Joseph S. Taylor, The Macmillan Company, New York, in a discussion headed, “Localization of Brain Function,” appeared the illustration reproduced above from Ladd and Woodworth’s *Elements of Physiological Psychology* (1911). That drawing of the brain clearly labeled Broca’s and Wernicke’s areas, and, in the back of the brain where the angular gyrus is located, appeared only the simple word, “Reading.”

Taylor’s 1912 text recounted the following case of aphasia, “alexia,” the loss of the power to read, which had been reported in an 1897 book, *Brain and Personality*, Dodd, Mead & Co., page 88. That book had been written by a medical doctor, William H. Thomson of New York:

“I was once hurriedly sent for by an old patient of mine. I found her much disturbed by a strange experience which she immediately detailed in the well-chosen words of an educated woman: ‘What is the reason, doctor,’ she said, ‘that everything in a book or newspaper is illegible to me?... I took up the Herald and found that I could not read a word of it. At first I supposed my eyesight had failed, but I could see everything around the room as well as ever... I then opened the Bible, but could not read a word. What is the matter with me?’ I at once recognized that she had been struck with word-blindness.... she had absolutely no other disorder of speech and none of vision. She heard every word that came to her ears, and she could speak as fluently as ever, but no word could reach her consciousness through her eyes. All that as yet had happened to her was that a little artery which supplies blood to a small area in the visual region of her brain had become plugged, with the result of totally disorganizing the gray matter where eye words are registered....”

After quoting Thomson, Taylor wrote:

“The printed characters are seen, but they convey no meaning. The individual thus affected may be able to write, but is unable to read what he has just written. Words as visual symbols are blotted out.”

Taylor went on to describe other types of aphasia, those resulting from damage to Broca’s area (the inability to make speech sounds), and those resulting from damage to the front of Wernicke’s area (inability to attach meaning to speech sounds).

An earlier edition of *Elements of Physiological Psychology* had appeared long before the 1911 edition from which Taylor took his illustration of the brain. That book had been published originally in 1887 as *Elements of Physiological Psychology: A Treatise on the Activities and Nature of the Mind from the Physical and Experimental Point of View* (New York: Scribner), and it had been written only by George Trumbull Ladd. It is of great interest that James McKeen Cattell was commissioned to write a review on Ladd's original text when it was first published in 1887 (and that original text may have included the same kind of brain diagram as the 1911 edition, since "Ross" had produced a similar one by 1887). Cattell would, further, have almost certainly been familiar with that 1911 revision by Ladd and Woodworth, since, at the 1926 honorary program at Columbia Teachers College for E. L. Thorndike, Cattell said he had been closer to Thorndike than any other, EXCEPT possibly Boas and WOODWORTH.

Cattell's review of Ladd's 1887 book appeared in a periodical, *The Independent*, on June 30, 1887. Shortly afterwards, Cattell said in a letter to his parents of July 3, 1887, "Prof. Ladd's *Physiological Psychology* is scarcely as good as I might write..." (That comment appears in the remarkable book, *An Education in Psychology, James McKeen Cattell's Journal and Letters from Germany and England, 1881-1888*, edited by Michael M. Sokal, the MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981.)

In *Mind* (11, 1886: 63-65), J. M. Cattell suggested as one possible use of his own psychological work on naming objects:

"Such experiments would be useful in investigating aphasia."

Therefore, Cattell (and by extension, James' and his ex-student, Thorndike) surely must have known about the brain areas shown in Ladd's and Woodworth's 1911 text: Broca's, Wernicke's and the area labeled, "reading," which was plainly the angular gyrus area.

Obviously, the information about areas in the brain concerned with reading and speech was common knowledge before World War I, not only for psychologists like James and Cattell, but for Ross, whom James quoted in 1890, and for Ladd, whose book Cattell reviewed in 1887, and for Woodworth, whom Cattell said in 1926 was his very close friend and who collaborated with Ladd on a revision of the book Cattell had reviewed in 1887. It was also common knowledge among educators, like Taylor, who wrote a book for teachers containing that information.

Furthermore, in the *School Journal* for October 19, 1897, on page 362, an article appeared by the psychologist G. Stanley Hall, who was the close associate of both James and Cattell, which article was an abstract of a lecture Hall gave entitled "School Reading." Hall said:

"Ross on Aphasia ought to be read by every teacher...."

So G. Stanley Hall in 1897, more than a century ago, recommended that "Ross on Aphasia" ought to be read by every teacher. Ross's illustration had been given in William James' book seven years before Hall's remark, and it had included almost all the areas which lit up like a string of lights on a Christmas tree in the 1978 blood flow diagram on silent reading printed by Ojemann and Calvin, taken from *Scientific American*. (Ross's 1887 diagram left out the area in the frontal lobe which is the conscious portion of the brain, but included an area in the motor strip concerning writing.)

If teachers today were taught to read "Ross on aphasia", the silent reading blood flow diagram from the 1978 *Scientific American* would only tell them what they already knew from Ross's book, published some time before 1890, and which James then just copied wholesale in 1890. Where HAS this essentially



simple information for teachers been since long before WORLD WAR I, when it was taken for granted by G. Stanley Hall in 1897 and by Taylor in 1912 that teachers should have access to it?

It really is amazing to see Ross's 1887 diagram on reading (and writing) almost perfectly match a 1978 state-of-the-art blood flow diagram taken during silent reading.

James said, after his discussion on Ross's diagram and aphasia in general:

“Meanwhile few things show more beautifully than the history of our knowledge of aphasia how the sagacity and patience of many bands of workers are in time certain to analyze the darkest confusion into an orderly display.”

The actual history, of course, is just the opposite. The many banded workers managed to turn “an orderly display” into “the darkest confusion”.

Japanese script has two kinds of characters: Kana, which are meaning-bearing like Chinese characters, and Kanji, which are syllable characters and are therefore sound-bearing. For comparison to Western writing systems, Kanji are like the purely meaning-bearing digit, “6,” while Kana are like the sound-bearing alphabetically written English word, “six.”

It was discovered over twenty years ago that some Japanese stroke patients with aphasia (loss of language) could still comprehend the Kanji meaning-bearing characters in Japanese script. Yet they had lost the ability to read words composed of the Kana syllable characters in that script, which characters are purely sound-bearing. That fact was reported by Itoh Sasanuma (1975, 1977), and was mentioned on page 92 of Sid J. Segalowitz's *Two Sides of the Brain*.

From other references in available literature on the brain, it may be presumed that the loss of ability to read words composed of the Kana sound-bearing syllables resulted from damage in the LEFT angular gyrus area of the patients' brains, where for over a hundred years damage has been known to cause a loss of ability to read alphabetic sound-bearing print. (In some cases, that type of aphasia has been only partial, affecting only the reading of alphabetic print but not the ability to speak aloud and to understand the spoken language of others.)

Logically, therefore, if the reading of Kana sound-bearing script, like the reading of alphabetic sound-bearing print, is processed through the left angular gyrus area of the brain, the reading of Kanji meaning-bearing script (and the reading of its equivalent, sight-words taught by the “meaning” method) should be processed through the mirrored counterpart, the RIGHT angular gyrus area of the brain. The left angular gyrus areas and the right angular gyrus areas in human brains should then provide the anatomical basis for processing the only two types of visual writing which are possible for humans: sound-bearing, or meaning-bearing. However, such an anatomical basis for processing the two types of reading, which appears to be logically probable, has never been clearly spelled out in any literature which I have ever seen.

The right side of the brain processes information simultaneously, spatially, or all-at-once. Of course Kanji, like Chinese characters, has to be read like spatial pictures, all at once, and its processing is therefore a right-brain activity. However, the left side of the brain processes information sequentially, or serially. Spoken language (and sound-bearing print) are, by their nature, sequential, so their processing is a left-brain activity. Charles M. Richardson, the engineer/educator from Huntington, New York, has pointed out the resemblance in these two types in the human brain (simultaneous vs. sequential) to the types in computers: parallel vs. serial processing.

Reading is a conditioned reflex. Therefore, it should be anticipated, it appears to me, that learning to read meaning-bearing print such as Kanji, Chinese characters, or whole meaning-bearing sight-words should establish a conditioned reflex to the angular gyrus area in the right, meaning-interpretive, picture, all-at-once side of the brain; learning to read sound-bearing print should establish a conditioned reflex to the angular gyrus area in the left, or sound-interpretive language side of the brain.

However, since we now teach beginning readers in America to regard words as meaning-bearing, sight-word “wholes,” while we simultaneously drill them to sound out only some letters of those words (phony phonics) in order to help in guessing the meanings of the whole words, children are therefore being drilled in the use of opposing reflexes on the SAME stimulus at the SAME time, something which occurs in no other activity. The resultant conflict is one of the probable causes for the reading disability known as “psycholinguistic guessing.”

Not surprisingly, laboratory studies, such as by Davidson, Perl and Saron reported by Daniel Goleman in the New York Times Magazine on May 12, 1985, show that young American readers today can read alphabetic print with BOTH SIDES of the brain. They are unlike the classic aphasic patients, most of whom would have been elderly and have learned to read before about 1826 or in non-English-speaking European countries teaching by “sound,” referred to in William James’ 1890 book on psychology. These patients had lost the ability to read after damage to the left side of the brain. Our modern American subjects are therefore also unlike the Japanese aphasic patients who lost ALL ability to read Japanese sound-bearing Kana print after damage to the left side of their brains.

The fact that reading BY MEANING and reading BY SOUND use opposite sides of the brain can be confirmed further, but indirectly, from some very modern laboratory data in combination with some very old historical facts.

In the act of seeing, research has shown that, when subject matter is being handled by the left side of the brain, the eyes scan from left to right, but when subject matter is being handled by the right side of the brain, the eyes scan from right to left. Sid J. Segalowitz referred to these directions in scanning as “Lateral Eye Movements (LEMs)”, in his book, *Two Sides of the Brain*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1983, pages 80-81.

A very old historical fact can be used in combination with this laboratory data, and it is the fact that different directions have been used historically in different writing systems. The Latin and Greek alphabets moved from left to right; but Chinese writing and the ancient Hebrew and Phoenician scripts moved from right to left.

It is this writer’s contention that the different directions used in writing systems (left-to-right as in the Latin and Greek alphabets, and right-to-left as in the Chinese system and in the ancient Hebrew and Phoenician scripts) arose from two different “pulls” from the opposite sides of the brain, and that these pulls are demonstrated by what Segalowitz referred to as Lateral Eye Movements. One “pull” from the left-angular gyrus area results in a left-to-right direction for sound-bearing print, and the other “pull” from the right angular gyrus area results in a right-to-left direction for meaning-bearing print.

The right side of the brain should be used for reading meaning-bearing symbols, as it is the right side of the brain which deals with pictures. The question arises, then: why did the Phoenicians write from right to left in their script, since their script was sound-bearing like the Protosinaïtic from which it was derived? The obvious answer is that, lacking the vowels, Phoenician could not be read back as sound-bearing syllables but only as meaning-bearing whole words (sight-words). Therefore, with their letters, they could consciously spell - and read back - only meaning-bearing whole words (as in “Th cw jmpd vr th mn,”) but never syllables.

I. J. Gelb explained in his writings, (as in his article “Logogram and Syllabary,” page 334A of Volume 14, in the 1963 Encyclopedia Britannica), that the Egyptian “consonant” signs should not be considered as consonants, because they were really an abbreviated syllable system. “B,” for instance, stood for any syllable formed with b: ba, be, bi, bo, bu, etc. After a thousand years or so, the Protosinaïtic script developed out of these Egyptian influences. (See Egyptian Hieroglyphs, particularly page 40, by W. V. Davies, University of California Press/British Museum, 1987, and Cuneiform, by C. B. F. Walker, University of California Press/British Museum, 1987.) It was this abbreviated syllable system which was used in the ancient Canaanite/Phoenician alphabet, and it is presumed it may have developed from the Protosinaïtic script.

The Phoenician alphabet, (which could only be used to record words, not whole syllables, since it lacked any vowels), is presumed to have reached Greece about 800 B.C. William A. Mason said in A History of the Art of Writing (The Macmillan Company, 1920, 1928, page 343):

“The early Greeks also may be credited with other substantial contributions to the alphabet. At the time when the earliest known Thera inscriptions were written there already had been evolved out of the Phoenician characters five true vowels: alpha, epsilon, iota, omicron, and upsilon....”

When the Greeks, between probably 800 and 700 B. C., invented the vowels, they completed the alphabet and made it possible for the first time truly to record the sound of speech (which means to record accurately the whole sound of its syllables, instead of just parts of meaning-bearing “words” as in “Th cw jmpd vr th mn.)

Now that writing was purely sound-bearing, it could be read by the left or language side of the brain, understanding (meaning) arising only as a result of the recreation of the sound forms of words, as the Russian D. B. Elkonin described alphabetic reading (quoted in Brian and Joan Simon’s Educational Psychology in the USSR, 1963, page 165.)

It is rather amusing to see what this switch from the right side to the left side of the brain caused in these early writing systems. When vowels first arrived in Greece, writing ceased to move from right to left, but the direction of their writing showed the great puzzlement caused to these ancients by the totally unsuspected “pull” from their brains. They now had to be using the left side of the brain to read their sound-bearing syllabic print, and eye movements dominated by the left side move from left to right. Therefore, they stopped writing consistently from right to left but showed great initial confusion. As William A. Mason said in his 1920 book, page 340:

“Strange as it may seem to us today many queer experiments were tried by the early Greek scribes before they finally adopted the consecutive left-to-right writing of each succeeding line. A strong predilection was manifest for continuous and uninterrupted writing. This was carried out in a variety of ways before the writing became standardized. Sometimes the writing was boustrophedon (Ed.: meaning as the ox plows) with the letters reversed in the alternate lines, sometimes the boustrophedon lines were written in inverted characters, and sometimes the writing proceeded spirally from the middle, at times rightward, again leftward.”

This confusion did not last long, and the ancient Greeks responded to the pull of their brains by switching the direction of alphabetic writing, now that it was sound-bearing and not meaning-bearing, from the left to the right.

Happily, mankind now had a totally syllabic and efficient system of writing which was sound-based. The ancients learned to read this syllabic writing with great ease, as shown by a quotation from Dionysius of Halicarnassus. That ancient Greek, writing about 20 B. C., was quoted by Mitford Mathews on pages 6 and 7 of *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1966. Mathews took the quotation from the book by W. Rhys Roberts, *Dionysius of Halicarnassus*, London, 1910, page 269:

“When we are taught to read, first we learn off the names of the letters, then their forms and their values, then in due course syllables and their modifications, and finally words and their properties, viz. lengthenings and shortenings, accents, and the like. After acquiring the knowledge of these things, we begin to write and read, syllable by syllable and slowly at first. And when the lapse of a considerable time has implanted the forms of words firmly in our minds, then we deal with them without the least difficulty, and whenever any book is placed in our hands we go through it without stumbling and with incredible facility and speed.”

Yet at that time no separation existed between the written syllables which were generating syntax as they were read aloud. (Oral reading was the norm as late as the time of St. Augustine of Hippo in the fourth century. W. J. Frank Davies quoted St. Augustine’s surprised comments on seeing St. Ambrose reading silently, in *Teaching Reading in Early England*, Pitman Publishing, London, 1973, page 78.) It was Alcuin, the English monk in the court of Charlemagne about the year 800, who “improved” this ancient system of continuous text by making it standard to show separations between parts of speech, or “words,” which had previously only been done on such things as monuments. What Alcuin actually did was to take the first step to change a sound-bearing system into a meaning-bearing system.

# Whole Language: Emancipatory Pedagogy or Socialist Nonsense?

by Patrick Groff

The “whole language” method of reading instruction is a highly popular, yet experimentally discredited teaching innovation. The educational principle that governs it falsely states that students best learn to read in the same informal, natural manner they previously learned to speak as preschoolers. The WL doctrine also erroneously insists that children be empowered to add, omit, and substitute meanings and words in written material—as they individually see fit.

Critics of WL note its appeals to educators to abandon direct, intensive, systematic, early, and comprehensive (DISEC) instruction in a hierarchy of prearranged discrete reading skills. The WL movement protests that DISEC teaching of reading is inhumane; a violation of each child’s unique, immutable “learning style”; stifling of teachers’ creativity by disempowering them; not “progressive” enough; too technical and mechanical; and hostile to the culture of low-income families.

But WL is misunderstood if it is seen as just a method of reading instruction.

In 1991 education professor Kenneth Goodman, co-founder of the whole language (WL) literacy development movement, edited the *Whole Language Catalog*.<sup>1</sup> It includes chapters written by leading WL economic/

political theorists who sought to convince educators and other audiences of the validity of the political, social, economic, and cultural agenda of WL. The writers made clear that the WL “philosophy,” as it is dubbed, views teaching students to read as a prime means to bring about definitive political, social, economic, and cultural changes—of a radically left-wing nature.

## The Ultimate Aim of WL Teaching

The DISEC teaching of reading is objected to by the *Catalog* on ideological (political, social, economic, cultural) grounds. The book emphasizes that WL is more than a sweeping reconstruction of how to teach reading skills; it prepares students to challenge traditionally or historically venerated political and socio-economic mores or precedents.

The politically active WL teacher uses reading instruction as a convenient vehicle to aid and abet the establishment of socialist goals, policies, values, and ideals. Through bona fide WL reading instruction, students learn how to rise up and challenge “the interests and values of the Anglo, white, middle and upper classes,” Harry Giroux proclaims in the *Catalog*.<sup>2</sup> They are prepared to oppose, writes Michael W. Apple, “the political right of the United States” by being ready to use

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their collective powers to change the world so that democratic [read 'socialist'] power replaces corporate power." Elimination of the present "economic, cultural, and social policies of business and industry" clearly is the ultimate aim of WL reading teaching.<sup>4</sup>

In WL terms, for students to be literate in the full and finest sense means they are eager to disrupt the political, socioeconomic, and cultural status quo by committing themselves to a socio-historical reconstruction of society.<sup>5</sup> Reading instruction by WL teachers arms students to engage in socioeconomic class warfare, whenever and wherever it is ordained, the *Catalog* explains. The WL teaching envisioned to that end is given a fetching revolutionary title: *Liberation/Emancipatory Pedagogy*.

### Update on WL's Supreme Purpose

The socio-political agenda of WL, as expressed in the *Catalog*, was updated in six articles in the summer 1997 edition of the educational journal *Reading and Writing Quarterly*. Here, seven education professors, all well-known enthusiastic defenders of WL, and a fourth-grade teacher of like persuasion, expanded on what they call "The Politics of Literacy."

The first argument posed for the need to transform students' literacy development into political action is that the United States is not "a just and democratic society."<sup>6</sup> Proof of this provocative allegation is the supposed fact that "high unemployment is becoming a permanent condition" in America. It is claimed that unemployed parents are provided only "\$208 a month" to "feed a family." At the same time, the family is "paralyzed by all the variables of pesticides and other chemicals" found in its food. The writers find that the depressed "state of the American economy" has "dampened working class and poor students' interests" in learning to read.

Also, so much "discrimination" now abounds in the nation that "many Americans" give up hope of finding a job. It thus is deemed outlandish to propose that "individuals must stand on their own"; that is, be

expected to show personal initiative and responsibility for their future lives. Even philanthropies "are losing any sense of social responsibility" for ameliorating the above evils, the writers complain.

Therefore, DISEC literacy development programs are criticized as not having "the power to overcome the effects of poverty and discrimination," as they are described. As the writer puts it, the goal of reading instruction "should be to educate students for democracy as a means of challenging a status quo in which a relatively small number of people—privileged by their race, class, gender, language, and sexual orientation—control a disproportionate share of society's social and economic resources."<sup>8</sup> Only "critical literacy" programs suffice in this respect. These are ones that teach students "to work toward a more just and democratic [again, read 'socialist'] society." Through the WL version of reading instruction, students are trained to attack the economic "status quo." Whole language reading instruction acts as the means "to help create the conditions for a more just and democratic society,"<sup>9</sup> the author emphasizes. That WL instruction has not yet achieved this goal purportedly is the fault of inadequately dedicated teachers, and not the WL theory.

The second major argument in the articles for using WL for political purposes concerns the conventional definition of reading ability. The historical conceptualization of reading ability was students' capacity to comprehend precisely the meanings that authors intended to impart.

It is argued, to the contrary, that teaching reading "should be viewed as socializing children into a particular set of social and cultural practices in particular social settings."<sup>10</sup> Educators who object to the validity of this approach are summarily dismissed as "cultural dupes merely acting out extant literacy practices."

The fourth-grade teacher-author in the *Reading and Writing Quarterly* describes how certain "social and cultural practices" are developed through WL teaching.<sup>11</sup> Her students first were led to be "shocked and angered" by past scenes of apartheid in South

Africa. Then, through the selection of literature, a "connection between racism in South Africa" in the past and "racism and injustice in the United States" in the present was established.

The third prominent argument for employing WL teaching to convey political-economic ideology centers on an attack on standardized reading tests.<sup>12</sup> That assault on those tests is not surprising since they measure how well students comprehend precisely the meanings authors planned to convey and not how well they are "socialized into particular social practices" of a left-wing origin.

The *Quarterly* writers voice vigorous grievances against the tests: they are "scientific," statistically sophisticated, and based on "meritocratic principles," that is, "glorify" competitiveness. Proof that these tests "corrupt the concept of fairness" is that students who score low on them typically are from politically oppressed low-income minority families. These students do not possess "the knowledge required" to score high on the tests and do not have "knowledge of test-taking skills." Therefore, testing these students signifies a "systematic bias" against them of a "racist" nature. Since it is held that the tests pander to students who are "white, male, middleclass, and American," scores on them thus "may be more findings of cultural difference [among students] than anything else."<sup>13</sup>

From the advent of the WL movement in the 1970s, its members have charged that standardized reading tests deliberately project socioeconomically disadvantaged students onto "a trajectory of school-based failure." The *Quarterly* writers repeated the common WL outcry that such testing must be abandoned and replaced with "individualized assessment" by bona fide WL teachers. This changeover, if activated, doubtless would work to the advantage of WL's reputation. So far, all the published accounts of WL instruction involving teacher assessment of students' reading conclude that it is superior to DISEC teaching. On the other hand, an overwhelming preponderance of relevant experimental research findings conclude the opposite.

The writers' fourth main argument for the necessity of WL teaching that politically

indoctrinates students is that DISEC instruction is expressly designed to "protect the privilege of the upper and upper-middle classes by encoding their values and intentions into school reading practices." This encoding is said to take place through schools' adoption of traditional reading instruction textbook series, called basal readers. These series of books are castigated as a dastardly "remote control" device operated by "the upper-middle and upper classes" to "neutralize other peoples' [the downtrodden masses'] literacies in their efforts to control their lives."<sup>14</sup> Lower-class and minority students, the writers claim, cannot satisfy the rigorous requirements imposed by the readers, for example, "completing daily assignments and periodical tests," because they do not reflect these students' peculiar cultural "intentions and values" and "ways of making sense of [written] text."<sup>15</sup>

According to the writers, the economic upper-classes induce frustration among students by "design." Through the imposed adoption of basal readers, the socioeconomic despots engage in "manufacturing reading failures among their [lower-class] children and hindering their prospects for the future" for jobs with decent wages. As a result, underclass students "doubt the value of who they are and what they do and could know."<sup>16</sup>

## Reflections on the WL Agenda

The WL movement's contention that certain members of the public school establishment must be authorized to shape the economic, political, and cultural institutions of the nation has distinctive precedents. For example, at the height of its influence in the 1930s, the Progressive Education Association expressed the same ambitions.

However, in light of the abject failure of socialism in the intervening years, revival of claims to its effectiveness, as currently made by the WL movement, takes on a particular distressing tone of *déjà vu*. The uneasiness one experiences in this regard is intensified by the statistically inaccurate, intensely partisan, and pitifully self-indulgent manner in which the WL theorists construct their argu-

ment for reading instruction as emancipatory pedagogy.

The scientifically invalid nature of WL reading instruction has been known since its inception. None of its unique principles or novel practices is corroborated by relevant experimental research findings. Whole language thus defends itself with qualitative (nonnumerical, anecdotal, subjective/impressionistic) research findings. A circular form of verification is adopted. Published reports refer exclusively to one another for confirmation.

Complimentary accounts of WL thus are notorious for their practice of the propaganda tactic called "stacking the deck." Any form of evidence that appears to support WL is approvingly displayed. None of the larger bulk of experimental data that finds WL inferior is cited. Examination of the defenses of WL thus leaves one with an eerie sense of disbelief, similar to that experienced on reading documents of Stalin's regime.

The greatest danger of WL's vision of politically oriented reading instruction doubtless lies in its irony. The WL plan, to liberate proletarian students from under the heel of the diabolical business and industrial class, rests largely on a fiction. It depicts a nonexistent society created as a convenient scapegoat for economic problems of the lower class, which in actuality are self-imposed to a great extent. It impetuously plays the "race card" whenever that expedient serves its purposes. It

blames the messenger for the message in its aspersions on standardized reading tests.

Thus while it professes to be the savior of abused racial minorities, the WL political-economic agenda paradoxically turns out to be their deceiver. It delivers no demonstrably effective pathways for them to become literate, join in the prosperity of the nation, and actively contribute to its improvement. Why educators loyal to WL appear blind to its weakness in these respects is one of the notable enigmas in the history of government schools. □

1. Kenneth S. Goodman, Lois Bridges Bird, and Yetta M. Goodman, eds., *The Whole Language Catalog* (Santa Rosa, Calif.: American School Publishers, 1991).

2. Harry Giroux, "Literacy, Cultural Diversity, and Public Life," in *ibid.*, p. 417.

3. Michael W. Apple, "Teachers Politics, and Whole Language," in *ibid.*, p. 416.

4. Stanley Aronowitz and Harry Giroux, "Education under Scige" (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1985), p. 66.

5. Bess Altwerger and Barbara Flores, "The Politics of Whole Language," in Goodman et al.

6. Curt Dudley-Marley, "Introduction: The Politics of Literacy," *Reading and Writing Quarterly* 13 (1997), p. 201.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

10. David Bloome and Laurie Katz, "Literacy as Social Practice and Classroom Chronotypes," in *ibid.*, pp. 221-22.

11. Maria Sweeney, "No Easy Road to Freedom: Critical Literacy in a Fourth-Grade Classroom," in *ibid.*, p. 280.

12. Sharon Murphy, "Literacy Assessment and the Politics of Identities," in *ibid.*, p. 263-66.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

14. Patrick Shannon and Patricia Crawford, "Manufacturing Descent: Basal Readers and the Creation of Reading Failures," in *ibid.*, p. 228.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 242.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 234.





## APPENDIX B

### **An Annotated, Chronological, Partial List of Beginning Reading Materials Published Before 1880 in Use in America, and Some Related Materials**

Nowhere prior to the compilation of the partial bibliographies in Appendices B, C, and D of this history has there ever been published anything approaching even a fairly adequate summary of beginning reading materials in America.

Nor has there been anything definitive published in any other country, for that matter, except for a book published in the Soviet Union in 1974, *Ot Asbukilvana Fedorovado Sovremennaug Bukvaria* (Russian Primers, 1574-1974), by V. P. Bogdanov. This very large and attractive, heavily illustrated book of 138 pages, covered in white leatherette, has been available at the Library of Congress, untranslated so far as I know and unacknowledged by reading "experts," for the last twenty years. It is a history in Russian of beginning reading books in the Soviet Union over the last four centuries. I had small portions translated at my own expense about 1980.

Material was published in German in the nineteenth century concerning the general history of beginning reading instruction in German. However, it does not appear to be complete, from the few references I have seen in translation, since it appears to leave out such important influences on German reading instruction as Pascal and Basedow.

The article, "Lecture," in the nineteenth century *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire* is extraordinary and of great use concerning the developments in beginning reading instruction in French until about 1880, and it does list very many French beginning reading materials. Yet it does not concern any developments after about 1880 and is obviously of little use on American materials.

Concerning books in English covering the periods before 1830, 1820 and 1800, Heartman, Evans and Alston, respectively, compiled bibliographies which contained limited information on beginning reading materials. (The full titles of the works by Heartman, Evans and Alston are given later.) Their lists are only of partial help in identifying American beginning reading materials, although Alston's which terminates in 1801 is overwhelmingly the most helpful of the three. Yet their listings which name some materials do little or nothing to evaluate such materials.

Furthermore, Alston included in his pre-1801 list of "spelling books" only those beginning reading books which were clearly labeled spellers, thereby leaving out spelling books which carried the title, "primer" instead of "spelling book." Correspondingly, Heartman, in making his list of "primers," did not realize that many of the books he listed because they had "primer" in their titles were really only spelling books. Yet spelling books, whether they were called spelling books or primers, were the introduction to reading before 1826 in America, and, for the most part, in Great Britain.

Evans' extremely long listing of all American materials known to have been published before 1820 contained no break-down into types of publications, such as primers and spellers, which makes his listing extremely difficult and time-consuming to use. Its use is also limited by the fact that it terminated very early, at 1820.

Some other bibliographical references are also of little help, very often being not much more than samplings of materials, and even then the materials are commonly wrongly interpreted. The publication, *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, which was published by the Office of Educational Research and

Improvement, Washington, D. C., in 1985, is an example of such works, even though it does contain much helpful information.

Other references such as Welch's and Thwaite's works, discussed later, intentionally omit almost all schoolbooks, which means they intentionally omitted almost all spellers and primers.

The wildly disorganized History of the Horn-Book by Andrew W. Tuer, first published in England in 1897 and republished by Arno Press, A New York Times Co., New York, in 1979, has a great deal of undigested information. However, it is only of very limited use as a history of beginning reading, and only then if the reader already has a considerable background of information on the teaching of reading.

The inadequacy of Nila Banton Smith's and Mitford Mathew's histories of reading have previously been discussed. G. Stanley Hall's early twentieth century material on reading history matches Andrew W. Tuer's in its wild disorganization and its inadequacy.

Teaching Reading in Early England, by W. J. Frank Davies, Pitman Publishing, London: 1973, is an excellent source for information on practices until the seventeenth century, but it does not concern materials published after that date. Old Textbooks by John A. Nietz, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961, however, is of some limited help concerning beginning reading materials in English, as is Susan Steinfurst's unpublished dissertation, The Origin and Development of the ABC Book in English from the Middle Ages through the Nineteenth Century, University of Pittsburgh, 1976.

Therefore, a great vacuum has existed in reference works concerning the history of beginning reading in English, and particularly concerning the teaching of beginning reading in America. This history and its appendices have been compiled in a painstaking attempt to fill that vacuum for American texts. Even so, it is clearly recognized that this history and its appendices certainly cannot be considered to be complete.

The earliest American appearances known to me of children's beginning reading materials in use in America before 1880 are shown in this Appendix B, in which texts are listed chronologically. Those after 1880 are in Appendix C, in which American publishers, and not textbooks, are entered chronologically. However, each publishers' texts are shown chronologically in that publisher's entries. Appendix D contains all known-to-me American reference works for adults concerning the teaching of reading to children. If any pertinent information has been available on any of these works, comments have been attached on such entries. (Appendix A contains pertinent reproductions from other materials concerning the teaching of reading, and Appendix E is a general bibliography of reference works which have been helpful in compiling this history.)

Some of the texts in this Appendix B are pre-1826 spellers used before 1826 to teach beginning reading, but most are American pre-1880 beginning reading books. A few related materials published before 1880 not used for beginning reading in America are also included.

Where I have been able to examine actual copies of texts, as in the very extensive Harvard collections after 1800, I have given them a code number. Code 1 represented a pure "meaning"-method approach to teaching beginning reading, Code 10 represented a pure "sound"-method approach, and codes in between represented relative mixtures of the "meaning" and "sound" approaches. Code 6 and lower approaches are presumed to produce reading disabilities. I did not examine the pre-1800 Harvard collections of rare texts, but I did examine and was therefore able to code some pre-1800 materials at the Library of Congress and at the New York Public Library.

Of the very many pre-1826 American texts shown in the following list compiled from many different sources, I personally examined and coded 52 different pre-1826 American beginning reading texts. Only

6 of the 52 pre-1826 texts rated Code 6 or lower because they demonstrated a clear attempt to teach with an increased “meaning” emphasis.

However, omitted from that list of 6 pre-1826 texts which were attempting to teach with a greater “meaning” emphasis were 3 other pre-1826 texts which also had low codes. Those 3 texts were omitted because they clearly were not attempting to teach with a greater “meaning” emphasis and their lower codes were only accidental. The first of the three was an inept 1698 book, Pastorius’s, which was clearly attempting to teach by “sound” but which rated only a Code 5 because of its incompetence. The second was an 1822 Code 6 pamphlet which was obviously only meant as a toy book, and not a school book, and which was entitled the 1822 American Primer, Abridged, printed in Cincinnati. The third was an English 1661 text, which was possibly not even used in America, entitled The Fannatick’s Primer. That 1661 text also ineptly attempted to teach by “:sound,” but rated only a Code 6. Therefore, these three books only accidentally rated low codes, two because their authors had attempted to teach by sound but were incompetent, and the third because it was not even meant to be a textbook, so those three books do not belong in a list of books which were obviously attempting to teach with a greater meaning emphasis.

Of the six increased “meaning”- emphasis pre-1826 textbooks I examined which rated Code 6 or lower, only three came before 1820: Kneeland’s Code 6 of 1802, Carll’s Code 6 of 1815, and that written by A Friend to Youth in 1819, Code 5. The other three were The Child’s Instructor of 1822, Code 3, the Lafayette Primer of 1824, Code 3 or 4, and the Catholic School Book of 1824, Code 4.

What the above breakdown shows, of course, is that pre-1820 spellers were overwhelmingly “sound” oriented, except for the three associated with two known activists (Kneeland and Carll) and one anonymous 1819 author. The move to “meaning” obviously began to increase from 1820 to 1825, when at least three more such books appeared. Yet, as discussed in this history and as shown by those books on the following list from 1826 onwards which I personally examined and coded, a veritable flood of low-code “meaning”-method beginning reading materials appeared from 1826 onwards. They almost totally displaced the high code “sound”-method beginning reading materials that had been overwhelmingly the norm in America before 1826.

British spelling books in the following listing are omitted unless they were also published in America or had editions that are at least reasonably thought to have been used in America. Nevertheless, it should be noted that a very great number of different spelling books for the teaching of beginning reading were printed in England since just before 1600 until after 1826. The hundreds of editions of spelling books in English up to 1801 on which there are records are almost all listed in Alston’s Bibliography of the English Language, Volume IV, Spelling Books. Alston’s listing includes not just editions in England, but editions in English which were printed anywhere in the world.

Until about 1740, most books printed in English, except for chapbooks, originated in London, and it was not until about 1740 that publishers elsewhere in the English-speaking world became numerous and important. Even after the great increase in American publishing after about 1740, London imprints continued to be widely sold in America until the Revolution in 1776. Therefore, many English spellers were widely imported in America from the seventeenth century until the American Revolution in 1776 when such imports were cut off. A Dilworth speller printed in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, during the Revolution, cited below, refers to the cutting off of such imports as the reason for its publication. Yet some spelling books had been published in America since the seventeenth century and even Dilworth’s famous 1740 spelling book had been published by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia as early as 1747. The comment by the American publisher who was publishing Dilworth’s speller during the Revolution seems to confirm that it was the imported British spelling books which had the lion’s share of the American spelling book market before 1776.

Very many of the eighteenth-century spellers which survive in American libraries have London imprints. That fact alone certainly supports the supposition that America depended to a large degree on imported spellers, rather than on domestically printed spellers, at least before the American Revolution in 1776. Some records of such imports survive in advertisements of the eighteenth century, as does a 1632 reference to the importing of a considerable number of horn books for the teaching of beginning reading in Massachusetts. The latter reference was given on page 8 of Beulah Folmsbee's *A Little History of the Horn Book*, Boston: Horn Book, 1942, according to Dr. Susan Steinfirst's interesting unpublished book, *The Origins and Development of the ABC Book in English from the Middle Ages Through the Nineteenth Century*. (This material was Dr. Steinfirst's 1976 Ph. D. dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh.) Obviously, however, most imports of such trivial items as horn books and spelling books must have left no convenient records attesting to their existence.

As should be expected, before about 1740 in Alston's exceedingly lengthy listing of all editions of spelling books known to him to have been published in English until 1801, most spellers were published by printers located in London. Yet, Alston's listing shows that after 1740 many printers who were located in Scotland, Ireland, and America published spellers. Therefore, before about 1740, the English-speaking world must have been largely dependent on London printers for almost all its schoolbooks, not just its spellers. Benjamin Franklin arrived as a successful printer in Philadelphia shortly before 1740, and he also printed "primers" and spelling books. Franklin was probably representative of the growing class of non-London printers throughout the English-speaking world.

Therefore, the fact that few American-printed spelling books are on record before 1740 obviously does not mean that spelling books were not in wide use in America before that date. It simply confirms that America, like the rest of the English-speaking world, was getting most of its books, including spelling books, from London instead of from local printers before about 1740.

The source for the listing in many cases is included below, usually abbreviated. "L. of C." is the Library of Congress. "Harvard" refers to Harvard's remarkable libraries. Other library names are self-evident. "Alston" is Alston's *Bibliography of the English Language, Volume IV, Spelling Books*. "Evans" is *American Bibliography* by Charles Evans, *A Chronological Dictionary of All Books, Pamphlets and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in 1639 Down to and Including the Year 1820 With Bibliographical and Biographical Notes, Volume I: 1639 - 1729* [also later volumes], New York: Peter Smith, 1941. "Welch" is d'Alte A. Welch's *A Bibliography of American Children's Books Printed Prior to 1821*, published by the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1972, which book omits almost all primers and spellers but provides much other useful information. Reference is also made to Mary F. Thwaite's *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, first published in 1963, the revised edition of which was published by The Horn Book, Inc., Boston, in 1972, which also omits most primers and spellers but is nevertheless very useful.

One important source is Charles F. Heartman's "American Primers, Indian Primers. Royal Primers And thirty-seven other types of non-New-England Primers Issued prior to 1830, A Bibliographical Checklist," Printed for Harry B. Weiss, Highland Park, N. J., in 1935. However, many of the books Heartman listed are clearly just the New-England-Primer catechism type and are therefore not pertinent for this listing. Only those books listed by Heartman on his list of non-New England primers which appear to have been spellers or beginning reading books, instead of catechisms, are included in this appendix.

Heartman also prepared three very exacting bibliographical checklists on *The New England Primer Enlarged*, the last of which was in 1934. Heartman's entries on *The New England Primer Enlarged* have already been analyzed in this history chronologically and numerically, and discussed at length, since his

painstaking records clearly demonstrate to an unbiased observer that *The New England Primer Enlarged* only began to come into wide use after about 1760. This fact becomes even more obvious when comparing his early records on *The New England Primer Enlarged* to the records shown elsewhere on early eighteenth century spellers. Such spellers were obviously in far greater and far older use than *The New England Primer Enlarged*, because their surviving records are far more numerous.

Yet the fable persists that *The New England Primer Enlarged* was the text uniformly used in America before 1750 to teach children to read. Because of the general acceptance academically of that fable, the roots of *The New England Primer Enlarged* are discussed at some length in this appendix. That is despite the fact that *The New England Primer Enlarged* clearly was not meant as beginning reading material, but only as catechetical material, like *The Royal Primer* of 1750 and King Henry VIII's primer of 1545, both of which were clearly labeled for use as a child's second book, and both of which also carried "review" lessons on the syllabary, just like the *New England Primer Enlarged*. *The Royal Primer* of 1750 was meant to be used only after the *battledore hornbook* also published by Newbery, which fact was clearly stated in Newbery's advertisement. King Henry VIII's official primer of 1545 was to be used only after a child had already used Henry VIII's equally official ABC book, which fact was clearly stated in the king's pronouncement.

Nineteenth-century purely "ABC" books are also omitted. After the shift from "sound" to "meaning" in the teaching of beginning reading about 1826, elaborate picture books became popular which had an illustrated alphabet and short verses for each letter. Yet these were very different ABC books from the old-style ABC books because they omitted the critically important syllabary which had always been used in teaching by "sound" and which had always been present at the beginning of the old spelling books as well as the old-style ABC books. The purpose of the post-1826 "ABC" books was not to teach reading but only to acquaint the child with the names and shapes of the letters before introducing him to "meaning"-bearing whole words, which whole words a child was expected to remember in the same way that he remembered pictures.

The picture-book alphabets that began to appear after 1826 should not be confused with the centuries' old ABC books whose purpose had been to teach reading by the "sound" of the syllables, first by teaching children the syllabary, and then by teaching children whole words by the sounds made by their syllables. However, excellent summaries of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century picture-book alphabets have been published which are available in libraries for those who wish to refer to them.

Some of the entries in this Appendix B have only one copy in the records, as far as I could determine, but others have multiple copies of different dates. However, duplicate listings are usually not shown, but only the earliest American date is recorded for each title. For instance, the Fox speller is shown with its earliest American edition in 1702, but Alston lists other American editions of the Fox speller in 1737, 1743, and 1769. Only the 1702 American entry is listed below.

Omitted from this list are the many German ABC books used to teach beginning reading in America. These have been covered exceedingly well up to about 1830 in Walter Klinefelter's excellent text, *The ABC Books of the Pennsylvania Germans*, Volume VII of *Publications of The Pennsylvania German Society*, Breinigsville, Pennsylvania, 1973, which has been discussed elsewhere in this history. Since the German language reportedly was under consideration as the official American language after the Revolution, German-speaking people must have been very numerous in America at that time (presumably largely in Pennsylvania), and the books used to teach their children to read are therefore of historical importance. Klinefelter's book, however, and a few similar ones, do ample justice to the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century German ABC books in America (which taught beginning reading by "sound,") so there is no need to summarize them here. One of those other useful histories with information on

teaching reading in German in America is *Early Moravian Education in Pennsylvania* by Mabel Haller, published by the Moravian Historical Society, Nazareth, Pennsylvania, in 1953.

Also omitted from this history are all but one of the Indian primers in the Indian languages. For those who wish to learn more about Indian primers, "American Primers, Indian Primers. Royal Primers And thirty-seven other types of non-New-England Primers Issued prior to 1830, A Bibliographical Checklist," by Charles F. Heartman, Printed for Harry B. Weiss, Highland Park, N. J., in 1935, did ample justice to these materials printed before 1830 in what is now the United States. Of course, Heartman omitted known Canadian and Mexican materials (and presumably South American materials) published for Indians which pre-date the American materials. Mention has been made in this history of some Mexican and Canadian materials. Heartman referred to a reliable source of further information on American materials for Indians, Dr. Wilberforce Eames' *Early New England Catechisms*, a bibliographical account published in Worcester in 1898.

Mary F. Thwaite's truly excellent book, *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, has been of help in compiling this bibliography, although her book is intended as a history of children's literature and has little to say about textbooks. Yet "primers" certainly did not "evolve" into "pleasure in reading," with the passage of time, as her title wrongly implies. Since the title is very misleading, a discussion therefore is in order at this point to distinguish "primers" (by which she meant beginning reading books) from "pleasure," by which she meant storybooks whose purpose was only to entertain.

The origin of the word, "primer," has been discussed at length in this history, and at no time did so-called children's "primers" have the primary aim of giving "pleasure in reading." Nevertheless, "pleasure in reading" or pleasure in hearing stories has always existed, for children and for adults. It is certain that pleasure in hearing stories pre-dates literacy, since Homer composed his pleasurable stories, which were recited in public orally, long before the alphabet arrived in Greece. Ancient Celtic Irish traveling story-tellers (and those from other countries) memorized hundreds of stories to entertain the public - including children - in oral recitations, centuries before the advent of Christianity. Those oral tales had absolutely nothing to do with teaching literacy.

The title, *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, implies acceptance of the ridiculous notion that children in the past were not expected to take pleasure from reading. Even more ridiculous than that notion is the current widely accepted academic doctrine that, before the Reformation, Europeans did not even recognize the existence of a stage called childhood but instead equated children past infancy with adults. That nonsense was given the most sober and elaborate credence not long ago in a children's book exhibit at New York City's main library at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street.

While Thwaite was most precise in providing corroborating sources in footnotes and elsewhere when she made statements concerning texts from the eighteenth century or later, she was not so precise when she stated that children had not been expected to take pleasure in reading before the eighteenth century. For instance, she said on page 245:

"The tradition of the past lingered after the Reformation in the continued domination of the Church in education and books for youth, both Catholic and Protestant.... everywhere catechisms, works of piety, primers for learning, and manuals of behaviour were the main mental fare provided for the young, long after Gutenberg and his fellows ended the era of the hand-produced book. Entertainment in reading was for long discouraged or condemned."

Yet she gave no corroboration for the statement, "Entertainment in reading was for long discouraged or condemned."

Many parents at Christmas, who could afford to do otherwise, unfortunately spend considerably more on clothes for their children than they do on toys. Yet does that mean that those parents condemn toys? Does it not mean instead that they are being what they consider “sensible”? The cost of books was relatively very high in the early days after printing arrived. If parents could find money to spend on books for their children, it was far more likely to go for the equivalent of “clothes” than for “toys.” Nevertheless, that does not mean the parents (or their churches) “condemned” entertainment in reading!

Furthermore, no reasonable person can conclude that children in the late Middle Ages were deprived of stories, any more than children today are deprived of television. Television programs specifically prepared for children are only a minor portion of the television programs children actually watch. Most of the time children watch, and enjoy at their own level, so-called “adult” programs. That fact is implicitly recognized by the very few “adult” television programs which carry a warning that they will not be suitable for children. In the Middle Ages, old tales were the equivalent of our television programs, and the telling of old tales was very alive indeed, for enjoyment by both adults and children. For instance, Thwaite wrote on page 247 about Giovanni Francesco Straparola’s *Le Notte Piacevoli*, published in Venice in 1550-1553:

“About twenty of the seventy-three tales, taken from many sources, were folk-tales. Among them were versions of Beauty and the Beast, Puss-in-Boots, and other familiar examples.”

These tales were old and widespread long before 1550 when Straparola repeated them in his book. Yet they had only survived because they had been enjoyed by ordinary people, including children, for many centuries. To say that children did not have enjoyable “literature,” meaning “stories,” before the eighteenth century is manifestly wrong.

Thwaite listed children’s books in English printed in England from 1479. Her list omitted foreign editions. Yet, as stated elsewhere in this history, foreign editions of books in English were necessary in the early 1500’s because English printers simply could not meet the demand in England for books. Therefore, there were undoubtedly other books suitable for children available in England besides those she listed. It is even possible there were many of those other books before Henry VIII broke with Rome in 1534 and such imports largely from France were probably curtailed.

The first book suitable for children that Thwaite listed was a book on manners printed by Caxton in 1479, but it obviously was not meant for enjoyment. The second English book Thwaite listed that could have been suitable for children was on page 275, *The Historye of Reynart the Foxe*, printed by Caxton in 1481. The third was an edition of Aesop’s fables by Caxton in 1484, and the fourth was *Le Morte d’Arthur* (The Death of Arthur) in 1485 (presumably in English) by Caxton. About 1500, *A Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode* was printed by Wynken de Worde. Thwaite showed on page 276 that, about 1500, three printers published the popular medieval romance, *Guy of Warwick*, and in 1517 *Gesta Romanorum* (Tales of the Romans) was published by Wynken de Worde in English.

Therefore, it seems obvious that reading purely for amusement - by adults or children - was acceptable from 1481 to 1517 for those who could afford to spend money on such “unnecessary” books. (Such Englishmen were undoubtedly a minority). However, after these early entries of purely entertaining storybooks, there were very few like them in Thwaite’s list of books in English for children, all through the rest of the turbulent sixteenth and the whole of the turbulent seventeenth century. It was in that unhappy time that so many people wrongly confused religion with gloom instead of joy, as well they might with their appalling views on predestination. It is hardly surprising that “merry” England ceased to be merry when the butcher, Oliver Cromwell, and his like came on the scene. Cinderella dressed up in the finery given her by her fairy godmother, and dancing till midnight at an elaborate ball would hardly have been to Cromwell’s liking, so Cinderella’s tale and those like it were certainly not going to be widely sold

in England in those days. Yet entertaining books in English suitable for children began to come out once again in the early eighteenth century, primarily in the flood of chapbooks meant for both adults and children, just as the old folk tales had been. Many of those centuries-old folk tales were retold in those eighteenth-century English chapbooks.

France and Spain fared far better, where ugly ideas on “predestination” found fewer adherents, though they found some, as with the heretical French Bishop Jansen. Such ideas presumably influenced Pascal in France when he wrote his gloomy *Pensees*, and such ideas certainly inspired the founding of the famous, dreary, and joyless Port Royal school. (Curiously, that school usually receives great praise in education “histories.”) Yet how could such joyless “Christians” account for Christ’s very first miracle at the marriage feast of Cana? He changed water into wine for a gathering which had already used up its first supply, and it is recorded that the miraculous wine was very excellent (enjoyable) wine. That certainly seems to put a stamp of approval on virtuous merrymaking and parties, and certainly ought to rout any proponents of “Christian” gloom. The necessary penance of Lent has been preceded for centuries by the merry-making carnival and followed by the elaborate and enjoyable celebrations of Easter. There certainly is nothing joyless about real Christianity.

For instance, some years ago, I was in a restaurant in the evening just outside the world-famous religious shrine of Lourdes. I was struck by the merrymaking, noisy, party atmosphere of the happy crowd in the restaurant. That crowd speaking a jumble of different languages had come from all over Europe on a religious pilgrimage, and they presumably came from farther away as well. The kind of people who made up that merry, religious crowd might be expected to enjoy hearing “pleasurable” stories, if there were nothing morally wrong with such stories. Yet it was the same kind of religious people who made up Western Europe all through the Middle Ages, and they provided the audience for the pleasurable folk tales that it is known were widespread for so many centuries.

Nevertheless, the early eighteenth century “development” of pleasurable stories to be enjoyed by children is wrongly attributed by Thwaite and others to a presumed decline in “religion.” Actually, the centuries-old and wholesome pleasurable element had simply gone underground during the gloomy Puritan-influenced period, and had simply resurfaced in the early eighteenth century as the Puritan influence waned.

“Primers” and pleasurable “storybooks” therefore must be seen as representing two parallel lines of development, instead of the sequential line of development that Thwaite implied. It is true that “primers” or spellers increasingly used stories for reading practice which were entertaining, instead of instructive, and it is true that “storybooks” frequently had a practice alphabet at their beginnings. Yet the two lines of development never melded into one. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, spelling books followed by reading series were displacing the old school sequence which John Locke had described in the 1690’s: horn book, primer, Psalter, Testament and Bible. Stories were used in these reading series after children had been taught to read in the spelling books, yet these readers remained schoolbooks, not storybooks. At the time Locke wrote, chapbooks were spreading, and many had the same old entertaining stories from the Middle Ages, meant only for “pleasure” and having no connection with schooling. The anonymous author of *The Irish Spelling Book* in 1740 Dublin specifically found fault with such chapbooks which he implied were in wide use, but he certainly did not regard them as schoolbooks. The two strands therefore remained separate, just as they are separate today: one strand was meant for “school,” and the other, the chapbook, was meant only for pleasure.

However, in the listing below, a few pivotal “pleasure” story books are listed because they do provide various kinds of useful historical background.

The list follows, in chronological order.



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1643 A Spelling Book, Cambridge, Mass., printed by Stephen Day

(Mentioned in Dunster MSS, Harvard. Not extant. John Clyde Oswald's book, *Printing in the Americas*, on pages 57-58, provides information on this first American press in Cambridge and the families who operated it and successive presses. Oswald said that on the death in May, 1649, of Mathew Day, who had been operating the press under the control of his father, Stephen Day, (his father had apparently never been the printer), the successor was Samuel Green, then 34. Samuel Green had been born in England, had come to America with Governor Winthrop in June, 1630, and died when he was 87. Green founded a family of printers which remained in the printing business for nearly 200 years. Very possibly that first Samuel Green was also the ancestor of Dr. Samuel Green who donated so many beginning reading books to Harvard Library in the nineteenth century, which books have been so helpful in the writing of this history. The Green family worked in various colonies and in the states that succeeded the colonies. Oswald said the Green family achieved:

“...a record that, with one exception, the Didot family of France, has never been equaled...”

Samuel Green married twice and was the father of 19 children. Three sons, Samuel Junior, Bartholomew, and Timothy, learned printing from him. The 1697 entry below, published by B. Green of Boston, was presumably published by the printing house of one of the sons, Bartholomew.)

1654 John Eliot's *A Primer or Catechism, in the Massachusetts Indian Language*, printed in 1654 by Samuel Green. See the discussion in the 1683 entry on *The New England Primer*.

1661 *The Fannatick's Primer*, Henry Adis, London (L. of C. copy. An inept Code 6 speller attempting to teach by sound. Its presence in the Library of Congress suggests its possible use in America.

The “Fannaticks” were a religious sect of that period in England, mentioned briefly in Samuel Pepy's diaries because they had predicted the imminent end of the world on a specific date.)

1679 *The Protestant Tutor*, a spelling book by Benjamin Harris, London, England, and later editions. Also, the completely different 1685 Boston book with the same name which was not a spelling book, also credited to Benjamin Harris.

The dates of Harris's birth and death are unknown, but library sources report “fl. 1673-1716,” meaning he “flourished” from 1673 to 1716. On page 228 of *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, Mary F. Thwaite lists the 1679 London edition. However, Alston stated it was not the same book as the 1685 Boston text with the same name. Alston listed the 1679 and later English editions of *The Protestant Tutor* in his list of spelling books, but noted that he was omitting the 1685 Boston book with the same title because it was not a spelling book.

On the title page of the 1685 Boston text appears “Printed by Samuel Green and are to be sold by John Griffin in Boston, 16(85)?”. The title page is mutilated on the date portion of the only surviving Boston copy, but it has obviously been dated by experts to 1685. That 1685 Boston copy is held by the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, but copies are available on film in other libraries. Harris had arrived in America reportedly in 1686, and returned to England in 1695, which makes the 1685 Boston date for this uniquely different edition puzzling. Although Harris's 1679 London book with this title was a speller, and he published more editions of the speller after he returned to

England, the short 1685 tract is only inflammatory anti-Catholic propaganda. It has no alphabet, syllabary or word lists. The first question in the “catechism” at the beginning reads:

“1. Qust. What religion do you profess? Ans. The Christian religion, commonly called the Protestant, in opposition to Popery.”

A number of other questions concerned the pope, very negatively. The most noteworthy was No. 20:

“Is the Pope’s power [missing portion] from Satan? Ans. Satan Rev. 13.2. [missing portion] gave him his Power and his Sea (sic) and great authority.”

Other questions not mentioning the pope were also anti-Catholic. In no way should this ridiculous “catechism” be compared to that serious earlier work, the Westminster Shorter Catechism. This so-called “catechism” was on the first nineteen pages of the 1685 book, followed by ten pages with the Verses of Mr. Rogers that later appeared in the New England Primer Enlarged, after which section came the word, “Finis.”

However, Nila Banton Smith’s description of The Protestant Tutor of 1685 in her “history” in no way matches the surviving 1685 Boston edition. In her book, *American Reading Instruction*, on page 18, Nila Banton Smith described The Protestant Tutor:

“The principal contents were the ‘Roman Small Letters,’ the Syllabarium, the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, John Rogers’s biography and verses, words of from two to seven syllables, the “Proper Names” (from Scripture), a catechism, and other religious selections.”

It also seems unlikely that Smith’s description could be a correct one for the Harris spelling books of 1679 and later which had the title, *The Protestant Tutor*, and which were on Alston’s list.

In sharp contrast to the fact that a copy of the obscure 1685 Boston book survives, as well as different editions of Harris’s various speller editions published in England with the same title, Harris advertised the *New England Primer Enlarged* in 1691 but no surviving copy appeared until 1727 when it was published by someone other than Harris or Harris’s 1691 partner, John Allen. That 1727 copy is entered below.

However, *The New England Primer Enlarged* in its surviving 1727 edition contains the “Mr. Rogers” material from the 1685 *Protestant Tutor* which is presumed to have been written by Harris, so Harris is therefore also considered to have been the compiler of the *New England Primer Enlarged* which he advertised in 1691. The Verses of Mr. Rogers were supposed to have been written before “Mr. Rogers”’s execution under Queen Mary in 1555, but since no record of the verses appears apparently anywhere until *The Protestant Tutor*, and apparently only in its 1685 version, it seems obvious they were written about 1685, presumably by Harris.

The history of *The Protestant Tutors* and of the *New England Primers*, and the biographical data on Benjamin Harris, as well as the biographical data on Harris’s 1691-1692 partner, John Allen, are therefore closely intertwined. Because of that fact, it is necessary to discuss all of them together.

The make-up of the *New England Primer*, with its capital-letter alphabets used as a framework for the listing of catechetical material, is reminiscent of Rothschild’s French sixteenth-century supposed “ABC book” which was really a catechism and which has been discussed in this history. That book was listed in the *Catalogue des Livres* of Baron James de Rothschild (1884 - page 177-179), with the name *La Croix de Par Dieu*, the French expression for the English equivalent, “Christ’s cross.” The Rothschild French

copy certainly used the alphabet for listing concepts of a religious nature. On the back of the first leaf of the Rothschild copy, the alphabet was shown in red, but it was obviously catechetical in intent, as following each letter was a word for a religious concept: A = Amytie, B = Benivolence, C = Crainte, D = Douleur, etc. It seems probable that the unsurviving circa 1683 New England Primer which is known to have been registered in England in 1683, during which year Harris was still living in England, was also a catechism in the same "Rothschild" type of format. Like the 1727 New England Primer Improved, the 1683 version probably had precepts in alphabetical order followed by the Our Father, Creed, Commandments, and the Protestant equivalent of the Catholic catechism.

Much of the material in the surviving 1727 primer is gentle, and it appears probable that the gentle material, such as the following, appeared in the earlier 1683 version that showed up in England:

"The Dutiful Child's Promises... I will love my friends. I will hate no man. I will forgive my enemies and pray to God for them...."

It even appears possible to separate out some of Harris's "enlargements" to that original 1683 primer by the fact that they are obviously not gentle. That is not surprising, considering the nature of his 1685 Protestant Tutor. For instance, it is almost certain that Harris added the picture alphabet, and it is the picture alphabet that carries the callous verse that has repelled so many people ever since: "The cat doth play and after slay."

A very interesting series of articles on Benjamin Harris appeared in a London periodical, and they are available on microfilm (New York Public Library \*ZAN-3662, Notes & Queries, London, 1932, v. 163, p. 129-133, 147-150, 166-170). The articles by J. G. Muddiman primarily concerned Harris's activities in England, since he had only spent nine or ten years in America. However, on page 167, the following appeared:

"Harris's American Newspaper. It has long been known that Public Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick of Boston, Massachusetts, No. 1, Thurs., September 25, 1690, 'Printed by A. Pierce for Benjamin Harris at the London Coffee House' was the first American newspaper.... The paper was suppressed at once... 'because of passages referring to the French king and the Manquees.' Turning to the paper itself, the accusation against Louis XIV is found to be an accusation of incest. The other piece of scandal was the story of a body of Indians revolting to the Manquees and being massacred by the French. Thus, for the second time, Harris's journalistic career had been cut short by his publishing 'false news.'"

Harris had been put into the stocks before he left England for publishing lies in a newspaper he printed there.

The old Bostonians probably had little liking for either Louis XIV or the French, but outright libelous lies about them in Harris's Boston newspaper were too much for those old Bostonians, particularly when one of Harris's lies concerned the unmentionable crime of incest. Therefore, the newcomer and foreigner, Harris, must have been a very visible and very notorious character in the provincial Boston of 1690. It is probably no accident that The New England Primer Enlarged apparently only began to be published again some thirty years after Harris, and probably the very memory of Harris, had faded from the New England scene. It is probably also no accident that Harris's name appears nowhere on the 1727 reprint.

In the early 1870's after returning from London, Henry James considered Boston to be an intolerable cultural backwater. Boston must have seemed extraordinarily so about two hundred years before that, about 1686 when Benjamin Harris arrived there from the turbulent London of Samuel Pepys and others. Harris's opening a coffee, tea and chocolate shop in Boston at that time may well have seemed to those

conservative old Bostonians like someone's opening a bar and grill to cater to the attendees of a meeting of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

What was most notable about Harris's "enlarged" New England Primer was the inclusion of the startling, ground-breaking alphabet woodcut pictures. However, to the eyes of 1691 Bostonians, those woodcut pictures meant for impressionable children (although boring to us) may well have appeared as real, London-style, worldly decadence, since nothing like them for children (and very likely, not even for adults) had appeared in Boston before. Those woodcut pictures may have fallen into the same fleshly category as all that probably "expensive" coffee, tea and chocolate that Harris was serving up in his very possibly notorious London Coffee House. After all, those old town fathers had come into Harris's London Coffee House in September, 1690, specifically to pick up and destroy all the lurid newspaper sheets that Harris had put out for sale (and they truly were lurid, even by today's standards). Yet, probably considerably less than a year later, Harris put out for sale in that very same coffee shop his New England Primer Enlarged, and it contained those startling, brand-new and seemingly worldly woodcut pictures. It therefore does not seem very likely that those old Bostonians would have viewed those unconventional, "entertaining," woodcut pictures for children in the same kindly light that they did their ministers' Sunday morning sermons.

In *A Bibliography of American Children's Books Printed Prior to 1821* by d'Alte A. Welch, published by the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1972, the following information appears on page xxi-xxii concerning a 1717 American edition of another one of Harris's books which is very pertinent to the history and which Harris first published in England in 1698.

Welch said that *The Holy Bible in Verse, 1717*, is the earliest book on the Bible which was published for children. He said it was originally written by Benjamin Harris, but the 1717 edition was probably printed in Boston. It carried a different title than Harris's original English edition, which was called "The Holy Bible, Containing, The Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphy. Done into Verse by B. Harris for the Benefit of weak memories." Welch said that only four American printings of this book exist today, but, from advertisements of the period, he assumed many more than those four printings were made, since the book was apparently very popular. He commented that the 1717 edition is of particular interest, because it included ten of the illustrations that appear in the 1727 (and first surviving) edition of *The New England Primer*. However, in the 1727 edition, the pictures, or "cuts," were reversed.

Therefore, some of the alphabet "cuts" in the very first surviving *New England Primer Enlarged*, that of 1727, were copied from pictures which were identical to those used in the first Boston edition of *The Holy Bible In Verse* of 1717, except in reverse. Yet, while the 1717 material only had SOME of the alphabet cuts, that 1727 edition had ALL of them, so the 1717 material was NOT the source for the 1727 material. It seems obvious that a paper copy of the original 1691 primer must have been available to the 1727 printers, and the 1727 cuts were made from it. Yet, because they all appeared in reverse, as mirror images, a reversal must have occurred in the process of copying from the original 1691 paper copy to the new 1727 printer's wood blocks. The comment is made elsewhere that the 1727 printed cuts were poor in comparison to the few cuts in the 1717 book. It is obvious that the copying from the 1691 paper copy must have been very badly done by those 1727 printers, probably because they were unused to the fancy "new" woodcut process which was obviously very rarely done in the American Colonies at that time.

After a lengthy discussion on type imperfections in the 1717 first American edition of *The Holy Bible in Verse*, which imperfections can be used to identify a printer, Welch said on page 160:

"The cuts furnish further evidence that John Allen published the first American edition of *The Holy Bible In Verse, 1717*, written by his former partner Benjamin Harris. Whether John

Allen printed the 1724 edition early in 1724 before his death... is not known.... After his death the primer alphabet cuts were acquired by Thomas Fleet as well as some of Allen's business."

These comments shed considerable light on the probable history of The New England Primer Enlarged. The original woodcuts most probably were prepared specifically for Harris's 1691 edition of The New England Primer Enlarged. Furthermore, as Welch's description of the four surviving American editions of The Holy Bible In Verse made clear, the cuts in the first surviving American edition of 1717 were in good condition, with the lined framework around them in place. Yet in the third edition of 1724, the cuts showed wear. Welch said on pages 160 and 162 concerning that third American edition of The Holy Bible In Verse in 1724:

"The primer cuts are from the same blocks used as in no. 492.1 [Ed.: the 1717 American edition], but portions of the borders are now lacking in certain ones."

Concerning such wear on cuts, Welch said on page 389, about the different cuts used in a different and far later book:

"This date seems too early, for if 1163.3 were the first edition, it would have all the rule borders in perfect condition, which is not the case.... Even no. 1163.1 has breaks in the border.... On this assumption the conjectural date [ca. 1787] is assigned no. 1163.1. This at least allows sufficient time for the Poupard blocks to acquire the breaks which appear in 1807, no. 1163.9. If the cuts had been used over a period of 32 years, more and larger breaks would be expected."

Using the same reasoning on the woodcuts that Allen, Harris's 1691 partner, is known to have used in 1717, their apparently pristine condition in that edition indicates the blocks could not have previously been used in many prior editions of The Holy Bible in Verse or of The New England Primer Enlarged. However, as discussed below, it is the conviction of this writer that The New England Primer Enlarged was published seldom, if at all, between the beginning of 1691 when Harris advertised it and presumably published it with his 1691 partner, John Allen, and 1727 when the first surviving copy was put out by publishers unrelated to either Allen or Harris. That first surviving edition of 1727 came out after Allen's death in 1724 and Harris's presumed death in or before 1716.

On page xxiii-xxiv, Welch discussed the rarity and high value of such woodcuts in America in the first half of the eighteenth century. Welch's comments certainly suggest that Allen would have placed a high value on any woodcuts he might have possessed before 1717:

"While The Holy Bible In Verse (1717) had Primer cuts, early extant American children's books were usually not illustrated. It must have been a great pleasure to the children of New England when a crudely illustrated little book was available entitled The History of The Holy Jesus. Third Edition (Boston, 1746), which also was in verse. One verse reads:

"The Wise men from the East do come  
Led by a shining Star,  
And offer to the new-born King  
Frankincense, Gold and Myrrh.

"The picture accompanying these verses shows a group of men in Puritan dress, two of them looking through telescopes at a star."

That is certainly charmingly ingenuous, but it also puts into focus the relative importance of the primer woodcuts which Allen had available to use in 1717. American woodcuts of any kind were very

scarce in that period, even poor ones like the ridiculous but far newer 1746 one mentioned above. Therefore, the primer alphabet woodcuts must have been very rare and valuable printer's materials in Colonial America when they were presumably used for the first time in the original edition of *The New England Primer Enlarged*, presumably published jointly by Harris and Allen in 1691.

Who paid to have those 1691 woodcuts made? Did both Harris and Allen split their cost, or did Harris bear the cost alone? It seems unlikely that experienced woodcut artisans would be readily available in the small Massachusetts colony of 1691. Were the woodcuts perhaps ordered from London through some contact of Harris, who had been a printer in England before 1686? Woodcuts were a scarce American commodity as late as 1746, as shown by the above reference, and Welch recorded that those particular primer woodcuts that Allen possessed in 1717 were passed to other printers and used for decades in America after Allen's death in 1724, but were NOT used in the *New England Primer* of 1727.

Therefore, does it seem likely that Allen would have paid to have those ten woodcuts (identical to ten in the *New England Primer*) made solely for his first circa 1717 American edition of *The Holy Bible in Verse*? It seems particularly unlikely that Allen would have done that, since it is probable those woodcuts had not appeared in Harris's 1698 London edition, because, if they had, that fact should certainly have been mentioned by Welch. However, Harris IS on record elsewhere for having used woodcuts in an edition of Aesop's fables that he published after returning to England, but no information is available on those woodcuts. Could they have been the other part of the 1691 *New England Primer* woodcuts - Harris's "share"?

Is it not likely that Allen already had those ten primer woodcuts on hand, and had had them on hand, unused, since he and Harris split up in 1692? Is it not likely that Allen finally decided in 1717 to make some good use of those woodcuts, particularly since Harris is presumed to have died in or before 1716 and was no longer around to argue about any use that Allen made of them? If the original 1691 edition of *The New England Primer Enlarged* had not sold well because of hostility in Boston to Harris, the cuts would not have become worn through heavy use in printing the *Primer*. When Harris and Allen ended their partnership only a year later in 1692, those expensive alphabet woodcuts may well have been divided between them, or Allen could simply have unilaterally expropriated about half of them, in partial "payment" for his work in the previous year. If Allen did that, his subsequent failure to use the woodcuts for 25 years, until after Harris died, could be explained, because it would mean that Allen did not have a clear, unchallengeable title to those "expensive" commodities.

Yet the actual publishers of that unsurviving 1691 edition of *The New England Primer Enlarged* are not on record, because the only surviving reference to that edition is Harris's brief advertisement in an almanac he had published around the end of 1690 or beginning of 1691, in which he said he would be selling the primer in his coffee shop when it was issued in the near future. The almanac, written by Henry Newman, showed a date of 1691, and was entitled *News from the Stars... An Almanac... For the Year of the Christian Empire, 1691*, "Printed by R. Pierce for Benjamin Harris at the London Coffee House." Nila Banton Smith and Paul Leicester Ford show 1690 as the publishing date of the almanac, but the only surviving copy at the Massachusetts Historical Society actually shows 1691. Therefore, the almanac was obviously published at the end of 1690 or beginning of 1691, presumably just about the time that Harris went into partnership with Allen. Harris and Allen are known to have been in partnership and to have jointly published in 1691 *The Shorter Catechism of The Westminster Assembly of Divines*, which has no surviving copy. It is even highly likely that the unsurviving 1691 Westminster Shorter Catechism listed by Evans was actually the last half of the original edition of *The New England Primer Enlarged*, since the 1727 title of *The New England Primer Enlarged* ends with the phrase, "To Which Is Added the Assembly of Divines Catechism."

The advertisement in that 1691 almanac was reproduced by R. R. Reeder on page 25 of his text, and by Nila Banton Smith on page 19 of her text. Evans copied part of the advertisement as his entry for the unsurviving 1691 edition of *The New England Primer Enlarged*. Microfilm copies of the complete original almanac are available in many libraries in microfilm collections of early American materials. The material read:

“ADVERTISEMENT.

“There is now in the Press, and will suddenly be extant, a Second Impression of The New-England Primer enlarged, to which is added, more Directions for Spelling: the Prayer of K. Edward the 6th. and Verses made by Mr. Rogers the Martyr, left as a Legacy to his Children.

“Sold by Benjamin Harris, at the London Coffee-House in Boston.”

The record does seem to provide the proof on the real history of *The New England Primer Enlarged*. Harris is known to have been in England in 1683. In that year, two men in England named John Gaine and William Scoresby were selling a book in England called the “*New England Primer or Milk for Babes*,” which is entered below under 1683. Harris had apparently seen that 1683 New England book which was probably a version of the standard Westminster catechism. It had reached England and been officially recorded there as *The New England Primer* instead of as a Westminster catechism. That book recorded in England in 1683 would have been the “first impression” of *The New England Primer* which Harris mentioned eight years later in his 1691 Boston advertisement. As discussed, Harris had previously written a speller in 1679 called *The Protestant Tutor*. Yet he is also credited as the author of a different 1685 book with the same title, containing the “Verses Made by Mr. Rogers...,” and they became a good part of Harris’s 1691 “enlargement” of *The New England Primer*.

Therefore, while Harris was in Boston in 1691, apparently earning his living largely by running a coffee shop and selling materials in it which he had published by others (which materials are listed by Evans), Harris incorporated part of his own 1685 material with the circa 1683 standard New England Primer version of the Westminster catechism. Since Harris had already written a 1679 speller, it is not surprising that he also added “more directions for spelling.” However, since the spelling material is short in *The New England Primer Enlarged*, that certainly indicates the circa 1683 New England Primer must have had even shorter “spelling” exercises and could not have been meant primarily as a spelling book. While Harris’s advertisement mentioned nothing about the alphabet woodcuts and verses, they were probably additions to the 1691 primer also, since pictures in children’s books of that period were so rare.

For that amalgamation, Harris must have had the famous alphabet cuts made, and they would indeed have made his new book a very striking and seemingly salable commodity in his 1691 Boston coffee house. Harris’s new partner, Allen, would have provided the use of his printing press, and very likely Allen would have provided some of the capital. The “enlarged” primer with its fancy and startling woodcuts was published in 1691, but it was very possibly entered in whatever records Evans used under two names, since the title on the primer actually suggests it is composed of two separate books.

The title on the 1727 first surviving edition reads, “*New England Primer Enlarged*. For the more easy attaining the true reading of English to which is added the Assembly of Divines’ Catechism.” No copy of the Westminster Assembly of Divines’ catechism of 1691 that Evans listed as published by Harris and Allen survives, and no copy survives of the 1691 *New England Primer Enlarged* that Evans listed as printed by “R. Pierce” who had printed Harris’s 1691 almanac with the *New England Primer* advertisement. Yet that advertisement had mentioned nothing about the printer of the proposed new primer, so Evans obviously only surmised that the primer would be printed by R. Pierce because R. Pierce had printed the almanac carrying the primer advertisement. Therefore, those two 1691 entries by Evans

may very well refer to the same book, made up in the exact form of the surviving 1727 primer. The title of that surviving 1727 edition certainly does suggest that it is a compilation of those two separate texts listed by Evans.

However, after the 1691 edition came out, Harris and Allen split up in 1692, and those expensive primer woodcuts may well have been divided between them. Yet that would have made it impossible for either Harris or Allen ever again to issue a New England Primer Enlarged, without incurring the large expense of making up the missing half of the alphabet cuts. After Allen's death, his old paper copy of The New England Primer Enlarged must have passed to the Boston printing partners, S. Kneeland and T. Green, who published that first surviving copy of 1727. Very crude new alphabet woodcuts are known to have been made up for their 1727 edition, and the cuts were almost certainly made from a paper copy. Therefore, in 1727, The New England Primer Enlarged once again re-entered history, eventually to explode into a trans-Atlantic publishing wonder by the 1770's.

The above scenario seems a far more likely one than the totally unproved scenario that is extant in academia. Untold thousands upon thousands of New England Primers are supposed to have been printed between 1691 and 1727, but every single one of those primers and every single historical reference to them are supposed to have somehow mysteriously disappeared, even though numerous records and numerous copies of far, far less famous books have survived.

In his book, *The New England Primer*, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1897, Paul Leicester Ford said Benjamin Harris came to America in 1686 and set up "a book and 'Coffee, Tee and Chuculetto' shop.... A year later his imprint reads 'at the London Coffee House' and he was [enlisting] the printers of the town to print pamphlets and broadsides for him.... In 1691 he formed a partnership with John Allen, and seems to have set up a press...."

The actual ownership of those 1691 woodcuts may well have become a cause for conflict between the two Boston printing partners, Allen and Harris, since a relatively great sum must have been paid to have them prepared for the 1691 edition. Such a conflict might account for the fact that by 1717 Allen apparently had almost exactly half of the woodcuts (ten of them), in almost brand-new condition. Therefore, Harris may very well have had the other half. [The woodcut alphabet covered only 24 letters.]

The Holy Bible in Verse carried a note:

"The Reader is hereby Caution'd against a little spurious Book, Printed with the same Title as this, and shaped like it, as ignorantly and illiterately as can be, Printed by one Bradford, which Book is partly stolen from the Original first printed by B. Harris, Senior, partly Corrupted, and perverted in its Sense; and generally the Word of God imposed upon with Nonsense, and Inconsistency: so that the real Design of the Author is Abused by such scandalous Imposition upon the Publick. B. Harris, Junior. March the 15th, 1712."

Was Harris's son referring to the New York printer, Bradford? Harris had been married before he came to America (which Ford dated to 1686), so Harris's son who was writing in 1712 was probably at least twenty-nine years old. Before coming to America, Harris had been fined and put into a stock in England for his publishing activities, and Ford recorded that Harris's wife had tried to defend him. As mentioned, after arriving in Boston, Harris had further trouble with authorities in 1690 for publishing an unacceptable newspaper. Obviously, Harris was a man used to conflicts, and perhaps one of his conflicts was with his 1691-1692 partner, John Allen. After all, theirs was certainly an unusually short partnership.

Some possible explanations suggest themselves. The elder B. Harris's last clearly identifiable London book came out in 1716 according to Alston, although it is possible that it was published by B. Harris



“junior” and not B. Harris “senior.” Did Harris’s son contact Allen after his father’s possible death about 1716 asking Allen to publish in 1717 an “authorized” American version of The Holy Bible in Verse, to counter the objectionable “Bradford’s” possibly American version? About 1717, did Harris’s son return half of the possibly contested 1691 woodcuts to Allen in some kind of settlement after his father’s death, which would explain why they were almost brand-new when Allen used them in 1717? What is considerably more probable, Allen may simply finally have felt free after learning of Harris’s death to use the half of the contested woodcuts which he may have been holding since 1691. Furthermore, the probably unhappy memory of Harris and the original 1691 use of those woodcuts would have faded in Boston after the passage of twenty-six years. Allen might also have felt free in 1717 to publish Harris’s The Holy Bible in Verse, if Harris was no longer around to make any embarrassing public objections. However, if Allen only had half of the alphabet woodcuts in 1717 in almost brand-new condition, that probably means he could not ever before 1717 have published by himself, without Harris, an edition of The New England Primer Enlarged.

Such speculations are not fruitless, since the real story on the late seventeenth century history of The New England Primer Enlarged almost certainly lies in the true explanation for the possession of those almost brand-new woodcuts in 1717 by Benjamin Harris’s former partner, John Allen, twenty-six years after the publication of the original edition which had probably been put out by both men in partnership in 1691.

It should be noted that three editions of The Holy Bible in Verse, presumed by the scholar, Welch, to have been printed by Allen, are still surviving: 1717, 1718, and 1724, as well as Allen’s successor’s 1729 version. All of these used the ten primer woodcuts from The New England Primer Enlarged. Copies of Harris’s work after he returned to Britain in 1695 survive, just as does the 1685 text entitled The Protestant Tutor. Yet we are asked to believe that untold editions of The New England Primer Enlarged were published both in America and in Great Britain since at least 1691, but that not a single copy of any of these many editions or even a single reference to them survived until the 1727 copy turned up which was printed by other publishers than either Allen or Harris. The New England Primer fable is, indeed, utterly ridiculous and it is a scandal that it is still promoted in academia.

On page 160, Welch called the pictures in the 1727 first surviving edition of The New England Primer Enlarged, which was not printed by either Allen or Harris, “crude copies... in the reverse.” If an uncut wood block is placed on top of an inked picture, and if the uncut block is then cut out according to that ink pattern, a block will be produced that is the reverse of the picture. Something like this must have been done to produce the crude 1727 alphabet cuts that were the reverse of the ten clear 1717 cuts. Most probably, the new cuts were made from a paper copy of the original New England Primer Enlarged of 1691. The 1727 edition of the primer, of course, has all of the alphabet woodcuts, of which Allen reproduced only ten in his unrelated 1717 edition of the Holy Bible In Verse. That certainly suggests the 1727 primer publishers were working from a paper copy of the original primer.

Welch stated Harris was in partnership with Allen in 1691 and 1692, citing Evans as his source. After 1692, Allen might still, however, have kept a paper copy of the original printing to which Harris had referred in 1691, even though its set-up type would presumably have long since been recycled for more salable publications. Yet the original cuts prepared for that primer should still have been handily available for newer materials, and should have been either in Harris’s or Allen’s possession. Nevertheless, only ten of those original alphabet woodcuts apparently survived in almost brand-new condition for Allen’s 1717 copy of The Holy Bible in Verse. That certainly suggests that Allen did not have the other alphabet woodcuts. Valuable woodcuts were recycled by printers for decades all through the eighteenth century, and Welch recorded that these particular woodcuts were used for years after Allen’s death, when they passed into the possession of Thomas Fleet. Allen could probably have found many places in The Holy

Bible in Verse that he could have used the rest of those alphabet woodcuts, if he still had possession of more than ten of them in 1717.

If Harris and Allen did split the original cuts between them when terminating their partnership in 1692, neither could print a new edition without making up the missing half of the cuts. That could very well explain the great gap on any traces whatsoever of The New England Primer Enlarged between 1691 and 1727, when a copy finally appeared after Allen's death, which used poor copies of the original cuts. It is highly likely that The New England Primer Enlarged was never reprinted again until after Allen's death, which is presumed to have been in 1724. Allen's death resulted in the dissolution of his printing office and the dispersion of his materials, including the primer woodcuts and, presumably, paper copies of his earlier editions.

Therefore, it was only after the death of Allen, Benjamin Harris's former partner, in 1724 that a copy of The New England Primer Improved finally turned up. Significantly, it was printed by other Boston publishers, S. Kneeland and T. Green, in 1727. Yet the new publishers clearly did not have those original ten "cuts" used in the 1717 Allen book, which had probably appeared in the 1691 primer, since Thomas Fleet is known to have had them and to have used them on other books for many years, according to Welch. Did Kneeland and Green acquire a paper copy of the New England Primer materials in some arrangement with Allen's estate after 1724? After all, Welch said Thomas Fleet only got "some of Allen's business." Therefore, others must have gotten the rest of Allen's business. Not having the originals of the wood block cuts, however, Kneeland and Green would have had to improvise, thereby producing the "crude copies" in "reverse" that appear on the earliest surviving copy of The New England Primer Enlarged, which is their 1727 edition.

When Harris returned to England in 1695 after about ten years in America, he continued as a printer for many years but almost certainly never published a New England Primer Enlarged. He did publish his speller using the title, The Protestant Tutor, but it was different in its content from the 1685 text. The fact that Benjamin Harris probably never published a New England Primer Enlarged in England certainly suggests his huge disinterest, after he returned to England, in the American material which he had "enlarged." Harris's American material presumably would have been unprofitable in England.

Evans lists the American publications by Harris, and Alston lists the spellers printed by Harris after he returned to England. In connection with this entry, see also the 1683, 1691 and 1727 entries on The New England Primer.

1683 The New England Primer (first existing reference) In Nila Banton Smith's American Reading Instruction, 1934, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1965, pages 18-25, she discussed The New England Primer and cited Heartman's 1922 checklist, which she referred to only as: "Heartman, Charles F. A pamphlet on The New England Primer, Metuchen, N. J., 1922," failing to give its proper title or to refer to its three editions of 1916, 1922 and 1934. Heartman had said of The New England Primer:

"...the first edition of this book was probably printed in England. In the Stationer's Register in London under the date of October 5, 1683, a certain John Gaine entered a title in accordance with the statute requiring the registration of all books for sale. This entry reads:

"Mr. John Gaine

Eodem Die et Anno. Entred then for his Book or copy Entitled the New England Primer or Milk for Babes with Wm. Scoresby.

Jno. Gaine"

An important New York printer in the eighteenth century was Hugh Gaine, possibly a relative. Printing seems to have been a business pursued by families at that time, since so many family names recur as printers, even "Daye" appearing in England in the late sixteenth century. However, all that this particular entry establishes is that two men in England named John Gaine and William Scoresby were selling a book in England in the year 1683 called "New England Primer or Milk for Babes." There is no indication that they either wrote it or printed it. Furthermore, it would have been very odd indeed for someone in England to put the title "New England" on his own work. The copies they were registering for sale in England might very well have come over by ship from Boston, since copies of the Indian texts printed by the Pilgrims are known to have done so even earlier. Furthermore, "Milk for Babes" was a term for catechism - and so was "primer." Of course, the two men may also have reprinted a New England original for the English market. Therefore, instead of this entry's suggesting an English origin, it instead tends to confirm the American origin of the original New England Primer and to suggest strongly that it was only a simple catechism, or "Milk for Babes."

Reviewing Evans' records of books published by the Puritans in New England in the seventeenth century suggests that the original New England Primer was only one of the numerous catechisms printed before 1683 by the Puritans, whose titles were shown by Evans only as "A Catechism."

It was only in 1683 that the title, New England Primer, showed up in England, and that is the only reference to a New England Primer before the enigmatic advertisement by Harris in 1691, claiming he had "enlarged" it. The third occurrence is the still-existing 1727 copy of The New England Primer Enlarged now in the New York Public Library.

John Eliot's A Primer or Catechism, in the Massachusetts Indian Language, printed in 1654 by Samuel Green who had taken over from Stephen Day, had been preceded by the printing of three catechisms in English in Cambridge, copies of which no longer exist. One was A Catechism by Edward Norris printed by Stephen Day in 1648. One was by Richard Mathew, A Catechism..., printed by Samuel Green in 1650. One was A Catechism by Samuel Danforth, printed by Samuel Green in 1651. Other catechisms appeared after the Indian primer. Presumably, they were all in accord with the Westminster Assembly's catechism of 1648 in its Shorter Version, the one in general use with the Presbyterians and Puritans and the one which is the principal part of The New England Primer Enlarged. Therefore, catechisms and a spelling book had been printed in Cambridge before the first "primer" in 1654, which was in the Indian language and called not just a catechism, but A Primer or Catechism. The use of the word, "or," however, meant the two words were synonymous in 1654 Cambridge. (The same "primer or catechism" wording appeared on the Church of England material.) That the words "primer" and "catechism" were synonymous is suggested further by the fact the Primer or Catechism for the Indians was preceded by the three catechisms for the settlers themselves, and they certainly would have provided as complete catechism ("primer") material for their own children as they provided for the Indians. The large numbers printed in 1654 for the Indians (500 or a thousand) suggest that large numbers had also previously been printed of the three English catechisms for the use of the children of the settlers. Possibly relatively large numbers of the speller had been printed.

In 1662, Evans' entry No. 70 shows that another fifteen hundred copies were printed of John Eliot's A Primer or Catechism in the Massachusetts Indian Language, and it was reprinted again in 1669. Evans noted on page 12 that John Small reproduced the 1669 edition of Eliot's Indian primer at Edinburgh in 1880, so that survived. Actually, a John Small reproduction under the date of 1877 is in the New York Public Library. It shows that Eliot preceded his catechism not only with the alphabet in capital and small letters, but with elaborate syllabary materials. It was obviously Eliot's intent to teach the Indians to read their language by "sound."

If the Puritans printed 2,000 to 2,500 copies of the Primer or Catechism in the Indian language, they obviously were attempting and possibly succeeding in teaching at least 2,000 or 2,500 Indians to read their own language, obviously with the fe, fi, fo, fum sound-method syllabary. Logically, the syllabary (probably plus lists of the word spelling patterns necessary to read English) must also have been included in the three earlier Puritan English-language catechisms since they almost certainly had been used as models for the Indian-language version. The Puritans are recorded to have imported horn books, with which their children would have initially learned to read. That the Puritan catechisms also included syllabaries (and word lists like those on the New England Primer Enlarged) appears particularly likely since the catechism titles appear to be synonymous in meaning to the title for the Indian text.

These seventeenth century Puritan catechisms, and the fe, fi, fum syllabaries in the Indian primer-catechism, are the unacknowledged roots of the New England Primer Enlarged, the first surviving copy of which was printed in 1727 and which included the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism. The only earlier record of a New England Primer Enlarged is Benjamin Harris's advertisement in 1691. The 1691 material advertised by Harris appears largely to have been an amalgamation of the "Mr. Rogers" material from The Protestant Tutor of 1685 which he is presumed to have written and of the 1683 New England Primer sold in England. That 1683 text was presumably only a version of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, since the words "primer" and "catechism" were synonymous at the time. The roots of the New England Primer are discussed further in the body of this history. See also in this index the 1679 entry for The Protestant Tutor and the 1691 and 1727 entries for The New England Primer Enlarged.

1691 The New England Primer Enlarged, by Benjamin Harris. (Evans recorded under No. 573 the following concerning the 1691 advertisement for The New England Primer Enlarged of which no copy has ever been located:

"The New England Primer Enlarged. To Which Is Added, More Directions for Spelling: The Prayer of K. Edward the 6th, and Verses Made by Mr. Rogers the Martyr, Left as a Legacy to His Children. A Second Impression. (Printed by R. Pierce for, and sold by Benjamin Harris, at the London Coffee-House in Boston. 1691,)"

Evans obviously took this information from Harris's edition of the 1691 almanac, News From The Stars, written by Henry Newman and published at the beginning of 1691, which almanac had been printed for Harris by "R. Pierce." Yet the actual advertisement, reproduced by Nila Banton Smith on page 19 of her book, presumably from the surviving copy of the almanac presently held by the Massachusetts Historical Society states nothing about the printer, reading merely:

"Advertisement.

"There is now in the Press, and will suddenly be extant, a Second Impression of The New England Primer enlarged, to which is added, more Directions for Spelling: the Prayer of K. Edward the 6th. and Verses made by Mr. Rogers the Martyr, left as a legacy to his Children.

"Sold by Benjamin Harris, at the London Coffee House."

Allen still had about half of the woodcuts from the primer in 1717, twenty-six years later, as discussed elsewhere. It appears highly likely that there was a conflict between Allen and Harris concerning The New England Primer Enlarged, and that the conflict resulted in the Primer's remaining unpublished for many years until after Allen's death in 1724.

It was the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism which gave the New England Primer Enlarged its importance after 1727. It is therefore possible that the unlocatable New England Primer which Harris

“enlarged” may well have been only a catechism itself. Harris would have felt no need to mention the word, “catechism,” in his 1691 advertisement, since the words “catechism” and “primer” had become synonymous in New England, as in the “Primer or Catechism” for the Indians. Therefore, could that original “New England Primer” to which Harris referred, presumably the 1683 London entry mentioned above, have itself been based on one of those earlier New England catechisms listed by Evans? Evans did not apparently show complete titles for those catechisms, and probably did not have them. One of these earlier and unlocatable catechisms might have also included the words, “New England Primer” in its title, just as the Indian work included the word, “primer,” in its title.

It clearly was not Mr. Rogers’ verses from *The Protestant Tutor*, of which Harris was the probable author, and the woodcut alphabet, which was the source of the fame of *The New England Primer Enlarged*, even though it is largely that material which is emphasized today in references to the primer. The real source of the primer’s fame was the material in the *Shorter Catechism*. Therefore, the real roots of that late eighteenth-century publishing wonder, *The New England Primer Enlarged*, very possibly lay in the seventeenth century “catechisms” that were published by and for the Puritans, and not in what was probably Harris’s material.

Evans listed the following publications which may shed some light on the relationships:

“579 - Westminster Assembly of Divines. *The Shorter Catechism*.... Printed by B. Harris, and J. Allen....1691....”

“587 - Bird, Benjamin - *The Jacobites Catechism*.... London.... Reprinted at Boston for Benjamin Harris....1692”

The first one of these “catechisms” printed jointly in 1691 by Harris and Allen might very well be part of the first edition of *The New England Primer Enlarged*, since that “primer” is primarily only a catechism, and used *The Shorter Catechism*. Evans had shown under No. 387 *The Protestant Tutor*, by “Benjamin Keach,” printed by Samuel Green in 1685, and added, “Benjamin Harris, the printer of the first London edition of 1679, is also said to be the author.” Yet, as Alston recorded, Harris’s 1679 and 1685 books were the same only in their titles. Nevertheless, Harris is listed as the probable author of the 1685 book, a portion of which appeared in *The New England Primer Enlarged*. That portion, Mr. Rogers’ Verses, was described by Harris in his 1691 advertisement. See the 1679, 1683, and 1727 entries for a discussion on all of these materials.

1697 *An Epitome of English Orthography*. Published by B. Green, Boston. (Alston, who said a copy of this spelling book is extant at the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester.)

1698 *A New Primmer or Methodical Directions to Attain the True Spelling, Reading and Writing of English*. F. D. Pastorius, Printed by Wm. Bradford, N. Y. Sold by the Author in Pennsylvania. (Alston. L. of C. copy. Inept attempt to teach by sound. Code 5.)

1702 *A Primmer and Catechism for Children: Or A Plain and Easie Way for Children to Learn to Spell and Read. Instructions for Right Spelling, and Plain Directions for Reading and Writing True English*, George Fox and Ellis Hooke, Published by Reynier Jansen, Philadelphia (Quaker text. According to Alston, the English original using this title was published in 1670, but it omitted the last half of the title, from the words, “Instructions for...” N.Y.P.L. 1743 copy was published in Boston by Rogers and Fowle, Code 7. Although no edition of the *New England Primer Enlarged* survives from before 1727, actual copies of George Fox’s and Ellis Hooke’s Quaker materials from long before that date have survived. The 1670 London edition of Fox’s and Hooke’s *A primmer and catechism for children; or a plain and easie way for children to learn to spell and read*...., a shorter title than the 1702 copy, is still in

existence as are other seventeenth century English editions of the Fox materials. This American edition printed in Philadelphia in 1702 survives. Even Benjamin Franklin is on record for having printed a Fox speller in Philadelphia in 1737 which survives, and a 1726 copy survives which was printed in Dublin, Ireland.

Heartman showed the following under items 141 and 142:

“141

“A Primer. Philadelphia: Printed by B. Franklin, and D. Hall, 1764.

“Evans No. 9802 says: ‘Over thirty-five thousand copies of this Primer were printed between the years 1749 and 1765.’ No proof is offered for the abbreviated title’s existence. It may refer to a New England Primer.

“142

“A Primer. Philadelphia: Printed by B. Franklin, and D. Hall, 1765.

“Evans No. 10147.

“Between March, 1765 and February, 1766 two thousand Primers were printed.”

Franklin is on record for having printed a Fox speller in 1737 whose title began, “A Primer....” Evans obviously referred to particular 1764 and 1765 copies printed by Franklin whose titles also began with the words, “A Primer....” The numbers printed were sharply dropping off from the 1749-1765 period to the 1765-1766 period. Yet the late 1760’s was the exact time when the known copies of the New England Primer Enlarged begin to increase. Both of these facts seem to preclude the possibility that Franklin was printing The New England Primer on these entries. The title of the New England text began with “The,” and not “A” like the Fox speller. Furthermore, the numbers of surviving New England Primers began sharply to increase in the 1765-1766 period, while the numbers Evans credited to Franklin of “A Primer” sharply decreased. Yet it is precisely in that period, in 1764, that Franklin is first on record for having printed a Puritan New England Primer. The Franklin 1764 copy of The New England Primer Enlarged is only the sixth copy on record that was printed outside Boston, and until the 1750’s, no copies are known to have been printed outside Boston. It appears obvious that the great numbers of copies Evans credits to Franklin in Pennsylvania for “A Primer” refer to the Fox speller written for Quakers. After all, it would have had an excellent market in the Philadelphia area in those early years, since that is exactly where the Quakers were most numerous at that time. Yet it seems likely that the dourness of The New England Primer would have had little appeal to Quakers.

Alston’s records on the Fox speller showed the earliest American edition in 1702, but he showed other American editions of the Fox speller for the years 1737, 1743, and 1769. See the 1779 entry below for “A Primer” which may refer to a Fox speller.)

1704 England’s Perfect Schoolmaster, or Most Plain and Easie Rules for Writing and Spelling True English, Nathaniel Strong, Published by B. Green for Nicholas Boone, Boston. (Alston. Harvard has a copy. Its first edition came out in London in 1674.)

1716 The Child’s Guide to the English Tongue, or a New Spelling Book, By a Schoolmaster in the Town of Nottingham. Boston, 1716. (Listed by Alston from Evans entry. First London edition 1711.)

1722 *The Art of Reading and Writing English, or the First Principles and Rules of Pronouncing Our Mother-tongue*, by Reverend Isaac Watts (1674-1748). A copy of this 1722 London edition is presently in the New York Public Library. Alston lists multiple surviving copies of the original 1721 edition at other locations, and of the later editions as well. It should be noted that this relatively unknown speller in comparison to the *New England Primer Enlarged* has many surviving copies dating back to its original publication date of 1721, and yet the earliest surviving copy of the *New England Primer Enlarged* is dated to 1727 (which copy is also at the New York Public Library). Therefore, it appears self-evident that the *New England Primer Enlarged* was almost unknown until well after 1727. However, very many copies of the *New England Primer Enlarged* exist with publication dates after 1770, and in numbers that far exceeded the surviving copies of Watts' speller of any date. That confirms that the *New England Primer Enlarged* truly was a publishing wonder, but only after about 1770.

Watts' speller was popular for many years. Among later editions, the New York Public Library card catalog lists a 1770 edition under a different title, *Compleat Spelling Book*. However, an edition was published the very next year, 1771, by W. & T. Bradford, Philadelphia, under the correct title.)

1727 *New England Primer Enlarged, For the more easy attaining the true reading of English to which is added the Assembly of Divines' Catechism*. Boston: Printed by S. Kneeland & T. Green, Sold by the Booksellers. (This copy is in the New York Public Library and is the earliest one in existence. The only earlier reference to the *New England Primer Enlarged* is the advertisement by Benjamin Harris in 1691, and the only reference to a *New England Primer* of any sort is the English entry shown previously under 1683. The 1727 New York Library copy has the following contents, listed below by pages. No mention is made of the Prayer of K. Edward the 6th which was cited in Harris's 1691 advertisement, but it is possible it was on the two pages of the 1727 copy which were mutilated and which are unreadable. The actual pages are unnumbered:

Page 1: Title page. Page 2: Quotations from the Bible. Page 3: Lower case alphabet and vowels, AEIOUY aeiouy. Consonants. Double letters. Italic letters. Italic double letters. Page 4: The Great English Letters. The Small English Letters. [These are in the old English black type.] Great Letters. [These are standard capital letters.] Basic Syllables for Children [Begins with the closed syllabary, ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, to al, el, il, ol, ul.] Page 5: Closed syllabary completed to ax, ex, ix, ox, ux, and then the open syllabary, ba, be, bi, bo, bu, to sa, se, si, so, su. Page 6: End of open syllabary with ta, te, ti, to, tu. Both the open and the closed had used fourteen consonants. The closed syllabary had contained x but omitted h, and the open contained h but omitted x. Neither used the consonants j, q, v, w, or z. The rest of page 6 was "Words of One Syllable," in ABC order, but without phonic analogies. "Hold" was out of ABC order, appearing in the "b" list, which was probably a misprint from the original 1691 edition, where it was probably bold. The words were arranged in sets of five, going across the page: first the "a" words, then the "b," "c," "d" and "f." There should have been a white margin under the "a" to "f" columns before beginning the next sets going across the page. However, the "g" words appeared directly under the "a" words with no break. That is probably also a printer's error from the original 1691 copy, in which there was probably a white margin between the first sets of five words (a, b, c, d, f groups) and the next sets of five words beginning with the "g" group. Harris had written a speller in 1679, and undoubtedly would have been familiar with printing clearly separated groups of words according to their function. Yet, with the misprint, "hold" for "bold," it is obvious Green and Kneeland were not familiar with spelling book formats. The first column contained the "a" words: Are air, add all ape. Going across came the second column, which began "be best bed hold bad." The next column across began "child," and the last "face."

Page 7 had Words of Two Syllables. Ab-sent, and across from it t.he word was printed without hyphens, Absent. This pattern, showing the word first with hyphens, and then without hyphens, was followed for the rest of the words. The second word was Bold-ly, and across from it Boldly, further suggesting that the word "hold" out of alphabetical order on page 6 was a misprint for "bold." Then came

Words of Three Syllables. A-ba-sing, and across from it, unhyphenated, Abasing. The list continued down to Ka-len-der, and across from it was Kalender. Page 8 had words of Four Syllables, Ac-com-pa-ny, and across from it Accompany, and so on. Then came Words of Five Syllables. Ad-mi-ra-ti-on, and printed across as on other pages the word without hyphens.

Page 9 started the famous woodcut picture alphabet in large letters going down the page. First came capital A, followed by the woodcut, and then the sentence "In Adam's fall we sinned all." Page 9 covered letters A to G of the woodcut alphabet, and the rest of the woodcut alphabet was on pages 10, 11 and 12.

Page 13 read, "Now the child being entred (sic) in his Letters and Spelling let him learn these and such like Sentences by Heart, whereby he will be both instructed in his Duty and encouraged in his Learning. The Dutiful Child's Promises. I will fear God and honor the King. I will honor my father and mother. I will obey my superiours. I will submit to my elders. I will love my friends. I will hate no man. I will forgive my enemies and pray to God for them. I will as much in me lies keep all God's holy commandments.

Page 14: "I will learn my catechism. I will keep the Lord's Day holy. I will reverence God's Sanctuary for our God is a consuming Fire." This was followed by "Alphabet of Letters for Youth," catechetical in intent. Going down on this page was A to G. Next to A was, "A wise son makes a glad father but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother." Page 15 had such sayings for letters H to S. Page 16 continued the aphorism alphabet to Z, followed by "Choice Sentences." "1. Praying will make thee leave sinning, or sinning will make thee leave praying." This was followed by similar sentences numbered 2 and 3. Page 17 had the Lord's Prayer and part of The Creed. Page 18 had The Creed continued and The Ten Commandments. Pages 19 and 20 were almost totally missing. Page 21 had more precepts, followed by beginning to name the books of the Bible. Pages 22 and the top of page 23 continued naming the books of the Bible. The rest of page 23 had, "The numeral letters and figures which serve for the ready finding of any chapter... and verse in the Bible," and this numeral section continued through page 27.

From page 28 through page 35 were "The Verses Made by Mr. Rogers, the Martyr," which are presumed to have been written by Benjamin Harris about 1685.

On page 36 began The Shorter Catechism Agreed Upon by the Divines at Westminster, and this copy ended on page 74, with the rest of the pages obviously missing. The fact that only the catechism part is missing in this 1727 copy, while the child's "spelling" section remains in excellent condition, certainly suggests that the copy was used as a catechism, and not to teach beginning reading. The beginning of spellers were often tattered or missing on pre-1826 copies, indicating that the beginning part had heavy use, Yet the pattern of wear on this 1727 book confirms it was used as a catechism, not as a beginning reading book.

It should be noted that the catechism totaled more than 38 pages, and 12 pages were given to numerals and figures meant to help in reading the Bible. The title page and scripture quotations immediately after it accounted for two more pages. That left only 22 pages covering what is commonly thought of as the New England Primer content, out of more than 74 pages in this 1727 book. The Shorter Catechism was overwhelmingly the most important section.

About 1900, Ginn & Company of Boston reproduced a copy of The New England Primer Enlarged which they dated to the years between 1785 and 1790, which copy was owned by G. A. Plimpton of New York. From the fact that Ginn advertised its early 1890's Cyr readers at the end of the reproduction, that reproduction probably came out about 1900. Yet the 1785-1790 primer they reproduced shows little resemblance to the 1727 New England Primer Improved, except for the inclusion of certain sections like



the woodcut alphabet and the Verses of Mr. Rogers, and the fact that it ends with the Shorter Catechism. What is most noteworthy about the purported 1785-1790 edition is the omission of much of the 1727 material and the inclusion of much later material from John Newbery's *The Royal Primer* of about 1750, and the inclusion of later material by Reverend Watts, neither of which could have been in the original *New England Primer Enlarged* of 1691. However, it obviously was only the last item, the catechism, that really mattered to the vast numbers of buyers of *The New England Primer* after 1770.

An 1885 edition of *The Improved New-England Primer*, published by Edson C. Eastman of Concord, New Hampshire, is a reprint of an edition of 1841. Its "Advertisement" at the beginning read

"The first edition of the present compilation was printed in the year 1823, in which the publisher had the use of several ancient as well as modern editions.... Out of the whole, however, the compiler collected about every article that was contained in the *New England Primer*, as printed so long ago as the year 1770, when the editions were in their original purity, and arranged the matter in the order in which it was then placed, and in this new edition, [1841] several appropriate hymns are added...."

This 1841 edition follows more closely the 1727 edition, but also has many omissions and some additions. However, like the Ginn copy, the "spelling" material at its beginning differs from that in the 1727 edition, using different words and a more complete syllabary. Yet the woodcut alphabet remains much the same, showing the usual 24 letters, and so do the Verses of Mr. Rogers remain the same.

Benjamin Harris's probable "enlargements," the woodcut alphabet and the Verses of Mr. Rogers, along with *The Shorter Catechism*, seemed most immune to change in editions of *The New England Primer Enlarged* over the years. That is why it is very amusing that Ginn & Company in Boston about 1900 apparently felt so embarrassed by one of Benjamin Harris's verses that they felt they had to censor it, very much in the way that the Boston fathers had censored Harris's libelous 1690 newspaper over two hundred years before. Most of the Verses attributed to Mr. Rogers, who Harris said had been a martyr during Queen Mary's reign, are only religious and ethical advice from a father to his children. But the following verse appears in the 1886 Concord edition, while at that exact point in the Ginn edition about 1900 there is a blank white space in the middle of the page. Something had obviously been censored on that page and removed in the Ginn reprint about 1900. It was obviously the following, which appeared at that exact point in the 1886 edition. It is a verse which certainly has the clear mark of Benjamin Harris on it:

"Abhor that arrant whore of Rome,  
And all her blasphemies;  
And drink not of her cursed cup -  
Obey not her decrees."

The demands of scholarship and academic niceties notwithstanding, the very large textbook publisher, Ginn & Company of Boston, obviously considered that shockingly bigoted verse of Harris's too embarrassing to reprint.

As discussed at length in this text, surviving copies indicate *The New England Primer Enlarged* was in little or no use before 1727 and in only light use in the 1730's and 1740's, since only three copies survive from each of those decades, all printed in Boston. Furthermore, it was obviously not normally used to teach beginning reading. As has been discussed at length in this history, from the time of Henry VIII, religious "primers" included the alphabet and syllabary, but were clearly meant to follow the ABC books which initially taught reading. An edict of Henry VIII specifically referred to that sequence: first the approved ABC book, and only then the approved "primer." Because of the reading difficulties that

had resulted from switching the teaching of beginning reading from Latin to English, it apparently had become necessary to continue ABC drill in the second book, the primer. In the *New England Primer Enlarged*, after some drill on alphabets, the syllabary and lists of words, this appeared: “Now the child being entred (sic) in his Letters and Spelling let him learn these and such like Sentences by Heart, whereby he will be both instructed in his Duty and encouraged in his Learning.” The catechetical purpose is obvious, from that statement and from the fact that the book contained the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, the catechism and other religious materials. The *New England Primer Enlarged* should not be considered a beginning reading book, but should be defined as catechetical material. Surviving copies indicate it began to be widely used in the 1760’s, but its period of massive use was after 1770 until about 1820, as shown by Heartman’s checklist of surviving copies, and the most important constant in almost all of these varying copies was the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

See also the 1679 entry above on *The Protestant Tutor* by Benjamin Harris, the 1683 entry on a reference to a *New England Primer in England*, and the 1691 entry on *The New England Primer Enlarged*.

1731 *The Youth’s Instructor in the English Tongue, or the Art of Spelling Improved....* Collected from Dixon, Bailey, Watts, Owen and Strong. Anonymous. Published in Boston, 1731. (Alston stated, “A plagiarism from Dixon’s spelling-book.” Concerning all the authors credited (though Alston referred to the book elsewhere as an “outright plagiarism” from Dixon), see elsewhere in this appendix the 1704 entry on Strong, the 1722 entry on Watts, the 1750 entry on Dixon, and the 1753 entry on Owen. Concerning Bailey whose speller is not listed in this appendix, he was the author of a famous dictionary published in 1721, long before Samuel Johnson’s dictionary. Bailey’s later spelling book, *Introduction to the English Tongue, Being a Spelling Book....* is listed by Alston as first published in 1726, but it had only one later edition, so it was apparently not very popular. Concerning this 1731 anonymous Boston plagiarism of Dixon’s speller, between 1731 and 1771 Alston listed fourteen Boston editions. Note the apparent expectation on the part of the Boston publisher that all the authors he listed as sources for his speller would be familiar to his American clientele in 1731. That suggests that their English spelling books must have been well known in America. The public undoubtedly expected any American imitation to be cheaper than such imports. See 1757 and 1770 entries on this title.)

1736 *The Second Book for Children, or the Compleat Schoolmaster. In Two Parts. I. Easie and Plain Directions for Spelling, Reading, and Writing True English.* Anonymous. Published by J. Draper for D. Henchman, Boston. (Also 1746 and 1750. Alston. First London edition 1704. The first “book” was probably the hornbook.)

1738 *An ABC and Spelling Book to be Used by All Religions Without Reasonable Objection*, printed by Christopher Sower (Saur) in Pennsylvania. Listed by John Clyde Oswald in his *Printing in the Americas*. Oswald stated on page 196 that Christopher Sower (Saur) was born in Lauterburg, Germany, in 1694, came to America in 1724 and worked successively as a tailor, farmer, and maker of stoves. Sower then entered the printing business by printing material for the Dunkers (Baptists) on a printing press they had imported. The 1738 text was his first book. The “Dock” ABC mentioned by Klinefelter was in German, so this must have been a different and earlier text in English. That is because Oswald stated

“The first production of the press under Sower’s direction, issued in 1738, was entitled, ‘An ABC and Spelling Book to be Used by All Religions without Exception.’ That same year he published an almanac in German....”

Oswald certainly implied the 1738 ABC was in English, so it is unlikely that it was written by the German, Dock. As mentioned, German-American texts are not included in this bibliography as the

Klinefelter history covers them so very well. For further information dating from the eighteenth century on the Sower printers who were in business for so many years, see the entries for Sower in Appendix C.

1744 *The Child's New Play-Thing; Being a Spelling Book Intended To make the Learning to Read a Diversion instead of a Task. Consisting of Scripture-Histories, Fables, Stories, Moral and Religious Precepts, Proverbs, Songs, Riddles, Dialogues, &c. The Whole adapted to the Capacities of Children, and Divided into Lessons of one, two, three, and four Syllables. To which is added Three Dialogues; 1. Shewing how a little Boy shall make every body love him. 2. How a little Boy shall grow wiser than the rest of his School-fellows. 3. How a little Boy shall become a great Man. Designed for the Use of Schools, or for children before they go to School.*

(Published by Joseph Edwards, Boston. The wording of the title was taken from the fourth Cornhill (Boston) edition of J. Edwards in 1750, which was the first edition Welch cited in his bibliography. Alston cited the 1744 Edwards edition, which presumably would have used the same wording as the 1750 Edwards edition. Alston also listed 1750 Boston, 1757 Philadelphia, 1761 Wilmington and 1765 Philadelphia editions. The 1765 Philadelphia edition was by W. Dunlap. However, the Library of Congress Rare Book Room has a March 3, 1763, edition by W. Dunlap not listed by Alston, which rates a Code 7, and which carries on the inside cover, in ink, a girl's name (Mary Lilla?) and the date, 1772. W. Dunlap is possibly the predecessor to John Dunlap of Philadelphia, entered below under 1769. Welch also quoted the title of the 1763 Philadelphia edition. It differed slightly from the Boston edition and increased the number of spelling lessons to include words up to seven syllables. In all, Alston listed ten editions, of which five are American. With the Library of Congress 1763 copy, that makes eleven editions for which there is documentation. Alston listed the first London edition by T. Cooper in 1742.

Note that this playful and supposedly uninfluential "speller" had four editions in blue-nose Boston by 1750, the first of which was published in Boston only two years after the initial London edition of 1742. Yet the supposedly massively influential *New England Primer* which was supposedly massively used to teach children beginning reading ever since 1691 in America, and even in Great Britain, has only seven surviving copies before 1750, with the first surviving copy published in 1727.

On pages 44 and following of *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, Mary F. Thwaite made the following remarks concerning this and other children's books of the period:

"A greater influence on Newbery's early publications for children than either Defoe or Swift was undoubtedly John Locke and his ideas about education.... It was probably due largely to Locke's suggestions, that the task of reading should be made interesting to children by letting them play their way to learning, that a new kind of book had already appeared on the market when Newbery arrived in the metropolis."

This observation is only partly true. Locke had himself cited the already existing use of dice to teach children the alphabet and syllables, a playful practice used in France since at least the mid-seventeenth century, as discussed elsewhere, and actually in use since ancient times. Cited earlier was the following quotation by Davies from page 71 of his book. The quotation referred to early Christian concern for the education of women, demonstrated by St. Jerome's matter-of-fact correspondence with a Christian woman concerning teaching reading to her little girl. On page 71 of Davies' book, he wrote:

"About teaching methods themselves, little can be found in this early period apart from some snatches of practical advice offered by St. Jerome in his letter to Pacatula. Before she could read, he advised, Pacatula would have to learn her alphabet, spelling and grammar and, to help her with the alphabet, he said in another letter to Laeta (Ed.: her mother), she should be given a set of ivory or boxwood letters.... From Quintilian's precepts it showed a difference only in minor

detail.... St. Jerome proposed that ‘little gifts’ (munusculis) should be distributed as prizes for successful spelling, and in the letter to Pacatula he varied the reward by giving a honey-cake (crustula mulsi) or something like a flower, a toy or a pretty doll.... This too he borrowed from the ancients.”

Since children’s toys are known to have existed from classical times, and almost certainly from before that time, and since playful approaches to learning are on record since classical times, it is certainly unreasonable to attribute the use of a playful approach in the teaching of beginning reading primarily to the advice of John Locke at the end of the seventeenth century! This is just another instance of the ridiculous “progress” fallacy: “old” is almost always supposed to be bad, but “new” is almost always supposed to be better, because of the powerful effect of that totally imaginary force for cultural good, “progress.” Instead, what seemed to be happening was that, as the grim Puritan influence of the previous century or so began to fade, which influence had so wrongly equated faith with gloom instead of joy, and which had implicitly branded pleasure as wrongful, normal human warmth was beginning to return. It was returning in more areas than in children’s spelling books in the English-speaking world.

Thwaite continued:

“...In the reign of Queen Anne the breakaway from didacticism has already been noted in the form of a little reading and spelling book of twelve pages - A Little Book for Little Children, By ‘T. W.’ (ca. 1702). Very different from the Puritan volume with the same title, by the minister, Thomas White, this is a light-hearted composition, proffering alphabet, spelling lesson, rhymes and riddles in happy style. The beginning of the alphabet rhyme ‘A was an Archer and shot at a frog’... makes its first appearance here in a children’s book... Whether Newbery came across this impressive trifle is uncertain. It is much more likely that he knew the work of Thomas Boreman (who) launched a number of tiny books for boys and girls, between 1740 and 1743, humorously dubbing them ‘Gigantick Histories’... being only two inches high... addressed to ‘Little Masters and Misses.’ ‘During the infant age, ever busy and always inquiring’, writes Boreman in one of his prefaces, ‘there is no fixing the attention of the mind but by amusing it’.... Boreman’s small volumes are mainly concerned with London and its history and description....

“About the same date another publisher was showing similar ingenuity in providing attractive forerunners of Newbery. This was T. Cooper at ‘The Globe’ in Paternoster Row. In 1742 he advertised The Child’s New Play-thing, a little work ‘to make learning to read a Diversion instead of a Task’.... Included were scripture-histories, fables, songs, proverbs, moral precepts, and most notable, stories - shortened versions of the long established favourites, St. George, Fortunatus, Guy of Warwick, and Reynard the Fox....

“St. George and his companions might give this Play-thing a flourish, but after all it was mainly a lesson book. There was more originality in another little work which Mrs. Cooper [T. Cooper’s widow] advertised in the London Evening Post for 22nd-24th March 1744, only three months before Newbery was to set a new standard in beguiling advertisements with his notice for A Little Pretty Pocket-Book [Ed.: his first child’s book]. Mrs. Cooper’s announcement ran -

“‘This Day is published, Price 6d, bound, Tommy Thumb’s Song Book for all little Masters and Misses... by Nurse Lovechild.’

“It heralded the first nursery rhyme book for children, and so marked a red letter day indeed in the history of their literature... the verses... are chiefly the familiar favourites of infancy - ‘Hickory, Dickory, Dock’, ‘Little Tommy Tucker’, ‘Baa, Baa, Black Sheep’ and similar ditties.”

Thwaite pointed out that the latter book was primarily meant for nursemaids to read to children. Citing Peter and Iona Opie's *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*, Thwaite said such rhymes:

“...had long been sung or chanted to babies, as Nurse Lovechild intended, before they found their way into print. From this time onwards, after Tommy Thumb's debut, they became a regular feature of publishing for children.”

That establishes, of course, that “entertainment” in verses for very little children was ages-old. It simply had not found its way into print, as least so far as Thwaite's references indicated. Also ages-old were the stories which appealed to older children and which were everywhere in the chapbooks. Those stories had also been in print before the arrival of the chapbooks. They appeared on the ballad sheets of the 1600's, as discussed by Victor E. Neuburg in his history of chapbooks, *The Penny Histories*, Oxford University Press, 1968. Even long before the ballad sheets, the famous Caxton had published a few old stories in the late 1400's.

Furthermore, Thwaite failed to make a distinction between the motivation for the Cooper and Boreman books, and Newbery's apparent motivations. It is true that all three concerns published children's books that are delightful and that were very popular. The Coopers and Boreman had used amusing material in order to focus young children's attention on reading and learning, as Locke had suggested, which suggestion Newbery also was presumably following. However, *The Child's New Play-thing* by the Cooper press in 1742 had included scripture histories, which gave the little book a clearly religious emphasis. Since it would have been difficult for Boreman to give any “history” of London without making some reference, like Cooper, to religion, it is presumed Boreman's books from 1740 to 1743 for little children also included some reference to religion. In 1744, almost immediately after Newbery arrived in London following a few years of publishing in a small way elsewhere, Newbery published his very first book, and it was a book for little children, *A Little Pretty Pocket Book*. It obviously was meant to imitate those children's books already put out by the highly successful Cooper and Boreman. Newbery certainly shared the Cooper and Boreman purpose of capturing children's attention by providing interesting material. Yet it is extraordinary that Newbery's very first book for little children, unlike the Cooper book, and probably the Boreman material as well, was totally devoid of religious content. (Newbery's later materials for children, however, did include religious material.) Also very meaningfully, Newbery cited a motivation for his work that did not appear on the Cooper and Boreman material.

Edward Percival Merritt in his history of *The Royal Primer* printed at the Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, said that Newbery's biographer, Charles Welsh, wrote;

“...on the frontispiece of the *Royal Primer*... [was] ‘Children like tender Oziers take the Bow, And as they first are fashion'd always grow, for what we learn in Youth to that alone, in age we are by second Nature prone.’

“The first couplet of the second set of verses, ‘Children, like tender Oziers, take the Bow’ had also been employed as early as 1744, when it appeared in an advertisement of the *Little Pretty Pocket Book*... of June 18, 1744 (*Booksellers of the Last Century* p. 117, Welsh, 1885, New York). ...at the very beginning of his career as a publisher of children's books, Newbery had proclaimed the standards which he constantly maintained thereafter.”

Therefore Newbery stated, in 1744 and later, that he was trying to shape the minds of children: “Children like tender Oziers take the Bow, And as they first are fashion'd always grow, for what we learn in Youth to that alone, in age we are by second Nature prone.”

That was an extraordinary and unprecedented statement from a publisher, particularly since Newbery's emphasis was, as has frequently been pointed out, away from heavenly and toward earthly rewards in a time when such an emphasis was revolutionary. It is truly extraordinary that NEWBERY'S VERY FIRST BOOK for children totally lacked what had been the ages-old religious content given to children!

That may very well be because Newbery can reasonably be numbered among the promoters of eighteenth-century "Enlightenment." An undated cover of Newbery's Lilliputian magazine for children suggests that fact, since the following appears under the title:

"...being the attempt to amend the World, to render the Society of Man more Amiable, and to establish the Plainness, Simplicity, Virtue & Wisdom of the GOLDEN AGE so much celebrated by the Poets and Historians, 'Man in that Age no Rule but Reason Knew, and with a native bent did Good pursue....'"

The message in that poem agreed with the eighteenth-century French "philosophers" like Voltaire. The magazine was published in 1751-1752, which issues Newbery later sold in bound volumes. Saying that men have a "native bent" for "Good" anticipated by ten years the same message in Rousseau's *Emile*. Rousseau denied the Christian and Judaic teaching that mankind is not naturally "good" but instead has a fallen nature which inclines it towards evil as well as towards good.

Only six years after arriving in London in 1744 and beginning to publish children's books, for which Cooper and Boreman had demonstrated that a ready market already existed, Newbery was successfully consigning shipments to America of a long list of children's books (which the records suggest that the previously successful Cooper and Boreman were not doing). Yet, despite the superficial resemblances between Newbery's very appealing materials and the appealing materials of publishers like Cooper and Boreman, Newbery's motivations were very different, since, unlike Newbery, Cooper and Boreman apparently never said they were promoting the arrival of a better and Newer Age by trying to shape the minds of little children. (Newbery's aim, of course, was the same as that expounded some fifty years later by the atheist/socialist, Robert Owen, when he founded the first infant schools - and then shortly afterwards by Brougham and others, in promoting the infant schools.

Concerning *A Little Pretty Pocket-Book*, see the American entry in this appendix under the date of 1762. Concerning the many children's books published by Newbery, many later published in America, particularly by Isaiah Thomas in Worcester, Massachusetts, see *John Newbery and His Successors, A Bibliography*, by S. Roscoe, Five Owls Press, Ltd., Wormley, Hertfordshire, England, 1973. For American editions of Newbery's books, and other children's books like *The Child's New Play-thing* published by the Coopers, see d'Alte A. Welch's *A Bibliography of American Children's Books Printed Prior to 1821*, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts, 1972. The *Royal Primer* and the *Royal Battledore* published by Newbery are discussed in the body of this history, and in the 1750 entry given below.

1747 *A New Guide to the English Tongue*, Thomas Dilworth, Pub. by Benjamin Franklin, Philadelphia (English original was 1740, L. of C. 1758 London copy. Code 7. Alston listed about 86 different American editions from many American cities by 1799. Noah Webster said this was the speller in use in Connecticut when he was a boy. Dilworth's speller is discussed in the body of this history. See the later Dilworth entry in this appendix.)

1747 *New York Primer*, Printed by Henry de Foreest, September 7, 1747. (Cited by Heartman, referring to an advertisement from the *New York Evening Post*, "Just published, N. Y. Primer, And to be sold by the Printer hereof, by the Wholesale or Retail.")

1748 *The Instructor, or Young Man's Best Companion, Containing Spelling, Reading....* George Fisher. Published by B. Franklin and D. Hall, Philadelphia, Ninth Edition. (Alston. First London edition was 1733(?). Alston listed Franklin's and Hall's tenth edition in 1753. The original Franklin and Hall edition was obviously some time before 1748. Alston also listed these other American editions: It was published by John Dunlap in Philadelphia in 1770; by John Boyle and J. D. M'Dougall in Boston in 1779; by Isaiah Thomas in Worcester in 1785 and 1786, and by Isaiah Thomas and David Carlisle at Walpole in 1794; and by Peter Brynberg in Wilmington in 1797. It was published in "Burlington" by Isaac Collins either in 1775 or 1787. It was reprinted in Philadelphia in 1801, 1810, and 1812. It was also published as *The American Instructor* by Hugh Gainé in New York in 1760, 1766, 1770, 1778, 1785 and 1792 and as *The American Instructor* in Philadelphia in 1787 by Joseph Crukshank. Alston showed information on 52 known editions to 1799, and briefly listed dates of others from 1801 (Philadelphia) to 1862 (London). The last known American edition he showed was that in Philadelphia in 1812, but that obviously does not prove that the last American edition was in 1812. Its use apparently faded in America when the activism for government schools began about 1817 or so. Whether it was, objectively speaking, a good or a poor textbook is unknown. However, it obviously was a very important textbook for very many years, although meant for older boys and not for beginners. Yet reference is almost never made to it, despite the fact it was published for many years by Benjamin Franklin, himself, who put out at least ten editions, and probably more editions on which no record survives.

In contrast, the fable persists that the *New England Primer* was the dominant eighteenth century American textbook, even though Noah Webster's recorded comments on textbooks used about 1760 in Connecticut schools omitted any mention of its use. Heartman listed a *New England Primer* edition by Webster about 1800, which Webster prepared to make the primer suitable for school use, an apparent confirmation that it was NOT being used in schools before 1800. Its real use, of course, was as a catechism.

1750 *The Royal Primer, or, An Easy and pleasant Guide to the Art of Reading*, London: Printed and Sold by J. Newbery in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1750.

(This description is given by Heartman, who said copies had not been located, but it was advertised in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on November 15, December 11, and December 25, 1750, and on January 1 and June 13, 1751. The *Royal Primer* was specifically labeled the second book for children, meant to follow Newbery's *battledore*, so it was clearly not meant to teach children beginning reading, any more than *The New England Primer* was meant to do so.

Heartman had many entries for *The Royal Primer*, with the earliest American printing by James Chattin in Philadelphia in 1753, a copy of which was in the Rosenbach collection in Philadelphia. Heartman's comments included the following, although there were far more "differences" between *The Royal Primer* and *The New England Primer* than he credited. Actually, they were almost totally different and unrelated books. To demonstrate that they were unrelated, *The Royal Primer* first appeared in England in 1750. Although hosts of *New England Primers Enlarged* survive which were printed after 1760, only seven copies of the *New England Primer Enlarged* survive which were printed before 1750, the year *The Royal Primer* first appeared. All of the pre-1750 copies of *The New England Primer Enlarged* were printed in Boston, the earliest of which is 1727, and no earlier mention occurs anywhere of *The New England Primer Enlarged* except the 1691 Boston advertisement referred to elsewhere. As mentioned elsewhere, an advertisement appeared in England a few years before that for an unlocatable "The *New England Primer*," the book that Benjamin Harris presumably "enlarged" by 1691. Therefore, it is really ridiculous to claim that *The Royal Primer* was consciously meant as a variation of *The New England Primer Enlarged*, since the latter was obviously confined to New England until the 1750's. Furthermore, Harris apparently never even bothered to print *The New England Primer Enlarged*, which he

is credited with compiling, after he returned to England in 1695. Yet Harris was a very active publisher in London in the early 1700's, and certainly would have reprinted it if there had been an English market for it.

Heartman wrote:

“...an advertisement of the [Newbery] Battledore in 1750 [was] accompanied by the statement: ‘after which the next proper Book for Children is The Royal Primer....’ The outstanding differing feature between the early New England Primer and the Royal Primer was the insertion of a description of A Good Boy, A Bad Boy, A Good Girl, A Naughty Girl, and promising credit, reputation, oranges, apples, cakes or nuts to the good ones and threatening the others with beggary. Mr. Newbery would not stand for such nonsense as salvation or unending fire which was the promise or the threat the Puritans held forth in the New England Primer....”

Heartman referred his readers to Perceval Merritt's Bibliographical Essay of 1925, written as a tribute to Wilberforce Eames, in which Merritt outlined his careful research on the Royal Primer. Heartman commented that American publishers had soon realized the market value of the Royal Primer and reprinted it, to such a large degree that, in Heartman's opinion, more were probably printed in America than in Britain. Heartman said that, starting about the time that Franklin and Hall reprinted it, most American newspapers carried advertisements about the Royal Primer, and a great many were imported from Great Britain. He remarked that it was unfortunate that collectors had never valued the Royal Primer as they had the New England Primer.

Heartman's powerful anti-religious bigotry, demonstrated by his words, “such nonsense as salvation,” may have been the reason that his judgment was so very bad on the nature, history and use of The New England Primer. It may also explain in part why Heartman's judgment was so very bad on the nature and use of the other American so-called “primers” on which he so painstakingly compiled accurate checklists. Yet his remarks confirm that many primers were being imported from England in mid-eighteenth century America, before the spread of The New England Primer Enlarged which is so wrongly considered the dominant American children's book of the period. Furthermore, Heartman's checklist on a Royal Primer for entry 164 inadvertently confirms that children had access to many books in Puritan Boston in 1773, many years before Isaiah Thomas had begun reprinting Newbery's children's books: “...Boston/Printed and Sold by William McAlpine,/ in Marlborough-Street; where may be had a Variety of entertaining and instruc/tive Books for Children. MDCCXXIII.”

1750 The English Instructor; or, the Art of Spelling, Improved... Henry Dixon. Published by D. Henchman, Boston. (Alston. First London Edition 1728. See entry under 1731, The Youth's Instructor in the English Tongue... published in Boston in 1731, and which then had fourteen more editions by 1771. Alston stated the 1731 entry was:

“A plagiarism from Dixon's spelling-book.”

1753 The Youth's Instructor in the English Tongue: or, A Spelling Book,... John Owen, Third Edition. To Which is Added, a Practical English Grammar. by Thomas Dilworth. Published by James Chattin, Philadelphia. (Alston's entry, on Addenda, page 152, stated it originally was published in London by J. Oswald and J. Huggonson in 1732. Alston said:

“The spelling lists are arranged alphabetically, so that the work could serve as an elementary spelling-dictionary (the first of its kind produced in the eighteenth century).”



It was probably not meant for beginners. Wickersham cited a Spelling Book by Owen published in Philadelphia in 1754 or before, and it was probably this. The original edition may have come out before the 1732 date cited by Alston, as the 1731 Boston “collection” cited above gave an “Owen” as one of its sources.

1755 The Pennsylvania Primer, Lancaster, Pa. (Mentioned by Wickersham)

1757 The Youth’s Instructor in the English Tongue, or the Art of Spelling Improved (According to page 87 of Reeder’s book, this was in George A. Plimpton’s New York collection. See 1731 entry and 1770 below.)

1762 A Little Pretty Pocket Book, Intended For The Instruction and Amusement Of Little Master Tommy, And Pretty Miss Polly. With Two Letters from Jack the Giant-Killer. New-York: Printed by Hugh Gaine, 1762. (This edition is cited by Welch, referring to “Evans 9159.” The Library of Congress has the First Worcester Edition, published by Isaiah Thomas in 1787. The London original was published in 1744, and is discussed above in the 1744 American entry on The Child’s New Play-Thing; Being a Spelling Book... originally published in London in 1742 by T. Cooper. A Little Pretty Pocket Book is not really a beginning reading book, although it contains alphabets, but apparently was meant to be read to a little child by an adult or to be given to a child who could already read. Isaiah Thomas published much of John Newbery’s material from England, including A Little Pretty Pocket Book. Mary F. Thwaite stated in From Primer to Pleasure in Reading, The Horn Book, Inc., Boston, 1963, that this successful book was Newbery’s:

“...first little book for the amusement of children, which the unknown publisher brought out within a few months of coming from London.”

Newbery had previously been in Reading, where he had published in a small way since 1740. The foreword on page 10 stated:

“... Let him read and make him understand what he reads. No sentence should be passed over without a strict examination of the truth of it; and though this may be thought hard at first and seem to retard the boy in his progress, yet a little practice will make it familiar, and a method of reasoning will be acquired which will be of use to him all his life after.”

It is of great interest that “reading for meaning” as the primary objective in a little child’s book was proposed, apparently for the first time anywhere, in the very first of Newbery’s publications for children, within a few months of Newbery’s arriving in London in 1744. So many of Newbery’s books for children were watershed materials, and, as noted elsewhere, Newbery specifically stated he was trying to influence children’s development. However, it was not until after 1818, after the extensive and widespread wars of the ensuing period had subsided, that “meaning” as the primary aim in beginning reading instruction began to take over from “sound” in beginning reading instruction in the English-speaking world. The real change came in America in 1826, but earlier in England with the publication some time unknown before 1823 but after 1808 of Andrew Bell’s revised material for monitorial schools.)

1766 The Child’s Best Instructor in Spelling and Reading, by John Gignoux. (The later Library of Congress 1769 copy was “Revised by John Entick, Author of the New Spelling Dictionary.” This 1766 edition, published by William Bradford, Philadelphia, and Garret Noel, New York, was listed by Alston, which listing he took from Evans, although Alston said the 1766 copies cannot now be located. The book was published first by Edward Dilly in London in 1757 according to Alston or 1758 according to the Library of Congress fifth London edition in 1769. Code 8. As discussed elsewhere, the French Gignoux was attempting to show English pronunciation, so difficult for foreigners to learn. Yet he only showed

accentuation of syllables, not synthetic phonics. Curiously, Thomas Sheridan, Jr., began his work on true synthetic Pascal-type phonics in 1758.)

1768 *The Art of Reading: Or, The English Tongue Made Familiar and Easy to the Meanest Capacity.....*, by Philip Sproson, Published First by J. Clarke & C. Hitch, London, England, 1740. (The 1740 edition was listed by Alston, which has surviving copies. Alston listed a second London edition of 1752 which has no surviving copy, but which was mentioned in *Scots Magazine*, XIV, 1752, 320. The *Williamsburg Gazette* in Williamsburg, Virginia, advertised for sale “new” arrivals of books by ship, reading “Alex. Purdie and John Dixon, at the Post Office. ...we have imported the following books.” Sometimes a list read, “for the use of schools, viz.,” followed by a long list of titles. The general list of books for sale in the February 25, 1768, edition included Philip Sproson’s spelling book, as well as Dilworth’s spelling book, Dyche’s spelling book, Fenning’s spelling book, Johnson’s spelling dictionary and Johnson’s dictionary, Sheridan on education, and Sheridan on elocution. A separate section showed books for children and 37 were listed, including “Primmers” with no titles, Horn Books, Infant Tutor, Lilliput Magazine, Pretty Plaything, Pretty Pocketbook, Robinson Crusoe, Royal Battledores, Tom Thumb’s Folio, Goody Two Shoes, etc. The children’s books were apparently almost all Newbery’s, plus Exposition of the Book of Common Prayer, History of England, and Lives of the Apostles. It is obvious a lively book market existed in Virginia, and that one of the books being imported from England in 1768, and probably earlier, was Sproson’s spelling book.)

1769 *The Spelling Book, and Child’s Play Thing....*, Anonymous, Published by Timothy Green, New London. (Alston. Possibly related to *The Child’s New Play-Thing; Being a Spelling Book Intended To make the Learning to Read a Diversion instead of a Task*, listed above under 1744, which was first published in London in 1742 by T. Cooper.)

1769 *The Universal Spelling Book; or, A New and Easy Guide to the English Language*, Daniel Fenning. Boston. (Alston. First Published in London in 1756. Also published in Boston in 1771 by Edes and Gill, in Providence in 1773 and 1784 by John Carter, in New York in 1787 by Samuel Campbell and in 1788 by Hugh Gaines, and in Philadelphia in 1799 by John Bioren for G. Douglas (Peterborough).)

1769-1773 - *A New Primer, Or, Child’s Best Guide. Containing, The most familiar Words of one Syllable, ranged in such order as to void (sic) the Jingle of rhyme, which draws off Children’s Attention from the Knowledge of the Letters to the sound of the Words. The Method here pursued being found, by experience, to render Spelling more easy to the Learner, and less troublesome to the Teacher, then (sic) the common one heretofore practised. With Variety of Reading Lessons. By David Manson, Schoolmaster in Belfast [Ireland]. Philadelphia: Printed by John Dunlap, at the Newest Printing Office, in Market-street. (1769-1773).64 pages; 32 leaves. (The foregoing is from Heartman’s listing. Alston said it was advertised in Belfast, Ireland, in 1758, so it dates at least from that year. Alston listed 8 other editions, one in Philadelphia in 1779, and the last Irish editions with some change in title were 1798, 1826 and 1845. Alston did not list this edition which Heartman saw, held by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Heartman wrote, concerning the title, *The New Primer*, on which he entered six unrelated texts, only one of which was by Manson:*

Heartman said that the first three with this title were greatly like the New England Primer type, but the others he described as “the hybrid type of this time.” Heartman noted that a very active Philadelphia printer, John Dunlap, had never printed a New England Primer. It is astonishing that with such information it never seemed to occur to Heartman that the reason for Dunlap’s failing to do so, and for the “hybrid type of this time” is that the idea of a New England Primer monopoly in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is only a latter-day myth.

Yet Heartman was not a judge of what constituted a spelling-book so-called “primer,” in comparison to the religious catechism type of primer. However, it is obvious from the information in this title, and from the fact that its author was a schoolmaster, that this was meant primarily as a spelling book. That Alston included it in his listing of spelling books further confirms that it was truly a spelling book. See the 1763 entry for W. Dunlap of Philadelphia, possibly the predecessor to John Dunlap at the “Newest Printing Office” in Philadelphia about 1769.)

1769 A New Book for Children to Learn In; With Many Wholesome Meditations. Stephen Crisp, Published by Solomon Southwick, Newport. (Alston lists this as a spelling book)

1770 The Youth’s Instructor in the English Tongue, or the Art of Spelling Improved, Boston (per C. Johnson, p. 61. See 1731 and 1757 above.)

1776 A New Primer. Norwich - Printed by John Trumbull; Bound and Sold by Henry Spencer at East-Greenwich in Rhode Island, 1776. 32 leaves. (This information was given by Heartman, who said a copy was available at John Carter Brown Library in Providence, Rhode Island. Whether it is a catechism type of “primer” like the New England Primer or a true beginning spelling book is not known.)

1776 The Pennsylvania Spelling-Book, or Youth’s Friendly Instructor and Monitor, Anthony Benezet, Published by Joseph Crukshank, Philadelphia. (Alston lists 1776 and 1779 Philadelphia editions, 1782 and 1789 Providence editions, and an 1800 Dublin (Pennsylvania?) edition by John Gough. L. of C. has a 1779 copy. Code 8. Discussed by Wickersham. In the Preface, Benezet said:

“In the course of above thirty years teaching.... I have also observed, that some of our longer words made up of short syllables were more easily managed, by beginners, than many shorter ones: which has induced me to select and place the more familiar words of two, and even three syllables, before some words of one syllable, which are more difficult to be pronounced and understood. The columns of words undivided into syllables, I have found very useful in forwarding pupils, as well as preventing the bad habit many children fall into, of reading falsly, (sic), by guessing at words of several syllables, which may, in a great measure, be prevented, by being made careful to divide those undivided words, and afterwards to read the same words leisurely, by syllables....”

Benezet obviously taught beginning readers how to syllabicate undivided words for themselves, just as the ancient Romans had done, which was a heavy emphasis on “sound.” Syllabication had been clearly explained in the Irish Spelling Book of 1740, discussed elsewhere, so probably still had been in wide use about that time, but that ancient practice was apparently gradually dying out, as a pronounced shift appeared from emphasis on the sound-bearing syllable to the meaning-bearing word. For instance, Noah Webster did not teach syllabication in his 1783 speller, merely showed multi-syllable words already divided. Noah Webster’s excellent Code 10 speller must therefore be acknowledged as one of the primary culprits responsible for the shift from the syllable to the word in the teaching of beginning reading in English.

1778 A New Guide to the English Tongue, Thomas Dilworth (English original was 1740). Wickersham cited an American edition of Dilworth’s speller printed by Francis Bailey at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1778. “at the darkest period of the Revolutionary War....” That edition referred to the cutting off of imports during the war as the reason for its publication. Wickersham’s remarks on that edition have been quoted at length in the body of this history. See the earlier 1747 entry for Benjamin Franklin’s American edition of Dilworth’s speller.

1778 A Guide to the English Tongue, Thomas Dyché, Newbern (North Carolina? It was published during the American Revolution so was probably American. Listed by Alston. First London Edition 1707.)

1779 A Primer. Adorned With A Beautiful Head Of General Washington And Other Copper Plate Cuts. Philadelphia: Printed for Walters and Norman, June 23, 1779. (This information is given by Heartman, who cited Evans No. 16480 and Hildeburn No. 3933, one of whom apparently gave the sentence Heartman placed in quotations, "This contains the first portrait of Washington engraved in America." He also cited the Pennsylvania Evening Post, June 23, 1779. Considering its origin in Pennsylvania, it might be a Fox speller, discussed in this appendix under the date of 1702.)

1779 The Newest American Primer. Philadelphia, Styner & Cist. 1779, Hildeburn No. 3914. (Heartman listed the previous information, presumably taken from a catalog by "Hildeburn." Heartman listed no surviving library copies.)

1782 The New American Spelling Book... John Peirce, Junior, Published by Joseph Crukshank, Philadelphia (Alston said, "The spelling-lists are confessedly based on Dilworth." Per Alston, seven editions in all to 1800, all Philadelphia except the seventh in Wilmington in 1800 by Peter Brynberg. Early American Textbooks shows on page 119 a sixth revised edition of 152 pages by Joseph Crukshank of Philadelphia in 1808. Nietz wrongly stated The New American Spelling Book was first published in Philadelphia in 1795, and had a sixth printing by 1808. Wickersham also listed this book.)

1783 A Grammatical Institute, of the English Language, Comprising, an Easy, Concise, and Systematic Method of Education... Part I. Containing, a New and Accurate Standard of Pronunciation... Noah Webster, Published by Hudson & Goodwin, Hartford, for the Author. (The title became shortened to The American Spelling Book by the 1787 Young & M'Culloch Philadelphia edition. Alston lists about 64 editions by 1800 and about 166 afterwards, most before 1829 when Webster's revised speller was first published, which is entered later under 1829. Harvard 1807 copy was published by John West, Boston. Code 10.

R. R. Reeder quoted Webster on page 29 of his history of reading, referring to The District School as It Was, page 24. Webster was reported to have said:

"In the year 1782, while the American army was lying on the bank of the Hudson, I kept a classical school in Goshen, Orange County, New York. I there compiled two small elementary books for teaching the English language. The country was then impoverished, intercourse with Great Britain was interrupted, schoolbooks were scarce, and hardly attainable, and there was no certain prospect of peace."

Webster's 1783 series eventually grew into four books. The First Part was his speller, and the Second Part his grammar, both apparently published in 1783. Webster's first reading book was published in 1785, the Third Part of a Grammatical Institute of the English Language. His reader was titled, An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking. In 1790, Webster wrote The Little Reader's Assistant to come after his speller, which speller also included reading selections. Therefore, in addition to his grammar, his series, in effect, had three books to practice reading, The American Spelling Book, The Little Reader's Assistant, and An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking.

Numerous copies of the Webster spellers with different publishing dates are in the New York Public Library. Interestingly, one early copy shows pencil notations which were obviously made by a speaker of German. The Webster "pronouncing" speller was apparently being used to learn English spelling and pronunciation. It seems highly probable that for many years large numbers of Webster's cheap

“pronouncing” spellers were bought by poor but educated immigrants so that they could learn how to spell and how to pronounce English. Copies of his spellers could serve that purpose very well today!)

1784 A New Primer, or Little Boy and Girl’s Spelling Book, Robert Ross. Published by Haswell & Russell, Bennington. (Alston. Lists ca. 1786 edition at Springfield, 1788 at Boston, and 1790 at Middletown.)

1785 The New American Spelling Book, or the Child’s Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading the English Tongue... Isaiah Thomas, Published by Isaiah Thomas, Worcester. (Alston said that it was Evans who attributed this to Isaiah Thomas in Evans’ listing, which listing from Evans Alston presumably just copied, no paper copy presumably being extant.)

1785 The New American Spelling Book; or A Complete Primer:... Robert Ross, Published by Thomas & Samuel Green, New-Haven. (Alston said this was “a different work” from the 1784 Ross entry.)

1785 The Vermont Primer, or Young Child’s Guide to the English Language, Anonymous. Published by Haswell & Russell, Bennington. (Alston.)

1785 Spelling Primer with a Catholic Catechism, Robert Molyneux, S. J., used in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Not extant and exact title unknown. Unlisted by Alston. Mentioned in Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, p. 80, Vol. V.

1785 The Only Sure Guide to the English Tongue; or, New Pronouncing Spelling Book, William Perry, Pub. by Isaiah Thomas, Worcester. Massachusetts. (Alston, from 1776 Scottish edition. Eighteen American editions by 1800, and thirty afterwards to 1835. The last three were widely spaced: 1825, 1832 and 1835, reflecting the decline in use of such Webster-like spellers after 1826. Harvard copy of 1817. Code 10.)

1785 The Art of Speaking, Hugh Gaine, Printed in New York (Nietz showed on page 62. An upper-level book.)

1787 An Introduction to Reading and Spelling, William Scott, Published by Thomas Dobson, Philadelphia. (Alston. First edition in Edinburgh in 1776. Scott also wrote Lessons in Elocution, Edinburgh, 1784, used in America.)

1787 The Royal Alphabet; or Child’s Best Instructor. To Which Is Added, The History Of A Little Boy Found Under A Haycock. The First Worcester Edition. Anonymous. Printed at Worcester, Massachusetts. By Isaiah Thomas, And Sold, Wholesale and Retail, at his Book-Store. (Listed by Welch, pages 380 and 381. He said it had been advertised by F. Newbery in The London Chronicle December 31, 1778-January 2, 1779, and was listed by Evans as No. 20688. Welch listed Cornhill (Boston) editions by Samuel Hall in 1793, 1795? and 1802, and Hudson, New York, editions by Ashbel Stoddard in 1794 and 1804. Listed as a spelling book by Alston, citing Evans.)

1787 Goody Two Shoes. The History of Little Goody Twoshoes; Otherwise Called Mrs. Margery Twoshoes, with the means by which she acquired her learning and wisdom, and in consequence thereof her estate. 1st Worcester ed. Printed at Worcester, Massachusetts, by Isaiah Thomas, and sold, wholesale and retail, at his book store, 1787. 158 p. illus. 13 cm. PZ6G639H JuvColl Rare Bk (This description is taken from Americana in Children’s Books, An Exhibition Catalog of Items Chosen and Annotated by the Children’s Book Section and Mounted in the Library of Congress Rare Book Room, November 1974-January 1975, Library of Congress, Washington, 1974. The entry continued:

“Often attributed to Oliver Goldsmith and originally issued by John Newbery in 1765, this chapbook, published in America in 1775 by Hugh Gaine of New York, is one of the most popular and longest lived of the Newbery publications. It is still available today....”

The entry stated that it marked a turning point toward entertainment in children’s literature, and an earlier entry stated that *The New England Primer* “was the American children’s book most widely found in the early colonies.” It is startling that librarians who have access to so much information on early books still docilely accept *The New England Primer* fable, and the fable that America was otherwise a bibliographical wasteland until well after the American Revolution, as far as books for children were concerned, whether printed domestically or imported. Yet in “the early colonies” there is absolutely no record whatsoever of *The New England Primer Enlarged*, other than the 1691 Boston advertisement quoted earlier, and the sole surviving 1727 copy now in the New York Public Library, while there are records of at least six spelling books published in America before 1730. Furthermore, since it is certain that America was largely dependent on London for almost all of its books, it almost certainly must have been buying many of the numerous spellers being printed there. How then can the statement be made that *The New England Primer* was the “book most widely found in the early colonies,” particularly since there does not exist even a single contemporary source confirming that statement?

Furthermore, how can the appearance of *Goody Two Shoes* in 1765 mark “a turning point toward entertainment in children’s literature,” even in America, since the eighteenth century was awash with chapbooks printed in English? They were widely sold, even to the very poor. It is simple-minded to presume that none of those chapbooks found their way across the Atlantic for sale in America, even as early as the first years of the eighteenth century. Oliver Goldsmith, himself, the presumed author of *Goody Two Shoes*, would have teathed on the chapbooks himself, as a boy in Ireland. The 1740 Irish Spelling Book referred with enormous disapproval to such books which had been popular with children in Ireland for some time before 1740. That was many years before that supposed 1765 “turning point.” In addition, the above 1768 entry on Sproson’s speller listed a host of Newbery’s children’s books imported to Williamsburg and on sale there in 1768, many of which must have been written before 1765, and most of them were meant only to entertain. In addition, the eventual publishing flood of New England Primers after 1770 did not precede but actually paralleled the great success of Isaiah Thomas’s spelling books and story books for children. As discussed elsewhere, those New England Primers were obviously being used as church catechisms, not schoolbooks.

Note in the entry above that *Goody Two Shoes* was being sold wholesale and retail in 1787 at Thomas’s book store in Worcester, Massachusetts, deep in blue-nosed New England, in which children at that time were supposed to be almost totally dependent, according to the “experts,” on the Bible and the *New England Primer* for their reading matter. Yet, obviously, those conservative old New Englanders buying those *New England Primer* “catechisms” must also have largely approved of Isaiah Thomas’s materials being sold in his Worcester, Massachusetts, bookstore, because Thomas became enormously successful in Massachusetts, eventually opening offices elsewhere in the United States.

As indicated elsewhere, Peter Brynberg in Wilmington was publishing a long list of entertaining books in 1801 for American children. By 1808, Mathew Carey had put out a seventh edition of Parson Weems’ entertaining “biography” of Washington, which was obviously specifically written for American children. The success of the latter book cannot be doubted, because it has become an American tradition every February 22, Washington’s birthday, to refer to the “I cannot tell a lie” fable that Weems’ book contained of little George, his hatchet, and his father’s cherry tree, and on February 22 cherry pies duly appear for sale in almost every American bakery. The very important publisher, Mathew Carey, discussed in the 1787 entry below, was the publisher of Weems’ book, which is also listed in the 1974 Library of Congress publication mentioned above. Yet, unfortunately that unsatisfactory 1974 Library of Congress

pamphlet not only promoted the New England Primer fable but omitted listing Carey's name as the publisher of Weems' book, even though Carey had a seventh edition of it in print as early as 1808 (and Washington had only died in 1798), and even though the 1978 Library of Congress pamphlet showed publishers' names on other books.)

1787 *The Philadelphia Vocabulary, English and Latin: Put into New Methods, Proper to Acquaint the Learner with Things as Well as Pure Latin Words. Adorned with Twenty-Six Pictures. For the Use of Schools.* By James Greenwood.... Philadelphia. Printed by Carey and Co., 1787. (Listed on page 198 of *Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education*, National Institute of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C.: 1976. It was described as:

“Elementary vocabulary text used as preparation for the study of classical authors. Illustrations are simple woodcuts for children.”

Note that this text proudly boasted of its having twenty-six simple woodcuts in 1787, while, almost a century earlier, the 1691 first edition of *The New England Primer Enlarged* must have had at least twenty-four woodcuts. Those 1691 woodcuts must have been not only very valuable, as has been discussed, but their use must have been highly unusual at that early date..

Greenwood who died in 1737 had written “*An Essay Towards a Practical English Grammar*,” published in London by 1711. The Carey material published in Philadelphia in 1787, a book of 123 pages called “*The Philadelphia Vocabulary*,” therefore had to be an adaptation of some other very old material by Greenwood. That 1787 adaptation very probably was made by Carey himself, who may have become familiar with the original material years before when Carey had been a student in Ireland. (Carey's background has been discussed at length elsewhere in this history.) Carey had apparently been a protege of Benjamin Franklin, since he had worked for Franklin as a printer when Franklin was in Paris. Lafayette gave Carey the necessary financial backing which made it possible for Carey to publish news of legislative proceedings after Carey arrived in America. Those legislative news notes were very popular. When Carey published this textbook in 1787, he was apparently starting to work in the new field for him of textbooks. Since Franklin had promoted “English” (non-Latin) grammar schools, it is therefore of interest that one of Carey's very first books and perhaps even his first book, other than his legislative news notes, was an adaptation of a very old Latin school book. See the 1797(?), 1798(?) and 1800 entries on Carey spellers.

1788 *The ABC With The Catechism, with Prayers of Academy of Protestant Episcopal Church, Philadelphia.* Church of England, Printed in Philadelphia by Zachariah Pozilson, Jun. (Listed in *Library of Congress Catalog* under call number BX 5140.A2, 1788, rare book collection. See the 1799 entry, *The American Primer; Or Young Child's HornBook...* apparently, like this, another American Episcopal Church version of the ABC with the catechism that had originated in sixteenth-century Elizabethan England.)

1788 *The New Primer. Or Little Boy and Girls Spelling Book; Amended, and Enlarged, By The Original Author.* Boston: Printed and Sold by B. Edes and Son, No. 49 Marlboro'-Street 1788. 98 pages. (Heartman reported this information, noting that a copy was at the Boston Public Library. See *The Columbian Primer* of 1790, printed by Edes, listed below.)

1790 *The Philadelphia Spelling Book*, by John Barry, reportedly the first book entered for copyright in the United States, being registered in the Clerk's Office of 1<sup>st</sup> District of Pennsylvania on June 9, 1790, according to the January page of the *Monthly Monitor*, an appointment calendar copyrighted by Baldwin Cooke Company, U. S. A., 1997. See the 1821 entry for *The Philadelphia Spelling Book* by John Barry, which was listed by Wickersham in his history as published by David Hogan in Philadelphia. However,

this 1790 spelling book was not listed by Alston in his massive listing of spelling books published up to 1801, which suggests that a review of copyright lists might turn up other forgotten beginning spelling and reading texts.

1790 *The Columbian Primer, Or The School Mistresses Guide To Children, In Their First Steps to Learning. Part I. Containing Words of one and two Syllables. With an Appendix, Containing Sundry Matters which Children may be taught to say by Heart.* By Samuel Freeman, Esq. Boston, Printed by Edes and Son. Publish'd according to act of Congress. M.DCC.XC. (This information was given by Heartman. C. Johnson on p. 197 listed an 1802 book with this title written by H. Mann, and Heartman also described that book, which is listed later. See also the different 1816 book with the title, *The Columbia Primer*, published by J. C. Totten. See the 1788 entry for *The New Primer* printed by B. Edes and Son, No. 49 Marlboro' Street, Boston, who were the publishers of this text. Heartman indicated that both of Edes' texts are at the Boston Public Library.)

1790 *New Pennsylvania Spelling Book*, David Sower, Norristown. (Wickersham gave a 1790 date, and, considering that Wickersham wrote in Pennsylvania about the mid-nineteenth century, Wickersham is likely to be correct. Alston cited two existing copies with a 1799 date for the *New Pennsylvania Spelling-Book; Calculated for the Use of Children, in Spelling and Reading*, by Anonymous.)

1792 *The Child's Companion, Being a Concise Spelling Book*, Caleb Bingham, Published by Samuel Hall, Boston. (Alston lists the seventh edition in 1799, and one in 1819 claiming to be the seventeenth. Harvard copy published in 1808 by Manning & Loring, Code 7.)

1792 *The Child's Instructor: Consisting of Easy Lessons for Children...* Volume I, John Ely, Published at Philadelphia (no publisher's name given). (Alston lists seven other editions by 1800 by named publishers at New London, Philadelphia, Norwich, Mount Pleasant, Newfield, and New York. Alston lists eleven other reprints to 1843. Through 1819, six were in New York, one was in Brooklyn and one was in Salem. In 1831, one was at Canandaiuga, in 1833 one was at Bridgeport, and in 1843 one was at Newark, presumably Newark, New Jersey.)

1793 *A New Introduction to Reading: or a Collection of Easy Lessons, Arranged on an Improved Plan*, by S. G., Published by Henry and Patrick Rice, Philadelphia. (Alston lists a fifth edition at Philadelphia by Henry and Patrick Rice in 1796, with a copy in the New York Public Library. Alston said it was a spelling book

1793 *The Child's Instructor, Being an Original Spelling Book, in Two Volumes*, Foster Waterman, Published by Isaiah Thomas and Ebenezer T. Andrews, Boston.

Alston said, "Based on the semi-phonetic spelling adopted by William Perry in his *Royal Standard Dictionary*, 1775."

1796 *The Child's Instructor: Being an Easy Introduction to the Orthography of the Columbian Language*, William A. Sterling, Published by Judah P. Spooner, Fairhaven. (Alston.)

1796 *The Scholar's Primer, or Child's Best Helpmate to Columbian Literature*, Amos Taylor, Published by Anthony Haswell, Bennington (Alston)

1796 *A New Pennsylvania Primer*. By John Simmons. Philadelphia: Printed by Mordecai Jones. (Listed by Heartman, who said the titlepage only survives at the Library of Congress. He also listed the following, with the same name but no date, possibly unconnected with this:



No Date: New Pennsylvania Primer; Being An Approved Selection of Words, The Most Easy of Pronunciation, Adapted to the Capacities of Young Children. Harrisburg, Pa. Printed And Published by G. S. Peters. 36 pages. Heartman said a copy is in the library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He said the cover reads, "New Pennsylvania Primer. Harrisburg. Printed And For Sale By Teo. F. Scheffer.")

1797(?) The American Primer, or an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading. Anonymous. Printed and Sold by Mathew Carey, Philadelphia (N.Y.P.L. has "The Fourth Improved Edition" of 1813. Code 7. Alston shows an 1800 date for this book, citing Evans. However, either Carey's American Primer or his Columbian Spelling and Reading Book, shown below under 1798, were certainly in print by 1797 or before. That is proven by the memoirs of an Englishman who was a tutor in America in 1797, at which time a spelling book of Carey's was mentioned to him, but the title was not given. Those memoirs have been cited in the body of this history. Carey was presumably not the author of either book but only the publisher. See the entries below for Carey's Columbian text and one other text of his. See the discussion on Carey in the body of this history.

The American Primer is listed by Heartman under his entry 15 dated 1800, citing a title page that survived at the Library of Congress. Apparently the Pennsylvania copyright office long ago threw away the body of the books in their copyright collection, retaining only the title pages! That is because they apparently sent only the title pages to Washington, after Washington took over issuing all American copyrights. Heartman also listed many surviving copies of the fourth edition of 1813 under entry 24. Heartman quoted Dr. Rosenbach's description:

"...the text consists of syllabaries and reading lessons, with an alphabet illustrated by oval woodcuts as the running headline to each page.")

1797 An Introduction to Reading and Spelling. Being the First Part of a Columbian Exercise.... Abner Alden. Published by Isaiah Thomas and Ebenezer T. Andrews, Boston. (Alston, citing reprints to 1824. Harvard has a copy of Part II with an 1812 copyright date published in 1826, but the title reads, "An Introduction to Spelling and Reading, Columbian Exercise, Volume Second." From the Volume II content, it is probable that Volume I used a Code 10 approach.)

1797 An American Spelling Book, Asa Rhoads, Published in 1802 by Daniel Lawrence, Stanford, New York. (Harvard copy. Code 10.)

1797 First Lessons for Children, printed by T. Dobson, Philadelphia. (N.Y.P.L. copy. Code 8)

1797 A New Introduction to Reading; or, A Collection of Easy Lessons....William Enfield, Fourth Edition, London, Printed: Baltimore, Re-Printed by John Hayes. (Alston listed this as a spelling book. The following appears in Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education, National Institute of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D. C.: 1976, item 160:

"Enfield, William. 1741-1797. The Speaker, or Miscellaneous Pieces Selected from Various Authors, and Disposed under Proper Heads, with a View to Facilitate the Improvement of Youth in Reading and Speaking. To which is Prefixed an Essay on Elocution. by William Enfield... from the Sixth European Edition.... Philadelphia. Printed by W. W. Woodward, 1799."

The dates of the original English editions of Enfield's books are unknown. The first Enfield book shown above was obviously meant by Enfield to precede his latter book, forming a series, just as William Scott's Introduction to Spelling and Reading was meant to precede his Lessons in Elocution, so popular in

America. Therefore, when Noah Webster produced his school series which also started with a speller in 1783, he was only following a norm.)

1797 Universal Spelling-Book. Anonymous. Published by Peter Brynberg, Wilmington. (Alston. Cited Evans and said, "No copy located. An edition of Fenning?" See 1769 entry on Fenning.)

1797-1798 The American Orthography, in Three Books, Enos Weed, Published by Douglas and Nichols, Danbury. (Alston)

1797 The Orator's Assistant; Being a Selection of Dialogues, Alexander Thomas (Listed by Nietz. An upper-level book.)

1798? The Columbian Spelling and Reading Book: or, an Easy and Alluring Guide to Spelling and Reading.... Anonymous. Printed for Mathew Carey, Philadelphia, by W. & R. Dickson, Lancaster. (Alston. Also Nietz, p. 17. Alston cited a sixth edition in Philadelphia in 1811. See comments under 1797 date on Carey's American Primer, and the possible date for this one. See the discussion on Carey in the body of this history.)

1798 The Child's Spelling Book, Calculated to Render Reading Completely Easy to Little Children;... Elisha Babcock. Compiled by a Printer. Published by John Babcock, Hartford. (Alston lists four editions to 1802; C. Johnson lists on p. 191)

1798 The Kentucky Spelling Book: or, Young Scholar's Assistant. Containing a Variety of Easy Lessons.... Anonymous. Published by Hunter and Beaumont, Washington, Kentucky. (Alston cited Evans. No copy located.)

1798 (Should be 1797) An American Spelling-Book Designed for the Use of Our Common Schools, Asa Rhoads, (No publisher indicated), New York. (Alston cited Evans as his source, and said that no copy had been located. However, Harvard library has a copy under a copyright date of 1797, not 1798 as cited by Alston. It was published in 1802 by Daniel Lawrence of Stanford, New York, and rates a Code 10.)

1798 The Natural Teacher; or, the Best Spelling Book for Little Children. The Second Edition,... Noah Worcester, Published by George Hough, Concord, for the Author. (Alston.)

1798 Essays on Practical Education - Richard and Maria Edgeworth, Dublin (A famous education guide. See comments on Richard Edgeworth, an Anglo-Irishman, later under Bumstead (1838), in Part 4, in Part 5, and in Appendix E. Maria Edgeworth, Richard Edgeworth's daughter, became a renowned author of children's stories. See the 1799 entry, below, for their beginning reading book, A Rational Primer.

1799 A Rational Primer. By the authors of Practical Education... Bristol, Biggs & Cottle for J. Johnson, London. This work by Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth is shown by Alston in his list of works on "Pronunciation," not on his list of spelling books. Alston described it as:

"[Pronunciation; phonetic spelling.] The pagination is erratic. Pronunciation indicated by the use of diacritical marks. See Plate XXVIII."

In Practical Education written in 1798, Richard Lovell Edgeworth said he prepared his phonic materials before he saw Sheridan's, which certainly suggests that Edgeworth of Ireland, probably like Sheridan of Ireland, might have had a copy of The Irish Spelling Book of 1740. Nevertheless, Sheridan's lectures on pronunciation were famous all over the British Isles after about 1758, so Edgeworth may

merely have heard of Sheridan's work second-hand and invented his own method, once he had the general idea. The very fact that Edgeworth gave that disclaimer in 1798 establishes that Sheridan's work was generally acknowledged in 1798 as the original work on synthetic phonic pronunciation in English. However, Noah Webster, obviously using Sheridan's work, produced a spelling book in 1783 which was highly phonic and which Alston listed as a spelling book, and Alston also listed Perry's pronouncing spelling book as a spelling book. The fact that Alston did not list Edgeworth's pronouncing book as a spelling book raises unanswered questions about its nature for beginning reading. In his 1798 book, Edgeworth had strongly opposed the use of the syllabary in beginning reading, so it is highly probable that he would not have included the syllabary in this book which was presumably meant as a beginning book. Edgeworth may also have avoided the columns of spelling words, as well as avoiding the syllabary. If that were the case, then Edgeworth's 1799 book would have the first whole-word "primer" approach to the teaching of beginning reading in English and would have been intentionally meant to replace the use of a spelling book for beginners. It would therefore have been of far, far more long-term influence than has ever been recognized. See also the 1798 entry on the Edgeworth's book, *Essays on Practical Education*.)

1799 *The American Primer; Or Young Child's Horn-Book; Where he may learn the Alphabet, and the rudiments of Spelling & Reading. To Which is Added, The Catechism of the Episcopal Church, And That Of The Assembly Of Divines, With many other things instructive and entertaining to children.* Newfield: Printed And Sold By Lazarus Beach.

(Listed by Heartman in *American Primers, Indian Primers, Royal Primers and Thirty-Seven Other Types of Non-New England Primers Issued Before 1830*. Heartman indicated a copy is in the American Antiquarian Society. Heartman's description indicates this was probably meant as a beginning book for children. Yet, as discussed at length in this history, the New England Primer was clearly not meant to teach children initially to read, but only for children to practice reading and to study their catechism once they already knew how to read. Even the commonly used sub-title of the New England Primer suggests that it was intended for reading practice: "An Easy and Pleasant Guide to the Art of Reading." Note the use of the word, "art." In contrast, the title of this 1799 book clearly indicates it was meant for beginners.

See the entry for 1788 of *The ABC With The Catechism, with Prayers of Academy of Protestant Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, Church of England*, apparently like this another American Episcopal Church version of the ABC with the catechism that dated back to sixteenth-century Elizabethan England.)

1799 *The Young Ladies and Gentlemen's Spelling Book... Containing a Criterion of Rightly Spelling and Pronouncing the English Language*, Caleb Alexander, Published by Carter & Wilkinson of Providence. (Alston lists the Isaiah Thomas edition of 1799. Copy of 1799 edition in L. of C., Code 10. Alexander taught for 30 years. Alexander of Massachusetts showed pronunciation in his dictionary published in 1800 by respelling, rather than by diacritical marks as had the 1798 dictionary by Samuel Johnson, Jr., of New Haven, Conn., who almost certainly had no connection to the famous English dictionary author of the same name, Samuel Johnson. That 1798 dictionary had carried endorsements by Noah Webster and 18 others, according to the 1963 *Encyclopedia Britannica* article, "Dictionary." The article said, however, that Webster stated a few weeks before Alexander's dictionary came out that Webster, himself, intended to prepare a dictionary series. Webster's first dictionary in 1806 had 40,000 words and his 1828 masterpiece had 70,000.)

1799 *The Columbian Spelling Book*, Benjamin Heaton, Published by the Author, Wrentham, Mass. (Alston listed a Fourth edition in 1800 but follows that with a question mark. C. Johnson mentioned on p. 195. Harvard library has an 1801 copy of Heaton's higher level book, *The Columbian Preceptor*.)

1799 A Spelling Book or The First Part of a Grammar of the English Language, as Written and Spoken in the United States, Enoch Hale, Published by William Butler, Northampton. (Alston.)

1799 The Maine Spelling Book, Thomas Mellen Prentiss, Published by Charles & John Prentiss, for the author, Leominster. (Alston.)

1799 The Young Child's Accidence; Being a Small Spelling Book for Little Children, Jonathan Grout, Published by Daniel Greenleaf, Worcester. (Alston, who said it was reprinted in Montpelier 1808 but placed a question mark after that date.)

1799 New Pennsylvania Spelling-Book; Calculated for the Use of Children, in Spelling and Reading.... Anonymous. Norristown, David Sower. (Listed by Alston.)

1800 The Child's Guide to Spelling and Reading, Fourth edition printed by Mathew Carey in 1810. (L. of C. copy, Code 7. Alston cited Evans but said that no copy had been located, obviously not having been told of this copy. See the discussion on Carey in the body of this history.)

1800 The Modern Primer, or a New and Easy Guide to Spelling and Reading. Anonymous. Published by Thomas Grieves, Elizabeth (Hager's Town). (Alston cited Evans but said that no copy had been located.)

1800 The English Orthographical Expositor, Being a Compendious Selection of the Most Useful Words in the English Language.... Third Edition. Daniel Jaudon, Published by D. Hogan, Philadelphia. (Alston.)

1800 The First Step to Learning: or, Little Children's Spelling and Reading Book, Abner Reed. Published by Luther Pratt for the Author, East Windsor. (Alston.)

1800 The Young Child's Easy Guide to the Seats of Science, Andrew Selden. Published by Anthony Haswell, Bennington. (Alston.)

1800 The Plain Spelling Book, and Easy Guide to Reading:... William Woodbridge, Published by Tertius Dunning, Middletown. (Listed by Alston, who said it was also listed by Evans, so "Middletown" is American, but in what state is unknown. Alston listed copies at four American libraries.)

1800 The Child's First Primer; or, A new and Easy Guide To The Invaluable Science of A. B. C., Philadelphia: Printed for W. Jones, Stationer, No. 30, North Fourth Street. 1800. 28 pages; 16 leaves. No signatures. Copies: Pequot L. (Quoted from Heartman's citation. This book may be largely a variation on English materials such as Newbery's. Certainly the phrase, the science of A. B. C., appears in Newbery's Little Goody Two Shoes. Heartman said that this contained the nursery rhymes, 'A was an Apple-Pye,' and 'A was an Archer.' He quoted Luther M. Livingston, who said this book was:

'Possibly the first to contain these rhymes, and a very early specimen of a radical departure from the thralldom of the famous but dreary New England Primer.'

Yet there had been no publishing "thralldom" to the New England Primer either before or in 1800, but both Heartman and Livingston apparently had an unshakable mindset on the central importance of that publication in children's books. To show how ludicrous that mindset was, in the New York Public Library are two copies of Mrs. Barbauld's Lessons for Children from 4 to 5 years old (New York Public Library Call Number \*KVD Barbauld). The little "books" are obviously chapbooks. They were published in Wilmington, Delaware in 1801, "Printed and sold by P. Brynberg." On the last page is an

advertisement for 23 OF BRYNBERG'S OTHER PUBLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN IN 1801! That advertisement obviously confirms the existence of a very lively and obviously profitable children's book market in the United States in 1801, and that was only one year after publication of the book listed above which was supposed to challenge the imaginary "thralldom" to the New England Primer. Brynberg's advertisement read, "Books Printed and Sold by Peter Brynberg, Market Street, Wilmington, for the Entertainment and Instruction of the Little Masters and Misses in the United States," and his list consisted of these titles:

Valentine and Orson, Seven Wise Masters, Seven Wise Mistresses, Academy of Compliments, Arabian Nights Entertainments, Book of Knowledge, Universal Dream Book, Robinson Crusoe, Deeds of Old, Fairy Tales, Prompta(?), History of Jane (?), Shaw and Fair Rosamond, Funny Companion, Oeconomy of Human Life, Catechism of Nature, History of the Bible, History of Little Jack, History of Margery Two Shoes, History of Dick by (?) John, Entertaining Tales for Children, The Father's Legacy to his Daughters, Little Masters' and Misses' Delights, and Gulliver's Travels.

Therefore, Brynberg, who was only one of America's many publishers at that time, was producing 23 different "Entertaining Tales for Children" by 1801. Obviously, he only did so because a lively market for children's books must have been in existence for some time before 1801. That fact alone certainly refutes the idea that there could have been any American "thralldom" to the "dreary" New England Primer. (The fact that it was "dreary," however, is not being challenged!)

Livingston was in error concerning the original dates of the alphabet verses. Mary F. Thwaite stated on page 6 of *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading* that "A was an Archer and shot at a Frog" had appeared in "T. W."s reading and spelling book of eight pages, *A Little Book For Little Children* (ca. 1702). Very probably the other verse also was earlier than this 1800 book.

1802 *The Child's First Book, Being an Easy Introduction to Spelling and Reading*, Lincoln & Edmunds, Boston (1816 edition. Harvard copy. Code 7.)

1802 *The Columbian Primer, or an easy, systematic introduction to the English language. intended for the use of schools in the United States.* By Herman Mann. Dedham: printed & sold by H. Mann. 1802. Published according to act of Congress. Sold also-by the booksellers in Boston, Salem, Worcester, Portsmouth (N. H.) Hartford, (Con.) Providence (R. I.) and at other principal places in the United States.

(The foregoing quotation, obviously from the title page, was given by Heartman, who listed a copy at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester. C. Johnson mentioned this book on p. 197. See the 1790 entry for *The Columbian Primer* written by Samuel Freeman, a different book, and the 1816 different book published by J. C. Totten.)

1802 *The Franklin Family Primer, Containing A New and Useful Selection of Moral Lessons. Adorned With A Great Variety Of Elegant Cuts; Calculated To Strike A Lasting Impression on The Tender Minds Of Children. By a Friend to Youth.* (Rev. Samuel Willard. L. of C. 1803 copy, the fourth edition. Code 7. 1802 edition and eight other editions listed and discussed by Heartman, the last in 1812. The 1802 edition and most others were published by J. M. Dunham, Boston. Heartman said Willard was born in Petersham, Mass., in 1775 and died in 1859, being sightless the last thirty years of his life. Heartman said the publishers of other primers, Manning and Loring, apparently purchased this primer from J. M. Dunham, and then called their publication, "Improved."

The Franklin Family Primer has been discussed at length in this history. It is of interest that, in 1868, the Loring company of Boston, presumably the successor to Manning and Loring, published the first of

Horatio Alger's fantastically successful children's books, *Ragged Dick*; or *Street Life in New York with the Bootblacks*, according to the 1974 Library of Congress pamphlet, *Americana in Children's Books*.)

1802 *Art of Reading*, Daniel Staniford, Published by West and Richardson, Boston, in 1814 (Harvard copy. An upper-level book.)

1802 *The Union Primer: or, an easy introduction to reading and spelling. to which is added The Assembly's Catechism*. Philadelphia: Printed And Sold By Joseph Charless, North West corner of Market and Fourth-streets. May, 1802. (This is cited as item 178 by Heartman, who said the title page only survives at the Library of Congress, like so many other early primers originating in Pennsylvania.)

1802 *American Definition Spelling Book*, Rev. Abner Kneeland, Pub. 1826 George Hough, Concord. (Harvard copy. Code 6. Discussed in this history. Hough had a second edition in 1814, third in 1820, and this fourth edition in 1826, showing the original date of the book as 1802. Harvard has a card for *The American Definition Spelling Book*, Kingsbery & Blake's first ed., Windsor, Vt., Nahum Mower, 1804. Therefore, presumably the first edition in 1802 was by Kingsbery & Blake.)

1803 *The Understanding Reader, or Knowledge before Oratory, Being a New Selection of Lessons*, Daniel Adams (An upper-level book. Nietz listed on page 101. An 1803 copy published by Adams & Wilder of Leominster, Mass., is on page 75 of *Early American Textbooks*, with an 1804 second edition by them, and a 9th edition by Isaiah Thomas, shown as at Boston, 1819. E. B. Huey wrote in *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, 1908, page 253, "Reading books had been taken into the service of the school subjects as early as 1824, in the "Agricultural Reader" by Daniel Adams." Therefore, Adams wrote that later book as well.)

1803 *New England Spelling Book*, by Fiske, Brookfield, Massachusetts (Nietz, C. Johnson, N. B. Smith. See the discussion on Fiske and the Pickets, under the 1815 Picket entry.)

1803 *Johnson's Philadelphia Primer. or a First Book for Children*. Published at the Book-Store of Jacob Johnson, No. 14, Market-Street.

(Listed by Heartman who said the University of Chicago copy has 36 pages, and at the bottom of the last page is shown, "J. Bioren, printer." Heartman lists a Second Edition, Improved in 1804, a Fourth Edition, Improved, in 1804. a Fifth Edition, Improved, in 1805, and a Seventh Edition, Improved, in 1806. See the 1810 edition below. See the 1821 edition by Benjamin Warner, and 1807 and 1824 editions of similar titles.)

1804 *An English Spelling Book*, Lindley Murray, Pub. 1823 by Collins & Co., N. Y. (Harvard copy. Code 7. See the text of this history for a discussion of Murray's popular spellers and readers. On page 13 of *Old Textbooks*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961, John Alfred Nietz stated that Lindley Murray was:

"...born and educated in America, but after a rather successful business career moved to England in 1784. There, after teaching for some time, he became one of the most successful textbook writers in both England and the United States. His *English Reader* and grammar were the most widely used in the United States during our early national period. After writing the grammar and reader, he published *The English Spelling Book with Reading Lessons* in 1804... to be used by beginners and to precede his *English Reader*...."

Murray's *English Reader* was first published in 1799.)

1805 The Columbian Primer for Children. In which they are taught to read English easily and properly. To which is added, a catechism for children of four or five years old. And also, a larger catechism, Formed by the stchester Associated Presbytery. And approved of by the Morris-County Association Presbytery. New York: Printed by L. Nichols, No. 308 Broadway. 1806. 71 pages.

(This listing was given by Heartman, who said a copy is in the Watkinson Library, Hartford, Connecticut. He said the title probably should have been Westchester Associated Presbytery, but the first two letters of Westchester did not print up.)

1805 First Book for Children, Lindley Murray, Pub. 1805 by Collins, Perkins & Co., New York (Harvard copy. Code 7. This was the first part of the 1804 speller listed above. See the text of this history for a discussion of Murray's popular spellers and readers.)

1805 Columbian Orthographer, James Pike, Pub. 1814 by R. P. & C. Williams, Boston (Harvard copy. Code 10.)

1805 The Union Spelling Book, by Albert Picket, New York (Listed by Nietz. Nietz said:

“The Union Spelling-Book printed in New York in 1805 was already the third edition.....”

For information on Picket and his books, see the 1815 entry.)

1806 The Young child's A B C; or, First book. New York, Published by Samuel Wood, no. 362 Pearl-Street, 1806. 16 p. illus. 10 cm. PE1119.A1Y63 JuvColl Rare Bk.

This description was given in *Americana in Children's Books, An Exhibition Catalog of Items Chosen and Annotated by the Children's Book Section and Mounted in the Library of Congress Rare Book Room, November 1974-January 1975, Library of Congress, Washington, 1974*. The title is sometimes given elsewhere as *The Young Child's ABC - New York Primer*. The 1974 entry continued:

“The first of Samuel Wood's many nursery books, this small chapbook has finely engraved woodcuts believed to have been made by Alexander Anderson.”

This book was also listed by C. Johnson, Nietz, and Reeder. Scribner's reproduced a portion on an old brochure, and a portion was reproduced on page 74 of *Early American Textbooks*, with no date. Pages 4 and 5 from *The Young Child's ABC, or, First Book*, were reproduced in Dr. Susan Steinfir's unpublished doctoral dissertation at the University of Pittsburgh in 1976, *The Origins and Development of the ABC Book in English from the Middle Ages through the Nineteenth Century*. Dr. Steinfir took the illustration from *Yankee Doodle's Literary Sampler of Prose...*, by Virginia Haviland and Margaret Coughlan, New York: Thomas Crowell, 1974, page 27. The two facing pages shown, pages 4 and 5, contained the complete open and closed syllabary, as well as picture examples and words for the letters A, B, C, and D: Ants, Bell, Cat, and Dog. Obviously, by beginning with the whole two-letter syllabary, Samuel Wood's spelling series began with a firm emphasis on sound. This was the first book in Wood's four-book spelling series, which would have an over-all rating probably of Code 7.

See the 1811 entry for *The New York Primer or Second Book*, and the notation that it had an earlier edition of unknown date, and the 1810 entry below listing the whole series. It is possible that the first edition of these four sequential spelling books came out in 1806, since the first book in the series came out in 1806. When Samuel Wood later produced his readers, he said they were to follow his spellers. He also published in 1821 an 1819 speller by R. Wiggins, listed below under 1819.

Samuel Wood of New York City, circa 1806 and later, should not be confused with John Wood of Edinburgh, circa 1828 and later.

1806 *The American Spelling Book, or Youth's Instructor, With Reading Lessons Adapted to the Capacity of Children, Calculated to Advance the Learner by Natural and Easy Gradation, Designed for the Use of Schools in the United States.* By Job Plimpton, Teacher. Printed by H. Mann, Dedham, Massachusetts, 1807.

Library of Congress copy, Code 9. The Introduction is signed, New York, May 5, 1806, and reads:

“As soon as a child has learned to read, it will be of great service to learn the Introduction of this work as it contains the different sounds of the vowels, diphthongs, consonants and many other useful subjects.... a plan whereby youth can acquire a just pronunciation of the language with the greatest ease....”

Since this book actually taught the beginning child to read by the sounds of the letters, the above remark seems to be a senseless contradiction. However, as other quotations from the period establish, once children had learned to read, they were then told to memorize and actually to recite the Introduction to such spellers. (See William Andrus Alcott's comments, and William Russell's on Memorius Wordswell.) Memorizing and reciting is apparently all that the author meant by “learn” in the above comment.

1807 *The New American Primer; Or, An Easy Road to Learning.* Philadelphia: Published by Bennett And Walton, No. 31, Market Street. “(Copyright-secured, as the Law directs.)” (Heartman indicated that only the title page of this book survives at the Library of Congress and there is no other record of it anywhere, so far as is known. As mentioned earlier, the Pennsylvania copyright office apparently only kept title pages and threw away the body of the books they had copyrighted. When Washington became the central copyright office, Pennsylvania apparently sent all these pathetic title pages on to Washington. The title of this book suggests it may have been meant for beginners and not older children.)

1807 *The Philadelphia Primer. Or, A First Book For Children.* Albany: Printed For Backus And Whiting. E. & E. Hosford... Printers. 35 pages. (The previous information is from Heartman, who cited a copy at Time Stone Farm, Marlborough, Massachusetts. It is probably related to Johnson's Philadelphia Primer, entered in this appendix under 1803, 1820 and 1821, and to Robert Porter's book entered under 1824.)

1808 *The Child's Instructor,* Philadelphia (Listed by Clifton Johnson)

1809 *A Useful Primer. Containing, An Alphabet and a Variety of spellings for Children. Also, Watts' Divine Songs, and his Shorter Catechism.* Printed for the Booksellers, 1809, Price eight Cents Single. 29 leaves.

(Heartman reported this as his item 182, and said copies were held by the American Antiquarian Society and Time Stone Farm, Marlborough, Massachusetts. As reported by Mary F. Thwaite in *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, many children's books in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century carried an alphabet, but they were not beginning reading books. Children continued to “spell” all the time they were in school, not just when they were learning to read. It seems probable from the title that this was essentially only a copy of Watts' highly popular religious poems for children, with his catechism and a little useful “spelling” practice thrown in for good measure. It seems highly unlikely that this book was meant as a beginning spelling or reading book, particularly since Watts, himself, wrote a very thorough speller for beginners.)



1809 The United States Speller, by Sundry Experienced Teachers, Being an Easy Standard for Pronouncing, Pittsburgh (Nietz. Note the 1809 emphasis on “pronouncing” and an easy method to do it).

Circa 1810 - The Uncle’s Present, A New Battledoor. Published by Jacob Johnson, 147 Market Street, Philadelphia. 5 p. illus. 18cm. PE1119.A1U5 JuvColl RareBk (The preceding information is taken from Americana in Children’s Books, a pamphlet published by the Library of Congress in 1974. It continued:

“Each letter of the alphabet is illustrated with a small picture from the Cries of London.”

Part of the material was shown in the 1974 pamphlet. A series of boxes each contained in alphabetical order a capital and small letter, an illustration and a sentence. For “A” appeared a picture of a salesman with a book, and the sentence, “Almanack, will you buy an Almanack?” The various versions of The Cries of London were pictures and sentences illustrating London trades. The earliest known was dated to at least 1771 by Mary F. Thwaite in From Primer to Pleasure in Reading. It later had many variations such as the Cries of New York published by Mahlon Day. Battledores normally included the syllabary and the Lord’s Prayer. Whether this did is unknown.)

1810 Poor Boy’s Pocketbook, Phineas Davison, Pub. by John Howe, Greenwich (Harvard copy. Code 7.)

1810 Elements of Elocution, John Walker (Listed by Nietz. An upper-level book.)

1810 Johnson’s Philadelphia Primer, or A First Book for Children, 11th Edition Improved, Published by Johnson and Warner.

(A Code 8 speller. Library of Congress copy had belonged to Will Culbertson, born March 30, 1805, died 1813, 7 years, 6 months. Note that poor little Will Culbertson had been given a speller probably some time before he was seven years old. The 1810 Philadelphia publisher, Johnson and Warner, may have been successors to the circa 1810 Philadelphia publisher listed above, Jacob Johnson. Since this was the “11th Edition Improved” in 1810, the original edition must have come out a considerable time before 1810. See the 1803 entry on this title, and the 1807, 1822, and 1824 related titles.)

1810 An English Spelling Book, James Pike, Pub. 1822 by Munroe & Francis, Boston (Harvard copy. Code 10.)

1810-1820 Western Spelling Book, Rev. Joseph Stockton, Pittsburgh (Wickersham)

1810 Brochure - School Books Printed and Sold By Samuel Wood, New York (Harvard copy. Lists Samuel Wood’s four small, sequential spelling books described elsewhere in this appendix: The Young Child’s A, B, C or First book, sometimes called Young Child’s ABC - New York Primer; The New York Primer, or Second Book; The New York Preceptor, or Third Book; and The New York Spelling Book, or Fourth Book.)

1811 The New York Primer or Second Book (Harvard copy published in 1837 by Samuel S. and Wm. Wood, New York but copyrighted in 1823. This 1837 Wood speller must have been revised from the material in print by 1810, but no earlier issue is available. Heartman said an 1811 copy stated that an earlier edition existed. Since the first book in Wood’s spelling series came out in 1806, as listed above, it is possible that the others came out in 1806. Heartman also cited an 1815, three 1823, and one 1829 editions of this Second Book. He showed that, in 1811, Samuel Wood was at 357 Pearl Street. No address

was given for Samuel Wood & Sons in 1815. In 1823 and 1829, Samuel Wood & Sons were at 261 Pearl Street.

The 1837 copy teaches sounds by analogy a la Dilworth, but mixes analogies on long vowels and diphthongs. The 1837 copy could be only Code 6 unless the syllabary were taught earlier. The probability is that earlier editions of Wood's Second Book, such as in 1806 or so, were far more "sound" oriented than this 1837 edition which came out years after "meaning" method primers had arrived in 1826. The earlier edition, and even the 1823 copyrighted edition, almost certainly would have rated a higher Code number.)

1811 The Child's Primer. Containing Easy Words From One to Four Syllables Intermixed With Easy Lessons, Fables &c. &c. By Silvanus Shepherd. Learn this Book, and you shall have one bigger. Windsor: Published By The Author. May, 1811. (This entry is copied from Heartman. Heartman also said its cover read, "S. Wood's New-York Primer. New-York: Printed and Sold by Samuel Wood At the Juvenile Book-Store, No. 357, Pearl Street. 1811." That note advertising Wood's primer suggests Wood may have been Shepherd's publisher. Nothing else is known on this curious book.)

Circa 1812 A Picture Book for Little Children. Philadelphia. Published by Kimber and Conrad, No. 93, Market Street; Merritt, Printer. 23 p. illus. 14 cm. PZ6.P583 JuvColl Rare Bk (The preceding information is taken from Americana in Children's Book, a Library of Congress 1974 pamphlet. It also stated:

"A tall, narrow chapbook containing alphabets and illustrated moral precepts (e.g. "Do not drink too much").

Kimber and Conrad of Philadelphia may be the predecessors to Kimber and Sharpless of Philadelphia, shown later as publishers of Comly's 1820 revised speller.)

1812 Oram's American Primer, James Oram. Pub. 1829 Geo. Long, New York (Library of Congress, Code 7. Heartman listed other editions of 1812, 1813, 1816, and 1820, and this one of 1829. All have 36 pages and 18 leaves except the 1829, which has 35 pages and 18 leaves. Something has therefore been omitted in this late 1829 copy, the one which I examined, which might raise the Code from 7.

Heartman said the cover of the 1812 copy read, "Printed by James Oram, No. 70, John-Street, For Griffin & Rudd, Booksellers, No. 189, Greenwich Street." Therefore, the New York printer, James Oram, was apparently the first publisher as well as the probable author. The 1813 copy was also printed by Oram, but the 1816 copy was printed and published by George Long, No. 71 Pearl-Street. The 1820 and 1829 copies were also published by George Long, but at 161 Broadway.)

1812 Allinsons' New-Jersey Primer. From the Press of D. Allinson & Co. Burlington, N. J. (Heartman listed this as possibly simply a variation on the New England Primer. He said a copy was held by the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester.)

1814 M'Carty's American Primer: being A Selection Of Words The most easy of Pronunciation. Intended to facilitate the Improvement of children in Spelling. Philadelphia: Published By William M'Carty. (This is listed by Heartman, who noted that only the title page of this 1814 edition survived at the Library of Congress. As noted elsewhere, the early Pennsylvania copyright office apparently simplified their files by throwing away everything except the covers of the books they copyrighted, and when their files apparently were later sent to Washington, the covers were all they had left to send.

See the entry for the 1828 version of this material, after a change in company name. The 1828 version is very poor material rating only Code 5. It very probably is an alteration of the original 1814 material, since it carries an 1828 copyright date and had multiple surviving copies according to Heartman, while the 1814 version has only one surviving cover.)

1814 *Metamorphosis: or, A Transformation of Pictures, with Poetical Explanations, for the Amusement of Young Persons.* By Benjamin Sands. New York. Published by Samuel Wood, No. 357 Pearl Street; Printed by Joseph Rakestraw. Philadelphia, 1814. 8 p. 125 cm. Jv Coll Rare Bk In the Hogan Collection.

(Welch has a lengthy listing of various American editions beginning in 1787 of this title, which was rewritten from an anonymous 1654 English version entitled, *The Beginning, Progress and End of Man*. London: E. Alsop for T. Dunster. The moral subject matter was presented in a very entertaining fashion, in which pictures, when folds were changed, turned into other pictures. The 1814 edition listed here was included in *Americana in Children's Books*, a pamphlet published by the Library of Congress in 1974. The following was added:

“The text for this earliest Library of Congress edition is one rewritten from an English edition of 1654.”

That note is particularly interesting, considering that entertaining materials for children are supposed to have been almost unavailable in 1654. In the late 1600's in France, the famous Perrault fairy tales for children appeared and were later adapted for English chapbooks, the market for which consisted of the poor and children. Despite the existence of such entertaining materials bought for children (and Johnson's Boswell recounted how he had loved them as a child in the early eighteenth century), the propaganda nevertheless persists not only that amusing literature for children was almost non-existent in the eighteenth century, but that children in England, America, and France generally were not literate before the firm establishment of the glorious government schools about the mid-nineteenth century.)

1814 *School Dialogues, First Hallowell Edition*, Published by Ezekial Goodale. (Harvard copy. An upper-level book.)

1814 *Lessons in Elocution*, William Scott. (See earlier entry for Scott. An upper-level book. Nietz stated on page 67 that Scott's book had been used in Boston schools, but John Pierpont “succeeded in having the School Committee of Boston adopt (his 1823 *The American First Class Book; or Exercises in Reading and Recitation*) to replace Scott's *Lessons*.”

1815 *The Windsor Primer. A Useful Book For Children. Ornamented with Cuts.* Windsor: Vt. Printed And Sold By Jesse Cochran. 1815. 35 pages. (Heartman listed this as item 184, saying copies were held by Time Stone Farm, Marlborough, Massachusetts, and by Harold Rugg of Dartmouth College.

Heartman added that Rugg, of Dartmouth College, had another *Windsor Primer* which was set up differently, but it was mutilated with the imprint ripped off. In the Preface to his 1935 book, Heartman thanked Rugg among many others for help, listing him as Harold G. Rugg. If that listing is correct, then he could not have been the Harold O. Rugg who was at Lincoln School of Columbia University, from 1921 or before to 1929 or later, and whose textbooks were subject to a heavy attack in the 1930's.)

1815

THE PICKET SPELLERS AND READERS ARE ALMOST UNKNOWN TODAY BUT WERE OF REAL IMPORTANCE. THEY WERE WIDELY USED FOR MANY YEARS AND WERE WRITTEN BY PROMINENT GOVERNMENT-SCHOOL ACTIVISTS.

IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE BACKGROUND INFORMATION, ALL REFERENCES TO THEIR BOOKS EXCEPT FOR THE 1805 SPELLER IS SUMMARIZED AT LENGTH BELOW.

American School Class Book, No. 1. The Juvenile Spelling-Book: Being An Easy Introduction to The English Language. Containing Easy and Familiar Lessons in Spelling, with Appropriate Reading Lessons, Calculated To advance the learner by easy gradations, and to teach the orthography of Johnson, and the pronunciation of Walker. By A. Picket, Author of the 'Juvenile Expositor,' & c. Stereotype Edition. Exeter. Printed and Published by John J. Williams, 1821.

(Harvard copy, Code 7. Copyrighted in the New-York District on February 3, 1815, by Albert Picket as "American School class-book No. 1. The Juvenile Spelling-Book: being an easy introduction to the English language. Containing easy and familiar lessons in spelling, with appropriate reading lessons, calculated to advance the learner by easy gradation and to teach the orthography of Johnson, and the pronunciation of Walker. By A. Picket, Author of the "Juvenile Expositor," &c...." Preface - "The very favourable reception which the Juvenile Spelling-Book has met with, and the consequent increased demand for it, have induced the Publishers to put a finishing hand to its correction, and secure its accuracy, in all future editions, by causing the whole work to be cast in Stereotype...." The Preface is dated Manhattan School, New-York, Feb. 1815. Because of this note concerning stereotyping, it is reasonable to conclude that the 1821 edition was essentially identical to that of 1815. Pages are missing to page 9, at the top of which is the closed syllabary in sequence from l to x for the vowels, a, e, i, o, and u.

The Harvard copy of the 1823 revised edition with a slightly different title shows essentially the same material as on page 9 of the 1815 edition, but it is on page 13 in the 1823 edition. The 1823 edition had a four-page illustrated alphabet (pages 7, 8, 9, and 10), taken from the Juvenile or Universal Primer. If the assumption is made that the illustrated alphabet was missing from the 1815 edition, it is then possible to reconstruct the content of the missing 1815 pages from that 1823 revision. In the 1823 revision, page 5 showed the alphabet and the names of the letters, and page 6 had "A Table of the Various Sounds of the Vowels." Presumably the same pages 5 and 6 were in the 1815 edition. Pages 7, 8, 9, and 10 in the 1823 edition had the pictured alphabet, which must have been omitted in the 1815 edition. Page 11 in the 1823 edition (which presumably would therefore be page 7 in the 1815 edition) had material on punctuation marks and numerals. Page 12 (presumably page 8 in the 1815 edition) had the open syllabary and part of the closed syllabary. However, in the 1823 edition on page 12, the open syllabary was partially incomplete, and the closed syllabary was even more so, and even partially irregular. Whether these flaws in the classic syllabary appeared on the corresponding page 8 of the 1815 version is unknown but appears unlikely. The incomplete and irregular syllabary may have appeared only in the 1823 edition, since such a flawed syllabary would have been exceptional in 1815. However, since page 8 with most of the syllabary is missing on the 1815 copy, that copy will be rated Code 7, the same as the 1823 copy. Nevertheless, it should be particularly noted that the alphabet and most of the syllabary pages were missing on the 1815 copy printed in 1821, presumably because they worn out by a young beginner, but they are pristine and unharmed on the 1823 copy printed in 1841. That is more proof that drill on the "sound" syllabary had been the norm before 1826 but had disappeared after 1826.

The content of some of the stories in the 1815 edition was exceedingly ugly, and totally unsuitable for little children. The stories were obviously introduced for the "morals" they were supposed to contain, but hideous stories of animal abuse are totally unsuitable to teach children anything that is desirable.

On the 1823 version printed in 1841, a footnote on page 12 read in part, “Here the author begs leave to recommend to the attention of Parents and Teachers his Universal Primer, improved edition, which is intended to accompany and precede this volume.” The revised version of the primer was dated to 1830 by Heartman. At what date the original version of Picket’s primer appeared is unknown. The Juvenile Spelling Book, the Juvenile Expositor, and possibly others still in print in 1841 had originally appeared some time before 1815, which fact is confirmed by the February 3, 1815, copyright on The Juvenile Spelling Book and the Preface to that book.

Listings in Early American Textbooks, when compared to the listings of the books in the American School Class-Book series printed in the 1841 New York copy of The Juvenile Instructor (sic), suggest that two parallel Picket series were being published after 1830: a “new” version with slightly different titles published in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Wheeling, West Virginia, and the “old” one still published in Eastern cities as late as 1851. Presumably an Eastern publisher had the copyrights to the older editions, and some arrangement had been made to permit the Pickets to publish the “new” edition from Cincinnati and Wheeling. Yet it is impossible to straighten out the facts from the little information available, so all the known copies and publishers are listed below for the reader’s information. They should be evaluated in view of Vail’s and Reeder’s second-hand and obviously somewhat inaccurate comments, made many years later, which are also summarized below, and in view of Bardeen’s far more reliable remarks, also given below.

The cover title of the 1823 revision printed in 1841 differed from the 1815 version, stating, American School Class Book, No. 1. Picket’s Juvenile Spelling Book, or, Analogical Pronouncer of the English Language, Conforming to the Standard Orthography of Johnson, and Classic Pronunciation of Walker; with Appropriate Definitions and Reading Lessons. Comprising A Systematic, Progressive, and Practical Course of Instruction for Primary Schools. By A. Picket, Author of The American School Class Books, Essentials of English Grammar, &c. Last Corrected Edition. Printed and Published by H. & S. Raynor, Booksellers & Stationers, No. 76, Bowery, New York, 1841. Although this copy was published in New York, the book had been copyrighted in the District of Virginia, West of the Alleghany Mountains, on January 14, 1823, by Charles H. Picket. Presumably that copyright was originally for publication in Wheeling, West Virginia, where a Picket text was published in 1831 by “A. & E. Picket,” according to Early American Textbooks. If the “E.” is correct, it means there was another Picket relative, “E.” It is known that Albert and John W. Picket went “West,” eventually to Cincinnati, but the 1823 copyright date suggests they had possibly first gone to Wheeling, West Virginia, as early as 1823, and that there was a fourth Picket relative, Charles H., in addition to Albert, John W., and “E.”

The Harvard copy published in 1841 of the 1823 revision of this book carries an advertisement listing the sequence of Albert Picket’s books, presumably for sale by the Eastern publishers in 1841, and does not include the titles shown in Early American Textbooks as published in Cincinnati and Wheeling. It omits The Union Spelling Book of 1805, which presumably was replaced by the “Juvenile” books, and the geography listed in Early American Textbooks. The advertisement read:

“Picket’s American School Class Books.

“The Juvenile or Universal Primer, being a First Book for young children: introductory to the Juvenile Spelling Book- 48 pages.

(Since Heartman showed the 1830 revised edition as containing 48 pages, this most probably is the revised edition.)

“The Juvenile Spelling Book - Complete.

“The Juvenile Instructor (sic); being a Natural Grammar and Reader, designed to succeed the Juvenile and other Spelling Books, and as an Introduction to the Juvenile Mentor and Expositor. - 214 pages.

“The Juvenile Mentor Or Select Readings, containing progressive lessons in Orthoepy, Reading and Spelling. - 248 pages.

“The New Juvenile Expositor, or Rational Reader, and Key to the Juvenile Spelling Book; comprising the definitions of all the syllabic words in that work, with copious illustrations in English etymology. - 384 pages. To this new Expositor, the attention of intelligent teachers is particularly invited.

“The Essentials of English Grammar; - Murray’s Improved. Soon to be published in New York.”

The title page to this book copyrighted in 1823 carried a date of 1841, and it was obviously more up to date than the page listing Picket’s books, as it showed “A. Picket, Author of the American School Class Books, Essentials of English Grammar, &c.” Therefore, the grammar must have been published by 1841.

Concerning information on the first book in the Picket series listed above, according to Heartman’s checklist, a revised edition was published in 1830 of Picket’s Juvenile or Universal Primer, “being A first book for young children” meant to precede The Juvenile Spelling Book. It appears likely from information on its title page quoted by Heartman that the 1830 revision of that beginning book represented a shift from “sound” to “meaning.” Since the Pickets were highly active in promoting government schools for many years, they may well be associated with the related change in reading methods that arrived in 1826.

Heartman listed no earlier edition than the 1830 revised primer. His listing showed the following information on its title page:

“1830 Picket’s Juvenile or Universal Primer. being A first book for young children: introductory to the Juvenile Spelling-Book. by A. Picket, author of the American School Class Books, the Juvenile Spelling Book, Essentials of English Grammar, &c. A New Edition, Revised, corrected, and improved throughout. New York: Printed and Published by Caleb Bartlett, Bookseller and Stationer, No. 76, Bowery, 1830.”

Heartman said the book had 48 pages, and copies were held by the New York Public Library and Columbia University Library. Heartman said the cover of the book read, “Picket’s Universal Primer, or first spelling-book; 48 pages; - containing easy lessons in spelling and reading: Designed to accompany, and precede the Juvenile Spelling-Book; 216 pages; - forming an extensive, progressive, and practical course of elementary instruction for Primary Schools. By A. Picket, author of the American school class-books. New-York: Printed and published by Caleb Bartlett, Bookseller and Stationer, No. 76, Bowery, 1830.”

It seems probable that Picket’s original primer was largely just an ABC book meant to teach the alphabet, as the beginning step in spelling. Yet from the title in this 1830 revision, it appears Picket may have been conforming to the 1826 shift from “sound” to “meaning,” making his introductory book into a “primer” that taught beginning reading by whole words and meaningful stories. What the original date of his first primer was is unknown, but it presumably was some time after he published his first speller in 1805. Picket’s spellers were still on sale in New York in 1837, as shown by the later 1837 entry on Mahlon Day’s book store textbook list.

In addition to the two surviving Harvard copies of *The Juvenile Spelling Book* discussed above, and the revised *Juvenile or Universal Primer* described by Heartman, information on surviving Picket copies appeared in *Early American Textbooks 1775-1900*, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985. The titles are listed below, with those published in Cincinnati and Wheeling listed last:

*Geographical Grammar*. 2nd edition, by Albert Picket. New York: Daniel D. Smith, 1817. 72 pages.

*The Juvenile Spelling-Book*. Stereotype edition. Exeter, New Hampshire: John J. Williams, 1821. 228 pages. (This was the second book in the *American School Class-Book* series which actually began with the primer, but this second book was nevertheless labeled “No. 1.”)

*Picket’s Juvenile Spelling Book*, by Albert Picket. New York: R. Bartlett & S. Raynor, 1836. 214 pages. (This was presumably the 1823 revised edition of the above 1821 book. Presumably the 1821 book had been stereotyped in 1815 like the Harvard copy. Two later editions were listed in *Early American Textbooks* under this revised title, both in New York: H. & S. Raynor, 1839. 214 pages, and Samuel Raynor, 1851, 208 pages.

*The Juvenile Instructor* (sic), or *American School Class-Book, No. 2 Being a Natural Grammar and Reader*, by Albert Picket. New York: Caleb Bartlett, 1826. 214 pages. (This was the third book in the series which began with the unnumbered primer, making this “No. 2.”)

*The Juvenile Mentor, or Select Readings: Being American School Class-Book. No. 3*. New York: Caleb Bartlett and John Gray & Co., 1826. 298 pages.

*The Juvenile Expositor, or, American School Class-Book, No. 4*, by Albert Picket. New York: C. Bartlett, 1827. 381 pages.

Early American Textbooks showed the following “Western” editions of Picket’s books, with slightly different titles, suggesting they were revisions:

*The New Juvenile Spelling Book and Rudimental Reader*, by Albert Picket and John W. Picket. Cincinnati: C. P. Barnes, and Morgan and Sanxay, n.d., 168 p. (paralleled *American School Class-Book No. 1*, which followed the primer.)

*The New Juvenile Instructor* (sic, paralleled *American School Class-Book, No. 2*) by Albert Picket. Cincinnati: Josiah Drake, 1834, 214 pages.

*The New Juvenile Expositor or Rational Reader*, by Albert Picket and John W. Picket. Cincinnati: Picket & Co.; Wheeling, W. Va.: A. & E. Picket, 1831. 384 p. (paralleled *American School Class-Book No. 4*, the last in the five-book series. Presumably all five books of the parallel series were in print in Cincinnati and Wheeling by 1831. Vail said they had been published in Cincinnati as early as 1832. The Pickets had published the 1831 text listed above, but Josiah Drake published the 1834 text listed above. That suggests the Pickets ceased publishing before 1834. If that is true, the “n.d.” spelling book listed above was published possibly as early as 1832.)

Rudolph R. Reeder, in his 1900 book, *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, The Macmillan Co., New York: 1900, claimed that the Pickets published in 1818 a series of seven books, of which the primer was first and the speller next. Reeder said the compilers of the seven-book 1818 series were A. and J. W. Picket, principals of the Manhattan school, New York, and cited the journal, *The Academician*, 1818, pp. 12-14 as his source, presumably for their identity. Yet the

1823 spelling book shows it was written only by A. Picket, and it was copyrighted by Charles H. Picket. This 1823 edition reprinted in 1841 advertised the six books listed above. Yet Reeder had called it a seven-book series, presumably meaning that a dictionary should complete it, from a comment he quoted, that the books “form a systematic gradation from the alphabet to Walker’s Dictionary.”

According to C. W. Bardeen’s *The School Bulletin*, Syracuse, New York, July, 1893, *The Academician* was published semi-weekly in New York City from February 7, 1818 to 1819, for a total of 25 issues. Albert Picket was president of the Incorporated Society of Teachers, and John W. Picket was corresponding secretary of the group. The publication carried a series of articles on the Lancastrian and Pestalozzian methods, among other things, before the Pickets abandoned the work. Bardeen included this information in a paper he gave at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair, which was an excellent history of education journals in New York State. It is very clear that education journals were widespread in the nineteenth century, being published in many other states after 1840, but *The Academician* was apparently the first education journal in America, and it failed, presumably because of a lack of interest.

The date of the paper’s publication suggests that the first real push for government control of private education had begun by 1818, and that the Pickets were associated with it, apparently along with someone named Fiske, from the very beginning. That both Fiske and A. Picket independently wrote spellers, and that the Pickets retained their interest in education after dropping publication of *The Academician*, is obvious from comparing two statements, one below by John A. Nietz (in *Old Textbooks*, University of Pittsburgh Press: 1961, page 18) and the other by H. H. Vail in 1911, quoted later:

“Fiske’s (1803 speller) was followed by several different spellers written by A. Picket. The *Union Spelling-Book* printed in New York in 1805 was already the third edition.... A second one was *The Juvenile Spelling-Book*... followed by a much larger and more advanced book entitled, *The Juvenile Expositor, or Sequel to the Common Spelling Book*.... Incidentally, later in life Fiske went west and helped found *The Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers in Cincinnati*. This organization did much to advance and improve education in the Ohio Valley.”

Henry H. Vail, in *A History of the McGuffey Readers*, Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1911, adds additional information which seems to confirm that the Pickets were very important early organizers along with Fiske of those peculiarly un-American institutions, government schools.

“While Dr. McGuffey was still at Oxford, Ohio, he took part in the formation of probably the first extended Teachers’ Association formed in the West. There had been a previous association of Cincinnati teachers organized for mutual aid and improvement. This was about to be given up; but at their first anniversary on June 20, 1831, Mr. Albert Pickett, (sic) principal of a private school in Cincinnati, proposed a plan for organizing in one body the instructors in public and private schools and the friends of education. Circulars were sent out and the first meeting of the College of Teachers was held October 3, 1832. A great number of teachers from many states (in the West and South) attended these meetings and took part in the proceedings. Through its (continuance) Dr. McGuffey took an active part in the work. (pages 30-31)

“Cincinnati, in 1837, was the largest city in the West excepting New Orleans and was the great educational center of the West.... The public schools of Cincinnati were then more highly developed than those of any other city in the West. (page 34-35)

“At no time in the history of (the McGuffey) readers have they been without formidable competition. Pickett’s (sic) Readers were published in Cincinnati as early as 1832. Albert Pickett was at one time president of the College of Teachers and his books were published by John W.



Pickett (sic), who was probably his brother.... The Pickett Readers, Cobb Readers, Goodrich Readers... were all swept out of the [Ed.: "Western"] schools by the superior qualities of the McGuffey Readers and the persistent energies of their publishers.

"In these books the publishers found space for a little advertising of their wares. In Pickett's Readers there is printed conspicuously at the top of a page a warm commendation of Pickett's Readers, written in 1835 by William H. McGuffey, Professor at Miami University, in which he "considers them superior to any other works I have seen." That was before he made his own readers. Mr. Smith [Ed.: McGuffey's publisher] responded by publishing a strong commendation of one of his books signed by Mr. Albert Pickett. (pages 61, 62, 63)"

1815 Pennsylvania Spelling Book, by An Association of Teachers, Copyright by Maskell M. Carll, Daniel L. Peck (Harvard copy. Code 6, discussed in this history. According to Nietz, p. 21, in 1820 Stephen Byerly revised this which he had assisted in writing and renamed it New American Spelling Book, listed below.)

1815 An Improved Spelling Book, Joshua Bradley, Pub. by Oliver Farnsworth, Windsor, Vermont (Harvard copy. Code 7. See the entry for O. Farnsworth & Co. of Cincinnati in 1822, perhaps the same Farnsworth. If so, he moved to the important city of Cincinnati in the developing "West" some time after 1815.)

1816 The Columbian Primer, or Ladder to Learning. Third Edition, Improved. New-York: Printed and Published By J. C. Totten, No. 9 Bowery-Lane. 1816. (This listing was given by Heartman, obviously from the title page. He said a copy is at the Library of Congress. See the different Columbian Primers of 1790 and 1802, apparently unconnected with this primer or each other.)

1817 An Improved Method of Education Instituted by Dr Bell... Also Joseph Lancaster's Method of Teaching, James Kelly, Philadelphia. (A Teacher's Guide. Uses Code 7 approaches. N.Y.P.L. copy.)

1818 Rules and Regulations for the Primary Schools of the Primary School Committee. Revised August 1825. (Primary schools established June 1818.) True and Green, Boston, City Printers, 1825.

(On page 3, the ages of the children to be enrolled in the Boston Primary Schools were given as 4 to 7. Page 10 stated about 50 students should be in each "school," which meant in each classroom under one teacher. Pages 11 through 13 included the following comments. The syllabary may have been dropped for beginners by 1825, but not the speller. However, the 1825 reference to "words" may also refer to parts of the syllabary, such as ba, be, bi, etc., since they were sometimes referred to as "words.")

"Section VI. Course of Instruction.

"Classification of the Pupils. Each of the Schools shall be arranged into four Classes; and the third and fourth Classes into two Divisions each, viz; 4th class, 2d div. - Cards; Alphabet; 1st Div. - Cards continued, Monosyllables and Disyllables.

"3d Class, 2d Division - Spelling Book; Words of two or more syllables. 3d Class, 1st Division - Spelling Book continued, Spelling and Easy Reading Lessons; the Lord's Prayer; Abbreviations and Numbers Commenced.

"2d Class, Spelling Book continued; Spelling, Reading, and all the other lessons in the same to the end; the Commandments; Reading Book.

“1st Class. Spelling Book continued; Spelling, Punctuation, Abbreviations, Numbers; Words of similar sound but different in spelling and signification, capitalizing; Reading Book continued; New Testament.

“RULE 1. The Second Division of the fourth Class shall first stand up, and after an appropriate address, shall read from the Cards with a distinct and audible tone of voice, the letters of the alphabet: in like manner the First Division of the same Class, shall read in words of one or two syllables and no one of this Class shall be advanced to the third or higher Class, who cannot read deliberately and correctly in monosyllables and disyllables.

“RULE 2. The third Class must be furnished with the Spelling Book adopted by the Board and the Second Division of it must be taught to read therefrom in words of three, four and five syllables. The First Division of the same must be continued in their spelling and advance to the easy reading lessons of the same book, and learn the Lord’s Prayer: the learning of Abbreviations and Numbers is to be commenced and no one is to be promoted to the second Class, who cannot spell, easily... words of the above syllables, and read well in the easier lessons of the said Spelling Book.

“RULE 3. The second Class must proceed in the Spelling Book through all the spelling, reading and other lessons of the same; and be taught to recite well the Ten Commandments; must be provided with the book of Reading Lessons, and make progress therein; and no one of this Class can be advanced to the first, who has not learned and recited, as far as practicable, all the lessons in the Spelling Book, including the stops and marks, and their uses in reading; the use of the common abbreviations; the letters used for numbers and their uses; and the catalog of words of similar sound, but different in spelling and signification. They must be able also to recite the Ten Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer and to read correctly and readily in the book of Reading Lessons.

“RULE 4. The first Class shall be continued and perfected in the lessons of the Spelling Book and book of Reading Lessons; be furnished with the New Testament, and be taught to read therein fluently and correctly; and no one of the first Class shall receive the highest reward, the recommendation of the examining Committee, to be passed into the English Grammar School, unless he or she can spell correctly, read deliberately and audibly, as learned in the several lessons taught in the... grade, and is of good behavior.”

(The 1818 curriculum for the first primary grade schools in Boston was mentioned in Superintendent Philbrick’s “Report” in the Annual School Report for Boston of 1874, pages 374-375:)

“Those who read in the Testament shall be in the First Class; those in easy reading, in the Second Class; those who spell in two or more syllables, in the Third Class; those learning their letters and monosyllables, in the Fourth Class; and that the books be the same in every school, for each pupil hereafter entering.”

Philbrick added this further quotation on the 1818 material:

“A card, a small spelling-book (Kelley’s) and the New Testament were the books originally used.”

It is evident that the “easy reading” was to be the short selections routinely included in the spelling books. The “card” most probably was like the battledores then in use in England, which were folded

cardboard sheets, elaborations of the syllabic horn book. Philbrick's reference to the bottom class's learning their "letters and monosyllables" suggest that the syllabary may have been on the 1818 card, but it possibly was not on the 1825 card.)

1818 The Common Reader, T. W. Strong (Listed by Nietz. An upper-level book.)

1819 Young Scholar's Manual or Companion to the Spelling Book, T. W. Strong, Published in 1821 by Denio & Phelps, Greenfield, Massachusetts, Copyrighted 1819. (Harvard copy. An upper-level book.)

1819 Columbian Spelling Book, by a Friend to Youth, Pub. Miller and Hutchins, Providence, R. I. (Harvard copy. Important Code 5 book discussed in this history.)

1819 The Pronouncing Spelling Book, J. A. Cummings, Pub. 1823 Cummings, Hilliard & Co., Boston (Harvard copy. Code 10.)

1819 North American Spelling Book, R. Wiggins, Pub. 1821 Sam Wood, New York, Baltimore (Harvard copy. Code 8. Not part of earlier four-book series of little spellers.)

1819 Spelling Book, The American Tutor's Assistant, Elihu Marshall, Pub. 1821 (Harvard copy. Code 8.)

1819 The Columbian Spelling Book, Daniel Crandall, Cooperstown, New York (Harvard 1839 copy. Code 8.)

1819 Young Scholar's Manual or Companion to the Spelling Book, Pub. 1821 Denio and Phelps, Greenfield, Mass. (Harvard Copy)

1819 The Young Child's Primer: or Introductory Spelling-Book. No place; no date. (This was cited by Heartman, who said it was at the Library of Congress, where only the titlepage survived, with writing on verso: Filed March 12, 1819. It appears safe to say that it originated in Pennsylvania, since so many early spellers filed for copyright in Pennsylvania have only their titlepages surviving at the Library of Congress. It must be presumed the early Pennsylvania copyright office threw away all of the books but their covers, and later sent the covers on to Washington. Note the equating of a "primer" with a "spelling-book" in 1819.)

1820 A New Spelling Book (revised), John Comly, Pub. 1821 Kimber & Sharpless, Philadelphia (Harvard copy, Code 7. Originally pub. in 1806, per C. Johnson, p. 205. Heartman listed an 1826 copy published by Kimber & Sharpless, no. 3 Market-street, "Stereotyped by J. Howe," which he said was at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. See 1842 entries for Comly. A Comly speller was still in print in the 1876 American Catalogue, indicating an extraordinary lifetime for his materials, from 1806 to some time after 1876, when it probably died out because of the Colonel Parker anti-spelling-book influence.)

1820 New American Spelling Book, Stephen Byerly (Nietz, Wickersham. See 1815 entry on which he was reportedly one of the authors.)

1821 Philadelphia Spelling Book, John Barry, Pub. David Hogan, Philadelphia (Wickersham)

1821 Johnson's Philadelphia Primer. Or, A First Book For Children. Philadelphia: Published by Benjamin Warner, No. 171, Market Street. (Heartman listed this book of 36 pages, which he said had copies in the collection of Dr. A. W. Rosenbach of Philadelphia and the Pequot Library in Southport,

Connecticut. He said the woodcuts were by Alexander Anderson. See the main 1803 entry, and related entries in 1807, 1810 and 1824.)

1821 Mrs. Sherwood's Primer; Or, First Book for Children. Illustrated By Cuts. Hartford, Published By H. & F. J. Huntington. 1828. P. Canfield, Printer. (Heartman listed this information and said a copy is at Time Stone Farm, Marlborough, Massachusetts. He said the cover reads: "Mrs. Sherwood's Primer; Or, First Book for Children. From The Fourth London Edition. Hartford, Published By H. & F. J. Huntington. 1828. P. Canfield, Printer." He also said that Time Stone Farm had a copy which was not printed in America. It was printed at Wellington, by F. Houlston & Son, Salop, in 1821, and he thought it was possibly the first edition.

Heartman noted that a biography of Martha Mary Butt (later Mrs. Sherwood) was given by F. J. Harvey Darton in London, in 1910, and that she wrote a great many books for children. He said she "expurgated" well-known chapbooks and put in material that:

"...seemed more likely to conduce to juvenile edification. So do not expect too much of her Primer."

The content of Sherwood's Primer is unknown, but that it had a Fourth London Edition by 1828 suggests it may have been altered from its probable 1821 original. Heartman also listed as item 174 a copy published in 1830 by S. Babcock of New Haven and S. Babcock & Co., Sidney's Press, in Charleston. He said the cover reads, "New-Haven Toy Books - No. 2's - New Series. 4. Sherwood's Primer, Or, First Book For Children...." That suggests her book may have been meant only as a toy book and not a serious text. Since this issue has only 23 pages, and 12 leaves, that seems to confirm that fact. Heartman did not state the number of pages in the 1828 copy printed by the Huntington company. The 1830 copy is held by the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts.)

1821 A Spelling Book, Thomas J. Lee, Pub. 1838, Munroe & Francis, Boston (Harvard copy, Code 7. See later entry.)

1822 Analytical Spelling Book, John Franklin Jones, Pub. 1824, E. Bliss and E. White, New York - Albany (Harvard copy, Code 7.)

1822 The Primary Instructor and Improved Spelling Book in Two Parts, Jasper Hazen, Pub. 1823, Simeon Ide, Windsor, Vt. (Harvard copy, Code 8.)

1822 Griggs & Dickinson's American Primer Improved: Being A Selection of Words The Most Easy of Pronunciation; adapted to the capacities of Young Beginners. Philadelphia: Printed and Published by Griggs & Dickinson, and for Sale at Whitehall, and the Principal Book Stores in the United States.

(This information is taken from Heartman's listing. He said the 1822 edition had the title page only in the Library of Congress, but an 1829 edition of 36 pages with a different illustration had all 36 pages. See the 1826 entry for Griggs & Dickinson, not to be confused with John Grigg of Philadelphia.)

1822 The Sunday School Spelling Book, Episcopal Sunday and Day School Society of Philadelphia (Nietz, p. 26)

1822 The National Primer, Adapted to the Capacities of Young Beginners: In Which the Words are Arranged According to the Vowel Sound. York, Pennsylvania. Published & Sold by M. B. Roberts.

(This information is given by Heartman from a title page in the Library of Congress, which page is all that survives of this material. Shown in manuscript is 4th May, 1822, and "Proprietor's name: Mathias B. Roberts." Heartman reported that an 1823 copy of 36 pages is at the Library of Congress, but was published in Baltimore instead of Philadelphia by Matthias (sic) B. Roberts, No. 70, North Howard Street. The reference to words being arranged by vowel sounds suggests that this is a phonic speller.)

1822 The Child's First Book, Being a New Primer, for the Use of Families and Schools. Goold Brown (Code 7. Library of Congress copy published in 1827. American Antiquarian copy published in 1840, shown as Cooledge's First Stereotype edition from the thirteenth New York edition, Freeman and Whig Press:

"It is quite useless to put a child at reading till he can spell and pronounce without aid, the syllables and words he must meet with."

See the note on the Pestalozzian grammarian Goold, p. xiii, Early American Textbooks. Heartman listed an 1829 edition "printed and sold by H. H. Brown, No. 15 Market Square," in Providence, which is also at the American Antiquarian Society, and which is 36 pages long. Heartman did not list the 1840 copy or the 1827 copy.)

1822 Child's Instructor, By a Teacher of Little Children. Improved, Second Edition. Consisting of Easy Lessons on Subjects Which Are Familiar to Them in Language Adapted to Their Capacities. Published by C. P. Walton, Montpelier.

(American Antiquarian Society copy. Follows the pattern of Code 6 or 7 spellers but much more reading matter:

"It is found by experience that the child will learn to spell the monosyllables when they occur in lessons which contain some meaning, much sooner than when the words are jumbled together, without conveying any ideas.... The child should be taught to spell each word in his lessons before he is permitted to read it...."

Overall Code 3.)

1822 The American Primer, Abridged, Containing Short and Easy Lessons for Little Children. O. Farnsworth, Cincinnati

(American Antiquarian Society copy. Code 6 but only a toy book, not a school book. Essentially a speller. Listed by Heartman. Shown under 1815 in this appendix is a Harvard copy of the Code 7 An Improved Spelling Book by Joshua Bradley, published by Oliver Farnsworth, Windsor, Vermont. Perhaps that was the same O. Farnsworth. If so, he had moved to the important city of Cincinnati in the developing "West" some time after 1815.)

1823 The Primer: Or, Mother's Spelling-Book For Children, At A Very Early Age. By M. Pelham, author of the Mother's First Catechism. Second American from the ninety-seventh London Edition. New York: Published by G. C. Morgan, Pearl-St. Franklin Square. Gray & Bunce, Printers. 1823.

(New York Public Library Copy, 36 pages. Listed by Heartman, who also listed an 1830 edition under the name Pelham's Primer; or Mother's Spelling Book For Children At a Very Early Age, published by S. Babcock, Church-Street, New-Haven. A copy of that book is also in the New York Public Library and in Columbia University Library, New York. M. Pelham was the pseudonym for Dorothy

Kilner, whose material has been discussed in this history. Her speller rates a Code 7 because of its heavy analytic phonics, despite its somewhat abbreviated syllabary.)

1823 The Critical Pronouncing Spelling Book, Hezekiah Burhans, Published in 1825 in Philadelphia (Harvard copy, Code 8, confused, poor.)

1823 The Albany Primer: or, Child's Instructor. A wise son heareth his father's instruction... Solomon. Albany: Printed by E.& E. Hosford, No. 100 State-street.

(Heartman listed this which is possibly simply a variation on the New England Primer. He said these publishers had issued a New England Primer in 1818. Heartman listed copies held by Wilbur Macy Stone, New York; New Hampshire State Library, Concord; and the New York State Library, Albany.)

1823 The Speller's Guide, A Spelling Book on A New Plan with Reading Lessons Adapted to the Juvenile Understanding, and a few Outlines of Geography. By Joseph Shreve. Second edition, corrected and improved. Published by Jackson and Harvey, Buffaloe, Virginia, 1824. Copyrighted in 1823. (L. of C. copy. Code 8.)

1823 New York Spelling Book, or Fourth Book, Pub. Samuel Wood & Sons, Baltimore - New York (See 1810 brochure entry above. Originally pub. by 1810. Four books equaled one speller, approx. Code 7.)

1823 The American First Class Book; or Exercises in Reading and Recitation, John Pierpont (Listed by Nietz. An upper-level text. Nietz stated on page 67 that Scott's Lessons in Elocution (1814) had been used in the Boston schools, but John Pierpont "succeeded in having the School Committee of Boston adopt (his 1823 The American First Class Book; or Exercises in Reading and Recitation) to replace Scott's Lessons."

R. R. Reeder on page 46 of his history quoted the preface to the first edition of the American First Class Book of Pierpont:

"I have observed, however, that that part of school books which consists of a brief treatise upon oratorical rules for reading, and essays on elocution" (are not worn and) "little used... The truth probably is that ...(elocution) is learned from example rather than by rule..."

This establishes that a heavy emphasis on elocution was unknown in America before 1823. It probably first appeared with the arrival of the activist/elocutionist, William Russell, from Scotland, who is discussed at length elsewhere in this history. As mentioned elsewhere in this history, it is an historical curiosity that the famous reading textbook author, John Pierpont, who wrote American reading books that were apparently very worthwhile, was also the grandfather of the famous American financier, J. Pierpont Morgan.)

1823 Easy Lessons in Reading, Joshua Leavitt, Pub. 1826 John Prentiss, Keene, N. H. (Book next after beginning level - Harvard copy. See 1847 entries for a reading series by Joshua Leavitt, probably the same man.)

1824 The Rational Guide to Reading and Orthography, William Bentley Fowle, Pub. 1828 Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, Boston. (Harvard copy, Code 8. See entry on his 1842 Code 6 speller not meant for beginners, and see comments in this history for Fowle's about-face on the subject of teaching beginning reading.)

1824 The Catholic School Book, W. E. Andrews, Pub. James Ryan, N. Y. (Harvard copy. Possibly not meant for beginners, but if so, it is Code 4 in its opening alphabets and word lists. This may only have been meant for review, since it constitutes a minor part of the book. However, if meant for beginners, this book's low-code would suggest the influence of activists, as discussed in this history. See the 1826 entry for the Union Spelling and Reading Book of the American Sunday School Union, a Code 4 book which almost certainly was produced under such activist influence.)

1824 The Red Book of Practical Orthography, William Bearcroft, Pub. 1828 Mahlon Day, N. Y. (Harvard copy. English reprint, not a beginner's text. Mahlon Day was apparently an important New York bookstore owner and printer. See entries of 1825 and 1837. The first entry for the very important publisher, Cooleage, who first appears in this Appendix B in 1839 when he was located on the second story of Mahlon Day's building.)

1824 Philadelphia Primer or Child's First Book, Printed and Sold By Robert Porter & Son, No. 97 Market Street, Wilmington, Del. (Amer. Antiquarian Society copy. Code 7. Standard spelling book approach. Complete syllabary, blends, phonics by analogy, and reading portions. 36 pages. See the related entries to this title entered in this appendix under 1803, 1807, and 1821. See 1810 entry on a Philadelphia Primer published by Johnson and Warner. Heartman reported the title as The Child's First Book, Or New Philadelphia Primer, but said the cover read, Philadelphia Primer, Or Child's First Book.)

1824 The Lafayette Primer and New Jersey Instructor (sic), No. 1. Carefully Prepared For Teaching The Rudiments Of The English Language. Without the Repetition Of The Alphabet: And Peculiarly Adapted For The Use Of Primary And Lancasterian Schools. By Edward C. Quin, Teacher of the Peckman River Academy, Caldwell, (N..J.) Printed For The Author, By Stephen Gould, Caldwell, N.J.

(N.Y.P.L., Library of Congress. Listed by Heartman. Code 3 or 4. This low code book was produced as the result of "help" Quin got from others, as he stated. Quin appears to have been an Irish immigrant schoolmaster, possibly from the hedge schools of the period. As discussed in this history, this is one of the very few pre-1826 texts with a low code. Heartman said that it contained two poems about Lafayette and a dialogue on his visit.

1824 A Pleasing Companion for Little Girls and Boys, Jesse Torrey, Jun., Pub. 1836 by Grigg and Elliott, No. 9, North Fourth Street, Philadelphia. (This was the new company name on the book cover dated 1836, which had been John Grigg, No. 9, North Fourth Street, Philadelphia, on the title page carrying the date of 1835. Harvard copy.)

Not a beginning book. Torrey stated that a large part of the material was adapted from Berquin. This book had become the third part of a series by 1836. The series was advertised on this 1836 copy as including Torrey's Primer or First Book for Children, First Reading Lessons for Children, and this book as the third in the series, with the fourth Torrey's Moral Instructor or Fourth Book. Probably Torrey's Primer used a "meaning" approach, since the series was listed in 1836 without mentioning Torrey's speller of 1825 which had been published by J. Grigg, No. 9, North Fourth Street, Philadelphia, in 1826. See Grigg and Elliott's later series, still in print in 1876.)

1825 Familiar Spelling Book, Jesse Torrey, Jr., Pub. 1836 by J. Grigg, No. 9, North Fourth Street, Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Code 8. See 1824 and 1835 entries on the author, Torrey, and the publisher, Grigg.)

1825 Exercises in Reading and Recitation, Dr. Jonathan Barber, Published in York, Pennsylvania. (Harvard copy. An upper-level book.)

1825 Cobb's Spelling Book, Lyman Cobb, Pub. Holbrook and Fessenden, Brattleborough, Vermont (Revision of 1821 edition. Harvard copy, Code 8, discussed at length in this history. Cobb campaigned against Webster's speller. According to page xiii of *Early American Textbooks*, Cobb's *The Juvenile Reader, Number One*, appeared in 1830. See 1842 entry for Harvard's copy of Cobb's *New Juvenile Reader No. 2*, part of the revision of his 1830 series, on which I have seen no copy. See Appendix C under the Worcester/Hillard entries for a discussion of the publishing family, Holbrook, apparently unrelated to Josiah Holbrook.)

?1825? - *The Tract Primer*, American Tract Society, New York. 108 pages. (According to Lawrence Cremin, on pages 66-70 of his history, the Society was founded in 1825. *Early American Textbooks* lists an 1830 copy of *The Tract Primer*, and one undated copy. If the original was not published in 1825, then it probably appeared at least shortly after 1825, and it was definitely in print by 1830, according to the *Early American Textbooks* entry. See Appendix C for the sequence of known books published by the American Tract Society, at least two of which were written by Reverend Thomas Gallaudet. That being the case, it appears probable that *The Tract Primer*, in print by 1830 at the latest, would have used Gallaudet's "meaning" approach to teach beginning reading.)

1825-1832? - *The Little Primer. New-York Cries, And many more, Can be bought, At Day's Book-Store. New York: Printed and Sold by Mahlon Day, At the New Juvenile Book-store. No. 376, Pearl-street. (1825-1832). 8 pages; 4 leaves. Copies: Rosenbach.* (The foregoing information is taken from Heartman's entry, who could not give a definite date for the material. This is probably not a beginning reading book, but an American picture book adapted from the famous English picture book theme, *London Cries. The Uncle's Present, A New Battledore*, published in Philadelphia about 1810, which has been listed previously, used the theme to teach the alphabet. Mary F. Thwaite said on page 208 of *From Primer to Pleasure in Reading*, published by The Horn Book, Inc., Boston, in 1963:

"Perhaps the earliest book to introduce trades to boys and girls were the various little publications on London 'Cries'. How far these go back in print in children's literature the writer is uncertain, but Francis Newbery (nephew of John Newbery) advertised a copy in January 1771, and there are copies dated 1775 extant...."

However, Heartman said this book does contain the Ten Commandments in rhyme and the Lord's Prayer. See entries of 1824 and 1837 for the important book-store owner and publisher Mahlon Day, and the discussion in the text of this history concerning his connection to the important publisher, Cooledge.)

1825 *A Spelling Book*, William Bolles, Pub. Samuel Green, New London (Harvard copy, Code 8. Harvard also has a copy of his 1837 *Spelling Book Containing Exercises....* and his 1831 *A Spelling Book*, a revision of his 1826 book, published in 1837 by W. & J. Bolles. See N. B. S., p. 66 and C. Johnson, p. 220.)

1825 *Standard Spelling Book, or The Scholar's Guide, Revised Edition*, James H. Sears, Pub. Durrie & Peck, New Haven (Harvard copy, Code 8. *Early American Textbooks* shows an 1827 edition by change-agent publisher of the 1826 *Franklin Primer*, A. Phelps, of Greenfield, Mass., and another in 1828 by Durrie & Peck. Sears' speller was obviously one of those attempting to displace Webster's.)

1826 *The New Primer*. Published by S. King, 150 William Street, New York. 35 pages. (Listed by Heartman, who indicated that a copy is at Harvard College Library. He said the following is on the cover after the publisher's name: "Of whom may be had the greatest variety of Toy Books in the United States." Yet I have found no other references to S. King.)

1826 *Gilley's Improved Primer*. Printed for W. B. Gilley, New York, New York. Listed by Heartman.



1826 Harrison's New-Jersey Analogical Primer. Second Edition Improved. Philadelphia. Printed and sold by Griggs & Dickinson, back of No. 171 Market Street. Sold also in New Jersey by D. Fenton, Agent, Trenton, and C. Harrison, Proprietor, Egypt. 1826.

(This information was given by Heartman. It is one of the many primers on which only the title page survived at the Library of Congress because of the curious practice of the old Pennsylvania copyright depository. It apparently later forwarded only the title pages on some copyrighted material to Washington. Heartman noted that it showed on the back that Charity Harrison was the proprietor. See the 1822 entry for the American Primer published by Griggs & Harrison. The Philadelphia publisher listed under 1824 above, John Grigg, was at No. 9, North Fourth Street, in 1826 and should not be confused with Griggs & Dickinson at the "back of No. 171 Market Street" in Philadelphia in 1826.)

1826 Willey's First Spelling Book (mentioned in William Russell's American Journal of Education, October(?), 1826)

1826 The First Book or Spelling Lessons for Primary Schools, Sixth Edition (abridged from Lee's Code 7 Spelling Book of 1821) Thomas J. Lee. Pub. 1832 by Munroe and Francis, Boston. "Adopted by the School Committee of Boston" according to an advertisement on an 1830 copy of Wood's 1828 "Account..." listed in Appendix D. (Harvard 1832 copy of Lee's Code 8 primary speller has, "With Prefixed John Wood's Edinburgh Sessional School First Book for Primary Schools" most of which is missing while the speller portion is intact. That suggests heavy classroom use of the sight-word "meaning" beginning material, and the neglect of Lee's "sound" material. However, Harvard's 1835 and 1836 copies of Lee's A First Book of Spelling Lessons and an 1838 copy of Lee's A Spelling Book did not ever include the John Wood material. See also 1832 entry on a different edition, Boston Primary Spelling Book, possibly not based on Lee's. Early American Textbooks shows on page 70 that Thomas J. Lee wrote The Primary Class-Book, published by Glazier & Co., Hallowell, Maine, in 1827, 178 pages. No further information is available on that book, which is listed below.)

1826 Marshall's Spelling Book of the English Language, or The Teacher's Assistant, First Revised Edition, Elihu F. Marshall, Pub. 1827 Jacob B. Moore, Concord, N. H. (Harvard copy, Code 8.)

1826 Union Spelling and Reading Book, American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia (Harvard copy, Code 4. Both the 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs listed "Union Primer, Am. S. S. Union," presumably prepared after this low-code 1826 spelling and reading book. See Cremin, p. 69, on the work of the American Sunday School Union. Nietz referred, p. 26, to an 1817(?) Union Speller, revised in 1832 as The Union Spelling Book. If that 1817 reference is correct, the group originated in 1817 or before. The record suggests such organizations of Sunday schools on both sides of the Atlantic were taken over by government-school activists after about 1818. That they produced such a low-code beginning book in the critical year of 1826 seems to confirm that possibility.)

1826 The Franklin Primer, or Lessons in Spelling and Reading Adapted to the Understanding of Children, Composed and Published by a Committee Appointed for the Purpose by the School Convention of Franklin County, May 25, 1826. (Attributed to Samuel Willard.) Fifth Edition, Improved, Published 1828 by A. Phelps and A. Clark, Greenfield, Mass.

(Harvard copy, Code 4, described in this history. Became the first book in a four-book reading series. The next level was published in 1827 and is described later: Secondary Lessons, or the Improved Reader, Sequel to Franklin Primer. The third book was published in 1828 according to Clifton Johnson, p. 291-292: The General Class Book. The publisher, Ansel Phelps, listed the fourth book, The Popular Reader, by 1843. See the 1827 entry on Secondary Lessons concerning that text. Heartman lists a second

edition of The Franklin Primer dated 1826, a third in 1827, a fifth in 1828, a ninth in 1830, and a twelfth in 1830. Heartman's listings ended at 1830, but the book was published after that date.)

1826 The Pestalozzian Primer, or First Step in Teaching Children the Art of Reading and Thinking, John M. Keagy, M. D., Pub. 1827 John S. Wiestling, Harrisburg, Pa.

(Harvard copy. Heartman lists a title page only from an 1826 edition in the Library of Congress. Philosophy in Preface is Code 1, but Keagy, a government-school activist for years until his death, claimed the public would not be ready for that pure "meaning" approach in teaching beginning reading until about ten years, so his actual content is strongly sound-oriented, Code 8. Keagy is discussed in this history.)

1826 Worcester's Primer, by Samuel Worcester, Pub. Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, Boston.

(Harvard copy, Code 1. Its "meaning" approach was praised by the arch-activist, William Russell, in the new American Journal of Education in 1826. Russell was the new journal's editor. Worcester's material is discussed in this history. It eventually was part of a series. A Harvard copy by Jenks & Palmer of Boston of uncertain date of the National Spelling Book or Pronouncing Tutor by Benjamin Dudley Emerson advertised Worcester's Code 1 reading series which Jenks & Palmer were then publishing: First Book, or Primer of the English Language, Second Book for Reading and Spelling, Third Book for Reading and Spelling, and Fourth Book for Reading, with Rules and Instructions. The advertisement stated, "The above make a complete series of Reading Books for youth...."

See Appendix C for the sequence of Boston publishers of the Worcester "meaning" series, which was ultimately replaced by the widely used Hillard "meaning" series from Boston. Heartman listed the 1826 edition and one more, apparently in 1829, which he showed as "(1824-1829)." His title for the 1826 edition was A Primer of the English Language, For the use of Families and Schools, By Samuel Worcester. Stereotyped Edition. Boston: Published by Hilliard, Gray & Co. Yet he said the imprint on the cover read, Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins. Heartman cited copies of the 1826 edition held by Stone and Plimpton. The later copy used the same title and the publisher was also shown as Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little, and Wilkins. He said the copy of the later edition was held by the Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts. Samuel Worcester's material should not be confused with similar later material by S. T. Worcester, nor should the publisher, Hilliard, be confused with the later author, Hillard.)

NOTE:

THE FACT THAT HARVARD LIBRARY HAS INTACT ALL THREE OF THE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT, PIVOTAL GOVERNMENT-SCHOOL TEXTS: THE 1826 FRANKLIN, THE KEAGY, AND THE WORCESTER (AS WELL AS THE 1826 LOW-CODE UNION SPELLING AND READING BOOK FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS) IS AN EXTRAORDINARY AND PRAISEWORTHY THING.

IT IS EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL THAT THESE CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TEXTS SURVIVE TOGETHER IN ANY OTHER LIBRARY ANYWHERE ELSE ON EARTH! THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE THESE 1826 TEXTS HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL TO MY WRITING OF THIS HISTORY. IT WAS THIS EXAMINATION THAT MADE ME REALIZE THAT THEIR SHARED DATE OF ORIGIN, 1826, MARKED THE BEGINNING OF A DELIBERATE, PROGRAMMED AND EXTRAORDINARILY SUCCESSFUL CHANGE IN BEGINNING READING INSTRUCTION, FROM "SOUND" TO "MEANING," WHICH CAMPAIGN WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE SAME ACTIVISTS WHO WERE WORKING (ALSO SUCCESSFULLY) TO REPLACE AMERICA'S THRIVING PRIVATE EDUCATION FACILITIES WITH GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS.

THESE 1826 ‘MEANING’-ORIENTED TEXTS HAVE BEEN DESCRIBED AT LENGTH IN THIS HISTORY.

1827 Selections from Scripture Designed as Lessons in Reading for the Use of Adults; with Lessons in Spelling, Charles Folsom, Pub. Hilliard, Metcalf & Co., Cambridge (Harvard copy donated in 1828 by Charles Folsom, probably the author. See similar 1828 copy below.)

1827 Infant Schools (on cover) Infant Education (title page), By a Friend to the Poor, Pub. 1828 Shirley and Hyde, Portland (Harvard copy. The book was infant school propaganda and cited the Spitalfields and Bristol schools in England. Wilderspin’s school at Quaker Street, Spitalfields, was opened on July 2, 1820. The book outlined the general nature of his ridiculous “teaching.” After discussing Wilderspin’s school, it discussed the Bristol School, run by a man whose name was blurred (possibly Goyder). The reading methods at that Bristol School were described: an incomplete, alphabetically mixed syllabary, a vowel table omitting diphthongs, a picture alphabet with non-phonetic examples (owl for o, ship for s, and wheel for w), and sight-words given for numerals at the beginning of the book along with the digits (one, two, three, etc.), something which is characteristic of a “meaning” method but which is never done with a “sound” method. By the 1820’s, it is obvious the infant schools had moved from “sound” towards “meaning.”

1827 The Primary Class-Book, (127 pages), Thomas J. Lee, Glazier & Co., Hallowell, Maine. (Listed on page 70 of Early American Textbooks. A speller was written by a Thomas J. Lee, entered earlier. This book may have been one of the new “meaning” primers by the same man.)

1827 First Principles of English Spelling and Reading, Caleb H. Snow, M. D., Pub. James Loring, Boston (Harvard copy, Code 8, reads: “...an attempt to bring together all the words of the New Testament to... progress... from the alphabet... to the more difficult parts of orthography and pronunciation.” Obviously not the philosophy of the government-school promoters of 1826 and 1827, as quoted in American Journal of Education.)

1827 The Maine Primer; Or, Child’s Second Book. “Tis education forms the youthful mind; Just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclin’d.” Published by Amos B. Parker, Boston, & E. Fellowes, Belfast. 1828. 36 pages; 18 leaves.

(Heartman listed this copy at the Library of Congress, and stated the cover showed E. Fellows, not E. Fellowes. It had been copyrighted on 24 January, 1827, and had an “Introduction: To Parents And Teachers.” Presenting a primer as the child’s second book was out of step with the movement in 1827 to publish primers for use as the first book, instead of a speller. Whether this was expected to be preceded by a speller, or by a simple ABC book almost solely meant to learn the alphabet, is unknown.)

1827 Kelley’s First Spelling Book or Child’s Instructor; Designed for Sunday and Common Schools, Hall Jackson Kelley, Revised 7th Edition, Pub. Lincoln and Edmunds, Boston (Harvard copy: Code 8. “Advertisement (Jan. 9. 1827) This spelling book prepared particularly for Sunday and primary schools has passed through seven large editions...” According to Philbrick, it (not Webster’s) was used when the Boston primary schools first opened in 1818. The hostility to Webster’s in Boston dates at least from 1818.)

1827 Secondary Lessons, or the Improved Reader, Intended as a Sequel to Franklin Primer, by A Friend of Youth [shown as Samuel Willard by the Harvard library], Fifth Edition, Pub. 1831 by Durrie and Peck, New Haven

(Harvard copy. Title page shows:

“I would rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Paul.”

American Antiquarian Society has a copy of the second edition of 1828 published by A. Phelps and A. Clark, Greenfield, Mass. This became the second book in the reading series, the Franklin Primer being the first. The third book in the three-book reading series was published in 1828 according to Clifton Johnson, p. 291-292: The General Class Book. On the back of an 1843 edition of Mrs. Barbauld’s Easy Lessons, the publisher, Ansel Phelps of Greenfield, Massachusetts, listed the foregoing three books plus the fourth book in the series, The Popular Reader.)

1827 Sequel to American Popular Lessons. Collins and Hannay, New York. 376 pages. (Listed on page 106 of Early American Textbooks. See under 1831 for Introduction to American Popular Lessons. Author appears to be Eliza Robbins.)

1828 The Child’s Primer or First Book for Primary Schools, by Jonathan Lamb. Published in 1831 by Chauncey Goodrich, Burlington, Vermont. (Harvard copy. American Antiquarian Society copy published in 1833. Code 4. Heartman lists editions of 1828, 1830, and 1831, and added that it was reprinted. He also lists an 1830 version published by Chauncey Goodrich, shown later in this appendix.)

1828 Child’s Companion, Enoch Lewis, Pub. in Pennsylvania (Mentioned in James Pyle Wickersham’s History of Education in Pennsylvania, 1886.)

1828 Gradations in Reading and Spelling, Henry Butter, Pub. 1836 Henry Perkins, Philadelphia (Harvard copy) (Preface to this 1828 English book is obviously American, presumably from 1836 and the book may have been altered also. The presumably American “Hint to Teachers” says in teaching beginning reading teachers should read the lesson over and over and also the spelling lessons:

“...to ascertain that they know the words before requiring them to learn to spell them.”

It also says children can read small words before knowing all the alphabet:

“The earlier tables of spelling are to be used as reading lessons; and at first they may be used only as such.”

By recommending that children not be permitted to decode new material by themselves, the book’s emphasis on “meaning” and away from “sound” is obvious. If used as directed, it would be a Code 1 book.)

1828 Introduction to the National Reader, John Pierpont, Pub. 1830 Richardson, Lord and Holbrook.

(Harvard copy. A nice collection of stories, not for beginners, but with pronunciation markings on long words:

“It is hoped that the lessons, in the beginning of the book, are, none of them, so difficult as to dishearten any child, who has mastered the reading exercises that are to be found in his Spelling Book and that, as the young learner proceeds, if he finds some hard reading, he will at the same time, find the subject so interesting, as to make him disregard the labor of spelling the long words....”

Pierpont's reading materials were massively used in America, perhaps being equaled only by Murray's. From the remark just quoted, it is obvious that as late as 1828 Pierpont clearly expected children to learn to read independently in the spellers before beginning his reading series, and then to use his pronunciation markings to sound out hard unknown words for themselves in his readers, which sounding-out he called "spelling." Yet by 1839 Pierpont added a Code 1 sight-word primer, *The Little Learner or Rudiments of Reading*, as the first book in his reading series. Harvard has a copy of an 1854 edition published by Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia. That Pierpont, the author of a widely used reading series, wrote such a sight-word primer by 1839 as an addition to his reading series, confirms that there had been a shift away from the speller as the beginning book considerably before 1839. It confirmed the shift away from the practice of teaching beginning readers how to sound out words, or how to "spell" words by themselves.

Pierpont's series was still being sold by Lippincott in 1876 according to the American Catalogue, but the names of the first and second books were apparently changed: *The Young Reader*, 15c, *New Reader*, 45c, *National Reader*, 63c, and *American First Class Book*, 95c.)

1828 *Boston Reading Lessons for Primary Schools*, copyright March 22, 1828, Pub. 1830 Richardson and Lord, Boston (The name, Holbrook, does not appear in the publisher's name on the 1830 Harvard copy of 142 pages plus table of contents but does on the American Antiquarian Society 1830 copy and on Pierpont's book, above, as Richardson, Lord & Holbrook. The American Antiquarian Society 1830 copy shows the author as Sarah Preston (Everett) Hale. Not a beginning book. The Harvard copy noted it had been adopted by the Boston Primary School Committee and "many other schools in various parts of the country." *Early American Textbooks* lists on page 78 an 1837 edition of 142 pages published by Charles J. Hendee of Boston, their catalog number PE 1120, so it was in use for at least ten years.

Very poor content. Largely horrid, upsetting stories with "morals," but even when not horrid, still with "morals." The inclusion of such nasty content in books for little children is curiously characteristic of change-agent materials. By contrast, Thornton Burgess, the early twentieth century author of highly successful nature stories for children, refused to include any upsetting content because he thought it unsuitable for young children. Yet Burgess managed to cram his stories with vast amounts of scientific data, beautifully sugared for the little unsuspecting learners.)

1828 *National Spelling Book or Pronouncing Tutor*, Benjamin Dudley Emerson, Principal of Adams Grammar School, Boston. Published by Jenks & Palmer, Boston (Apparently copyrighted in 1828 but the actual publishing date of this 170th edition uncertain. Harvard copy, code 10 if used for beginners, but not a beginning book. *Early American Textbooks* shows a 160th edition and 170th edition of this book, both under 1828, just as 1828 is the only date printed on this one. It seems probable that date appeared on many later editions by Jenks & Palmer. Yet *Early American Textbooks* also shows an 1829 copy (apparently from Jenks & Palmer) with no note on an edition number, and an 1829 copy and an 1830 copy published by Richardson, Lord & Holbrook of Boston, also with no notes on edition numbers.

The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge published in 1843 a 32-page pamphlet, *Report of the Committee on Spelling Books*, a copy of which is presently in the American Antiquarian Society library. It confirms that Emerson's speller was the most used in Massachusetts in the 1830's and had displaced Webster's. Emerson also wrote reading books (listed under 1835 and 1846) and *The Introduction to The National Spelling Book, for the Use of the Youngest Classes and Primary Schools*. They may have appeared after this speller was printed, as this Harvard copy by Jenks & Palmer of uncertain date advertised only Worcester's Code 1 reading series, *First Book*, or *Primer of the English Language*, (listed under 1826), *Second Book for Reading and Spelling*, *Third Book for Reading and Spelling*, and *Fourth Book for Reading, with Rules and Instructions*. The advertisement stated

“The above make a complete series of Reading Books for youth, which are not surpassed by any other works for this purpose now before the public.... This series of Readers has been introduced into numerous Seminaries and Schools in the United States, and wherever used, the books have given satisfaction.”

See Appendix C for the sequence of publishers of the Worcester readers.)

1828 *The American Primer, Designed as the First Book for Children*. Published by E. & G. Merriam, Brookfield, Massachusetts. (American Antiquarian Society copy. Code 3. Listed by Heartman, who also showed a second edition in 1829. Note the presumption by 1828 that a speller was not to be the first book.

The successor company, G. & C. Merriam of Springfield, later became the publisher of Webster's dictionary, so obviously the company prospered. Webster's 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language* had originally been published by S. Converse in New York, and printed by Hezekiah Howe at New Haven. An extraordinarily beautiful reprint of that 1828 Converse edition, with an extraordinarily scholarly preface by Rosalie J. Slater, was published by the Foundation for American Christian Education, P. O. Box 27035, San Francisco, California, 94127, in 1967 and 1983.

See the 1830 entry for G. & C. Merriam's *Child's Guide*, which gives more information on reading books published by Merriam, including the fact that in 1821 E. & G. Merriam had published *The American Reader, Containing Extracts Suited to Exciting a Love of Science and Literature, to Refine the Taste and to Improve the Moral Character, Designed for the Use of Schools*. The 1821 book was obviously later part of Merriam's *American Readers*. Also see the 1833 entry. This 1828 book must have been the first in that series. No information is available on other books which may have been in Merriam's *American Readers* series, besides the 1821 and 1828 books.)

1828 *M'Carty's American Primer, Being A Selection Of Words The Most Easy Of Pronunciation. Intended To Facilitate the Improvement of Children in Spelling*. Philadelphia: Published and Sold by M'Carty & Davis. (Successors to the late Benjamin Warner.) No. 171 Market-Street. Stereotyped by J. Howe Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Apparent English content - Code 5 - a mixed-up mess. Considering the post-1826 shift to "meaning" in beginning reading books, this may be different from the 1814 M'Carty's *American Primer* listed earlier, published only by William McCarty of Philadelphia. According to Heartman, only the title page of that version survives in the Library of Congress, like so many other Pennsylvania spellers of that period, so its content is unknown.)

1828 *Analytical Spelling Book*, William Mulkey, Copyrighted in Alabama, Printed for the Author by J. & J. Harper, N. Y. (Harvard copy, Code 10.)

1828 *Introduction to the Analytical Reader*, Samuel Putnam, Pub. Whipple and Lawrence, Salem (Harvard copy. See Putnam's 1826 entry. This book is also meant for children who can already read, and then teaches true phonics to children who already can read words as wholes. It phonetically marks words children should long since have learned. Like so many other books connected with the change-agents, this has some very ugly content for little children, such as a story of a lamb being eaten alive! Such nasty publications form quite a contrast to Oliver Goldsmith's charming tale for little children of *Goody Two-Shoes*.)

1828 *Selections from the Scriptures, Designed as Lessons in Reading for the Use of Children*, Hilliard & Brown, Cambridge (Harvard copy. Straight short reading paragraphs, preceding each with word lists, with no marking for phonics. See related entry for 1827 published by Hilliard, Metcalf & Co. of Cambridge, *Selections from Scripture Designed as Lessons in Reading for the Use of Adults; with Lessons in Spelling*. The words, *Lessons in Spelling*, were omitted in this title. If meant for beginners, it

was a Code 1 text. One of Hilliard's companies was also the publisher of Harvard's materials, as discussed elsewhere in this history.)

1828 Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School, John Wood of Edinburgh, Scotland, Second Edition Reprinted 1830 by Munroe and Francis, Boston. (N.Y.P.L. copy. Recommends teaching whole words and dropping the syllabary: Code 1, pure "meaning." This was an exceedingly influential book on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, and is discussed elsewhere in this history.)

1828 The Pennsylvania Primer. Carefully Compiled By James Martin, Practical Teacher of Children. Philadelphia: Mifflin and Parry, Printers, 1828. Listed as item 126 by Heartman, who said the Library of Congress had only the title page, with an entry stating James Martin was the author. An 1829 title page is also at the Library of Congress, with slightly different wording: The Pennsylvania Primer: Designed to Render Both Sight and Sound Subservient To The Juvenile Understanding. Carefully Compiled, By James Martin, Practical Teacher of Children. Philadelphia: Mifflin And Parry, Printers. It is obvious Martin's emphasis was on "meaning," and not on "sound," as might have been expected in 1828 and 1829.)

1829 The Pittsburgh Primer containing three thousand familiar words, ranged in tables, according to the various tones of the vowels, with due regard thereby ascertaining the Pronunciation. Together with Easy reading lessons. Pittsburgh, Printed and published by Cramer and Spear, Franklin Head, Wood Street. 1829. 36 pages. Copies: Ernest J. Wessen. Cover title: The New Primer, Pittsburgh. Printed and Sold by Johnson and Stockton. (This was cited by Heartman. It apparently was a "sound"-oriented spelling book, presumably meant for beginners, and as such was very much out of date in 1829 when the shift toward "meaning" for beginners was almost triumphant.)

1829 The Elementary Spelling Book, Being an Improvement on the American Spelling Book [Ed.: of 1783], Noah Webster.

(Apparently many printers originally. However, at least by 1847 but probably shortly after Webster's death in 1843, G. F. Cooleage & Bro., New York, became its sole publisher. Yet the Cooleage company sold Webster's speller for use at the upper grades, producing cheap sight-word "primers" instead for the primary level. In 1855, D. Appleton of New York became the publisher, and in 1890 American Book Company, New York, became the publisher.

The 1829 revision was still a Code 10, heavily phonic one, but it obviously was meant to meet the strident change-agent opposition to the 1783 Webster American Spelling Book that had surfaced after about 1818 and that had become enormous after 1826. That Webster's 1829 The Elementary Spelling Book was meant as an answer to that opposition seems to be confirmed by Webster's publishing in 1832 The Elementary Primer (listed later), whose stated purpose was to precede The Elementary Spelling Book of 1829. Yet, in 1783, Webster's American Spelling Book had been the first book in his series, followed by his grammar, and, ultimately, two reading books, The Little Reader's Assistant, and An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking. Therefore, when Webster in 1832 said that his primer reading book should precede, and not follow, his new spelling book, he was falling in line with his opposition. Webster obviously had been defeated in the market place some time before 1832.

It is possible that the Cooleage company only had the rights to the Webster's The Elementary Spelling Book of 1829, but not the original The American Spelling Book of 1783. No where in the material I have seen does Cooleage refer to that earlier book which has a different title. Yet, in the 1844 list of textbooks in use in Virginia, quoted in Part 4, the three most widely used spelling books were "Webster's" in 63 counties, Comly's in 31 counties, and "Elementary" (probably Webster's 1829 title) in 20 counties. Other spelling book titles were far less used. Webster's 1783 spelling book had always been

licensed to many printers all over the United States. The Virginia figures suggest that many of those printers were still supplying the 1783 edition in 1844, and that it was still the most used, but that the “Elementary” (presumably Webster’s 1829 edition) was also in use. Only a year after Webster’s death in 1843, the arrangement with Cooleedge might not yet have been operative. However, if “Webster’s” on the Virginia list meant the 1783 edition, and “Elementary” meant Webster’s 1829 edition, then the Virginia listing may be the last time that Webster’s 1783 edition appears in the records.

The Elementary Spelling Book of 1829 was “revised” again in 1857 after Webster’s death, and its Code 10 nature for beginners was gutted. The 1876 American Catalogue listed Noah Webster’s Elementary Spelling Book (obviously the gutted 1857 edition), his Elementary Reader (but which one is not clear), and his son’s Speller and Definer as available from Appleton.

1829 Boston School Primer; or First Book for Children, with Watts’s Catechism, Pub. 1831 by Munroe and Francis, Boston; C. S. Francis, New York (American Antiquarian Society copy. Code 1. This was apparently a very important book.. See the edition below.)

1829 Boston School Primer, or First Book for Children, Pub. 1831 by Munroe and Francis, Boston; C. S. Francis, New York (Harvard copy, without Watts’s catechism which is present in the American Antiquarian Society copy. Code 1. Preface in both Harvard’s and American Antiquarian’s copies discusses and praises Wood’s Edinburgh school which dropped the syllabary for beginners. See the discussion of this book in Part 4.)

1829 National Spelling Book and Scholar’s Guide on a New Plan, Pub. Charles Hoag, Concord, New Hampshire (Harvard copy, Code 7. A written note in the front indicates that in 1861 it was a gift to Harvard, by the family of Reverend Samuel Hillard or Willard of Deerfield, an 1808 graduate of Harvard. Possibly it was the Reverend Samuel Willard of Deerfield who is credited with writing the Franklin Primers of 1802 and 1826. See the further discussion at the beginning of Appendix C. See the 1829 entry below for The Progressive Primer published by Hoag, which specially stated it was to be used before this speller.)

1829 The Progressive Primer, being an easy introduction to the Scholars Guide, for the use of schools in the United States. Concord, N. H. Published by Charles Hoag. 35 pages. (This was cited by Heartman, who said a copy was in the New Hampshire Historical Society Library in Concord, New Hampshire, and that it was also issued after 1830. Heartman had no understanding of beginning reading practices, with his mindset on the New England Primer, and therefore wrote concerning this book that it was “A regional issue of no special features.” Yet it had extremely interesting features. This 1829 “primer” was almost certainly one of the many low-code sight-word meaning-emphasis “primers” that were being published starting in 1826 to displace the use of high-code sound-emphasis spellers for beginners. It should be noted that the title to this primer indicated that Hoag’s National Spelling Book and Scholar’s Guide, listed above under 1829, was meant to be used only after this primer.)

1829 The Atlantic Primer Or Child’s First Book (cut of flowers in basket) In Easy Spelling and Reading. Adorned With About 70 Cuts. Dover, N. H. Samuel C. Stevens - Washington-Street. Printed by George W. Ela. 1829. 34 pages; 18 leaves. Irregular signatures. Copies: NHSL AAS. (This information is given by Heartman, but I have not seen this text, available at the New Hampshire Historical Society in Concord, New Hampshire, and the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Mass. That two copies survive in that area and that both have more pictures (70) than pages (34) suggests two conclusions. It was probably popular there in 1829 and it most probably is a low-code “meaning” approach beginning book.)



1829 The Speller and Definer, or Class-Book No. 2, E. Hazen. Pub. M'Elrath and Bangs, New York. (Harvard copy. "Sold by all the principal booksellers and country merchants in the United States and Canadas." See Hazen's 1829 Code 1 The Symbolical Primer.)

1829 The Symbolical Primer, or Class Book No. 1. Designed To Render The Progress Of Beginners, In Spelling And Reading, Easy And Agreeable. By E. Hazen. Philadelphia: Published By The Author. Stereotyped by J. Howe. (Heartman cited this 1829 copy, which he said was in the library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. He also said the Library of Congress had the title page only with a Ms. entry on verso giving Edward Hazen as the author. Heartman listed two other editions, but not Harvard's copy. The Harvard copy shows it was published in 1830 by many publishers. The material is Code 1 (or 3 if its syllabary were used but Hazen said it would be better to omit it). Poor Heartman obviously knew very little about teaching beginning reading, because he actually commented about this incredibly bad "meaning" text which taught reading by pictures of objects as a deaf-mute was taught:

"A Primer in name only. This is really a schoolbook but not without merit."

On the Harvard copy appeared the words, "...for the use of Infant and Monitorial Schools" and in smaller print, "common schools." See 1829 entry for Book No. 2, a speller, which is actually the third volume as Book No. 1 has two parts. Book No. 1 after the syllabary teaches words only by pictures, all pure "meaning." By the time E. Hazen wrote his Preface to his 1845 The Grammatic Reader, No. 1, (Harvard copy), and "meaning" had triumphed over "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading, he said, not surprisingly, "...much of the first and second year [is spent] learning to read and spell...."

When it is contrasted to some comments in pre-1826 spellers, that 1845 comment corroborates that a sharp drop in achievement had taken place because of the 1826 switch from "sound" to "meaning" in teaching beginning reading. In 1804 Lindley Murray wrote An English Spelling Book with Reading Lessons, a Code 7 book. Its first part was reproduced as A First Book for Children. On page 29, after a child would have been in the book perhaps a few months, Murray wrote for the child to read: "In a few weeks, I hope to read well. I will make the best use of my time." Some spellers published in the next twenty years after Murray's 1804 spelling book copied Murray's words as quoted above exactly, such as Elihu F. Marshall's 1819 A Spelling Book of the English Language and Jasper Hazen's (not E. Hazen's) Code 8 1822 The Primary Instructor and Improved Spelling Book, Being an Easy System of Teaching the Rudiments of the English Language in Two Parts, The remarks confirm that teaching to read before the change-agent date of 1826 was expected to take a few months. After 1826, it was expected to take at least two years. Yet, as indicated by Philbrick, even two years were not enough. In the Boston Annual School Report for 1874, pages 283-285, Superintendent John Dudley Philbrick recorded what he found to be the practice in his first inspection of the Boston Primary Schools in 1857:

"In respect to the initiating of children into the art and mystery of reading, - the teaching of them the elements of the art, the enabling of them to pronounce at sight the words of easy prose or verse, - I found the Primary Schools on my first inspection of them in 1857, in a deplorable condition. The old-fashioned method, by ABC syllables and spelling, had been nominally abolished by the abolition of the usual appliances for teaching it, and it had been so much ridiculed that the teachers were very shy in using it in the presence of visitors. The reading books and charts in the schools were designed for the 'word-method,' a method of very limited capabilities.... In recalling the slow and tedious processes by which they brought their pupils up into only semi-fluent reading, I am reminded of what Milton says of an arduous path, -

'Long is the way,  
And hard, that out of hell leads up to light.'

1829 Worcester's Spelling Book, Samuel Worcester, Pub. Crocker and Brewster, Boston, J. Leavitt, New York. (Harvard copy. Not a beginning book:

“Some other common defects [of spellers] are... the elements of spelling are expected to be attended to before the elements of reading. The author begs leave to refer to his Primer, which was designed as the child's first book and as a suitable introduction to all Spelling Books, as illustrating the mode of instruction which he thinks is to be preferred.”

Worcester's 1826 sight-word primer listed earlier was a straight Code I book. This book meant to teach older students to spell included alphabets and phonic notations, but NOT the syllable tables that had always been included in spellers.)

1830 The Abecedarian, Samuel W. Seton, Pub. J. R. Roqua, New York. (Harvard copy, effectively Code I. This is a teacher's guide, and the directions for teaching beginning reading are unspeakably obscure, convoluted and bad. Samuel W. Seton was on the committee for the original and enormously influential American Lyceum organized by the arch-activist Josiah Holbrook, per Blumenfeld, p. 130.)

1830 The Child's Guide, Pub. 1839 G. & C. Merriam, Springfield, Mass. (Sold in New York, Philadelphia, Hartford, Boston, Springfield, Rochester, Albany “and book sellers generally.” Harvard copy, an upper-level book and Code I philosophy. Harvard note says “By Merriam G. & C.”)

“Preface...Too great pains cannot be taken to prevent the formation of a ‘habit of reading without thinking’....”

Quoted “Babington”:

“To prevent... this habit they should be questioned as to the subject of each lesson, whether questions are annexed or not.”

(The back of this Child's Guide advertised their 1833 Easy Primer, meant to precede this book, and the Intelligent Reader, “Designed as a sequel to the Child's Guide.” The New York Public Library card catalog credits Charles Merriam (1806-1887) and Geo. Merriam (1805-1880) of Springfield with “The Child's Guide comprising familiar lessons designed to aid in correct reading, spelling, defining, thinking and acting.” The catalog also credits them in 1841 with “The Village Readers, Designed for the Use of Schools, by the Compilers of the Easy Primer.” On page 111 of Early American Textbooks appears The Village Reader. Springfield, Mass., G. & C. Merriam, 1846, of 300 pages. Also listed is an 1849 copy from Springfield, Mass., published by Merriam, Chapin & Co. E. Merriam was an earlier member of the company when it was in Brookfield. and the catalog credited E. and G. Merriam in 1821 with “The American Reader, Containing Extracts Suited to Exciting a Love of Science and Literature, to Refine the Taste and to Improve the Moral Character. Designed for the Use of Schools. Second Edition, Brookfield, Mass.” At the head of that title appeared “Merriam's American Readers.” Entered previously, above, for 1828 was The American Primer, Designed as the First Book for Children, by E. & G. Merriam. That American Primer was obviously added by 1828 to Merriam's American Readers series, which presumably had other books in the series besides the 1821 reader, but the Easy Primer listed later dates from 1833. The Merriam company of Brookfield, and then Springfield, which had been publishing reading books since at least 1821, later became the publishers of Webster's dictionary, as discussed under the 1828 entry above.)

1830 An Easy Primer, Adapted To The Capacities of Children. By Charles C. Guenther. No place. (1830) Copies: LC [Library of Congress]. Titlepage only with Mss. entry on verso: 1830, Oct. 7, Deposited by Chas. C. Guenther as Author. (The foregoing is given by Heartman. This pathetic remnant

is almost certainly from the old Pennsylvania copyright office which sent only title pages of spellers to Washington, throwing the rest of the books away.)

1830 First Lessons in Reading and Grammar, Chiefly from the Works of Miss Edgeworth. By Warren Colburn. (Harvard copy. Not a beginning book. Colburn, who was reportedly a “Pestalozzian,” had also written an enormously widely used and reportedly highly effective arithmetic book teaching mental arithmetic to beginners, which not many years later met a series of “revised” editions that apparently spoiled its utility. The existence of such opposition to Colburn’s arithmetic book tends to promote this researcher’s confidence in the value of Colburn’s original arithmetic text, sight unseen. (I have not seen either Colburn’s original text or its various “revised” editions.) Mark Sullivan’s *Our Times*, Volume II, page 10, implied that Colburn wrote a reading series, in “1833,” but this 1830 reading book is the only reader of Colburn’s on which I have found a record. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 50 and at length in Appendix E, Warren Colburn wrote materials on the teaching of mental arithmetic to beginners, and the results were spectacular. On pages 84 and 85 of the 1883-1884 volume of *The American Teacher* appear the following comments from an October, 1883, letter from Iola Rounds of Wellesley, Massachusetts, who was a teacher:

“Dear Editor: Moses, Jr., speaks feelingly of Warren Colburn’s mental arithmetic. As I read his earnest appeal in behalf of that good old book, memories come to me of days long gone by, when through suffering and tears I was drilled through it. In later years the sorrow has changed to a feeling of joy and exultation, for I am constantly reminded of my superior education as I see my friends laboriously ‘reckoning’ small bills with pencil and paper. It is painful, but amusing to me when, in one of our large stores, having reached the end of a long shopping-list, I proceed to pay my bill. ‘I owe you this amount,’ I say, handing out a bill to be changed. The clerk takes his pencil from behind his ear, looks at me as if I meant to cheat him, and after a prolonged ‘ciphering’ which takes the time I had allowed to catch a train, comes to the conclusion that I am right. My ability in that direction is not in the least due to quality of brain. Colburn’s *Arithmetic* deserves the whole credit, detestable as the book seemed when I studied it.” )

1830 American Definition Spelling Book, Moses G. Atwood, Concord, New Hampshire. (Harvard copy. Code 9, obviously heavily emphasizing “meaning” also, despite the Code 9 evaluation. Claimed it was based on an 1802 work, probably Kneeland’s which had been only a Code 6.)

1830 Cobb’s Juvenile Readers, by Lyman Cobb (See 1825 entry on Cobb’s speller, which entry notes his original reading series came out in 1830, but I have seen no copies of the 1830 reading series. See the 1842 entry for Cobb’s *New Juvenile Readers*, a revision of Cobb’s original series of reading books. The 1830 series, like the 1842 series, was perhaps Code 3.)

1830 Union No. 1, or Child’s First Book, Oliver Angell (1787-1858) Preceptor of the Franklin High School, Providence, Rhode Island, Pub. 1848 E. H. Butler, Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy of 1848. However, the Library of Congress has an 1830 copy with an historically important preface that was omitted on later editions. It was published by Cory, Marshall & Hammond, and copyrighted by them in Rhode Island in 1830. Parts of that preface have been quoted in Part 4 of this history in the discussion of Angell’s readers. Angell’s Code I sight-word series was published starting in 1830 and had readers in levels from the first to the fifth. Angell’s long-lived and widely used series is virtually unknown today although copies of the upper-grade readers turn up in used book stores. I bought one in such a store, an 1850 copy of Angell’s *Fifth Reader*, with “reading comprehension” questions annexed to its stories. Yet Angell’s virtually unknown 1830 series is historically of great importance, as it was perhaps the first sight-word reading series ever published in America, possibly preceding Lyman Cobb’s which also began to come out in 1830, copies of which I have not seen. Cobb’s 1830 material was

probably not a straight Code 1 as Angell's was, since Cobb's later material (part of which I have seen) appears to rate Code 3, as discussed elsewhere. Angell's material undoubtedly produced veritable phalanxes of functional illiterates. See further entries on Angell's material in Appendix C.)

1830 New Primer. (American Antiquarian Society copy. Code 3. Groton: Alpheus Richardson. Carries this notation: "Note from an old envelope: Printed by Stacey and Rogers 1830. Printer and date from S. A. Green, Groton Historical Series, Vol. 2, p. 179." Also listed by Heartman, who cited an 1830 copy held by the Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, published by Alpheus Richardson at Groton, printed at Groton, Mass., by Stacy and Rogers. Has Mrs. Barbauld's silly "Charles" stories.)

1830 The North American Spelling Book or the Youth's Instructor in the Art of Spelling and Reading, Rev. J. G. Cooper, Pub. Towar, J. & D. M. Hogan, Philadelphia; Hogan & Co., Pittsburgh. (Harvard copy. Very poor - only as high as Code 5 because syllabary included. "The work was prepared several years ago as will appear from the date of the recommendations.... I purpose shortly to furnish you with a second part, designed as a connecting link between the spelling book and those consisting exclusively of reading lessons." Remarks dated July 20, 1830.)

1830 The American Primer; or First Book For Primary Schools. Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich. 1830. 36 pages. (This listing was given by Heartman, who said a copy is in the Library of Congress and its Preface states, "The following work might, perhaps, have been more justly entitled a new edition of 'Lamb's Primer' etc." See the entry in this appendix under 1828 for Lamb's primer.)

1830 Pelham's Primer; or Mother's Spelling Book For Children At a Very Early Age, by M. Pelham, published by S. Babcock, Church-Street, New-Haven. (A copy is in the New York Public Library and Columbia University Library, and it is listed by Heartman under item 123. His item 147 lists the same material in an 1823 edition, also in the New York Public Library, The Primer: Or, Mother's Spelling-Book For Children, At A Very Early Age. By M. Pelham, author of the Mother's First Catechism. Second American from the ninety-seventh London Edition. New York: Published by G. C. Morgan, Pearl-St. Franklin Square. Gray & Bunce, Printers. M. Pelham was the pseudonym for Dorothy Kilner, whose material has been discussed in this history. Her speller rates a Code 7 because of its heavy analytic phonics, despite its somewhat abbreviated syllabary.)

1830 The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book, Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Principal of the American Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb. Published by H. & F. J. Huntington, Hartford; Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, and Carter & Hendee, Boston; Jonathan Leavitt, New York.

(Harvard copy. Bookplate states, "The Essex Institute Text-Book Collection, Gift of George Arthur Plimpton of New York, January 25, 1924." On the flyleaf opposite in ink is shown, "Miss Elisabeth A. Brooks from her Father, Dec. 12. 1830." The first "s" in the cursive "Miss" is the outdated long "s," confirming it was written by an adult who would have learned to write twenty or thirty years previously. The back cover was headed, "Juvenile Books, for Infant and Primary Schools. Published by H. and F. J. Huntington, Hartford." It advertised four of the Hartford publisher's books. One was The School Dictionary by the Rev. Wm. W. Turner, Instructor (sic) in the American Asylum, which carried a long endorsement from Gallaudet. Another was Peter Parley's Method of Teaching Geography to Children, with a quoted endorsement from the American Journal of Education. William Russell was the editor of the American Journal of Education from its beginning in 1826 to 1830, but during 1830 the title was changed to American Annals of Education and its second editor became Gallaudet's former assistant, William Channing Woodbridge, who had been an instructor at Gallaudet's school. Peter Parley was the pseudonym of the publisher, Samuel Griswold Goodrich, who became the third editor of the journal immediately after Woodbridge and who also wrote a "meaning" series of readers in which one story belittled Webster's speller, as discussed in this history. Another text advertised on the back cover was The

Child's Arithmetic, by Ingr... (letters blurred) Cobain, "First American from the Second London Edition, Improved and enlarged by the Rev. William W. Turner, A. M., Instructor in the American Asylum," carrying a paragraph endorsement from Gallaudet. (Note the resemblance in the title to Gallaudet's The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book, suggesting a kind of American Asylum series.) The last was the National Spelling Book by B. D. Emerson, Principal of the Adams Grammar School, Boston. Emerson's speller was being promoted widely as a replacement for Webster's. The presence on the advertising back cover of Emerson's spelling book and of all the ties to Gallaudet and the Journal of Education confirms that the publisher, H. & F. J. Huntington of Hartford, was handling the activists' materials.

Furthermore, the widespread publication of Gallaudet's book the first year it appeared, even showing TWO publishers in Boston, suggests it had been widely and successfully promoted even before it had appeared in print. The ink inscription on the flyleaf which is dated December 12, 1830, proves that the copy showing those other publishers had to have been in existence in that first year of publication. As shown elsewhere in this appendix, two of those other publishers, Richardson and Leavitt, handled other noteworthy "meaning"-oriented reading materials which helped to displace Webster's "sound" speller as the beginning reading text in American schools.

Gallaudet's The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book was not a book for beginners, but was meant for both deaf and hearing children. It contained pure Code 1 "meaning" philosophy. A "Note" on the copyright page read, "This little volume, although originally prepared for the Deaf and Dumb, will be found to be equally adapted to the instruction of other children in families, infant schools, common schools, and Sunday schools."

Gallaudet's written comments on reading instruction are few. Therefore, his comments in the "Preface" to this reader are of importance. It will be evident that some of his themes are like those of so many other activists of the period who have been quoted elsewhere in this history. His comments on "progress" parallel those of Angell and others, and his comments on "science" in education and the use of "sense" objects in education parallel those of Keagy, and, to some degree, Pestalozzi. Although lengthy, most of the "Preface" is quoted below because of its importance and its relative unavailability to most researchers.

The 1830 comments of the American teacher of the deaf, Gallaudet, should also be compared to the remarks made by a teacher of the deaf in England, Charles Baker, Headmaster of the Yorkshire Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, which have been quoted at length in the British section of this history. Baker began teaching the deaf about 1831 and in 1864 said he had promoted the deaf-mute method for hearing children for 30 years. Gallaudet first openly promoted the deaf-mute method for hearing children in America in a paper he contributed to the journal in 1830 after Woodbridge, his former assistant, took it over. Woodbridge's American Annals of Education was apparently widely read in England. Gallaudet began his promotion of the deaf-mute method for hearing children in America in 1830, about four years before Baker began his promotion of the deaf-mute reading approach for hearing children in Great Britain. Yet Baker made no mention of Gallaudet's parallel activity in America at about the same time, despite the fact that written records demonstrate that a lively trans-Atlantic traffic existed at that time in ideas on education. Baker's paper is filed with other papers in a volume which was stamped by the British Library July 14, 1864. Baker's paper is titled, On Teaching Reading, - A Paper Read to the Church Schoolmasters' Association, Doncaster, London: William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row, and is dated March 31, 1864. It is discussed at length in Part 6 of this history.

Gallaudet's comments follow:

“This little book was originally designed for the use of some of the younger classes in the Institution with which the author is connected. His experience, for a long course of years, in the instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, has fully convinced him, that most, if not all, the principles on which the gradual development and cultivation of their powers, both intellectual and moral, is conducted, may be applied with equal success, in the education of children and youth who can hear and speak. That enthusiasm in his profession, which it is well suited to inspire, has led him to go still farther in his speculations, and to think, that if these principles were thus applied, a new era would commence in the whole process of education, from its earliest stages upwards and that a system of instruction might be devised, with a regular series of books corresponding to it, more true to Nature, and better adapted to the rapid and successful cultivation of both the mind and heart, than any other now in existence. While, within the last half century, so many astonishing discoveries and improvements have been made in the various sciences and their practical applications to the business of life, does it comport, either with the past history, or the future prospects, of our species, to suppose, that the science of education, on which, in fact, these very discoveries and improvements depend, has already attained to that degree of excellence of which it is susceptible?

“In all the arts and sciences, experiment has led the way to improvement. Results have been laboriously obtained and carefully examined; then compared, arranged, and classified. Thus Genius has embraced within its scope of clear and extensive vision a host of particulars, noticing with rapid and intuitive glance their respective resemblances, and differences, and relations; and perceiving these few and simple principles by which the causes of the various phenomena that they exhibit, are to be explained. Invention takes these principles and applies them to the production of new and wonderful results. Is not this the only way in which the science of education can ever be elevated to an equality of rank with other sciences, and have its elementary principles accurately defined and successfully applied? Why, too, it may be asked, is the discovery of elementary principles in every other science - in Geometry, for instance, considered as entitled to rank among the highest efforts of genius, while those that relate to the science of Education continue to be so much overlooked and neglected?

“But the preface of a child’s book, is hardly a suitable place for a philosophical disquisition; and the remainder of it must be devoted to stating the object for which this little work is designed, and the manner in which the author would recommend it to be used. It is formed on two simple principles, - that children almost immediately refer to some sensible object, or visible occurrence or transaction, in their first efforts to acquire the meaning of words, and even those whose import is of an intellectual and elevated kind; - and that the language of pictures, being founded in Nature, and thus a Universal Language, may, like the signs and gestures and pantomime employed in the instruction of the deaf and dumb, be used, as a key or translation to illustrate and explain written or printed language, and this probably to an extent that has, hitherto, scarcely been imagined.

“The first part of the book is intended to show, how a reference to some sensible object, with a suitable explanation upon the part of the teacher, is vastly better adapted to give a child the precise import of terms, than the common, and very absurd mode of attempting this by definitions in a dictionary. The youthful mind needs illustrative examples, and a gradual induction of particulars, in order to enable it to understand the meaning of words.

“It will be seen, that with each of the pictures of sensible objects, are associated an adjective, a verb, and a short phrase in which most of the pronouns and prepositions are introduced and the various tenses of the verbs illustrated. These should all be made intelligible to the child by oral explanation on the part of the instructor. For instance, suppose we refer to the word tent. The

child sees the picture of a tent. This will aid him in forming a just conception of it. But this is not enough. Let the materials out of which a tent is formed be described to him; the manner of erecting it; its size, and its design. Then explain to him, that a tent is a temporary dwelling; unlike the house in which he lives for months and days and years; that it is put up often only for a night; and so on, referring to all the particulars which constitute the correct import of the word. Give him another example of the use of the word temporary, and another, and another; endeavouring all the while, to make these examples of a more elevated and general kind. Then ask him to furnish some examples. If they are well chosen, let him know it; if they are not, correct his mistakes. Proceed in the same way to explain the word remove; illustrating its meaning, at first, by the removal of a tent, and then, of other objects. After this, as before, let the child furnish illustrative examples. Explain the import of the little phrase. Then a variety of questions may be asked with regard to each of the single objects, of which some examples will be found prepared, at the end of the first part, as a specimen.

“The first part of the book may also be used for lessons in spelling; the child learning to spell the names of the objects, the adjectives, the verbs, and the words in the phrases. He may thus, also easily be taught the different parts of speech, by being told which are called nouns, adjectives, verbs, &c.

“It will be noticed that most of the adjectives are contrasted with each other, - a very useful mode of teaching their meaning, as is abundantly exemplified in the instruction of the deaf and dumb.

“The second part of the book consists of reading lessons, each explained and illustrated by an appropriate picture. Let the child attempt the reading of these lessons, without any assistance on the part of the teacher in regard to the import of the words contained in them. The object here is, to exercise the thinking powers and ingenuity of the child, in endeavouring to understand the story, by the mere inspection of the picture. After he has done this, the inquiry should be made, if there are any words or phrases which he does not fully understand. If so, they should be explained to him by illustrative examples, as in the case of the pictures of single objects. Then let a variety of simple questions be put to him, with regard to the agents, the actions, and the occurrences described, such as, “Who is that man?” “Where is he?” “What is he doing?” “Why is he doing it?” and the like.

“A regular set of questions has not been prepared for the stories in the second part of the book. The author would rather leave this to the ingenuity of the teacher....

“It ought to be stated, that this book is intended for such children as are already able to read what is written in a very simple and easy style.

“Should this experiment prove to be conducive to the object which the author had in view, he may attempt a primary book, on the same plan, and, indeed, a series of books, embracing subjects of a more elevated and important kind.”

The resemblance to Keagy’s material quoted earlier is very great. Gallaudet later wrote the primary book, *The Mother’s Primer*, in 1835, and he wrote a series of books on Scripture history, two of which are shown in *Early American Textbooks*, on page 247. One is *The History of Jonah*, American Tract Society, N. Y., 156 p., no date, and the other is *Scripture Biography for the Young*, 200 pages, American Tract Society, New York, 1896 (obviously published long after his death). Gallaudet’s *The Child’s Picture Defining and Reading Book of 1830* also has page-length Scripture stories at the end, with illustrative pictures. What is surprising since Gallaudet was a Christian clergyman is that his Scripture material seems

primarily (and perhaps only) to concern the Old Testament. Was Gallaudet an orthodox Christian clergyman? His fellow clergyman of the general period, Ralph Waldo Emerson, certainly was not. Emerson more appropriately should be called a pantheist. Gallaudet's *The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book* was discussed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates*. Clifton Johnson on p. 86 of *1904 Old-Time Schools and School-Books* (1904, 1935) duplicated a page. See later entries on Gallaudet of 1835 and 1840.)

1830 *Key to the First Step in Teaching Children to Read, According to the Lesson System of Education*. First American from Third Edinburgh Edition. Pub. 1831 by Jonathan Leavitt, New York; Crocker and Brewster, Boston. (Harvard copy. Code 1 and can only be described as ghastly. It is a teacher's guide, teaching words with no reference to sound, right after the alphabet. All is "reading for meaning" and the text contains more questioning than even one of W. S. Gray's Scott, Foresman 20th century first-grade teacher's guides.)

1830 Ninth Edition of 1826 *Franklin Primer*. (See earlier entry. Library of Congress copy: syllable tables replaced with syllabicated whole-words as examples of only some syllables: "ba-by, la-zy," etc., increasing further the move away from "sound" and toward "meaning" for teaching beginning reading. Code 3.)

1830 *The Clinton Primer for Common Schools*, Montgomery Robert Bartlett, Author of the *Common School Manual*. Pub. Carey and Lea, Philadelphia. (Library of Congress copy, Code 4. N. Y. P. L. has an 1832 copy. The 1830 copy states:

"A series of first lessons with cuts for little children designed to prepare them for entering upon the study of the first part of the *Common School Manual*. It will also be found well adapted to the purposes of instruction in infant schools and private families."

The 1832 copy changed the name of the upper level material from the *Common School Manual* to the *National School Manual*, stating:

"This work of which the *Clinton Primer* is the incipient branch will include nearly 1400 pages and embrace a comprehensive and practical system of English education, the cost of which will be about three dollars. The parts of the work will be retailed at the following prices: primer, 48 pages, 6 1/4 cents; 1st part, 108 pages, 18 3/4 cents; 2nd part, 302 pages, 62 1/2 cents; 3d part, 380 pages, 75 cents; 4th part, 550 pages, \$1.00; Atlas, 75 cents. Primer with the first, second and third parts are completed and now(?) offered for sale by ALL booksellers."

Bartlett's materials certainly sound like a reading series, or like a series meant to replace existing reading series, but no other information has surfaced concerning any part of it except *The Clinton Primer*. The 1832 copy was published by Carey & Lea at Chestnut Street, Philadelphia and stereotyped by James Connor. Heartman lists an 1830 edition "Stereotyped by James Connor. New-York: Published For The Author. 1830," on which Heartman stated that the Library of Congress had only the title page. That suggests the copy Heartman cited originally came from the old Pennsylvania copyright office, which apparently was the source for the many spellers published in Pennsylvania on which only title pages reached the Library of Congress. However, the Library of Congress also has the complete Carey & Lee copy, with the note, "Rec'd 10/27/1830." That copy apparently reached Washington in 1830 directly from the publishers.)

1830 *The Progressive Reader or Juvenile Monitor*, Concord, N. H. (Listed by C. Johnson, p. 248. Johnson also discussed on pages 298-299 Adams' *The Monitorial Reader*, published in Concord, New Hampshire, in 1839. That book may have been related to this 1830 book. It is unlikely that the 1839 text



was related to the 1831 Monitorial Primer by J. A. Prest, listed later, which was presumably using the term, “monitorial,” in connection with the schools of that name. An 1806 reading book for older students is listed in *Early American Textbooks* on page 50, and its title page is reproduced on page 103. It was entitled *The Young Gentleman and Lady’s Monitor, and English Teacher’s Assistant: Being A Collection Of Select Pieces From Our Best Modern Writers...* by J. Hamilton Moore, “Author of the *Practical Navigator, and Seaman’s New Daily Assistant*,” New York: Printed by A. Forman. The 1806 book had no apparent connection to the 1830, 1831 or 1839 books. The term, monitor, obviously did not have to relate only to monitorial schools.)

1830 *The Young Reader, to Go with the Spelling Book*, John Pierpont. Publishers of 1835 fourteenth edition: Carter, Hendee & Co., Boston. (Harvard copy. Responding to the change in pre-1826 practices, when spelling books preceded reading books for beginners.)

1831 *The Child’s Instructor, Consisting of Easy Lessons for Children By a Teacher of Little Children in Philadelphia*, Pub. Bemis & Ward, “Fourth Canandaiuga Edition.” (Harvard copy, Code 3 speller/reader, with almost no “sound” instruction. Preaches to parents on their duties. Redolent of activism.)

1831 *Introduction to American Popular Lessons, By the Author of American Popular Lessons*, Pub. of 9th edition, Roe, Lockwood, N. Y.

(Harvard copy. See under 1827 for *Sequel to American Popular Lessons*, which indicates obviously that the series dates at least as far back as 1827 and probably farther. *Introduction to American Popular Lessons* is not a beginning book. The author was Eliza Robbins. The publisher advertised on this 1831 copy Robbins’ *The First book, or Primary Lessons*, original publishing date unknown, making this a four-book series with *Introduction to American Popular Lessons*, *American Popular Lessons*, and *Sequel to American Popular Lessons*.

*Early American Textbooks* lists *American Popular Lessons*, published by Roe, Lockwood, New York, in 1829 (251 pages) but credits it to Barbauld, Mrs. (Anna Letitia) and Miss (Maria) Edgeworth. The probability is that Eliza Robbins reproduced many of their stories, which was the common practice in such readers. That book obviously was published originally before 1829, the date of the copy in *Early American Textbooks*.

Robbins also wrote *The School Friend* published by Robinson and Franklin, Successors to Leavitt, Lord & Co., New York in 1839. As a teacher, she praised a German (128th edition) text from Saxe-Weimar, and imitated it in her 1839 text. In this upper-level 1839 book, she also quoted “Cousin,” a pivotal change-agent. Therefore, Eliza Robbins seemed “au courant,” so she probably used a “meaning” approach in her beginning level book of unknown date, Robbins’ *The First book, or Primary Lessons*, which was in print by 1831.)

1831 *Monitorial Primer*, J. A. Prest, a member of the American Institute of Instruction. Printed by F. Wyeth, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. (L. of C. copy. A Code 2 book. Clifton Johnson listed on pages 295-299 Adams’ *Monitorial Reader*, Concord, N. H., 1839, apparently unconnected with this text but possibly associated with *The Progressive Reader or Juvenile Monitor*, Concord, N. H., of 1830. listed by C. Johnson on p. 248.

On the title page of this 1831 book, Prest wrote:

“To the American Institute of Instruction (established at Boston), this effort to be useful is respectfully inscribed, by one of their members, THE AUTHOR.”

The connection of this “meaning” text with the influence of the activists in Boston is clear. The writing of such a Code 2 “meaning” text for American beginners would have been almost inconceivable only seven years before, in 1825, the year before the organization of such institutes began. Keagy had left his Harrisburg monitorial school by 1831. It is possible that Prest was a teacher at that Harrisburg monitorial school in 1831 when he wrote his “monitorial” primer, since his book was printed in Harrisburg.)

1831 *The Picture Primer, Intended as A First Book for Children, and as an Introduction to the Picture Reading Book*, By A Friend to Youth, Pub. S. Babcock Co., New Haven. (Harvard copy. A weak Code 5, actually a weak speller. An 1833 copy of *The Picture Reader* - note the difference in title - advertised “Juvenile and Toy Books,” including Sherwood’s *Primer, or First Book for Children*, probably that of the prolific English author of children’s books by the 1820’s, Mrs. Sherwood, which is entered here under 1821; Blair’s *First, or Mother’s Catechism*; *South Carolina Primer*, *Child’s First Book*. No other information is available on those titles, which presumably resembled *The Picture Primer*, above, which was also included in the list on the *Picture Reader*. *The Picture Primer* itself, above, advertised for sale *The Picture Alphabet, or ABC in Rhyme*, “one-cent toy.” *The Picture Primer* showed that the company sold many such toy books, including *The Infant Primer, or Picture Alphabet*, “two cent toy,” and *Child’s First Lessons, or Infant Primer*, one-cent toy. *Picture Primer* and *Picture Reading Book* were not listed with their toy books so were presumably meant for serious home or school instruction. Harvard library also has a copy of *Little Lessons for Little Learners, in Words of One Syllable*, published by S. Babcock of New Haven in 1840, but it is a story book, not a beginning book.)

1831 *Juvenile Lessons, or the Child’s First Reading Book*, J. K. Smith, Pub. 1832 J. and J. W. Prentiss, Keene, New Hampshire. (Harvard copy. Not for beginners - nice content. Referred to a book he quoted from, *Juvenile Miscellany*. Company also published *Easy Lessons in Reading* “By Rev. Joshua Leavitt,” listed previously under 1823. See 1847 entries for a series by Joshua Leavitt, possibly the same man. Preface said Smith’s intent was to use short words as children did not understand long words (“the meaning”) and lost interest.)

1832 *Barnum’s Introductory School Books, Specimens of Barnum’s Introductory School Books*, H. L. Barnum. (Harvard copy. Reading material was Code I, and other subjects were covered. Took a “core curriculum” approach to all subjects. Exceedingly poor materials.)

1832 *Blake’s First Reader - A Class Book for Schools, To Be Used Next After the Spelling Book*. By the Author of the *Second Reader*, the *Historical Reader*, and the *High School Reader*. On the cover: pub. 1838 John F. Brown, Concord, N. H.; on the title page: pub. 1832, Horatio Hill, also with the changed phrase: *After the Spelling Book or in Connexion with It*. (Harvard copy. Used a greatly outdated print of a man in knee trousers and wig, which suggests cheap publishing.

According to Nietz, p. 61, Blake’s *Historical Reader* had been published in 1822. Early American Textbooks on page 77 reproduces the cover of *The Historical Reader*. It reads, “*The Historical Reader, Designed For The Use Of Schools And Families On A New Plan. By Rev. J. L. Blake, A. M., Minister of St. Matthew’s Church, and Principal of a Literary Seminary, Boston. Concord, N. H., Published by Horatio Hill & Co.*” On page 78, Early American Textbooks dated that edition of *The Historical Reader* to 1825. On the back cover of *Blake’s First Reader*, this appeared, dated October, 1837, Concord:

“This little book has recently been adopted into all the primary schools in the City of Boston, also at New York City and Cincinnati, Ohio, and is also extensively used in the State of New Hampshire.”

The publishers also sold The Infant School Alphabet and Marshall's New Spelling Book.)

1832 First Book for Primary Schools, Reprinted from One Prepared by John Wood, Esq., for the Edinburgh Sessional School and Prefixed to the Boston Primary Spelling Book, at the Request of the Committee, Pub. by Munroe and Francis, Boston (Harvard copy, Code I. See 1826 entry for a different 1832 edition of the same material with different arrangement of the titles.)

1832 Progressive Exercises in English Composition, Richard Green Parker. Principal of the Franklin Grammar School, Boston, Second Edition Pub. by Lincoln & Edmands, Boston; Hubbard & Edmands, Cincinnati.

(This is not a reading text. Numerous copies with publishing dates over many years appear on the Harvard bookshelves. Early American Textbooks shows a 39th stereotype edition in 1843, a new stereotype edition from the 55th edition in 1850, and a revised and enlarged edition in 1872. Yet, not long ago, an "expert" made the claim that, until about World War II, teaching composition had not been a concern of American schools! R. G. Parker later wrote a reading series, grammar books and other books, and then with J. Madison Watson the extremely widely used Code I sight-word National Series published by Barnes. The Parker-Watson series originally appeared from 1857 through 1866. Parker also wrote Part I of Introductory Lessons in Reading and Elocution, A. S. Barnes, New York, 1852. Part II was by J. C. Zachos, who wrote the phonic material listed later. Zachos apparently wrote his phonic material after he taught beginning reading to freed slaves in the South during the Civil War and found that phonics worked far better than sight-words.

Early American Textbooks shows on page 269 that Parker wrote The Boston School Compendium of Natural and Experimental Philosophy, 6th ed. Boston, Marsh, Capen, Lyon & Webb, 1841. It was a physics text, and the same publisher also published Horace Mann's Common School Journal. By 1842, that company became Wm. B. Fowle & N. Capen. See elsewhere in this history for comments on William B. Fowle, a promoter of sight-words. Parker used the whole-word method for teaching reading. Parker also wrote one of the new "scientific" texts (although it may, indeed, have been good) so beloved by the change-agents, and he did so considerably before 1841 when its sixth edition appeared. Parker also used Horace Mann's publisher for his "scientific" schoolbook, at a time when Boston was full of publishers. These facts certainly suggest that Parker was a member in good standing in the influential change-agents' circle by at least 1832, when the second edition of his composition book appeared, which later prospered so mightily. Parker's association with the change-agents may well account for his later great success.)

1832 The Elementary Primer, by Noah Webster. Pub. by John Wilcox, Wells River, Vermont. Copyrighted in Connecticut in 1832.

(Copy in American Antiquarian Society library, and a later copy in New York Public Library. The book is rare and so obviously was seldom used. It was a pathetic Code 10, Webster's inept attempt to meet the rampant whole-word "primer" competition by 1832 by producing his own whole-word "primer," partly using diacritical marks. His "primer" was meant to precede his Code 10 speller, which was no longer being widely used as the beginning book in teaching reading. A truism applies to Webster's writing his own "primer": "If you can't beat them, join them." Yet, only seven years previously, in 1825, such "primers" had been unheard of! The Boston primary school curriculum of 1818 had still made no mention of such primers in its revision of 1825. The world of teaching beginning reading had been turned upside down by the government-school activists in only six years, from 1826 to 1832. Yet virtually no one today knows that it ever happened!)

1833 The Columbian Spelling-Book. Cooperstown, N. Y.: H. & E. Phinney (In Early American Textbooks, p. 115 - same as 1819 above?)

1833 *The Easy Reader, or Introduction to the National Preceptor, Consisting of familiar and progressive lessons, designed to aid in thinking, spelling, defining & correct reading*, Jessie Olney, A. M. (1798-1872), Pub. 1833 by Durrie & Peck, New Haven, Conn. (Harvard copy. See text of this history concerning Olney and his ties to government-school activists Holbrook, etc. This was not a beginning book, but the preface of July 20, 1833, complained about habits acquired by “reading without thinking.” Olney obviously wrote at least two sequential readers, *The Easy Reader* and *The National Preceptor*, the latter presumably published before 1833. Since Olney referred to another book of his, *The Child’s Manual*, that may have been the first book, probably also published before 1833, in what comprised at least a three-book reading series.)

1833 *The Easy Primer, Containing Children’s First Lessons in Reading and Spelling*. Pub. 1836 by G. & C. Merriam, Springfield, Mass. (Harvard copy, See earlier entries of 1828 and 1830 for the Merriam company. This Code 1 material is arrogant in not even referring to its dismissal of all “sound” and in its not even discussing how to teach its pure sight-word content. Its Preface said, “to excite a love for school” teachers should suggest that every parent read *The Little Philosopher, or Infant School at Home*, by J. Abbott, *Hall’s Lectures on School-Keeping*, and *Davis’ Manual for Teachers of Common Schools*. These texts were obviously from the same change-agent group which had been attacking Webster’s speller for the previous ten years, to which attacks Webster had so pathetically replied in print by 1826, as discussed elsewhere. Long before 1833, the change-agent group had succeeded in displacing Webster’s “sound”-approach speller with their “meaning”-approach sight-word “primers” at the critical beginning reading level. The Merriam company was not only promoting the change-agents’ works but was also publishing its own sight-word primer, *The Easy Primer*. Since Webster’s 1828 dictionary was the culmination of Webster’s life’s work, it certainly is inappropriate that it was the Merriam company, who had worked in clear opposition to Webster’s famous spelling book, who eventually took over the publication of that dictionary, which fact is reported in the 1828 Merriam entry.)

1833 *The American Primary Spelling Book*, S. T. Worcester. Boston: Lilly, Wait, Colman, and Holden. Copyrighted by S. T. Worcester in 1833. (Harvard copy. S. T. Worcester was a different author, apparently, from Samuel Worcester who published the critically important 1826 Worcester Primer. However, S. T. Worcester also endorsed teaching beginning reading by “meaning,” instead of “sound,” and produced a two-book so-called spelling series to do so. S. T. Worcester said in the Preface to this 1833 book:

“This little work is designed as a suitable introduction to the ‘Sequel to the Spelling-Book.’ It is intended to be used in teaching children the rudiments of Reading and Spelling by a series of lessons addressed to the understanding as well as to the eye and memory. No words have been admitted into the Reading lessons of which the learner may not readily form a clear idea, and no ideas which he will not easily comprehend.... It is however recommended that the learner, as he spells [such words as are most common and familiar] should be required to give their meaning in his own language. The words defined will be found somewhat less familiar than those not defined, although... in common and daily use.... Spelling-Books are commonly the first books put into the hands of learners in our public schools.... they might... with equal facility and profit [learn] the Orthography of any foreign tongue, with which they are wholly unacquainted. If instead of the course usually pursued, they can be taught to associate some distinct idea with the order of the letters in each word, their progress will be much more sure and rapid.... Whether this little book shall prove a successful attempt to remove the evil complained of, experience must decide.... Cambridge, March 1833.”

Presumably S. T. Worcester, whoever he was, taught at Harvard. Perhaps the tide of literacy that had resulted from the use of Webster’s old-fashioned speller for beginners was not receding as fast as S. T.

Worcester and the others in the Boston/Cambridge area wished, so he wrote this speller and its sequel to masquerade as real spellers. His “speller” began with a disarming and complete alphabet, syllabary and phonic analogies, rating at least a code 8 on pages 6, 7, 8 and 9. However, it then plummeted to a pure Code 1 for the rest of the book. From S. T. Worcester’s advertised description of his ‘Sequel to the Spelling Book’ at the end of this book, his “Sequel” would provide more of the same deadly (and deadly dull) Code 1 approach, even though he claimed in the Preface that his Primary Spelling Book would instead make children’s “lessons incomparably more interesting.” His advertisement for that “Sequel” was followed by gushing endorsements from American Monthly Review, Cambridge; B. Abbott, Principal of Phillips Academy; H. Humphrey, President of Amherst; and S. M. Worcester, Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory there; Calvin Park, Late Professor at Brown University; J. L. Kingsley, Professor of Greek and Latin, Yale College; and C. G. Putnam, Secretary of the Salem, Massachusetts, School Committee.

A further advertisement from Lilly, Wait, & Co., at the end was of great interest:

“New and Cheap Periodicals.... One is designed for children and youth, and the other for general readers. Parley’s Magazine for Children and Youth will be published every fortnight.... About 12 English, Scotch, and Irish juvenile periodicals are regularly received to assist in the undertaking.... The People’s Magazine. This will comprise, besides many new articles, a careful selection from the London Penny Magazine, The Tourist, The Christian’s Penny Magazine, The Saturday Evening Magazine, Chambers’s Edinburgh Journal, and various other British periodicals, designed for all classes of readers, and now circulate to a prodigious extent in every part of Great Britain, surpassing any thing before known... It will be issued once a fortnight...”

That comment on contemporary journals certainly is a contradictory footnote to the illiteracy we are told was rampant in Great Britain and America before the advent of the glorious government schools, and the “meaning” method in teaching beginning reading.

1834 Mamma’s Lessons for Her Little Boys and Girls, Chiefly in Words of One Syllable, Embellished with Cuts, Pub. Cory and Daniels, Providence, R. I. (Harvard copy, Code 1 if for beginners. Has alphabet and little reading lessons. Probably meant for home use. It was probably meant as a beginning book, considering the date of its publication.)

1834 Peter Parley’s Spelling Book, by “Peter Parley” (Samuel Goodrich, the prolific publisher and author discussed elsewhere in this history. Speller discussed by Nietz, page 26, and illustrated on page 27. It looks like a Code 2 speller.

The Library of Congress has Peter Parley’s Primer, 1835, hard to rate but perhaps Code 3, since it starts with alphabets and incomplete syllabaries but is afterwards a straight Code 1 book. The syllabaries could, of course, be ignored in teaching.

Harvard has Little Reader for the Use of Schools, Peter Parley, published by R. W. Pomeroy, Philadelphia, copyrighted in Massachusetts in 1836. Peter Parley’s series of readers advertised on the Harvard copy consisted of: Parley’s Picture Book, or First Reader (possibly the same as Peter Parley’s Primer); Parley’s Little Reader; Parley’s Common School Reader; Parley’s School Library, or Universal Reader.

The series was revised by Noble Butler about 1857 (Nietz, page 80) and published by Morton of Louisville, Kentucky. It was still in print by Morton in 1928, per the United States Catalog and appears always to have been almost a pure Code 1 approach, The series published by Morton based on the Parley material is discussed at length in Appendix C.)

1834 The Young Tyro's Instructor, New York (Mentioned by C. Johnson, p. 224 and N. B. Smith, p. 66. From its description, it sounds like a low code book.)

1835 Emerson's Progressive Primer and Fourth Class Reader, A First Book for Children, To Be Used Introductory to His Spelling Book and Third Class Reader or Similar Books, by Benjamin Dudley Emerson. Published by Carter, Hendee & Co., Boston

(Harvard Copy. Code 1 "meaning" material, obviously meant as a beginning step in learning to read, to replace spellers at that level. See 1828 and 1846 entries for Emerson. The back cover of this book advertised Emerson's First Class Reader, Emerson's Second Class Reader, Emerson's Third Class Reader, Emerson's Progressive Reader, and mentioned his spelling book. Harvard library has a copy of his Third Class Reader, which carries an ink notation stating it was published in 1820. That is highly improbable, particularly since its cover carries a picture, which was not generally a publishing practice as early as 1820. However, that Third Class Reader, which was the lowest in the Emerson series when it was originally published, obviously came out some time before 1835 and was never meant for beginning readers. The 1835 Primer and Fourth Class Reader stated, "These works are prepared by B. D. Emerson, late Principal of the Adams Grammar School, Boston, and Author of the National Spelling Book and Pronouncing Tutor, with progressive reading lessons, a work extensively known, and one of the most popular used in American schools."

Emerson's 1835 "primer" confirms the banishment of the spelling book, particularly Webster's Code 10 speller, from beginning reading instruction by that date, and its replacement by that new invention, the sight-word so-called "primer." Early American Textbooks lists a copy of Emerson's The Second Class Reader printed in Philadelphia by Crissy & Markley in 1854, so his materials were used over a long period. See the 1846 entry for his apparently later speller published by Hogan and Thompson of Philadelphia. His books were not listed in the 1876 American Catalogue so apparently were out of print before 1876.)

1835 The North American Spelling Book, With a Progressive Series of Easy Reading Lessons, Conformed to Worcester's Dictionary, Rev. Levi W. Leonard, Author of the Literary and Scientific Class Book, Published by Geo. Tilden, Keene, New Hampshire (A Code 8 book, with controlled vocabulary, according to its Preface. Early American Textbooks has an 1833 entry for Leonard's The Literary and Scientific Class Book published by J. & J. W. Prentiss of Keene, N. H. It also has entries for a revised edition of Leonard's The North American Spelling Book by George Tilden of Keene, N. H., in 1846, and another in 1847 by D. Bugbee of Bangor, Maine. Worcester's Dictionary was not written by Samuel Worcester, the author of the Code 1 Worcester Primer of 1826.)

1835 National Primer or Primary Spelling Book Upon a New Plan, By Which Young Children May More Easily Learn Words of Two Syllables Than They Have Generally Learned Words of One Syllable, (No author cited.) Published by Wm. Pierce, Boston. (Harvard copy. A Code 8 speller, with complete syllabary, vowels later, and McGuffey-like reading. Yet, if taught as recommended in the following instructions, it was turned into a memorized Code 1 sight-word book, with some words learned even before the alphabet was learned. The teacher was specifically told not to let children attempt to sound out words for themselves:

"In teaching, the instructor should first read the lesson to the pupils, over and over, both the reading and spelling lessons. They should be frequent, and very short. The words of two letters may be resorted to, before the alphabet is perfectly obtained.")

1835 Mother's Primer, Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (Harvard copy published in 1845 by Belknap & Hamersley, Hartford. Gallaudet College in Washington has a copy of the second edition, printed by Daniel Burgess & Co., Hartford, in 1836.

In this book, Gallaudet did not begin with the alphabet, and only taught it later from the base of whole sight-words which the book taught first.

As discussed in this history, Gallaudet's Code 1 book for beginners with normal hearing used a rigidly controlled sight-word vocabulary, and generally observed the 90% frustration level (using 90% of "old" words when introducing "new" words). This approach was obviously based on the deaf-mute "guessing" method. It is remarkable that Gallaudet's book appeared just about ten years after Keagy's remark in his Pestalozzian Primer written in 1826 that it would take about "ten years" for the public to be ready to use the presumed benefits of the pure deaf-mute "meaning" approach to teach hearing children to read. Keagy had also referred in 1826 to the "engine of reform." That change-agent mechanism appears to have been active in producing many of the "meaning" reading methods listed here for the years between 1826 and 1835, but Gallaudet's was apparently the first "primer" to drop completely the teaching of the alphabet as the first step.

Gallaudet had a brief appointment at New York University, and his use of the title, Mother's Primer, for his 1835 book possibly had some connection with The Mother's Magazine published in New York. Page 112 of Early American Textbooks lists an 1841 288-page edition of The Mother's Magazine published by S. Whittelsey, Brick Church Chapel, New York, on which A. G. Whittelsey was the editor, and an 1843 382-page edition on which A. G. Whittelsey and D. Mead were editors, also published by Brick Church Chapel, New York.

Teaching Reading, A Phonic/Linguistic Approach to Developmental Reading, by Charles Child Walcutt, Joan Lamport, and Glenn McCracken, with Robert Dykstra, published by Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, in 1974, reproduced material from the reading controversy in Massachusetts in the 1840's. It showed that the Boston Primary School Committee had reported favorably on Gallaudet's The Mother's Primer in November, 1837, and Horace Mann endorsed it enthusiastically in his 1838 Second Annual Report. Boston used it for six years. In Mann's Seventh Annual Report, he praised the sight-word method warmly and denounced any method beginning with the alphabet.

In 1844, an Association of 31 Boston Schoolmasters authorized a rebuttal of Mann's position, which rebuttal was written by Samuel Greene of the Phillips Grammar School. Mann's reply showed that his support for the sight-word method had been inspired by Gallaudet's Mother's Primer. Samuel Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates reports thoroughly on that Boston controversy.

Concerning Gallaudet, also see entries of 1830 and 1840.)

1836 or earlier - The Washington Primer. Or First Book For Children. Philadelphia: Printed by George Strong, No. 44, Strawberry St.

(This was listed by Heartman, who gave no date for this item 183, saying it had 35 pages, and that its cover read, "The Washington Primer. Philadelphia. Published By G. Strong, No. 44 Strawberry Street." Heartman said that another issue came out in 1836, implying that the issue he described as having no date had been published before 1836. He said a copy was held by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia. Its content is unknown, but its date, 1836 or probably earlier, and its description as a primer meant as a first book for children, certainly imply that it is one of the many post-1826 books that used the "meaning" approach for beginners.)

1836 The Scholar's Progressive Etymological and Spelling Book, by [Samuel or John] Gummere. (Referred to as Samuel Gummere by Nietz on page 26 of his book, on which page he gave the 1836 publishing date. Gummere's books (no first name given) were advertised on the back cover of Harvard's 1846 copy of John Comly's 1842 A New Spelling Book, published by Kimber & Sharples, Philadelphia. It stated Gummere's Progressive Spelling Book contained "Spelling, Pronunciation and Derivation. Extensive tables of words deduced from their Greek and Latin Roots." Kimber & Sharples in 1846 also published Gummere's books on astronomy and surveying, according to the advertisement on the Comly text. The astronomy and surveying texts are listed on pages 232 and 253 of Early American Textbooks but the author's name is given as John Gummere, not Samuel Gummere.)

1836-1838 McGuffey Readers, Original Edition, William Holmes McGuffey and Alexander Hamilton McGuffey, Published by Truman and Smith, Cincinnati, Ohio (Mott Media of Milford, Michigan, have reproduced this first edition. Two other major editions were made, one in 1879 which is the most commonly sold today, and one in 1901 which is virtually unknown. These three editions, the changes in company names, some other materials published by these publishers, and the background on this series is discussed at length elsewhere in this history and in Appendix C. The series was originally a sight-word series, but two years after it began to appear, Alexander Hamilton McGuffey wrote a phonic speller, stating it should be used before the readers. The series then technically became a "sound" approach, but it is highly doubtful that the speller was used as the first book in most places by 1840, despite Alexander McGuffey's good advice in 1838.)

1836 American Juvenile Primer and First Step to Learning, Carefully Arranged on a New, Simple and Interesting Principle, Published by Turner and Fisher, Philadelphia and New York. (American Antiquarian Society copy. Compare to June, 1837, The Juvenile Primer, similar toy book, containing 24 pages.)

1836 The Young Pupil's Second Book, Lovell, New Haven (Per Clifton Johnson, p. 261. On page 300, he mentioned Lovell's The Young Speaker, New Haven, 1844. See later entry for Harvard 1855 copy of Lovell's Progressive Readers, No. 1, by J. E. Lovell. The 1836 copy was apparently part of the first series, and the second Code 7 phonic series dated from 1855 to 1857, according to the 1876 American Catalogue, and it was still in print in 1876. Whether the 1836 series was phonic is not known but appears unlikely.)

1836 Town's Spelling Book, Designed to Import a Distinct Idea While Learning Every New Word, by Salem Town (1779-1864). (Harvard copy. Published or sold at a long list of New York State locations, plus Boston and Philadelphia. See entry under 1847 for an apparent revised edition, and the entries for his readers. Nietz said (p. 27 and elsewhere) that Salem Town was principal of Granville Academy from 1807 till 1822 when he observed students had trouble with Greek and Latin derivations, so he wrote Town's Analysis of Words (prefixes and suffixes, etc.) in 1835, and the next year his Spelling and Defining Book, Being an Introduction to Town's Analysis, followed by his Speller and Definer in 1847, Progressive Speller by Town and Holbrook in 1859, and Town's New Speller and Definer in 1863. Nietz said that was still in print in 1890. The title Nietz gave for Town's 1836 book is different from the Harvard copy, but is apparently the same book which was obviously very widely published.)

1836 The Little Franklin, Teaching Children to Read What They Daily Speak and to Learn What They Ought to Know, By (my note not clear), Published by S. Babcock (Presumably in New Haven. New York Public Library has a copy in its rare book room about which I made pencil notes:

"Preface. The following lessons begin with words, for the most part of one and two syllables and with subjects familiar to children. The desire is to amuse and please the pupils while they are learning to read, and to make them familiar with words of daily use and with their true spelling.



These lessons are also intended to impress upon these young minds some truths which may be useful in the common affairs of life. Dr. Franklin was an eminent teacher of common sense....”

This “meaning”-oriented text probably had no connection with the 1826 Franklin Primer and was probably named after Benjamin Franklin. See other books published by S. Babcock.)

1836 Analytical Spelling Book, John Usher Parsons, Late Principal of the Indiana Teachers Seminary. Published by Wm. Hyde, Portland, Maine. (Harvard copy. See 1827 entry, Infant Schools/Infant Education, published by Shirley & Hyde of Portland in 1828, apparently this publisher’s activist predecessor. This upper-level book uses some German analytic/synthetic-type approaches mixed with sight words. Credits “Gaul’s Lesson System of Glasgow” for ideas of preceding book, Parson’s Analytical Primer. Comments of C. Johnson, p. 225-226, suggest the philosophy of the Primer was Code I. N. B. Smith lists this text on page 66. Early American Textbooks lists on page 119 a sixth edition of Parson’s Analytical Spelling Book published by Wm. Hyde. Harvard library also has an 1837 copy of Parson’s Analytical System of Teaching Orthography, an upper level book.)

1837 or Before - Cardell’s Spelling Book - On the back cover of The Infant School Primer, which Mahlon Day published in 1837, Mahlon Day of New York listed “School Books” which he sold in twenty-one categories. The first was “SPELLING BOOKS, by Webster, Marshall, Burhans, Bentley, Bolles, Cardell, Cobb, Cummings, Emerson, Hazen, Jones, Peter Parley, Picket, Sears, Worcester, Wood.” Next came “READING BOOKS - all the varieties...” No other material has surfaced on a spelling book by someone named Cardell which was in print in 1837. Mahlon Day also advertised a grammar by Cardell, in his list of grammars for sale.)

1837 (approximate date) Sigourney’s Girl’s Reading Book and Boy’s Reading Book. According to C. W. Bardeen in his 1893 report at the Chicago World’s Fair on educational journals in New York, The Common School Assistant of J. Orville Taylor had listed these books among the texts available after 1837 from Taylor’s American Common School Union, New York City. See 1844 and 1846 entries on Lydia Sigourney, a member of the household in which was the first deaf-mute child with whom Galladet had contact, as discussed elsewhere.

1837 Infant School Primer and Arithmetic Tables in Verse, With a Simple Catechism for Infant Schools, Suited to Children of Four or Five Years of Age, Published by Mahlon Day, New York

(Possibly Code 3, a mish-mash mess and obviously very cheap. However, this book was the predecessor to the Cooledge company’s obviously cheap primers advertised for school use, to precede Webster’s speller. Cooledge began publishing Webster’s speller probably shortly after Webster’s death. See the discussion in this history on these materials. The back cover read, “Mahlon Day, at his long established stand, No. 374 Pearl st., a few doors above Franklin Square, has for sale, in quantities or by retail, the best editions of School, Classical and Miscellaneous BOOKS, INCLUDING toy books....”

Cooledge’s 1839 United States School Primer showed Cooledge’s location as “Second Story of M. Day & Co.’s Book Store,” so Day apparently had expanded by 1839, becoming “M. Day & Co.” Heartman lists as item 181 The United States School Primer, giving Cooledge’s address as 323 Pearl Street and the date of The United States Primer as 1830. Obviously that is wrong, since Cooledge almost certainly was not at that address in 1830. By 1840 Cooledge had moved to 323 Pearl Street. Judging from Heartman’s entries, Mahlon Day was located at No. 376 Pearl Street at least from 1825 to 1832, and in business at least from 1815 to 1836. The correct address, however, is apparently 374 Pearl Street which was listed by Mahlon Day on his 1837 Infant School Primer. Day remained in business to at least 1839, when Cooledge showed that address as M. Day and Co.’s Book Store. The toy-book publisher/book store owner, Richard Marsh, was at that address by 1845 or before, since Marsh published The Mother’s

Primer (not Gallaudet's) with that address in 1845. Possibly, however, Marsh had bought out Day about 1839 and did not change the name of the publishing company/store to his own name until some time after 1839.

Early American Textbooks listed on page 70 "The Infant School Primer. Philadelphia: Thomas T. Ash & Co., n.d. [22 p.]" The probability is that it had nothing to do with Mahlon Day's material, but most probably appeared about the same time, during the 1830's.)

1837 The Primary Reader, William Bentley Fowle, Late Principal of the Boston Female Monitorial School. Pub. 1843 by William B. Fowle and N. Capen, Boston.

(Harvard copy. Most selections were Fowle's own. Was he related to Bentley Rensselaer? Fowle also wrote The Common School Speller of 1842, recommended by Horace Mann, and the 1824 speller listed earlier, as well as other books. The Primary Reader is shown in Early American Textbooks with an 1840 copy published by Henry B. Williams, Boston. See other entries for Fowle in this listing, and comments on Fowle in the body of the history.)

1837 The Child's First Book, Comprising Exercises with the Alphabet on an Improved Plan Adapted to the Capacity of small Children, By a Teacher. Published by R. White and Sold by the Booksellers Generally. (Harvard copy. NO "letters of recommendation" on this excellent, Code 10, book, which would work today. A very thorough phonic approach, and comprehension questions on selections in the latter part of the book.

"Prefatory Notice: This book is not a competitor of the spelling book, but is THE CHILD'S FIRST BOOK, or INTRODUCTION to such a work. The difficulty of learning the young child the letters arises wholly from the ... method of teaching the alphabet by course,..which difficulty is remediated by a good arrangement of the alphabet...."

1837 The Juvenile Primer and Child's Own Progressive Guide to Learning, Carefully Arranged on a New, Simple and Interesting Principle, Published by Bayly and Burns, Baltimore

(Harvard copy. Code 3. Abbreviated syllabary and sight-words. Toy book for home sales, 23 pages long. C. Johnson shows on page 261 "American Juvenile Primer," 1838, perhaps the same as American Antiquarian Society's copy published by Turner and Fisher, listed below.)

1838 American Juvenile Primer, And First Step to Learning, Carefully Arranged On a New, Simple, and Interesting Principle. Turner and Fisher, Philadelphia and New York. (American Antiquarian Society copy. 24 pages and printed wraps. American Antiquarian has two more with no dates. A toy book. See Harvard's 1840 copy of Turner and Fisher material.)

1838 My First School Book for Reading and Spelling, By A Friend of Mine [Josiah F. Bumstead], Published by T. R. Marvin, Boston Inside Title: My First School Book to Teach Me to Read and Spell Words and Understand Them. (Code 1. Harvard copy of 1851. Harvard's 1871 copy is shortened and somewhat changed in the section, "To the Teacher," and slightly different elsewhere. The book had an 1852 revision which stated that its multi-syllable spelling words had been divided between syllables. Both the 1851 and 1871 copies quoted the following above the copyright notation. The "third and fourth classes" it mentioned were the beginning and lowest classes in the primary school:

"At a meeting of the Boston Primary School Committee, held on the 4th instant, it was voted that the book called 'My First School Book' be introduced into the Primary Schools for the use of the third and fourth classes. Joseph Curtis, Secretary. Boston June 5, 1839."

The section, To the Teacher, began with the sla/sleigh story quoted by Nila Banton Smith, which belittled learning to read by sound. However, the 1851 Harvard copy of the 1838 text included an opening paragraph which was omitted in Harvard's 1871 copy of the 1838 text, reflecting the fact that the 1838 comments about the use of the syllabary would have become meaningless by 1871 since the syllable method was forgotten by that time. The 1851 section, To The Teacher," read:

"A little boy, who had been a long time plodding his dreary way through the alphabet, and had finally reached the columns of three-letter syllables, one morning, (the first snow of winter having fallen during the night,) on rising from his bed, and looking out at the window, exclaimed with ecstasy, "Hurrah! There's a sleigh! S-l-a, sleigh! S-l-a, sleigh!!

"John," said his father, "that doesn't spell sleigh."  
"Don't it! What does it spell, sir?"  
"O, I don't know - it don't spell any thing."  
"Why, father? What is it in my book for?" ...

"...For this reason, there is here an exclusion of that chaotic mass of fragments of words, which it has been usual to present to the eyes and ears of children in their first exercises. Such lessons, it is believed, are as unnecessary as they are uninteresting. They convey no thought; they rather teach a child *not* to think".

The 1871 version of the last paragraph also had to be changed to reflect the dropping of the syllabary. It simply read:

"There is here an exclusion of those fragments of words which have usually been presented to the eyes and ears of children in their first exercises...."

Something else was omitted in the 1871 copy, and it was a comment by Horace Mann which appeared in the 1851 listing of the books in Bumstead's series. After the listing for The Black-board in the Primary School, A Manual for Teachers, the quotation from Horace Mann read:

"Perhaps ingenuity has seldom, if ever, rendered a greater service to mankind, than when it turned a few feet of deal board, and a little black paint, into one of the most effective of all instruments for the rapid and vivid communication of knowledge"

Another comment on the list of Bumstead's books, however, appeared in both the 1851 and 1871 editions. It followed the listing for the last book in the series, Spelling and Thinking Combined, or, the Spelling-Book made a Medium of Thought. The remark was from The Schoolmaster, by George B.Emerson:

"How do you teach spelling? Cannot the Nonsense Columns in Spelling-Books be dispensed with? \* \* \* In every stage we should avoid, as the bane of good habits of thought, the common use of the nonsense columns of a spelling book. Nothing more pernicious could be contrived. The use of them; prevents thinking, without teaching to spell."

Bumstead obviously agreed with Emerson. One of his comments in the section, "To the Teacher, read:

"The main point, in the arrangement of the columns, has been the sense, and not the sound."

The title page of Bumstead's book supplied a surprising fact. It was the surprising name of the unidentified person, who had been quoted elsewhere, who had made the comment that learning to read was "the most difficult of all human attainments." Pre-1826 testimony, when children were virtually always taught to read by "sound" and not "meaning," and which testimony was always casually given, had always indicated that learning to read was an easy task. That had been the case from the days of the ancient Greek, Dionysius, to the days of the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster. Speaking in 1829 about his thirty years of experience in teaching children to read, the Scottish Schoolmaster said that a child can be taught to read anything fluently by the time he is seven years old. That had been the case with William Andrus Alcott, who had also been a schoolmaster for some ten years or so, and who unwittingly confirmed that learning to read was easy and quick before 1826 by his many remarks about his days as a schoolmaster when he said that the children at that time read without "expression." Because of those comments and many others, a reasonable assumption would be that the remark that learning to read was "the most difficult of all human attainments" had to be a post-1826 one, after "meaning" had replaced "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading and when reports of reading disabilities began to surface.

It is therefore astonishing to learn from the title page of Bumstead's book that the remark was made by Richard Edgeworth, presumably in his 1798 book, *Essays on Practical Education*, which he wrote in Ireland with his daughter, Maria. In that book, Edgeworth was the first person writing in English to recommend the dropping of the syllabary in beginning reading. Edgeworth would have had to know that his remark that reading was "the most difficult of all human attainments" was absolutely senseless in his 1798 time frame. The fact that he made such a senseless remark suggests that the remark may have been meant to be one of the entering wedges of the change-agents who were to begin promoting the "meaning" method in beginning reading. The "meaning" method had become a fait accompli on both sides of the ocean only shortly after 1826. Besides making the "most-difficult-of- all-human-attainments" remark and besides advocating the dropping of the syllabary, Edgeworth was also a promoter of government schools for Ireland, as discussed elsewhere. Those schools, founded after 1830, and discussed elsewhere, were appalling.

Edgeworth's remark was presumably from his 1798 book, but it was possibly from his 1799 pronouncing beginning reading book, discussed in Appendix B. Alston curiously did not include that book in his list of spellers, although he included the pronouncing spellers of Webster and Perry. Edgeworth must have omitted in his 1799 book, not just the syllabary, but the usual columns of spelling words given to beginners. If that were the case, then Edgeworth's 1799 book would have been the first sight-word primer in English, even though it used pronunciation marks. It would have been a ground-breaker, the first sight-word primer in English intentionally meant to replace spelling books. However, since it has not been possible to see Edgeworth's 1799 book, it has not been possible to evaluate its real nature. Edgeworth's remarks are quoted on Bumstead's title page, as follows:

"We think that nine tenths of the labor and disgust of learning to read may be saved; and that, instead of frowns and tears, the usual harbingers of learning, cheerfulness and smiles may initiate willing pupils *in the most difficult of all human attainments*. - Edgeworth."

Bumstead's text endorsed written, not oral spelling, which, of course, further buries awareness of the "sound" nature of syllables, just as for Gallaudet's deaf-mute students, who wrote letter sequences without any awareness of syllables. Although the reading lessons follow the spelling columns, Bumstead's directions said that the reading lessons should be started after only a few pages of the spelling columns. The emphasis, of course, was consistently on "meaning," to the avoidance of "sound."

The 1871 copy listed the finished Bumstead's Primary School Series: I. My Little Primer - to teach a few words and the alphabet... II. My First School-Book [the above 1838 book], III Second Reading-Book

in the Primary School... IV. Third Reading-Book in the Primary School. V. Spelling and Thinking Combined, or The Spelling Book Made a Medium of Thought.

VI. Table for Training the Organs of Speech in Articulation..... VII. The Blackboard in the Primary School. A Manual for Teachers.... VIII. My First Arithmetic..... IX. Reading Table for the youngest scholars. X. Punctuation Table. XI. Numeration Table. "The last three are Wall Tablets."

The 1851 copy listed the items through number VII, which were obviously all available by that date..

The 1876 American Catalogue listed as still in print in 1876 J. F. Bumstead's My First School Book; for Reading and Spelling, published by Marvin, obviously the 1838 edition, but they dated it to 1841.

In 1850, Bumstead published the book meant to be used as the first book in the series, entitled My Little Primer, to Teach a Few Words and the Alphabet. The Harvard copy was published in 1851 by T. R. Marvin, Boston. Letters were to be learned from whole words. It is Code 1 material, with vocabulary control and repetition Reeder mentioned it on page 53.

Harvard library has an 1842 copy of the 1841 book, Bumstead's Spelling and Thinking Combined, the highest book in the series, which carries the note:

"This book was introduced into the Boston Primary Schools for the first and second classes by the unanimous vote of the Primary School Committee. September 21, 1841."

This fifth and highest book in the Bumstead series used a Code 1 approach to spelling. The teacher pronounced the words, and the pupils were to imitate her. It had "elocution" at the end. It stated, "The acquirement of pronunciation and spelling is the main object of every spelling book."

Bumstead's material is discussed by N. B. Smith, p. 87 and following, but it is not in Early American Textbooks.

Of all the appalling sight-word materials that came out of Massachusetts starting in 1826 and which were promoted so assiduously by the change-agents, Bumstead's materials are indisputably the very worst and the most harmful. This Bumstead series of criminally defective books which were in unchallenged use over so many years, particularly in Boston, the "intellectual" capital of America at that time, constitute a national disgrace.

A tie exists and should be mentioned, even though it may possibly be of no importance, between the publisher of the Bumstead books, Marvin, and Josiah Holbrook, the arch-activist, since Marvin, who put out Bumstead's materials, had previously printed some of Holbrook's. The activities of Josiah Holbrook (1788-1854) have been outlined very well in Samuel Blumenfeld's book, *Is Public Education Necessary?*

The following biographical information on Josiah Holbrook appears on pages 656-657 of *Biographical Dictionary of American Educators, Volume 2*, edited by John F. Ohles, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut. It stated that Holbrook wrote an article for the *American Journal of Education* in October, 1826, entitled "Association of Adults for Mutual Education" which recommended that:

"...public education should be organized in mutual learning associations in towns and villages in the Northeast. His plan, which became known as the American lyceum, was implemented one month later at Millbury, Massachusetts. The movement sought... [also] to encourage and support the establishment of tax-supported common schools.... Holbrook built and supplied local lyceums with scientific apparatus needed to assist in conducting educational activities. He lived at Lyceum

Village in Berea, Ohio, where he manufactured and sold equipment (1837-42). Holbrook lived in New York City (1842-49) when he was executive secretary of the American Lyceum Association. He moved to Washington, D. C., in 1849, where he promoted the lyceum system until his death in 1854. Holbrook wrote many pamphlets on geology and education. He drowned in Blackwater Creek near Lynchburg, Virginia, on an outing to collect specimens of minerals and plants indigenous to the area. Holbrook was the author of *Easy Lessons in Geometry* (1829), *First Lessons in Geology* (1833), *First Lessons in Geometry* (1833), *Penny Tracts for Children* (1833), *Apparatus for Schools, Academies, and Lyceums* (183?)....”

An 1829 Pamphlet in the New York Public Library was published by Perkins & Marvin of Boston, the apparent predecessor to T. R. Marvin of Boston. It is entitled *American Lyceum, or Society for the Improvement of Schools, and Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*. Appended on pages 23 and 24 is “*Apparatus for Schools, Academies, and Lyceums,*” reading:

“To advance the general interests of popular education, and especially to facilitate the progress of Lyceums and Infant Schools, various articles of apparatus for familiar and practical illustrations, are prepared under the direction of Mr. Holbrook. The subjects which the apparatus is designed to illustrate, are geometry, arithmetic, natural philosophy, chemistry, and astronomy.”

Listed were not only many concrete materials but some charts and books, including Holbrook’s *Easy Lessons in Geometry*. The materials were listed under separate headings: “For Geometry,” “For Arithmetic,” “For Natural Philosophy” (physics), “For Chemistry,” “For Astronomy,” “For Infant Schools,” and “For Geology.” The next to last entry read:

“For Infant Schools, all the necessary apparatus, consisting of prints for Natural History, accompanied with spelling and reading lessons, illustrations in Geometry, Arithmetic, and Astronomy, is prepared, and those articles of the Infant school apparatus fitted for common schools, can be furnished in any quantities.”

At the bottom of page 24 appeared, “The above articles are kept for sale by Perkins & Marvin, 114, Washington Street, Boston.”

Holbrook, therefore, showed some interest in “reading” and “spelling” in infant schools by preparing natural history prints “with spelling and reading lessons.” However, it is of interest that the probable successor to Perkins & Marvin of Boston who had handled Holbrook’s materials, including “spelling and reading lessons,” was T. R. Marvin of Boston who published in 1838 *My First School Book for Reading and Spelling, By A Friend of Mine* (Josiah F. Bumstead). That famous, enormously used, and criminally harmful Code 1 book for beginners which was first published in 1838 was still being printed at least as late as 1871.

However, Josiah Holbrook at some point after 1829 began to publish and market his materials himself instead of having the Perkins & Marvin company (and possibly the T. R. Marvin company) handle them. On page 137 of the 1862 *Object Lessons for Teachers*, published by A. S. Barnes & Company, A. S. Welch referred to models in wood of solid geometrical shapes, and said:

“A large assortment of such models can be obtained from Holbrook & Co., Hartford, Connecticut, or from Sherwood & Company, Chicago. These firms have agencies in all our large cities.”

It is of interest that the Sherwood company which sold models like Holbrook's and which also published the dreadful Edwards/Webb "word method" readers were bought out in the early 1890's by Scott, Foresman, who later published the dreadful 1930 "Dick and Jane" deaf-mute-method series.

1838 Sanders Spelling Book, Charles W. Sanders, Published by Gould, Newman, and Saxton, New York, and for Sale by the Principal Booksellers in the United States. (This Harvard copy, apparently an 1844 reprint, said two million copies of Sanders' books had been sold by that date. This included his reading series listed below. His speller was Code 10 but was not intended as a beginning book. This speller read, "It is hoped that the subject of elementary orthography will soon receive its appropriate attention in our primary schools," which confirmed the speller was not being used at the primary level in 1838.)

1839 The United States School Primer Designed for Schools and Families, Copyright 1839 (possibly 1830) by William W. Allen, Published by George F. Cooledge, Second Story of M. Day & Co.'s Book Store, 374 Pearl Street, New York.

(Harvard copy. Code 3. Cooledge soon moved to another Pearl Street address, 323 Pearl Street. C. F. Heartman dated this primer to 1830, but gave Cooledge's address as 323 Pearl Street. Obviously, the copy Heartman saw, presumably one of the five copies he listed, was printed after Cooledge moved, but it possibly carried a copyright of 1830. That seems very possible, since the blurred copyright on the Harvard copy which looks like 1839 could be 1830. Heartman listed the title as:

"The United States School Primer; or the First Book for Children: designed for home or parental instruction. Embellished with numerous engravings, and pretty stories, Which will please the children amazingly.... New York: Published by George F. Cooledge & Brother, 323 Pearl street, Franklin Square, And also published and for sale by all the principal Booksellers throughout the United States of America, and its territories."

C. F. Heartman had listed Day at 376 Pearl Street at least from 1825-1832, and in business at least from 1815 to 1836. See 1824, 1825 and 1837 entries on Mahlon Day. This material rates a Code 3. It has an incomplete syllabary, sight words and "stories," with some blends and analogous short-vowel words, and more "stories," with analogous spellings under stories. It is a mixed-up 47-page picture-book mess, resembling but better than most cheap toy books and apparently meant as a cheap school beginning book. This publisher soon became the sole publisher of Webster's still massively-sold speller which the publisher advertised for use as an upper-grade book after his "primers," which seem to be only variations of this book with different titles. See other Cooledge entries and the discussion on Cooledge in the text of this history.)

1839 The Pictorial Spelling Book, With Reading Lessons... (etc.), by Rensselaer Bentley, Published in 1853 by Pratt, Woodford, & Co., New York. (Harvard copy, Code 8. Not a beginning book. Showed Ward School Teachers' Association's 7/23 1845 recommended adoption of: 1. The Pictorial Primer, 2. The Pictorial Spelling Book, 3. Introduction to the Pictorial Reader, "a continuation of this system of spelling and reading books..." The Preface reads, "The Spelling Book being usually the primary book of instruction, is, perhaps, the most important one... that is ever put into the hands of the pupil..." (said it bored children, and then) "Aware of these evils from personal experience in the business of instruction, the author has been induced to attempt a remedy..." His approach: "ideas" from words. However, that others already had such a "remedy" and that the spelling book was no longer used for beginners was shown by his next remark. He said, page 6, under date of May, 1839, New York: "Many excellent primers, or picture books, have been published for the use of children, with a view of substituting them for the spelling-book; but they seem to have entirely failed in their object, in consequence of the great deficiency in the variety of spelling lessons...." See other Bentley entries.)

1839 The Readers Manual, Designed for the Use of Common Schools in the United States, John Hall, Late Principal of the Ellington School (Ellington, Connecticut). Published in 1840 by Gurdon Robins, Jr. (Harvard copy. An upper-grade elocution reader. Wrote a series: 1. Primary Reader - "for those able to read sentences," 2. The Reader's Manual, 3. The Reader's Guide. On page xi, said he opposed "definition" school books, and supported learning vocabulary through exposure. On page 13, he confirmed the existence of reading disabilities by 1839. No such comments had occurred on books before 1826. John Hall was obviously in opposition to the mainstream practices of 1839.)

1839 Kay's Progressive Infant and Primary School Reader and Speller, No. 1, in Words of Two or Three Letters Only, Together with Elementary Lessons in Drawing. A Course of Progressive Lessons in Reading, Spelling, and Pronunciation. Published in 1840 by James Kay, Jr., and Brother, Philadelphia; C. H. Kay & Co., Pittsburgh. (Harvard copy. Referred to late Mr. Ballantine's reader, apparently British, before 1832. Recommended teaching 200 words before the alphabet is introduced. Vowels taught for elocution. Still in print in 1876 per American Catalogue, by C. H. Davis as Kay's Infant and Primary School Reader & Definer, three volumes. Vol. 1. In words of 2 and 3 letters, 25c. Vol. 2. In words of one syllable, 30 c. Vol. 3. In words of one and two syllables, 37c. The publishing date was given as 1840-1842.)

1839 The Southern Primer, or Child's First Lessons in Spelling and Reading, by T. N. M., Published in 1860 by W. R. Babcock and M'Carter & Co., Charleston, South Carolina and Sold by All the Principal Booksellers in the Southern and Southwestern States. Inside cover: Richmond: Adolphus Morris, 1860. Copyright S. Babcock & Co., 1839. (Harvard copy. Code 5. For the most part the 1860 edition was the same as Harvard's 1841 edition, which was the fourth edition, "Printed and Published by S. Babcock & Co." of Charleston, but the later edition omitted consonant blends. Both had the syllabary. The Southern Primer was sharply superior to the material being published in 1839 in the North but far weaker than Noah Webster's speller that had previously been sold all over the United States. The Southern Primer listed in the 1876 American Catalogue was written by R. Sterling and seems to be unconnected with this book.)

1839 Young Child's First Reader, or Dialogues in Short Sentences - Adapted for Children From the Age of Three to Eight Years, Anonymous (but obviously written by a woman), Published at the Brattleboro (Vermont) Book Store. (Harvard copy. Code 1. Totally devoid of "spiritual," and has some ugly content. Overall, it is a terrible book.)

1840? The American Illuminated Primer Designed for the Use of Schools and Families, Published by Wm. H. Murphy, New York. (Harvard copy. A truncated toy book, truncated syllabaries, three-letter words arranged by sound analysis, then 4 letter by sound analysis, then 5 letter by sound analysis, and three pages of stories by syllabication. If it were a serious book (which it is not) it would rate about Code 5. Despite its inadequacy, it was sharply more "sound" oriented than the serious school primers of this period. "Toy" books seemed to lag behind in adopting "improved" methods.)

(1840)? The Boys and Girls' Own Primer, or First Step to Learning, Published by William Raine, Baltimore (Harvard copy. A sixteen-page toy book, with alphabets, partial syllabary and blends, with pictures on top of most pages, page of three-letter words, two pages of reading with syllables divided at end, misprints in book. Cheap, low quality toy book.)

1840 Child's First Primer or A, B, C. Book, Published by H. & S. Raynor, New York. (Harvard copy. Obviously a toy book. Advertises "School Books, All the different kinds of Primers, Spelling Books, Readers, Grammars..." etc. Raynor's obviously was primarily a book store, not a publisher. This book has complete alphabets, almost complete syllabary, words arranged by sound analogy, in sequence of 3-4-5



letters, and then two-syllable words. Pictures with words at top of pages. Ends with one-page of connected sentences. Despite its short “toy” nature, it is a Code 6.

1840? Child’s First Lessons, or Infant Primer, Published by S. Babcock, New Haven, Conn. (Harvard copy. Toy book, about 3 by 2 inches, with pictures. Whole alphabets given in small and capital letters, followed by eight pages of words beginning “am, an, as, at....” Code 1.)

1840 Sanders Series, 5 vols. (By 1876, when sold by Ivison: 1st 28c, 2d 50c, 3d 75c, 4th \$1.20, 5th \$1.25.) Charles Walton Sanders. Published in 1844 by Mark H. Newman, New York, New York (In 1876 American Catalogue, the Primer shown below was not listed but it was listed in the 1912 U. S. Catalog with the other two Sanders’ primers. It is possibly one of the two Sanders’ primers listed as sold by American Book in the 1928 U. S. Catalog.)

1840 Sanders’ The Primary School Primer, Charles W. Sanders, Published in 1843 by Mark H. Newman, New York; W. H. Moore & Co., Cincinnati. (Harvard copy. Code 3 phony phonics, after Code 1 beginning. See other entries on Sanders, whose materials were vastly used.)

1840 Sanders’ The Primary School Primer, Charles W. Sanders, Harvard copy published in 1854 or after by Ivison & Phinney, New York, successors to Newman and Ivison, and Mark H. Newman & Co.; Chicago: S. C. Grigg & Co.; Auburn: J. C. Ivison & Co.; Detroit: A. M’Farren; Cincinnati: Moore, Anderson & Co. (Code 3 phony phonics, after Code 1 beginning. See copy above and other Sanders entries.)

1840 Sanders Series - School Reader - First Book, by Charles W. Sanders, Published sometime after November, 1846, by Mark H. Newman & Co., N. Y.; Wm. H. Moore & Co., Cincinnati; J. C. Ivison & Co., Auburn; Mills, Crandall & Mosely, Cazenovia; Griggs, Bross & Co., Chicago, Ill. (Harvard copy. Contains 1845 and 1846 testimonials on adoptions: New York State, New Jersey, Kentucky, Ohio, Vermont. The series sequence was: Sanders Primary School Primer, Sanders Spelling Book, Sanders School Readers: First Book, Second Book, Third Book, Fourth Book. Said, “Sanders Series of School Books: Three Million Sold - New York, Vermont, and Several Other States.” It greatly outsold McGuffey’s in this general period.)

1840 The Practical Spelling Book, with Reading Lessons, Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet and Horace Hooker, Pub. Belknap and Hamersley, Hartford, Conn.

(Listed on page 116 of Early American Textbooks. Harvard library has an 1856 copy published by Wm. James Hamersley of Hartford who also published in 1856 Gallaudet’s Mother’s Primer of 1836, still in use twenty years after it first appeared. The speller would be a Code 8 book, but obviously when it was finished in 1840 it was meant to be preceded by the Code 1 Mother’s Primer or similar book, even though the speller gave practice on learning letters. The Mother’s Primer taught the alphabet eventually, but, as Green said in the early 1840’s, quoted in Blumenfeld’s *Is Public Education Necessary?*, some children at that time were being taught pure sight words. In the early 1840’s, Greene said Boston children were leaving the primary schools and entering the grammar schools reading whole words without having learned the alphabet.

Concerning Gallaudet’s intent for the use of his speller, he would hardly have produced his Code 1 The Mother’s Primer for rank beginners in 1835, and then in only a year or so have started working on a Code 8 speller meant for rank beginners. Yet that would have to have been the case since his speller, which would have taken a long time to prepare, appeared in print only five years after his primer. The speller’s preface said the authors had examined 40,000- to 50,000-word dictionaries and had separated out

the easy words for the first part of the speller, the harder ones being given later. The speller was intended for common schools and above. It recommended that the teacher explain the phonic markings.

According to an advertisement on Harvard's 1852 copy of J. S. Denman's 1850 *The Student's Primer*, Pratt & Woodford of New York were selling Gallaudet's *School and Family Dictionary* in 1852. It is therefore evident that Gallaudet had gone in deliberate competition with the famous Webster, eventually producing not only his sight-word *Mother's Primer* but a speller and a dictionary in competition with Webster's. Webster had in a sense competed with Gallaudet, since he eventually put out a primer to precede his famous speller, when primers were taking over beginning reading by about 1832, displacing spellers at that level. Also see entries on Gallaudet for 1830 and 1835.)

1840? *The Christmas School Primer*, Published by George F. Cooledge (American Antiquarian Society copy. Code 3, almost identical to other Cooledge primers discussed elsewhere in this listing. Mentioned by Nila Banton Smith.)

1840 *The Progressive Primer, Adapted to Infant School Instruction*, Mrs. Goodheart, Published by John F. Brown, Concord. (Harvard copy. A 35-page toy book, presumably not for schools, despite its title. Code 3. Pictures at top of pages, short, mixed-up, incomplete syllabary, followed by lists of consonant blends. Then pictures with words, 3 to 4 to 5 letters, then two syllable words, and sentences at end, with syllables divided. This is the general pattern of the circa 1840 short toy books, usually with alphabets at the beginning, as in this book.)

1840 *New National Primer*, Published by Turner & Fisher, New York and Philadelphia (Harvard copy. See American Antiquarian's Turner & Fisher material listed under 1838. The Harvard copy is a 24-page toy book, possibly Code 4, but an incomplete mish-mash like so many toy books, starting with a mangled syllabary and followed by consonant blends, large and small alphabets, 3 - then 4 - then 5 letter words arranged partly by analogy, pictures on the top half of pages, and a sight-word approach with "new words" on stories, etc.)

1840 *New Juvenile Primer and Child's Own Progressive Guide to Learning*, Published by William Raine, Baltimore. (Harvard copy. A 22-page toy book, Code 3. This toy book publisher also put out *Goody Two Shoes* of the eighteenth century and *Butterfly's Ball* of the early nineteenth, two superb children's books. Yet his art work was often poor and his spellings sometimes bad. He advertised, "Lower prices than any other establishment in the United States." This work began with jumbled syllables, and then followed the general pattern of the other toy books, with pictures on the top of each page, and words introduced in 3- and then 4-letter lengths, and then two syllable words, a parody of the old spellers.)

1840 *The Infant School Primer*, Published by George F. Cooledge, New York, with this caption on interior pages: *Day's New York Infant School Primer*. Listed elsewhere appears, "Approved by Samuel W. Seton."

(Harvard copy. Code 3. About 32 pages long, and in toy book pattern, but markedly superior to other publishers' toy books, although unsuitable for teaching beginners. It was based on an 1837 version published by Mahlon Day, which appears to have been actually used in the infant schools and to have been endorsed by the activist, Samuel W. Seton, as discussed in the text of this history. The previous year, on *The United States School Primer*, Cooledge gave his address as the second story of M. Day & Company's Book Store, 374 Pearl Street, but on this issue his address was 323 Pearl Street. Cooledge's primer versions, with various names, apparently also were used in schools. The Cooledge company had become the publisher of Webster's speller at least some time before the late 1840's, but more probably by the early 1840's shortly after Webster's death, so Cooledge obviously was an important publisher.

This text has pictures at the top of pages, alphabets, incomplete syllabary, rhyming-word lists, three-letter-word lists followed by stories, four-letter-word lists followed by stories, five-letter-word lists followed by stories, and then a two-syllable story followed by two-syllable word list, and more stories with divided syllables. All the Cooledge primers with varying names appear to be variations of the same kinds of materials. Cooledge was still publishing in 1851, according to an entry in *Early American Textbooks*, page 92.)

1841? *The New Picture Primer and Table Book; or, The Child's First Book in Spelling, Reading, and Rules of Arithmetic for Primary Schools and Families*, Theodore Dwight, Jr., Pub. Bolles and Williams, New London. Page 21: "I must know what the words mean. Then I can know how to sound them."

(Harvard copy, 35 pages. From page 28, contains material on arithmetic and geography. Code 3, resembling a "toy" book. Some spelling by analogy, but too sparse. Page 130 of Blumenfeld's *The New Illiterates* states Dwight was a corresponding secretary with Josiah Holbrook (Massachusetts) and Samuel W. Seton (New York) of the national American Lyceum, organized in May, 1831. Since Seton wrote his appalling "primer," *The Abecedarian*, in 1830, it appears likely that Dwight's primer may also originally have been published about 1830, reflecting the intense interest of the change-agents at that time in beginning reading materials.)

1841 *Primer*, Mrs. Horace Mann (Mary Peabody) (Discussed by Mitford Mathews in *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, 1966. See Mathews' comments under the 1851 entry for what appears to be a revision of Mrs. Mann's *Primer*.)

1841 *The Pictured ABC*, Turner & Fisher's *Brilliant Colored Toys*; Turner & Fisher, New York and Philadelphia; J. Keller, Baltimore; James Fisher, Boston. (They sold a huge number of toy books. This was not a reading primer, but a true ABC book for home use, primarily only with the alphabet and digits, plus one page of words and pictures. See 1845 entry and 1855 entries on Fisher & Brother.)

1841 *The Gradual Reader, First Step in Exercises in Articulation, Designed to Develop and Strengthen the Organs of Speech and to Facilitate the Correct Utterance of the Elementary Sounds and their Combinations, with Simple Reading Lessons for Pupils in the Younger Classes*, David Bates Tower, Principal of the Eliot Grammar School, Boston. Fourth Edition; Charles Stimpson, Boston.

(Harvard copy. Page ii: voted for use in fourth class of Boston Grammar Schools. Used for seven years in Tower's grammar school, i. e., since 1834. "The reading lessons are adapted to the capacities of the pupil on leaving the grammar schools." Teaching "reading" meant elocution: see p. v and elsewhere. Refers to Sheridan, p. vi. Not a beginning book, but meant for elocution. A letter appears on the back cover dated April 28, 1841, from thirteen Grammar Masters of thirteen Boston schools endorsing this book with its apparent innovation of systematic vocal "exercises" to aid elocution. It is illuminating concerning the importance of elocution in the schools in 1841:

"Practical 'EXERCISES,' so requisite to the development of the Organs of Speech, are now, for the first time, offered to the public, in the 'GRADUAL READER,' - a work admirably adapted to the wants of our School, and which will entitle the author to the gratitude of all, who are interested in the cause of Education. As the continual practice of the Elementary Sounds and their combinations is absolutely essential to good articulation, these "EXERCISES," so long needed, will be found invaluable to the teacher of the Primary or High School, and should be in the hands of every pupil. The "READING LESSONS" are the best we have ever seen, for the class of pupils for whom they were selected. They are simple, easy to be understood, conveying moral truths in an impressive form, and at the same time well suited to interest the youthful mind."

R. R. Reeder mentioned Tower's books on page 50. The 1876 American Catalogue shows D. B. Tower's Readers, 7 volumes, First reader, 25c. - Second, 45c. - Intermediate, 50c. - Third gradual, 60c. - Fourth, 75c. - Fifth, 90c. - Sixth, \$1. for sale by Lee & Shepard, Boston. The date Lee & Shepard took over publishing the Tower readers is unknown but was apparently long before 1876. See later entries on Tower's books.)

1842 The Common School Speller, William Bentley Fowle, Pub. Wm. B. Fowle & N. Capen, Boston (In Early Am. Textbooks, p. 116. Harvard copy: Published by Leonard N. Ide, Boston. Meant for upper grades, not beginners. See entry for Fowle's 1824 speller and 1837 reader.)

1842 Introduction to the Pictorial Reader, Rensselaer Bentley, Published 1847 by Geo. F. Cooledge & Brother, 323 Pearl Street, New York, and Pratt, Woodford & Co., New York; Thomas Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy. Not a beginning book, but make-up suggests book 1 is sight words. Pratt, Woodford published in 1852 Bentley's Pictorial Spelling Book, according to an 1852 copy of J. S. Denman's 1850 book, entered elsewhere. The Bentley series was: 1. Pictorial Primer, 2. Pictorial Spelling Book, 3. Introduction to the Pictorial Reader to Go with the Speller, and 4. Pictorial Reader. See other Bentley entries.)

1842 The Pictorial Primer, Being an Introduction to the Pictorial Spelling Book, Designed as a First Book for Children in Families and Schools, Rensselaer Bentley, Published in 1857 by Brown, Taggart & Chase, Boston, Successors to W. J. Reynolds & Co.

(Harvard copy. Pratt and Woodford were still publishing Bentley's books in 1852, and perhaps also as late as 1857, when this copy came out by Brown, Taggart & Chase of Boston. The 1876 American Catalogue lists R. Bentley's Pictorial Primer, published by "Thompson," so it was still in print in 1876. Also listed as in print in 1876 was his Pictorial Definer of 1852, published by Claxton and by Lippincott, and his Pictorial Spelling Book, published by Sheldon. His readers were not in print in 1876. Bentley's 1842 Boston publisher, Brown, Taggart & Chase, also put out Rollo stories, Peter Parley stories, and Colburn's arithmetic, and gave a whole page of that famous arithmetic's history and testimonies.

The Preface to Bentley's Pictorial Primer was signed New York, 1842, and said the book was meant to interest a child. It had pictures to help a child pronounce the words and get the meaning. The picture alphabet showed O for owl and S for shoe, so phonics was not intended. However, it had an incomplete syllabary, and word lists by length, such as four-letter words, then five-letter words, and then two-syllable words followed by three-syllable words. Despite giving consonant blends, and some sound analogy in the arrangement of words, first short vowels, and then silent "e", its heavy use of pictures for word identification lowers the code to perhaps a Code 3 or 4. By page 16, straight five-letter word lists are given with no sound analogies. See other entries on Bentley.)

1842 Cobb's New Juvenile Reader, No. 2, Lyman Cobb; Pub. 1845 in New York by Caleb Bartlett. Cobb's Series of Reading Books, in Five Numbers. Second Reading Book, "composed of Easy Words of One, Two, and Three Syllables in Which All the Words in the First Reading Lesson not Contained in any Reading Lesson in No. 1, and all new words in each subsequent Reading Lesson throughout the Book, are placed before it, with the division, pronunciation, accentuation, and definition noted, and the part of speech designated, designed for the use of small children, and, in connection with No. 1, to accompany the Spelling Book in Schools and Families."

(See 1825 entry on Cobb's speller, which entry notes his original reading series came out in 1830, but I have seen no copies. Cobb's revised No. 2 text and possibly the 1830 text used dictionary markings on respelled words, useless for teaching children decoding skills on any new material. The vocabulary was stringently controlled. Children could go through the series without ever learning to read independently. The 1830 and 1842 series probably rate Code 3 if the first books in those series used dictionary respellings on new words, like the 1842 No. 2 book, though I have not seen the first book in either series. The back cover of this 1845 copy advertised Cobb's New First Book or Introduction to the Spelling Book, and New Juvenile Readers #1, 2, 3, New Sequel (fourth reader), and New North American Reader (fifth reader). Therefore, by 1845 or before, Cobb expected the speller to follow, not accompany, the New First Book.

See negative comments in the body of this history on Cobb's attack on Noah Webster, which attack suggests Cobb was one of the activists. Cobb's reading and spelling books were spectacularly successful, displacing Webster's speller in many places, which also suggests Cobb's access to "influence.")

1842 Cobb's New Spelling Book, in Six Parts, Lyman Cobb, Ithaca: Published by Andrus, Gauntlett & Co., copyrighted by Caleb Bartlett.

(Harvard copy. See other Cobb entries. This book is Code 8, but it taught pronunciation by respelling phonetically. On page 16, "To Teacher," said children should not be asked to read before spelling and the spelling book, but that argues with Cobb's writing a book to precede the speller some time before 1845, as discussed in the previous Cobb entry. "Preface: The great and prominent object of a spelling book should be to aid the pupil in learning to spell, pronounce and read with ease, accuracy and precision." Said one-third of time in school was spent on spelling. Said most people thought it did not matter what book children were first given. "By association and classification we learn and retain everything." Said Juvenile Readers 1, 2, 3, were to accompany the spelling book. On p. vii, said in previous 20 years, 7,000,000 copies of his spelling book had been sold. Signed New York June, 1842. See other entries on Cobb.)

1842 The New Classical Spelling Book, containing Rules and Reasons for English Orthography and Pronunciation.... Third Revised Edition, Rev. A. B. Chapin. Pub. 1847 by W. A. Leary, Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy. Lists booksellers in Philadelphia, New York City, New Haven, Boston, Cincinnati, Hartford, Springfield, Utica, Albany, Louisville [Kentucky], Wilmington, Pittsburgh, Richmond [Virginia], Baltimore, St. Louis [Missouri], Charleston [South Carolina], Hallowell [Maine]. The list provides confirmation on how rapid the spread of "new" ideas could be to American schools in the 1840's. Probably not meant as a beginning book, but because of spelling by analogy of sounds, might be Code 5, despite fact teachers were to read words first to pupils [pages 7 and 8], which confirmed children were not being taught how to sound out words. Stated language had defied pronunciation before this book [page 8]! The last two statements confirm the degeneracy in the teaching of beginning reading by "sound" by 1842, only 17 short years after the appearance of the first real "meaning" texts for beginners. This book is far above the level of a child. Page 181: recommends "small" number of rules, but they are ludicrous.

Refers to "prevalent" opinion that English language is "chaos" "wholly unsusceptible of any analysis, by which its pronunciation can be acquired." The author, a "linguist," used about 8,000 roots and 32,000 derivations to write his dreadful book.

1842 (?) Southern Spelling Book, Charleston, South Carolina (Referred to on page 186 of A. B. Chapin's 1842 The New Classical Spelling Book, reviewed above.)

1842 Comly's Spelling and Reading Book, With Notes for Parents and Teachers, Adapted to the Use of Public Schools and Private or Family Instruction, Bonsal's Edition, By John Comly.

(Harvard copy. Pub. by Thomas L. Bonsal, Philadelphia, in 1848 and copyright in 1842 by Bonsal. Also published Cobb's Juvenile Readers, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and Sequel to the Juvenile Reader. See 1820 entry on Comly Speller. Clifton Johnson referred to an 1806 Comly speller. Despite the great gap in time between 1806 and 1842, this book was signed John Comly, Byberry, 1842. In the back of the book, the date of 1845 was given for Comly's Reader and Book of Knowledge. Claimed defects were caused by not "spelling out of book." This 1842 book was not like Comly's 1820 book, lacking vowel markings. Words were arranged by phonic analogy. It was fairly thorough for that approach and rates at least a Code 6.)

1842 A New Spelling Book, Compiled with a View to Render the Arts of Spelling and Reading Easy and Pleasant to Children, To Which Is Added A Variety of Useful Exercises So Arranged As to Familiarize the Pupil With The Correct Spelling, Pronunciation and Meaning of About Two Thousand ... or Difficult Words. John Comly.

(Harvard copy. Pub. in 1846 by Kimbler & Sharples, Philadelphia, and copyrighted by them in 1842. They also published among other books advertised on the back cover Comly's Primer, Spelling Book and Grammar, Gummere's Progressive Spelling Book, and Comly's Spelling Book Enlarged. This book which rates a Code 6 has an incomplete syllabary, blends, short vowels by analogy in grouping, and the same on silent "e," but mixed groupings later. Groupings by sound continued to page 13. On two-syllable words, vowels were marked.)

1842 The Common School Speller, William B. Fowle, Late Principal of the Female Monitorial School in Boston, Pub. 1849 by Lemuel N. Ide, Boston.

(Harvard copy. The back cover stated Wm. B. Fowle, Boston, published the following school and educational books. The Common School Journal, ed. Horace Mann. Lectures on Education - Mann, The Common School Speller by Fowle, recommended by Mann, "and in The School and Schoolmaster of Geo. B. Emerson and Dr. Potter, used in Salem, Newburyport, Portsmouth" and more places specifically named, "and hundreds of other towns, the work having passed through about thirty editions already." Fowle's The Companion of Spelling Books was "...recommended by William Russell and others..." Fowle also published The Common School Grammar by Wm. B. Fowle, The Common School Geography and The Elementary Geography by Fowle, The Bible Reader, selections by Fowle, The Primary Reader by Fowle, The Child's Arithmetic by Fowle, and A Practical French Grammar by Fowle. The Primary Teacher of October, 1878, p. 57, also listed The Teacher's Institute by Fowle. See other entries on Fowle's books and comments in this history on Fowle. His 1842 speller, above, was not a beginning book. It had no syllable tables and used an unsatisfactory phonic approach, but rates perhaps as high as Code 6.)

1842 Standard Orthography and Orthoepey of the English Language, Simplified by a Scientific Classification of the Orthographic Symbols, by Means of Which the Labor of Learning to spell is Greatly Abridged and the Science and Art of Articulation is Rendered Intelligible and Attainable, For Common Schools, Academies and Private Instruction. George Stearns. Pub. by Benjamin F. Moore, Printer, Providence, Rhode Island. (Harvard copy. Highly technical classifications. Not for beginners.)

1842 The Second Book of Reading Lessons. Brothers of the Christian Schools. Eugene Cummiskey, Philadelphia. (This text is listed on page 78 of Earlier American Textbooks. The series is listed for sale by others in the 1876 American Catalogue as Christian Brothers. Readers. 3 v., First Reader, Second, Third. Those later editions were by D. & J. Sadlier, the O'Shea company, and the Strong company who

published a fourth reader as well. The series was revised in 1884 by John P. Murphy. The material is discussed at greater length in Appendix C. Its approach is unknown.)

1842 *The New American Primer, Containing Short and Easy Lessons for Young Children*. Published by E. Morgan and Son, Cincinnati. (Harvard copy. Toy book. Code 7 overall. Complete syllabary and blends. Three-letter words by sound analogy on consecutive short vowels: a, e, i, o, u, but not marked. Then four, then five letter words, most by sound analogy. Then two-syllable words and stories.)

1842 *Elements of the English Language, or Analytical Orthography*, Albert D. Wright, Designed to Teach the Philosophy of Orthography and Orthoepy, Adapted to Schools. Fourth Edition, Enlarged. Pub. 1845 Henry, Hitchcock & Co., Cazenovia, New York. Alexander Blake, New York.

(Harvard copy. Pathetic content. Not a beginning book, but meant for use AFTER "...they have to learned to read." It "teaches" what rank beginners had formerly learned from Webster. Originally written between 1832 and 1838, per page 4, and published in 1839. "Part I, Elementary Sounds," was not in the first edition but in this one of 1842. Page 34: "First Exercises in Synthesis.." Elements, m - e, then pronounced "me" (!). This was intended as elocution for those who obviously previously knew no phonics. Per *Early American Textbooks*, page 124, this was still published in 1859 by A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, but it was not listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as in print in that year.

Wright's *Primary Lessons, or Child's First Book*, was listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as on sale for 25c, apparently the same book as that in the Rare Book Division of the Library of Congress under the date of 1846, call number PE 1119.A1W86 Office. It was possibly first published in 1842. The purpose of Wright's "phonics" at the primary level in 1846 was probably elocution, not decoding, as was the case with the Swan and Tower materials of the same period. The following title appeared on the Library of Congress copy of 1846: "Primary Lessons - Being a speller and reader, on an Original Plan in which one letter is taught at a lesson with its power, an application being immediately made of each letter thus learned and those words being distinctly arranged into reading lessons," by Albert D. Wright, New York, D. Appleton & Co.; Philadelphia, G. S. (?) Hall.

1843? *The American Pictorial Primer, or the First Book for Children, Designed for Home or Parental Instruction*, G. F. Cooledge, New York, and also published and for sale by all the principal Booksellers throughout the United States of America and Its Territories.

(Harvard copy. Across the top of cover: "Take It Home." At top of inside pages: "Infant School Primer," indicating it is a revision of the 1840 Cooledge *Infant School Primer* described previously. Code 3 and a typical toy book, very roughly following skill sequence in old spellers and very like the 1840 *Infant School Primer* previously described. Like that book, most pages have pictures at the top. It begins with a pictured alphabet and incomplete syllabary, shows sight words under some pictures, has three-letter words with sound analogies, "stories," finally progressing to two-syllable words. See other Cooledge entries and the section in this history concerning the Cooledge company.)

1843 *Mrs. Barbauld's Easy Lessons, For the Use of Schools - Improved Edition*, Pub. A. Phelps, Greenfield, Mass. (See comments in this history on this edition, and previous entries and comments on the publisher, A. Phelps, who published the critically important 1826 *Franklin Primer*.)

1843? *My Little Primer*, Published by S. A. Howland, Worcester (Toy book, probably English. Code 1. In sections: *My Little Alphabet* - pictures, words and sentences to be read to children; *My Little Primer* - alphabet in print, followed by pictures and words plus word lists, straight sight words and short stories; *Easy Lessons for Young Readers* - mentions four-year-old boy reading.)

1843 New English Spelling Book and Child's First Reading Book, Revised and Improved, Designed for Schools and Private Families Where the English Language is Spoken. John G. McCall. Published for the Author, Hartford, 1846. (Harvard copy. Code 6, by sound analogy, with syllables. Reading with "understanding" for beginners. Rehashed stuff, probably for sales as a toy book. Pointless effort, apparently not by a teacher.)

1843 The Primary School Reader, Part First, William D. Swan, Principal of the Mayhew Grammar School, Boston. Published 1844 by Charles C. Little and James Brown, Boston. (Harvard copy. Code 5, because of oral vowel practice, though decoding was NOT Swan's purpose, but elocution was. His purpose was to write an elocutionary reader composed of sight-words. Mentioned by Reeder, page 50. See later entries in this list for Swan.)

1843 Town's Speller & Definer, Being an Introduction to Town's Analysis, Salem Town, Pub. by R. C. Root; Agents: New York - Harper & Bros.; Philadelphia, Grigg & Elliot; Albany, Oliver Steele; New Haven, S. Babcock. One Hundredth Edition, Critically Revised and Corrected.

(Harvard copy. On the cover, blurred, is what appears to be an 1828 or 1838 statement of the U. S. House of Representatives recommending this ridiculous work as the National Uniform Spelling Book. Yet Town's definitions were so very bad that Noah Webster spoke against this book, as quoted in J. Orville Taylor's newspaper, referred to elsewhere in this history. Putting little children through such silly exercises was an extension of John Wood's "meaning" nonsense. Harvard library has another version, copyrighted in 1843 and published in 1848, which is completely different, with the title, Town's Speller and Definer, Revised and Enlarged, published by Sanborn and Carter of Portland. That 1848 copy advertised "Town's School Books, Revised," consisting of Town's 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Readers, Speller and Definer, Town's Analysis of Words, and Town's Chart of Elementary Sounds and Substitutes. See other entries on his materials and on his reading series, apart from his spellers. What appears certain is that Town's "meaning" speller was being massively promoted in government schools, while Webster's "sound" speller was losing ground, though Webster's still had very large sales for use above the beginning level, possibly because it was very cheap.)

1843 Lessons in Elocution, by William Russell. Boston: Charles J. Hendee, and Jenks and Palmer, 81 p. (Listed in Early American Textbooks, p. 36. See other entries on Russell.)

1844 Town's First Reader, To Be Used in Connection with Any Speller, Salem Town, Published 1846 by H. & E. Phinney, Cooperstown, New York.

(Harvard copy. Town's reading series, which appeared apparently from 1844 to about 1846 or so, consisted of first through fifth readers, plus a Grammar School Reader, and has multiple copies listed in Early American Textbooks, indicating it was published in Portland, Buffalo, New York City, and Cincinnati. Harvard also has a "Revised Edition" of The Child's First Reader dated 1848, published by Sanborn & Carter of Portland, Maine, and an 1854 copy of the 1848 revised edition published by Blake and Carter, Portland, Maine. Town's whole series was still in print by "Mason" in 1876, according to the American Catalogue, but out of print when the 1912 United States Catalog was published. In 1866, Mason Brothers, N. Y.; Mason & Hamlin, Boston; and Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago, published Webb's readers. The New York Mason appears to have been taken over by Taintor about 1867, so possibly the Mason publishing Town's readers in 1876 was Mason & Hamlin of Boston.

Town's First Reader rates a Code 4, only because of two pages of vowel practice, which was obviously oral and obviously meant for elocution, not decoding, though it accidentally might teach some phonic decoding. The preface to the 1848 edition said



“This book is designed as the First Book for children. It comprises a series of progressive lessons, commencing with the Alphabet and advancing to words of two syllables. The words composing the Reading Lessons, are first presented in spelling columns. With these the child should be made familiar before he is required to pronounce them in sentences. This arrangement is calculated to prevent hesitancy in reading, and to secure an easy and natural utterance of words.... The use of the “abs” [Ed.: the syllabary] is now very generally discarded by practical teachers. They are, therefore, omitted in this work, and such significant words introduced as the child can understand. The exercises on the Vocal Elements are introduced for the use of such teachers as consider it important for children to be instructed in them, at this early stage of their education.”

Note that the “Vocal Elements” (phonics) were meant only for “exercises,” or elocution, and were not used to teach decoding to beginners. Even so, such “exercises” were not mandatory. Note the confirmation in 1848 that the “abs,” the “sound” syllabary, had been generally discarded by that date, although it had been in universal use only 22 years earlier, in 1826, and instead in 1848 the child was only being taught “significant words... the child can understand” (“meaning”)! The 1876 American Catalogue shows that the six volumes of Town’s readers were on sale in that year by Mason. See the later entry for the Town and Holbrook reading series.)

1844 The Boys’ Own Primer, By A Friend to Youth, Pub. by William T. Truman, Cincinnati, Ohio. (Harvard copy. Toy book. Imitates in form, greatly abbreviated, content of Dilworth-style spellers. Shortened syllabary and blends, three-letter words, etc. Clearly not a serious attempt.)

1844 Picture Reader, Designed as a First Reading Book for Young Masters and Misses, by A Friend to Youth. Pub. by S. Babcock, Sidney’s Press, New Haven. (Harvard copy. Not a beginning book. American Antiquarian Society has a slightly different edition of 1844 published by William T. Truman of Cincinnati.)

1844 New Series of Common School Readers, No. 1. Pub. by Grigg & Elliot, No. 9 North Fourth Street, Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy. Not a beginning book. “This little volume is intended to be used as a First Reading Book, after the Spelling Book.” First story syllabicated. Some selections that are really object lessons. Per the 1876 American Catalogue, this series had four books by 1876 and was published in 1876 by Lippincott as Grigg and Elliot Common School Readers. Grigg and Elliot also published many other books: The Primer, or First Book for Children. Moral Tales, or First Steps in Reading for Children, and First Lessons in Reading for Children, as well as Grigg & Elliot’s New Series of Common School Readers, Nos. 1, 2, and 3 (and a 4 by at least 1876). See also entry under 1824 for Jesse Torrey’s series which was published by Grigg in 1835. Many of the above titles appear to be variants on the names for Torrey’s 1835 series, which were: Torrey’s Primer, or First Book for Children; First Reading Lessons for Children; Torrey’s Pleasing Companion for Little Girls and Boys, and Torrey’s Moral Instructor. See also Torrey’s 1825 speller.)

1844 The American Definition Spelling Book, Improved Edition. R. M’K. Ormsby. Pub. by A. Low, Bradford, Vermont.

(Harvard copy. Code 5, and apparently not successful, despite many curious hints of ties to change-agents. Same title as Kneeland’s 1802 book. Apparently a deliberate sight-word version of Webster’s which it tried to replace. Referred to Webster’s popularity (p. 5.) One testimonial was from Phillips Academy. Another was from U. S. Senator Samuel S. Phelps, Vermont: “It is designed, and I think will prove effectual, to relieve the child from the tedium of dealing with sounds to him

unmeaning.... In mature life we find it extremely difficult to remember what we do not understand, and it must be so in childhood.... Although I have never devoted much time to the subject of the education of children, yet I take the liberty of saying that I consider your plan as a decided improvement.” Many were local testimonials, apparently canvassed. From the St. Johnsbury Caledonian: “We venture to express the opinion that the work is a decided improvement, in the arrangement at least, upon Webster’s Spelling Book, for new beginners.” Another testimonial from the Vermont Chronicle said, “...we do not think that, in the whole, a better will be found. It is already in general use in many of our large villages.”

The book is a hopeless mixture of sight-words and “sound” at the beginning, but the effect is probably Code 5 because it does have the syllabary. Ormsby’s second book was listed on the cover: “The American Reader, or exercises in reading designed to accompany the American Definition Spelling Book, to be put in the scholar’s hands as soon (as he) has finished the reading lessons in that book....”

1844 New Spelling Book, or Second Course of Lessons in Spelling and Reading, Enlarged Edition, William Russell, Principal of Merrimack, N. H., Normal Institute. Pub. 1855 by Tappan and Whittemore, Boston.

(Harvard copy. Code 10, but not a beginning book. Harvard also has an 1850 copy published by Charles Tappan, Boston. The Introduction makes it clear the purpose of the phonic instruction was correct pronunciation, NOT DECODING. The 1850 copy by Charles Tappan advertised Russell’s Elementary Series - Russell’s Primer, Russell’s Spelling Book, Russell’s Primary Reader. He also wrote The American Common School Reader and Speaker. The 1876 American Catalogue listed two books by “Russell, W.,” probably the same man, and possibly his older readers under new titles. They were Introduction to Reader, 63c, and Elocutionary Reader, \$1.25, both published by “Dennet” about whom I have no information.

Russell was the quintessential “expert.” On page 18, he endorsed the teaching of reading BEFORE spelling. A page at the beginning said more books are “now” available: Introduction to Primary Reader, and Sequel to Primary Reader, the former for schools with another speller, to accompany it, “and the latter to connect the author’s Elementary Series with Goldsbury and Russell’s Series for Common Schools. For classes still further advanced, the author has prepared in conjunction with Mr. John Goldsbury the Introduction to the American Common School Reader and Speaker... and the American Common School Reader and Speaker.”

Being an “expert” and a promotor of government schools apparently paid very well for such prolific “authors” as Russell. See other entries on Russell and discussion of change-agent Russell in the body of this history.)

1844 Primer, or First Steps in Spelling and Reading, William Russell. Published in 1846 by Charles Tappan, Boston. (Harvard copy. Code 4. See previous entries on Russell and his spelling and reading books. This copy said his Third Book had been endorsed in 1843 by Horace Mann’s Common School Journal. The Third Book was also endorsed by N. Y. State Superintendent of Common Schools and “meets with a very favourable reception in our common schools.” The change-agents were very well organized and apparently knew how to promote one another’s interests.)

1844 Primer or First Steps in Reading and Spelling, Improved Edition, Accompanied by A New Spelling Book. William Russell. Published 1850 Tappan, Whittemore and Mason, Boston and possibly revised in that year. (Harvard copy. Inexplicably bound with a play in the middle from London, 1859: Ici On Parle Francaise. Code 4, with massive amounts of sight reading for beginners and totally inadequate in dealing with short vowels or closed syllables. It is a confusing mess for children, and yet, in some of his comments, Russell seemed to endorse “sound.” Russell was a strange person, as the comments in the

body of this history demonstrate. In this very poor Code 4 book teaching in effect by “meaning,” Russell nevertheless said, “As spelling is the only sure method of teaching reading... the teacher should be careful to teach the sounds of letters....” After this, Russell endorsed sounds for enunciation. Yet he endorsed sight words for irregular spellings, and considered reading should be taught initially by a primer, not a speller, obviously favoring the “sight” approach in the climate of the day.)

1844 *The Illuminated American Primer, Being an Introduction to Mrs. Sigourney’s Pictorial Reader, For the Use of Schools.* Published by Turner & Hayden, New York.

(Harvard copy. Code 5 or less. Toy book. See 1846 entry for later edition and see 1837 entry for earlier books. Presumably Mrs. Sigourney was Lydia Huntley Sigourney. As discussed in this history, in Dr. Alcott’s short biography on Gallaudet, he referred to her. Alcott told of Gallaudet’s initial meeting in 1814 with the little deaf-mute girl, Alice Cogswell:

“...the daughter of an eminent citizen of Hartford... at play with the rest of the children, in her father’s garden. Mr. Gallaudet, having succeeded in gaining her attention by signs, proceeded to give her a lesson in written language, by teaching her that the word hat represented the thing hat, which he held up in his hand. Following up this first step as well as he was able, he succeeded in importing to her a number of many simple words and sentences. His ingenuity was also greatly assisted by a publication of the Abbe Sicard of France, which Mr. Cogswell, the father of the girl, had received from Paris, as well as by the efforts and cooperation of other individuals residing with her in the family, among whom was Lydia Huntley, afterwards Lydia H. Sigourney, the poetess....”)

1844 *Very Little Tales for Very Little Children, in Single Syllables of Three and Four Letters.* First American From the Sixth London Edition, D. Appleton Co., New York, Geo. S. Appleton, 138 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy. Code I. This copy reports that it was the fourth Appleton edition in eighteen months. The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, The Viking Press, New York, 1953, shows on page 56, “Appleton, Daniel, 1785-1849, American publisher, founder of a large publishing house.” This is the earliest Appleton reading text I have found. Yet D. Appleton would have been 59 by 1844, so presumably he had published other materials for some years and had entered the reading book field about 1840 squarely on the side of “meaning” to teach beginning reading. Later entries show Appleton produced other “meaning” beginning reading books which had originally been published in England. All were presumably pirated editions, which were common at that time on both sides of the Atlantic because of the absence of international copyright laws.

The author of this book referred to “her” self and said it was hard to write stories of three or four letters for infants. “It is meant only for children who have just acquired their alphabet.” She said nothing like it had been available before, but that was not strictly so, unless her original book was VERY old, dating back to the mid-eighteenth century. Three- and four-letter stories are described elsewhere in this history dating to the late eighteenth century, but they were meant to follow “spelling” of syllables and words, which this author was obviously omitting. She said the book was “designed to lead the young learner to the various early lessons provided by many excellent writers for the more advanced states....” See later Appleton entries similar to this one.)

1845 *Gradual Speller and Complete Enunciator, showing the Orthography and Orthoepy of All Words in Common Use...* arranged in accordance not only with the vowel sounds, but also with their consonant elements and their various combinations, giving a correct pronunciation.... David B. Tower. Published by Sanborn, Bazin and Ellsworth, Boston (according to Harvard notation, in 1857).

(Harvard copy. Code 10 if for beginners, but as Tower's quotation later makes clear, spellers were not used for beginners at that time. The speller used an analytic-synthetic approach. The publisher, presumably in 1857, was printing Tower's Series: Tower's Gradual First Reader, Tower's Gradual Second Reader, Tower's Gradual Third Reader, Tower's Intermediate Reader, Tower's Gradual Fourth Reader, Tower's Gradual Fifth Reader, Tower's Gradual Sixth Reader, Tower's First Steps in Articulation, Tower's Progressive Speller and Definer, Tower's Gradual Speller. The full title of the first book was Tower's First Reader. The Gradual Primer, or Primary School Enunciator, so no "Gradual" primer existed apart from the first reader. Tower also wrote algebra and grammar books. Sanborn, Bazin and Ellsworth also published Salem Town's and N. M. Holbrook's series, the Progressive Primer, Progressive First-Fifth Readers, and Progressive Speaker. Tower was credited on its title page as having written the December, 1856, Pictorial Primer of the Town and Holbrook series, but it was NOT a phonic primer, and the possibility exists, as discussed later, that it was prepared in his name after his possible death towards the end of 1856. In the preface of the 1845 Gradual Speller, page 7, Tower had said:

"The spelling book was formerly the only text-book used in teaching a child to read. Its place in that respect, is now supplied by Primers and Reading Books, expressly adapted to that end and better suited to the purpose. The Spelling Book now falls into its appropriate sphere of giving the learner the orthography and orthoepy of the language; and it should be confined to these specific objects. Nor is it by any means to be neglected in its proper place; it should go with the pupil through his school days, and be the last book to leave his hands. December 1, 1845."

Tower therefore confirmed that the use of the spelling book for beginners was a thing of the past by 1845. He also confirmed that it had taken the "experts" less than twenty years, from 1826 to considerably before 1845, totally to change the practices of millennia!)

1845 The Gradual Primer, or Primary School Enunciator. David B. Tower, (Formerly Principal of the Eliot Grammar School, Boston, and Late Principal of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind). New edition published in 1853 by Daniel Burgess & Co., New York.

(Harvard copy. Daniel Burgess & Co. published other Tower's readers. Nila Banton Smith showed 1853 as the date (page 99-100 of her book), wrongly claiming Tower's was a truly phonic series for first grade. Yet a review of his book makes it clear his purpose was only elocution, although he therefore accidentally taught decoding at a Code 8 level. This book spoke of the "new feature" of giving only a few letters before reading words composed of these letters. See other Tower entries.)

1845 A, B, C, With Pictures and Verses. Published by A. Phelps, Greenfield. (Harvard copy. Toy book, about four by two inches, and useless except for teaching the alphabet. What is notable is the fact that books meant solely to teach the alphabet, without the syllabary, spelling and reading, were a novelty about 1845, but became common later. Note the change-agent publisher discussed elsewhere in this history: A. Phelps of Greenfield.)

1845 Comly's Reader and Book of Knowledge, With Exercises of Spelling and Defining, for the Use of Schools and for Private Instruction. John Comly. Published by Thomas L. Bonsal, Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Meant to follow spelling and reading book. Questions at end. Publisher also published Cobb's Juvenile Readers 1, 2, 3 and Sequel.)

1845 The Grammatic Reader, No. 1. Edward Hazen. Pub. J. S. Redfield, New York. (Harvard copy. Code 3. Exhausting, pathetic. Some phonics through sound analogy on other whole words. "Preface: Much of the first and second years of the scholastic course is wasted in learning to read and spell...." Hazen's comments indicated here should be contrasted to his earlier "meaning" works, described

previously. Hazen mentioned working “for 17 years” which would presumably be since 1828, the copyright date on his first book, which would have produced the problems he complained about in learning to read and spell.

This Harvard copy has the notation, “Gift of Albert E. Winship, Editor of The New England Journal of Education.” The back cover of this book also advertised the following “Popular School Books by Edward Hazen, A. M. for Sale By the Principal Booksellers:” Grammatical Readers Nos. I, II, III... J. S. Redfield, N. Y. Publisher; The Symbolical Spelling Book. Embellished with Over Five Hundred Wood Engravings, Nafis & Cornish, N. Y., Publishers, [The American Antiquarian Society has an undated copy of The American Pictorial Primer, a common title for such books, 24 pages long, published by Nafis and Cornish, New York.]; The Speller and Definer, “This Book Is To Be Used After A Spelling Book,” Baker Crane & Co., N.Y., Publishers; A Practical Grammar of the English Language, or an Introduction to Composition, Huntington & Savage, New York, Publishers.)

1845 The Little Child’s ABC, Published by Geo. P. Daniels, Providence. (Harvard copy. Colored toy book. Code I. Arranged in paired boxes running down the page, with a capital and small letter in each left-hand box plus a sample word beginning with that small letter, and a capital letter in the right-hand box, with sample whole words beginning with that capital letter. Sequence in alphabetic order. For A, the sample small letter word was archer, and the sample words beginning with a capital letter were Ant, Arm, Apple, Amuse, Awake. Unphonic sample words: for W, What, Who, etc. Apparent purpose: home practice on alphabet, plus learning sample sight words.)

1845 The Mother’s New Primer, or The Infant’s Library, Published by Richard Marsh, New York, New York.

(Harvard copy. Toy book which looks like an English reprint: shows officer’s funeral with kilts, so apparently British import with some changes. Usual abbreviation of syllabary and blends, and very little spelling by analogy, the standard toy book approach after about 1830. Three, then four-letter word lists, then two syllable words and stories. See similar one by the same publisher in 1850, titled The Infant’s Book, and another in 1856, entitled Mother’s Primer. Publisher advertised for sale toy books, stationery, ink, sealing wax, etc. His address was 374 Pearl Street, the same as Mahlon Day’s address when he published the 1837 The Infant School Primer. Day also had a stationary and book store, so it is reasonable to assume that Richard Marsh bought out Mahlon Day, some time after 1839, in which year George F. Cooledge showed his address on his own version of The Infant School Primer as the second story of M. Day & Co.’s book store. By 1840 or so, Cooledge was at 323 Pearl Street, and was still publishing in 1851, if an entry on page 92 of Early American Textbooks is correct for Henry B. Maglathlin’s The National Speaker.

American Antiquarian Society has a copy of a 24-page undated book, with a pencil notation, “1863,” entitled The American Pictorial Primer, constructed to Allure Children....” published by Richard Marsh of New York, the book’s name being a variant on others of the 1840’s. It is not known if Richard Marsh was related to the Marsh of the 1841 Boston company, Marsh, Capen, Lyon & Webb, which published Horace Mann’s Common School Journal. That company by 1842 became Wm. B. Fowle & N. Capen. See later entries on Marsh.)

1845 (or later) New National Primer, Published by Turner and Fisher, New York, Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Toy book. See 1855 entries for toy books of Fisher & Brother, Philadelphia - New York - Boston - Baltimore, presumably the same company.)

1845 Manual, Analytical and Synthetical of Orthography and Definition, James N. McElligott, Principal of the Mechanics’ Society School, New York City, Published 1846 by Mark H. Newman & Co.

(Harvard copy. Not for beginners. Recommendations: From Teacher's Institute, New York City and County, October, 1845 - "The Committee appointed to examine books published for the use of schools and to give the sentiments of this body respecting them..." endorsed this appalling book with "unanimous approval." The book concerned roots, prefixes, suffixes, etc. Children at this time "studied" dictionaries but were not properly taught to read. See 1846 entry for McElligott.)

1846 Young Analyzer, Being an Easy Outline of the Course of Instruction in the English Language Presented in McElligott's Analytical Manual, Designed to Serve the Double Purpose of Spelling Book and Dictionary in the Younger Classes in Schools. James N. McElligott, Principal of the Mechanics Society School, New York City. Published in 1855 by Ivison and Phinney, New York.

(Harvard copy. Also listed publishers in Chicago, Detroit, Auburn, Cincinnati. Also published Joshua Leavitt's American Lessons in Reading and Speaking and Stone's Child's Reader (of which I have no record). Like 1845 McElligott text, this was not for beginners, It attempted to teach the meaning and spelling of words through roots, prefixes and suffixes. Claimed spelling is visual, not to be learned by sound, and needs "rules.")

1846 John's First Book or the Child's First Reader, John Russell Webb (1824-1887), Per Nila Banton Smith. Webb's various "word method" readers are discussed at length in the body of this history, in Appendix C and elsewhere in this appendix, particularly in the 1851 entry for the United States Spelling Book.)

1846 The Illuminated American Primer, Being an Introduction to Mrs. Sigourney's Pictorial Reader, For the Use of Schools, Published by S. Ide, Agent, Claremont Manufacturing Company, Claremont, New Hampshire. S. Ide, Agent. Copyright Turner & Hayden, New York, Fifth Edition - 30,000.

(Harvard copy. Toy book, Code 5 or less. See 1844 entry for earlier edition and an 1837 entry for earlier books. Religious at end. Hopeless for teaching reading, but has syllabary. See Progressive First, by Salem Town and Nelson M. Holbrook. 1867, Oliver Ellsworth, publisher, for a testimonial on the inside cover from a "Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, 1864." She was possibly well known in 1864.)

1846 The English Spelling Book (On same copy, also called The New English Spelling Book). American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, New York. Published in 1849 by Leavitt & Company, New York.

(Harvard copy. Harvard also has another copy printed in 1847 by Leavitt, Trow & Company, 191 Broadway, which showed the 1846 copyright was taken out in that name. Code 5 or 6. See the body of this history for the opportunistic money-making nature of this small group, which conclusion was based on printed testimony from the period against the men adopting this organization name. The very small group had no apparent connection to the famous English society. However, the book refers to the society's Report on the Subject of Spelling Books, which, although seriously flawed, is a very important historical source, as discussed in this history. Both the Report.... and the printed statement against the American Society.... are presently held by the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts. The Report.... stated that 110 different spelling books had been published in America from 1804 to 1846, and attempted to list them. The list, although obviously faulty with a confusion on names, is nevertheless invaluable. The Report.... also gave some information on the spellers most used in some states for some years previously.

Noted on this speller was the information that the publisher, Leavitt & Company of New York, also published the American School Series, of which this book was a part. The series included the First

American Reader, the Second American Reader, and the Third American Reader. I have no further information on the Leavitt & Company American School Series in print by or before 1849.)

1846 First Book of English for Children, Charles Kraitsir, M. D. Published by Elizabeth P. Peabody, Boston. (Harvard copy. Sheer nonsense. Refers negatively to Pitman phonics. Opposes letter spelling and endorses Kraitsir's conception of "sound" spelling, which is by LATIN phonics, since he assumed English has been corrupted. Words not following Latin pronunciation were to be taught as corruptions, as sight words!)

1846 Introduction to the Primary Reader, or Russell's Elementary Series, Designed to Accompany the Spelling Book. William Russell, Editor of American Journal of Education, First Series. Author of Lessons in Elocution. Published 1847 by Charles Tappan, Boston.

(Harvard copy. If used as he said, with his speller, or after others, it would be acceptable, but not as a beginning book. This copy carried the following: "Advertisement - The present volume consists, principally, of the course of reading lessons included in the author's Spelling Book...." - said so it could be used in schools with the spelling book, to follow the speller "to render progress in reading, sure, easy and rapid, by placing it on the safe foundation of spelling." Reading some of Russell's remarks out of context suggest he endorsed "sound" in beginning reading. The reverse was true: he endorsed "meaning," and promoted "spelling" to fix sight words in mind, and letter sounds to promote proper enunciation of already memorized sight words.)

1846 English Spelling Book and Child's First Reading Book, by John G. M'Call, Hartford: Published for the Author. Note that its title begins the same as the 1846 speller published for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. The latter is only a Code 5 or 6 speller. That 1846 Code 5 or 6 speller certainly is not described as a child's "first reading book," which spellers were supposed to be twenty years earlier, before 1826. However, M'Call's book is a throwback to those pre-1826 spellers. It is clearly meant for beginners and it teaches by "sound," a Code 10. What is really astonishing is that, in 1846, M'Call said he was surprised to find that his approach was the same as that in Webster's spelling book. That certainly suggests that by 1846 very few people were paying any attention to or even reading Webster's preface to his speller which had the directions for its use.

1846 The American Inductive Spelling Book, Containing A Progressive Series of Lessons in Syllables and Words and in Easy Reading. Also Exhibiting the Proper Pronunciation of Words.... Designed as Preparatory to the Use of Emerson's Readers, Benjamin Dudley Emerson, Pub. by Hogan and Thompson of Philadelphia

(Harvard copy. A Code 10 speller, apparently different in content and purpose from Emerson's 1828 speller, since the advertisement claimed it was to be used before all his readers. The use of the spelling book as a first step seems to have lingered in Pennsylvania after 1826, as with Comly's speller, referred to elsewhere. The advertisement on the back cover of this 1846 speller read:

"The Emerson Books are published by Hogan and Thompson, Philadelphia. They are for sale by the principal booksellers throughout the United States, and can be had easily by the schools in the interior of the South and West by giving their orders to the merchants with whom they deal.... The Emerson Series of School Books has been introduced extensively into a great number of the best schools, public and private, of the United States. The Books are used to a large extent in the Massachusetts, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Pennsylvania Public Schools, and in those states where the general Public School system is not established, they are used with much approbation by various private institutions of the best character."

Note the confirmation of widespread private schools in 1846 where government schools had not displaced them. Note also that the “general Public School System” by 1846 was limited to Massachusetts, New York, Vermont, and New Hampshire, and to Pennsylvania which had only joined it after enormous opposition to the change-agents in the early 1830’s. See Samuel Blumenfeld’s *Is Public Education Necessary?* for the background. The advertisement continued:

“The series consisting after the spelling book, of Four Reading Books... geography and arithmetic by Frederick Emerson.... Of the Class Readers immediately following the use of the Spelling Book, we shall here particularly speak. The most elementary Book is the Fourth Class reader, intended for the youngest class of readers...”

It is evident that by the time Emerson published his newer speller by 1846, he had gone back to teaching beginning reading by “sound” and not by “meaning.” That possibly accounts for his new publisher’s being located in Pennsylvania, where the use of the speller as a beginning book was lingering, and possibly also accounts for Emerson’s series dying out not long afterwards. It would not have met with the approval of many old activists. See the 1848 entry on Swan concerning Swan’s displacing Emerson’s in Boston in 1849. See other Emerson entries under 1828 and 1835.)

1847 Hemans’ *Young Ladies’ Reader*. T. S. Pinneo. \$1.25. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. (Listed in 1876 *American Catalogue* under Readers.)

1847 *Exercises and Illustrations on the Blackboard*, John Goldsbury. Published by Geo. Tilden, Keene, New Hampshire. (Harvard copy. Not a beginner’s book. See Russell’s entries for collaboration with Goldsbury on *American Common School Reader and Speaker*, and see page 133 of this book for reference to Russell. The Preface quotes Horace Mann on the use of the blackboard in Prussia.)

1847 *Infant School Alphabet*, Published by Henry M’Grath, Philadelphia. (Harvard copy, Eight-page toy book, Code 4. See other 1847 entry.)

1847 *The Inductive Primer, Constructed to Allure Children By the Quickest Steps To An Acquaintance With The Letters, To Form Syllables, And To Read*, Published by Henry M’Grath, Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Code 3 toy book, 24 pages. Also published the *Infant School Alphabet*, above, *The Child’s Own Primer*, 37 pages, *The Child’s Primer*; or *My Darling’s ABC*, 16 pages, *The Infant School Primer*, 8 pages, M’Grath’s *New Picture Books*, 12 different kinds, 8 pages, *Public School Arithmetical Table Cards*, *Juvenile ABC Cards*, large size, *Juvenile ABC Cards*, small size. “Has always on hand a general assortment of Medical, Theological, Law and Miscellaneous Books, and Blank Books, School Books, Toy Books, Coloured and Plain; and Primers, From One to Six Cents, Which Will Be Sold, Wholesale or Retail, On the Most Reasonable Terms.”)

1847 *My Little Primer with Many Engravings*, Published by J. Grout, Jr., Worcester. (Harvard copy. Toy book, 24 pages, Code 1.)

1847 *Primary Reader, A Selection of Easy Reading Lessons, With Introductory Exercises in Articulation, For Young Classes. Improved Edition*. William Russell, Former Editor *American Journal of Education*, Author of *Lessons in Elocution, Etc.* (Harvard copy. Gives articulation exercises. Page 8: Refers to “prevalent fault” of stumbling in reading. Contrasting Russell’s 1847 remark to the testimony given on pre-1826 reading fluency by William Andrus Alcott, quoted elsewhere in this history, demonstrates a sharp deterioration in reading ability by 1847. The deterioration in reading ability was the result of shifting from the “sound” spellers to teach beginning reading before 1826 to the “meaning” primers to teach beginning reading after 1826.



1847 *The Illustrated Primer, or Child's First Book, Designed for the Earliest Instruction in Schools and Families*, Published by George F. Cooledge & Bro., New York, Booksellers and Publishers.

(Harvard copy, Code 3. See other entries on Cooledge's books. Cooledge was still in business in 1851, as *Early American Textbooks*, page 92, refers to Maglathlin, Henry B - *The National Speaker*. Boston: Robert S. Davis; New York: G. F. Coolidge (sic) and Bro.; Philadelphia: Thomas Cowperthwait & Co.

*Early American Textbooks* also lists on page 70 a copy of *The Illustrated Primer, or the First Book for Children*, published by George F. Cooledge & Bro., New York, 47 pages, no date. Harvard's copy of *The Illustrated Primer* carries many testimonial letters on Webster's speller published by Cooledge and refers to the practice of children's memorizing the dictionary. The back cover said they published Cooledge's Pictorial Edition of Webster's speller, and "A New and Cheap Common School Dictionary by Wm. G. Webster, Noah's Son." They also published:

"A Beautiful Primer, The National Pictorial Primer, or the Child's First Book. This primer is arranged progressively, beginning with the alphabet, and ending with words of three syllables. It is also interspersed with Reading Lessons...."

Cooledge also listed:

"Valuable and Popular Reading Books, Pierpont's Series of Reading Books.... 1. *The Little Learner or Rudiments of Learning*; 2. *The Young Reader to Go with The Spelling Book*; 3. *Introduction to the National Reader*; 4. *National Reader*; 5. *The American First Class Book*."

Also on the back cover appeared:

"Valuable and popular school books, published by Geo. F. Cooledge & Bro., N. Y., and for sale by the principal Booksellers throughout the Union: The cheapest and most popular Spelling Book published in the United States - Cooledge's Edition of Webster's Elementary Spelling Book, The Last Revised Edition.... This Spelling Book... is in almost universal use throughout the United States, the sale of it being about One Million Copies per Annum. This book has more influence than all other others on a national language, and the effects of its general use for more than forty years, are visible to this day, in the remarkable uniformity of pronunciation among the citizens of the United States."

See the text of this history for the worth of such overblown publishers' claims, which claims were also parodied in the story published in the *School Bulletin*, included in Appendix A. Nevertheless, Webster's was possibly the best-selling spelling book among the many on the market about 1847, possibly because, as its publisher admitted, it was the cheapest. Concerning the credibility of the general claim, however, it should be noted that the publisher, George F. Cooledge & Bro. of New York, is virtually - and possibly almost totally - unknown today. How could a company claiming such monumental importance fade into almost total oblivion, unless the company was not so important as it claimed?

1847 *Leavitt's Reading Series, Part 1 - Primer, or Little Lessons for Little Learners*, by Joshua Leavitt. Published in 1851 by John P. Jewett, Boston.

(Two Harvard copies, the other published by Jewett in 1850. Some books of this series are listed in *Early American Textbooks*, pages 70, 90 and 91. The material could be Code 5 if taught in sequence, but was adaptable to Code 3 or 4 or even Code 1. The Preface, page 4, discussed prevalent methods. On page

44, it mentioned reading at age 6, and page 42 mentioned age 3 at infant school. It considered optional the use of the syllable method, but nothing was mentioned about teaching the phonic decoding of words. Page 60 showed that the book's use of phonics was only for elocution. Page 4 described the "old way," the syllable method.

This text listed high frequency words (which was extraordinary!) It showed eleven words that it claimed composed one quarter of all reading, and another page of words presumed to form another quarter. The first quarter is almost identical to Ayres' first quarter published in 1915.

In the 1846 book, the *Young Analyzer*, by James N. McElligott, published in 1855 by Ivison and Phinney, New York, which has been listed previously, Ivison and Phinney were shown as publishing Joshua Leavitt's *American Lessons in Reading and Speaking*, perhaps the material listed below from *Early American Textbooks*. It is unknown whether Ivison and Phinney were only the New York publishers, or whether they actually took over from the Jewett company by 1855. The Jewett company 1851 copy of the *Primer* shows that Jewett published Leavitt's *First Book* (which was the *Primer*), and Leavitt's *Second, Third, and Fourth Books*. Possibly the Ivison and Phinney title applies to that *Fourth Book*, when Ivison and Phinney presumably were at least the New York publishers.

*Early American Textbooks* lists *Primer: or, Little Lessons for Little Learners*, Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1854, 72 p.; *Leavitt's Reading Series, Part II. Easy Lessons in Reading*, also Jewett, 1850, 180 p.; *Part IV. Selections for Reading and Speaking*, also Jewett, 1847, 312 p.; *Part V. Selections for Reading and Speaking*, also Jewett, 1849, 312 p., and another copy of *Part V* by Jewett in 1850. The reason for the difference in the numbering of the books, in comparison to those listed on the *Harvard primer* published by Jewett in 1851, is unknown. Also listed in *Early American Textbooks* is what is obviously an upper-grade reader published by Jewett: *The Literary Reader*. Miss A. Hall. Boston: John P. Jewett & Co., 1851. 408 p.)

1848 *Little Annie's First Book, in Words of Three Letters*. By "A Mother," page iv, "for children from 3 to 5 years old." Published in 1850 by Geo. S. Appleton, 164 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, and D. Appleton & Co., New York City.

(Harvard copy. Code I, pictures match "key" words and sentences, presumes alphabet learned first. Book is probably a pirated English edition, which Appleton copyrighted in America in 1848. Appleton's 1850 children's book-list largely represented wholesale raiding of British publishers. Also published *Very Little Tales for Very Little Children, in Single Syllables of 3 and 4 Letters*; *Little Lessons for Little Learners, in Words of One Syllable*, by Mrs. Barwell, author of *Mamma's Bible Stories*. See Joshua Leavitt's book with the same subtitle, *Little Lessons*, etc. Also published *Little Annie's Second Book, in Words of One Syllable*; *Mother Goose in Hieroglyphics*. This 1850 edition of *Little Annie's First Book* included a catalog of Appleton's books, which also showed Miss Sinclair's *A Series of Tales* with a review from the *Edinburgh Advertiser*; *Divine and Moral Songs* by Isaac Watts; Maria Edgeworth's books; and Mrs. Sherwood's books, all old British materials. See 1844 Appleton entry and later Appleton entries, and entry on the *American, Mandeville*, whose readers Appleton published.)

1848 *The Spelling Book, Consisting of words in columns and sentences - as oral and written exercises together with prefixes, suffixes and roots from the Greek and Latin languages*, William D. Swan, Principal of the Mayhew School, Boston, Published in 1852 by Thomas Cowperthwaite & Co., Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy. Not a beginning book, but Code 10 for upper levels. Back cover shows publisher dealt in higher grade textbooks. Preface endorses written instead of oral spelling. Re misspelling in writing, "The recent reports of school committees upon this subject bear witness to the truth of this conclusion.")

Publisher also sold Swan's series of reading books: Revised Primary School Reader, Part I. Primary School Reader, Part II, Primary School Reader, Part III, Swan's Grammar School Reader, Swan's District School Books, Swan's Young Ladies' Reader, Swan's Instructive Reader, Swan's Introduction to the Instructive Reader, Swan's Speller, Swan's Primary Speller, "Series recently revised."

Shown under the copyright was the statement that the book was adopted in Roxbury on January 1, 1848, and in Boston, to replace B. D. Emerson's on March 7, 1849, "subject to the conditions prescribed by the regulations." Cincinnati on March 9, 1850, had a resolution to adopt it for the Common Schools of Cincinnati. In Rochester, (no date given) was reported to have said "that Swan's Spelling Book be adopted as the textbook in orthography in our Public Schools, in the room of Cobb's, or others now in use." In Schenectady on June 21, 1850, "Swan's text-book was unanimously adopted as the text-book for spelling in the schools under charge of the trustees." The book's comments referred to Swan's "long experience and great success as a teacher of reading... for many years principal of the Mayhew School, Boston, and who is well known throughout the United States as an earnest laborer in the cause of popular education." Note how many "laborers in the cause of popular education" so frequently acquired massive textbook sales to the very same nation-wide government schools for whose establishment they "labored." The text referred to "...the extensive sale" of these books "recently undergoing an entire revision."

The book also referred to a grammar by "Samuel S. Greene, A. M., Supt. Public Schools, Providence, and professor of the Normal Department of Brown University." Greene wrote Greene's Analysis, and Greene's First Lessons in Grammar, also published by Thomas, Cowperthwait of Philadelphia. See further comments on materials by Greene listed in Appendix D. The book stated that The Primary School Reader, Part I, was intended for beginners:

"It contains a lesson upon each of the elementary sounds of the language. The design of the author is to teach the form, name, and power of each letter separately, and then its use in combination with other letters in the formation of syllables and words. By adopting this process, the pupil will acquire the habit of a distinct enunciation, at an age when the organs of speech are the most flexible, and much labor will be saved in his future progress in education.... The Primary School Reader, Part II, contains exercises in articulation arranged in connection with easy reading lessons."

The approach was teaching phonics from known whole words, and only then to "sound," not "sound" to identify words, (See other Swan entries.)

1849 The Second Round in the Ladder of Education, James Brown, Published by John T. Lange, Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Unspeakably awful, and sheer nonsense. Code 1, if possible to code at all. It is to be hoped that no one ever tried to teach any little children with this insane opus. It did make a good point: a contemporary defect with common primers was that they did not teach syllable reading. It had a ludicrous kind of teaching of meanings of prefixes and suffixes, and no syllabary, but a ludicrous substitution which was, in effect, non-phonetic.)

1849 Child's ABC Book, Published by Rufus Merrill, Concord, New Hampshire. (Harvard copy. Tiny toy book, about 3 1/2 by 2 inches. It had the alphabet, a few pictures, and words, and an alphabet rhyme, out of normal order. If meant to teach reading, Code 1.)

1849-1852 School Readers, Richard Green Parker, former Principal of the Franklin Grammar School, Boston. Published by Barnes. School Primer, First School Reader, Second, Third, Fourth, Rhetorical.

(In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers and Readers: School Primer 12c, 1st 20c, 2nd 35c, 3rd 50c, 4th 75c, and Rhetorical \$1. See other entries on Parker, who wrote Progressive Exercises in English

Composition in 1832, a composition book which was in wide use over a long period of time. Parker later wrote another widely used series of readers with J. Madison Watson.)

1849 McGuffey's Newly Revised Eclectic Primer, Eclectic Educational Series, Copyright by Winthrop B. Smith, Ohio, Published by Clark, Austin and Smith, New York.

(Harvard copy, Code 1. It makes no pretense to be anything special and is very poor, even in comparison to other primers of the period. The Preface said it could be used for the pupil to "instruct him in the use and meaning of language...an introduction to 'McGuffey's Eclectic First Reader.'" Its non-phonetic nature is confirmed by the alphabet picture which shows the word "wren" for the letter "w". See extensive comments in this history, the 1836 entry in this appendix, and the material in Appendix C on the McGuffey readers.)

1849 Primary Reader, Designed for the Use of the Youngest Children in Our Schools - Mandeville's Series, Henry Mandeville, D. D. Published by D. Appleton, New York, and Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy, Code 4, only because of word arrangement, NOT its philosophy and use of sight words. Abbreviated syllabary and blends, which it said it was optional to skip. No phonics per se but words arranged at beginning as short a, then short e, i, o. and u. Some words grouped by phonic analogy at beginning, then sight words. Emphasis on elocution. A pamphlet in the American Antiquarian Society Library reviewed Mandeville's readers scathingly, condemning them for coarseness and vulgarity, which comments were, in part, justified. The pamphlet is entitled "A Review of Mandeville's Series of Readers for the use of Common Schools, By A Friend of Education," Portland: Advertiser Office - Foster & Gerrish, Printer, 1851. The pamphlet indicated it also had an 1849 edition. Mandeville in a letter from Albany dated July 22, 1850, said he had made 12 out of 21 recommended changes. Mandeville's 7-volume series was still on sale by Appleton in 1876 according to the 1876 American Catalogue: first reader, 20c, second 40c, third 60c, fourth 60c, fifth \$1, Course of Reading, \$1.25. Elements of Reading and Oratory. \$1.25. Possibly the Primary Reader listed above became the first reader by 1876, since no "Primary Reader" was listed in the 1876 Catalogue.)

1849 The Second Reader (252 pages), Oliver Beale Peirce, Published by Gates, Stedman & Co., New York (Listed in Early American Textbooks, page 101. Early American Textbooks shows on page 54 that Peirce wrote The Grammar of The English Language, Impr. ed., Watertown, N. Y.: Knowlton & Rice, 1843, 192 pages. No further information is available on Peirce's material which was apparently a complete reading series.)

1849 Columbian Spelling Book - Ticknor's (Listed by Nietze on page 26. Presumably the publisher was Ticknor, Reed & Fields of Boston. See 1852 entry.)

1849 First Nursery Reading Book, Intended to Teach the Alphabet by Means of English Words, Whose Analysis Shall Give the True Sounds That Were Originally, and Even Now Are Generally, Attached to the Characters in All Languages. Elizabeth Peabody. Boston: 13 West Street, and New York: G. P. Putnam.

(Harvard copy, Code 4, because it does have blends and consonant sounds, but if taught by sight as recommended in note on bottom of page 12, it would Code 2. It is a crazy, mixed-up mess pretending to be phonic. It uses Latin vowel sounds. She had published the book by Charles Kraitsir, M. D., with these ideas, listed previously. Peabody wanted these sounds learned from sight words:

“To the Mother.... The words being learnt as wholes, they can afterwards be pronounced slowly which analyses, or spells them (spells means separates) into the elemental sounds, and these elemental sounds are the true names for the characters.”

Refers to articles in the North American Review, January and April, 1849, “Significance of the Alphabet.” Peabody’s book teaches Latin vowels, with no distinction between long and short - a ludicrous approach for English. Elizabeth Peabody, who was Horace Mann’s and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s sister-in-law, and who was a highly visible “literary” personality for decades in her own right, also had an article in Primary Teacher, December, 1875, page 108.)

1849 North American Review, January - April, “Significance of the Alphabet,” articles referred to on page iv of Elizabeth Peabody’s First Nursery Reading Book

1849 Angell’s Reader No. 5, Fifth Reader, Oliver Angell. Published in 1850 by E. H. Butler, Philadelphia. (My copy. Butler published the Angell series, books 1-6. Early American Textbooks lists The Child’s First Book, New Edition, 1850, on page 69, and The Child’s Second Book, New Edition, 1850, on page 76, both published by E. H. Butler, Philadelphia. See earlier entry on Angell’s readers, and see the comments on Angell’s readers in this history and Appendix C.)

1850 Picture Alphabet, Published by American Tract Society, New York. (Harvard copy. Toy book, about 2 1/2 by 4 inches. Intent obviously to teach alphabet only, as first pages are completely reading, with initial letters obviously only to teach the alphabet while the book is read to beginners.)

1850 The Student’s Primer, Designed as a First Book for Children - The Student’s Educational Series. J. S. Denman. Published in 1852 by Pratt, Woodford & Co., New York.

(Harvard copy, Code 3. Begins with a little analytic phonics, but goes rapidly downhill. Exceedingly ugly content on “stories” for little children, as on page 74. Denman’s series was The Student’s Primer, The Student’s Spelling Book, The Student’s First Reading Book (and Second, Third, and Fourth volumes), and The Student’s Speaker for Young Pupils. This publisher also published Olney’s geography books, Comstock’s science books, Bullions’ grammars, etc., including Gallaudet’s School and Family Dictionary and Bentley’s Pictorial Spelling Book. The material in Denman’s reading series was based on Denman’s 1846 articles in “The Student,” a monthly paper. Praised by David P. Page, then principal of the State Normal School at Albany. Note the numerous ties to personalities associated with the movers-and-shakers. See other entries on Denman.)

1850 The Southern Second Class Book. 176 pages. S. I. Griffin. Pratt, Woodford & Co., New York. (Listed on page 84 of Early American Textbooks.)

1850 The Student’s Spelling Book, J. S. Denman. Published in 1853, eleventh edition, by Pratt, Woodford & Co., New York.

(Harvard copy. Not a beginning book. See entry above on Denman’s reading series. This edition of Denman’s speller has a “new” section 3, moving it up to a Code 7, although not for beginners. Without it, earlier editions might be as high as Code 5 because of vowel markings. Denman indicated it was intended to teach correct pronunciation. “Contains about 23,000 words, nearly all the words in common use in the English language.” Begins by teaching short-vowel words by pictures, but with some analogy (ox, box, fox). This is Gallaudet’s visual analogy on learned sight words. Page 22:

“The great popularity of this work has induced the author to comply with the request of numerous teachers and revise this section, for the purpose of making the lessons easier than they

were in the first editions and adapting them to... those who are just commencing the study of this branch of education.”

That remark confirms that spelling was not meant to be the beginning step. In the *School Bulletin* (Harvard copy, page 177, 1876?) on the history of teachers’ institutes, the statement is made that the first teachers’ institute ever held was at Ithaca, New York, on April 14, 1843, organized by J. S. Denman, the “honored superintendent of Tompkins County.” The textbook author Denman was obviously an important mover-and-shaker, and therefore in a position to profit financially from his connections. It is obvious that his 1843 “teachers’ institute” would have promoted teaching beginning reading by “meaning” instead of “sound.”)

1850 *The Book of Elements, Embracing a Scientific Analysis of Elementary Sounds - Elocution and Versification. Spelling, Abbreviations, Capitals, Punctuation, in a concise form, indeed all the laws of: Reading and Writing.* B. Smith Goodenow, A. M., Former Principal of Bath High School. Third edition published by Phillips, Sampson, and Company. (Harvard copy. Not a beginning book. Divided into Part I, Orthoepy, and Part II, Orthography. In Appendix, it gave the “Lord’s Prayer” as it claimed it had been said from 700 A.D. to 1537. The Appendix recommended Pitman’s Phonography. “The common method of teaching children to read is also very erroneous, and is made so, in a great measure, by the usual process of naming the letters, instead of learning their sound.” This is further confirmation that in 1850 children learned by “meaning” and not by “sound.”)

1850? *The Infant’s Book*, Published by Richard Marsh, New York, New York. (Harvard copy. Toy book, about 4 by 5 inches. Begins with oversized large and small alphabets, then more alphabets with pictures and sentences for each letter. By page 12 “w”, “Whales in the sea, God’s voice obey,” abbreviated syllabary and blends, 3-letter words in five columns by short vowels, and on the next page 4-letter words with no “u” column. Toy books before 1850 were often such abbreviated and mixed-up parodies of the sequence in early 19th century spellers.)

1850 *Little Annie’s ABC, Showing the Use and Sounds of the Letters, in Words of One Syllable*, (Inside title page reads, *Little Annie’s Primer*). Published by Geo. S. Appleton, 164 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, and D. Appleton & Co., New York. (Harvard copy. Philosophy is Code 1, but in practice it could be used differently solely to teach the letters from sample words, without teaching the words as sight-words, to be memorized. Not really meant as a beginning reading book, but only to learn ABC’s, except for a few sight words and pictures at the end. “Advertisement” reads:

“The idea on which this little book is founded, although not an original, is a useful one. It was suggested by Mr. Wood, of the celebrated Edinburgh Sessional School. It is simply this: that as soon as a child learns the letters of the alphabet, and even while engaged in learning them, he should be taught their use and sound in real words, such as he is uttering every day, and not in unmeaning syllables, which convey to his mind no ideas, and are associated with no real objects... Uttering sounds without meaning and being told that b, a, spells ba, he justly esteems rather dry work. But at the moment he is able to connect the sounds he is acquiring with the objects he sees about him, he becomes interested, and in this way he may easily be induced to learn his letters without repugnance.”

This book also carried a catalog of Appleton’s books at the end. Juvenile Publications included Appleton’s New Cheap Juvenile Library of 12 volumes, *Little Annie’s ABC Book*, followed by *Little Annie’s Speller*, *Mother Goose*, *Little Annie’s Second Book* (and presumably *Little Annie’s First Book*), Mrs. Sherwood’s books, Miss Edgeworth’s books, etc. See other entries in this appendix on Appleton’s books from 1844 on.)

1850 Furst Fonetice Redur (fourth edition), Elias Longley. Published in 1851 by Longley & Brother, Cincinnati.

(Also see later Longley entries and text of this history. This book was a Harvard copy with Pitman special alphabet, Code 10:

“Introduction: The phonetic alphabet.. is the joint invention of Isaac Pitman and Alexander John Ellis, B. A., of England... (finished) in 1847.... It is a universally acknowledged fact, that the acquirement of a knowledge of the art of reading, according to the common (or Romanic) manner of spelling, is a very difficult task. Years are spent in learning the mere mechanical art of reading. The cause of this difficulty is, that the letters have no fixed power or sound.... No one can tell the spelling of a word from hearing it pronounced, or its sound from seeing the manner in which it is spelled.... the Phonetic method of spelling... is the work of a few weeks instead of years...[Otherwise] every word in the language must be learned separately, and consequently learning to read is very laborious... and still worse, a slow process.”

Note the almost unbelievable fact that by the 1840's learned Englishmen like Pitman and Ellis, and their American imitator, Longley, were totally ignorant of the fact that with the ancient syllable “sound” method children had once learned to read “in a few weeks.” A sentence reading roughly, “In a few weeks, I shall read well,” actually appeared in pre-1826 American “sound” spellers, from Murray's onwards, and the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster in 1829, after thirty years experience in teaching beginners to read, felt it was standard for little eight-year-olds to be able to read fluently anything in print. Such expectations were before the ancient “sound” method first began to be changed about 1818 and was finally totally discarded for “meaning” after 1826, creating massive reading disabilities on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean because of the establishment of wrong conditioned reflexes in reading. See the 1857 entry on Longley.)

1850 Primer (on cover), Illustrated Primer (title page), Published by D. Lothrop & Co., Boston. (Harvard copy. Apparently not meant to teach reading, but only the alphabet. If for teaching reading, it is Code 1. Alphabet followed with pictures with phrases under them, then pictures with excerpted paragraphs apparently lifted completely out of sequence from other stories. Disconnected, disorganized, and its purpose is puzzling. The pictures are EXCELLENT. See later entries in this and Appendix C on Lothrop.)

1850 The New American Primer, or Child's Companion, Designed for Young Beginners, Carefully Compiled, Containing Near Fifty Engravings, Published by John Moore, Baltimore, Maryland. (Harvard copy. A toy-book mess, possibly Code 3. So “carefully compiled” that it had an upside-down alphabet. It contained alphabets, then pictures and words, incomplete and mixed syllabary, sight-word paragraph above blends, and a reading paragraph above short-vowel words, etc. It was a mixed-up parody of the old spellers, like other toy books of the post-1830 period in the Harvard library. A large market must have existed for such toy books attempting to teach reading which were sold to parents by 1850. The apparent existence of that market raises a question: Were American parents finding that their little children were having trouble learning to read in the new government schools which were enrolling most beginning American students after 1830?)

1850 Webb's Normal Reader No. 1, John Russell Webb (1824-1887). Huntington & Savage, New York; H. W. Derby & Co., Cincinnati; H. Crittenden, St. Louis. (In Early American Textbooks, p. 111. See the discussion of the various Webb readers in the 1851 entry for the United States Spelling Book, in the body of this history and in Appendix C.

1850 The Primary School Spelling Book, Designed for Primary and Intermediate Schools, by William D. Swan, Principal of the Mayhew School, Boston, Published in 1852 by Thomas Cowperthwaite & Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Depending on how it was taught, could be Code 4 to 6, probably 5, but not meant for beginners. Lists other publishers in other cities: New York - Geo. F. Coolidge; Boston - Phillips, Sampson & Co.; Baltimore; Charleston (S. C.), Louisville; St. Louis; Cincinnati; Nashville; Memphis; Lexington; Macon; Buffalo. Shows it was adopted in Cincinnati and elsewhere. See other entries on Swan.)

1851 Aunt Mary's Primer, Adorned with One Hundred and Twenty Pretty Pictures, by "J. C." Published by Mather & Burr, Providence, Rhode Island. (Harvard copy. Code 2 because of some two-step word building at beginning, but not because of its philosophy which is Code 1. An obvious English reprint, about 5 by 7 inches. Discussed at length in the body of this history. A "meaning" approach.)

1851 The Child's Little Thinker. A Practical Spelling Book, Containing Easy, Gradual and Progressive Lessons in Pronouncing, Spelling, Reading, Thinking, and Composing, Arranged on a New and Original Plan, Joseph Bartlett Burleigh, LL. D., Published in 1854 by Lippincott, Grambo Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Begins Code 1, adds analytic phonics on vowel sounds later. Poor book. Burleigh had written what was apparently an upper-level reader, The American Manual, largely patriotic and civic material which included a copy of the Constitution, on which Lippincott had published the 15th edition by 1854. See later material on Burleigh.)

1851 A Primer of Reading, Spelling, and Drawing, Rev. Ed., Mrs. Horace Mann, Pub.: Willis P. Hazard, Philadelphia, 113 p. (In Early American Textbooks, p. 71. Although it is possibly the same general material, this does not sound much like Mrs. Mann's sight-word primer described by Mathews, in Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, The University of Chicago Press, page 67:

"About 1841, Horace Mann's second wife, Mary Peabody, brought out a little book entitled Primer. Mann described it as a 'beautiful book... published in Boston. It is prepared on the same general principles with those of Worcester, Gallaudet, and Bumstead; and it contains two or three reading lessons and a few cuts for drawing, in addition to a most attractive selection of words. It is the result of many years' successful efforts in interesting young children in reading and spelling.' "

For this quotation, Mathews cited Horace Mann's Spelling Books (Boston, 1841), p. 36 n. Mrs. Mann's 1841 book obviously would have used a Code 1 "meaning" approach. This 1851 book, therefore, may also have used a Code 1 approach. Mary Peabody Mann also wrote with her sister, Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, A Primer of Reading and Writing for the Intermediate Class and Primary Schools, Generally, which is shown in Early American Textbooks, page 73, as published by E. Steiger, New York, in 1878, 110 pages.)

1851 First Reading Book, Containing Easy, Progressive Lessons in Words of One Syllable - The Student's Series, J. S. Denman, Published in 1852 by Pratt, Woodford & Co., New York. (Harvard copy.

"Preface... [This book progresses from] sentences composed of the most simple words, of two or three letters, to those containing words of a greater number of letters and somewhat more difficult of pronunciation but of so common use that their signification is readily comprehended by the children.... Those who are engaged in instructing the young, should bear in mind that the practice of reading without comprehending what is read (a habit frequently acquired in school) is highly injurious to the learner, and should never be allowed in the smallest child."



Contrast this Dugald-Stewart-style psychological nonsense apparently first proposed by Stewart in the 1790's to the diametrically opposite 20th-century definition of reading given by the Russian psychologist, Elkonin, which has been quoted elsewhere in this history. At the bottom of page 11 of Denman's book, this appeared: "Children should always be questioned after reading a lesson." Sample reading comprehension questions appeared at the bottom of some pages.

The purpose of the phonetic keys in Denman's book was obviously elocution, not decoding. Yet bright children might learn vowel sounds for use in decoding, since one each appeared on succeeding pages, along with connected print of sight words. Yet the average child would not have enough exposure to the vowel patterns and would therefore read the material as "whole words." Some words were arranged by sound and spelling analogy. Children could learn the "sound" material for decoding if not exposed to it too late, but this book is not the beginning book in the Denman series. However, constant "sentence" reading might destroy that "sound" effect because not enough practice was provided. The effect more likely would be visual analysis of whole words.

A very curious "religious" poem was on pages 107-108, the only religion in the book. The book contained gentle stories to page 44, and then very ugly material, as in another book in this series. Ugly word-play was on page 50.

A note was on the inside cover concerning The Student's Primer, which has been reviewed in this appendix, earlier: "...designed as an aid to those... teaching children the first principles of written language.... The late David P. Page, then Principal of the Normal School at Albany, N. Y., said... 'It is the best system I ever saw for teaching the first principles of reading.'" "

Denman's name does not appear in Nila Banton Smith's "history," nor in Reeder's. Also, Denman's name apparently does not appear in Nietz's book. In Early American Textbooks, two of Denman's books are listed on page 81: Second Reading Book (1851) and Fourth Reading Book, 2nd ed., 1852, both published by Pratt, Woodford & Co., New York. See other Denman entries in this appendix. Denman's books were obviously important although almost totally forgotten today.)

1851 United States Spelling Book, Fourth Edition. Josiah Miles [from Watertown, New York], published in 1854 by Lamport, Blakeman and Law, New York. (Harvard copy. Not for beginners. Without syllable tables, but probably Code 10 from vast discussion on phonetics in Preface, even though it began with "words." I do not have the first pages for pupils.

"Preface: ...there is no spelling book at this time that fully meets the wants of the people of the United States.... The first spelling exercises, instead of what are commonly called "a-b - abs," are composed of entire words, the most of which are among the first that children become familiar with in vocal language so that, in the outset, the young pupil is not disgusted with that which to him is an irksome task and without meaning.... by his system of notation for pronouncing, the sound of any vowel, distinct or obscure, is manifest to the pupil."

The purpose of the phonics in this book, not meant for beginners, was obviously elocution. Much discussion of vowel sounds follows. Testimonies came from Principal Farnham, Public School No. 8, Syracuse, February 21, 1851, before he became superintendent, and others, including one in 1845 from Chairman of the (Schools) Committee, New York State Legislature. The publisher also put out Webb's Normal Primer, Primary Lessons, "A Series of Cards to be used with Primer and No. 1, Normal Reader," and also published Webb's Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5. The back cover of Miles' speller read re Webb's:

“These readers are used in the principal cities and villages throughout the United States and are rapidly coming into use in the smaller towns of the country... the system of teaching... is the... WORD METHOD...”

Hon. S. S. Randall, Deputy State Sup’t., Common Schools said of the Webb readers, “They are the best practical readers that have come under my notice; they are all and everything they should be.” Josiah Miles was from Watertown, New York, and Webb “invented” his word method in a country school near there. Farnham also had a tie to Watertown, as discussed in the body of this history. See Webb entries in this and the other appendix.)

1851 My New Picture Alphabet and Primer, Pub. C. S. Francis & Co, New York. (Harvard copy. Effect, if used to teach reading, about Code 4. Toy book, apparently an English reprint, about 6 by 7 inches. The 1829 Boston School Primer had been published in 1831 by Munroe and Francis of Boston and C. S. Francis of New York, as listed earlier. C. S. Francis, therefore, had been in business at least twenty years with a long-standing association with the “meaning” method in readers.)

1851 The North-Carolina Reader, Calvin Henderson Wiley, Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia (Early American Textbooks, page 112. Published in 1855 by Barnes. From entry for 1855, this was book 3 in the series.)

1852 The Indestructible Reading Book Chiefly in Words of One Syllable (In Coated Cloth), Published by Ticknor, Reed and Fields, Boston. (Harvard copy. Also published the Indestructible Alphabet, the Indestructible Primer, the Indestructible Spelling Book, and the Indestructible Reading Book. They were combined in the Indestructible Lesson Book: The Four Parts Bound in One Volume. The Indestructible Reading Book carried this note:

“To the teacher: In describing the pictures, many words are used that are too difficult for young beginners. The teacher, in such cases, is requested to help the child by pointing to the object named, or by repeating the word two or three times.”

That is obviously a pure “meaning” approach. The material was evidently English, with references to May Day, to a cottage with an “old dame,” to a “barrow” and “water pot.” It also used the term, “hay cock” instead of hay stack. Ticknor, Reed and Fields were apparently printing for home use in 1852 an English Code 1 series, also intended for home use. See earlier entry on Ticknor.)

1852 The Picture Primer, Published by Huestis and Cozans, New York. (Harvard copy. Toy book. Cannot seriously be considered for instruction. American Antiquarian Society has another book I saw, with no date, published by Huestis and Cozans, or possibly just Philip J. Cozans. Company sold toy books, stationery, etc. See two other entries for this concern.)

1852 New Juvenile Reader, No. 1., Lyman Cobb. Published and copyrighted in 1852 by J. C. Riker, New York.

(Harvard copy. See earlier entries on Cobb’s books. Cobb, who wrote his series in 1830, revised this 1852 edition himself. “This edition recently revised and improved by the author.” It carried Cobb’s note that the vocabulary was totally controlled, and he wanted all new words pronounced at sight before reading the selections. Reading comprehension questions were included. Because of controlled vocabulary and phonic respellings, Cobb’s text rates only Code 3, but it is not a beginning book.

Cobb's spellers appeared from the 1820's and his readers from 1830 until the 1850's or so. Yet Cobb is discussed by Nila Banton Smith, incredibly, in the same time-frame as Bingham whose books appeared beginning in the 1790's and were apparently in use only until about 1820 or so.

This publisher put out Cobb's series in 1852: Cobb's First Book, or Primer, New Primary Spelling Book, New Spelling Book, New Juvenile Readers Nos. I, II, III, New Sequel, or No. IV, New North American Reader No. V, Cobb's Old Spelling Book, Improved, Old Juvenile Readers Nos. I, II, III.

On the back cover appeared, "The above series of books by Mr. Cobb... are already adopted in many of the principal cities of the Union, and are rapidly finding their way into the common schools generally." The claim on an 1842 Cobb copy, quoted earlier, was that Cobb's books had sold 7,000,000 copies. Now, on this 1852 book, a decade later, the statement was made, "More than 6 millions of Cobb's Old and New Series of School Books have been published and sold." Publishers' claims about the numbers of books sold, like those about McGuffey's, are apparently not worth much. This copy claimed Cobb's books had replaced Sanders in Brooklyn, and were adopted in Baltimore and Lancaster, etc., from about 1845 on. )

1853 Union Primer, Published by American Sunday School Union, Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Gives listing of other locations and sects comprising the American Sunday School Union. Code I, with remarkably little religious material. Both of these facts suggest that John-Wood-Sessional-School-type activists may have comprised the Committee of Publication, which consisted of 14 members from various denominations.)

1853 Tower's First Reader, The Gradual Primer or Primary School Enunciator, David B. Tower. (Shown elsewhere as formerly Principal of the Eliot Grammar School, Boston, and Late Principal of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind. This 1853 revision of Tower's original 1845 first-reader/primer was published by Daniel Burgess & Co., New York. The Harvard copy shows that at the time, presumably 1853, Daniel Burgess & Co. published Tower's other readers.

Nila Banton Smith showed 1853 as the original date (page 99-100 of her book), wrongly claiming Tower's was a truly phonic series for first grade. Yet a review of Tower's first-reader/primer makes it clear his purpose was only elocution, although he therefore accidentally taught decoding at a Code 8 level. This book spoke of the "new feature" of giving only a few letters before reading words composed of these letters.

Harvard has at least two other copies of this first-reader/primer. One carries the edition date of 1853, and was published by Crosby, Nichols & Co., Boston; and Mason Bros., New York, but it also carries the printed notation, "Boston School Edition," with a penciled publishing date of 1859 written in by the Harvard library. The other copy with the printed notation, "Boston School Edition," was published by Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company, and has a written-in publishing date of 1857. The omission of Ellsworth's name on the company title, Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company, suggests the book was printed in the early part of 1857, while an 1857 speller carrying Ellsworth's name in the publisher's title was probably printed in the latter part of 1857. The text is a Code 8 book but only by accident, since its intent was to teach elocution of "words" to beginning readers. The preface and content make it crystal clear the phonics was for elocution and had nothing to do with decoding. To satisfy some teachers, the two copies titled Boston School Edition, with the penciled dates, 1857 and 1859, had five straight pages of sight-word running text at their beginning.

As noted elsewhere in this history, Philbrick of Boston had written in the Boston Annual School Report for 1874, pages 283-285:

“In respect to the initiating of children into the art and mystery of reading, - the teaching of them the elements of the art, the enabling of them to pronounce at sight the words of easy prose or verse, - I found the Primary Schools on my first inspection of them in 1857, in a deplorable condition. The old-fashioned method, by ABC syllables and spelling, had been nominally abolished by the abolition of the usual appliances for teaching it, and it had been so much ridiculed that the teachers were very shy in using it in the presence of visitors. The reading books and charts in the schools were designed for the ‘word-method,’ a method of very limited capabilities.... All that has been changed, but long and hard has been the road by which the change has been reached: A publishing interest joined hands with old-fogyism in interposing obstacles in the way of progress. But, at length, books and appliances for teaching reading phonically were introduced, and the teachers were gradually initiated into the phonic method. Then came Dr. Leigh with his ‘pronouncing type,’ the result of years of study and labor, a new and valuable instrumentality for facilitating the teaching of the phonic method. The use of this is now [Ed. 1874] nearly universal in our schools.”

Probably the first book introduced in the Boston schools which could be used to teach phonics was Tower’s first-reader/primer, even though its intent was to teach elocution. That Tower’s was the first such book introduced is suggested by a notation on the copyright page of Tower’s Pictorial Primer, a different book from Tower’s Gradual Primer, copyrighted in 1856. The notation reads as follows: “City of Boston, In School Committee, September 2, 1856. Ordered, That Tower’s Gradual Primer be the Text Book of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Classes in the Primary Schools. Attest: Bernard Capen, Secretary.” This may very well have been prior to Philbrick’s arrival which was about 1857, and the introduction for beginning readers may have been meant to benefit elocution, not decoding.

What makes Tower’s Pictorial Primer which carried this notation so interesting is that Tower’s Pictorial Primer was NOT copyrighted by David B. Tower, although his name HAD appeared on the 1853 copyright for Tower’s Gradual Primer. Instead, Tower’s Pictorial Primer was copyrighted by Anna E. Tower, whoever she was, and carried a Preface reading:

“At the request of several gentlemen of the School Committee, and of many Primary School Teachers, this book has been prepared, in which all the text is drawn from pictures. During the last fifteen years dozens of Primers have been issued, wherein a part, and even the greater part, of the text is thus drawn from the cuts. This book goes only a step farther, and has all the text illustrated. It will be seen that LETTERS or WORDS can be taught first from it, just as the teacher pleases; but it does not begin with long and difficult words, and gradually progress to short and easy ones, to avoid the beaten track, as one author, not a teacher, rather boasts of doing. Verily, this is new. Boston, December, 1856.”

The Preface is unsigned. Was it perhaps written by Anna E. Tower, who took out the copyright? Had David B. Tower perhaps recently died? After all, on September 1, 1856, the Boston School Committee had ordered the use of Tower’s Code 8 Gradual Primer in the beginning grades, which could be used to teach elocution. Yet now, in December, 1856, Anna E. Tower was copyrighting a Code 1 pictorial primer, purportedly by David B. Tower, “at the request of several gentlemen of the School Committee, and of many Primary School Teachers....”

It could not be used to teach elocution in the beginning grades and thereby frustrated the September, 1856, school regulation mandating the use of the Tower Code 8 first-reader/primer.

That December, 1856, Code 1 primer, obviously intended for use in the Boston schools instead of the Code 8 primer authorized in September, 1856, was published by Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company. Only a month later, in January, 1857, Anna E. Tower published her OWN Tower’s Little Primer for the

Youngest Class in Primary Schools, a phony phonics Code 3 work, although this was under her own name as author, clearly demonstrating that she had been capable of writing the pictorial primer. However, her publisher was Brown, Taggard & Chase of Boston. Its preface (also unsigned) said, "This book will be an easy introduction to the 'GRADUAL PRIMER,' the First Reader of Tower's Series; also to his 'PICTORIAL PRIMER;' and, in short to any Series of Readers."

Therefore, in 1857, Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company were publishing the unauthorized Code 1 picture primer to precede David B. Tower's authorized Code 8 primer, which they also published! They were very possibly the publishers referred to by Philbrick who had joined with "old fogies" to defeat the teaching of phonics. However, that publisher may have paid dearly for its activism. Only two years later, it was no longer the publisher of David B. Tower's series of Gradual readers. Another Boston publisher was producing the Tower's series, including all those copies meant for the Boston schools, although the five sight-word pages were still inserted at the beginning of each Gradual primer. In 1859, the Tower series was being published by Crosby, Nichols and Company of Boston. Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company, became Sanborn, Bazin & Ellsworth, then Bazin & Ellsworth, and then, sometime after 1862, simply Oliver Ellsworth. However, the concern was apparently out of business by the time the 1876 American Catalogue was published.

The "old fogies" referred to by Philbrick might very well have been those people who insisted, and succeeded, in inserting those five pure sight-word pages at the beginning of Tower's Code 8 primer, and the publisher who cooperated with them very probably was Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company who published the unauthorized pictorial Code 1 primer meant to displace the authorized Code 8 primer. The publisher and the "old fogies" were very possibly also the people who managed to have that curious book prepared by December, 1856, Tower's Pictorial Primer, meant to be used before the Gradual primer which had been authorized for the Boston schools in September, 1856. Tower's Pictorial Primer was pure Code 1 material attributed to David B. Tower, even though he had only written Code 8 material before that. It should be noted it was copyrighted by Anna E. Tower, not David B. Tower, at the end of 1856. Therefore, it is not surprising that in January, 1857, only a month later, Anna E. Tower published her own phony phonics Code 3 primer, which aped David B. Tower's synthetic phonics approach at its very beginning, and which demonstrated that she had the ability to write a primer herself. In the 1876 American Catalogue, A. E. Tower's Little Primer is shown as available from "Thompson" in quantities of a dozen for \$1.25. It obviously remained in print for a long time.

Tower's Gradual series was being marketed by Lee & Shepard of Boston in 1876, according to the American Catalogue, and that company was the probable successor to Crosby, Nichols and Company. See the 1857 entry on another primer published by Bazin and Ellsworth with no author's name but which they later credited in an advertisement, probably wrongly, to Tower. See the discussion in Appendix C concerning the pro-phonics history of Lee & Shepard, which pro-phonics attitude was not a permanent one. See other Tower entries.)

1853 Rhetorical Manual; or Fifth Reader, Fifth Edition. D. B. Ross. Claxton. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. Presumably Claxton is Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, listed in Early American Textbooks as the Philadelphia publishers of two of Ray's arithmetics. Claxton apparently had a complete reading series. See other entries below taken from the 1876 American Catalogue.)

1853 Comstock's Juvenile Reader No. 1, Andrew Comstock, Published by the Author, Philadelphia, "Elocution taught, and stammering, lisping and other defective articulations are corrected, by Dr. A. Comstock, at his Vocal Gymnasium, Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy. His "phonetic alphabet" discussed on page 6. This was the first book in a reading series that Comstock intended to publish. Whether he ever did is unknown. It was written in ordinary

type, except for showing accent and inflections, but was meant to follow his Phonetic Reader No. 1, which was written in his phonetic type, and which had used exactly the same stories. Comstock's accent and inflecting material was first published in the author's System of Elocution, 1841. According to Clifton Johnson, page 293, Comstock published a book of symbols in Philadelphia in 1832 whose purpose also was tone or pitch, not phonics. Comstock's material provides further confirmation that "phonics" was not the norm in the nineteenth century. It appears probable that Comstock added his phonic alphabet to his accent and inflecting material because of the influence of the Pitman phonetic type)

1853 The Sentential Reader, By a Literary Association, Published in Boston by Frederick Parker, and in New York by Alexander Montgomery, Copyrighted by John L. Chapman and James Scott, "For a Literary Association, New York." (Harvard copy. This is a bizarre and ridiculous book, but it was meant as a second book, the first in the series having taught the alphabet and words. See the discussion in the text of this history.

On page 16, the father said, "A SENTENCE, my son, IS TWO OR MORE WORDS BY WHICH WE SAY SOMETHING. A great man in Germany, called Becker, says it is 'a thought made known in words'. Here, my son, are three sentences: Rain falls. The night is dark. The moon is not bright." On page 20, the child Wilmer spoke: "A sentence is made up of words. When I speak or write, I put words together. When I put them together, and say something, I make a sentence." On page 21, the father said, "So you must mark your steps as you pass from sounds and letters to words, and from words to sentences"

Despite the isolated quotation from someone named "Becker," the book was obviously not promoting the unbreakable sentence thesis of William James. Yet some of the vocabulary resembled James' vocabulary, as in the following:

On page 114, "Remember that sentences are the instruments of thought.... Remember ever that sentences are thoughts made known in words, and that you must understand their form and make in order to understand their thoughts. Sentences, my son, are great things."

1853 The New American Primer and Juvenile Preceptor, Martin Ruter, D. D., Published for the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church by Carlton and Phillips, New York. (Harvard copy. Code 7, very like old analytic phonics spelling books, and beginning with syllabary and blends. Much gentle, true religious content. Sharp contrast in religious tone and instructional Code to the Code 1 Union Primer of the American Sunday School Union which had been prepared by a nameless committee instead of a named minister like Reverend Ruter.)

1853 The Spelling Book Superseded, by Robert Sullivan, Published in Rochester.

(Harvard copy No indication was given on whether "Rochester" was in England or America, but it was most probably in America. No information was given on whether this was the same Sullivan whose "meaning"-method materials, from government schools in Ireland, are discussed elsewhere in this history. However, with the title, "Superseded," it appears probable that it was the same Sullivan who endorsed John Wood of the Edinburgh Sessional Schools and his Code 1 approach. According to the 1876 American Catalogue, Sullivan's new edition was being sold by Sadlier for 32 c. Sadlier published Catholic school books, so Sullivan's dreary material was unfortunately ending up in American Catholic schools in the 1870's as well as in Irish government schools before the 1850's. Irish government schools, established shortly after 1830 were the very antithesis of Catholic schools. See the discussion in the text of this history on the Irish government schools.

Excerpts from "Professor Sullivan's 'Outline of the Regulations and Methods of Teaching in the National Model Schools of Ireland,'" are given in Henry B. Barnard's American Journal of Education

article, "A-B-C Books and Primers," 1863-1864, Volume XI, pages 593-604. It is likely that the material was written by the same "Sullivan" as the man in the above entries, and that "Outline..." obviously had to have been published some time before the 1865 date of Barnard's article, possibly as early as the 1840's or even 1830's. In Barnard's excerpt from Sullivan's work, Sullivan quoted extensively from Richard and Maria Edgeworth's *Essays on Practical Education* (1798) concerning phonics in beginning reading. Yet Sullivan did not endorse Edgeworth's phonic method. See the material quoted elsewhere in this history concerning the highly unsatisfactory government schools established by the British in Ireland, with which unacceptable schools Sullivan was associated. The schools were largely boycotted originally by the Catholic Irish majority because of bigotry in the curriculum.

1854 or Before - Webb's Series of Normal Readers 1-5, plus Normal Primer and Primary Lessons: A Series of Large Cards to be Used in Connection with the Primer and No. 1, by John Russell Webb (1824-1887), Lamport, Blakeman & Law, 8 Park Place, New York.

(From an advertisement on the back of Harvard's 1854 copy of Miles' United States Spelling Book. See the discussion of the various Webb readers in the 1851 entry for the United States Spelling Book in this appendix, in the body of this history and in Appendix C.)

1854 Primary School Reader, Part First, New Edition, Revised and Improved. William D. Swan, Published in 1856 by H. Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Rates a Code 6. Teaches phonemes but in many, many sight words. Harvard also has an 1856 copy. See Reeder, page 50, concerning Swan. See discussion of Swan's materials in earlier Swan entries.)

1854? Every Child's Primer, Published by Richard Marsh, 374 Pearl Street, New York, New York. (Harvard copy. Tiny toy book, too short for instruction, but content in Code 6 category. See other Marsh entries. As noted, this address had been Mahlon Day's Book Store as late as 1837.)

1855 Practical Reader. 504 p. Richard Culver. \$1. Lippincott. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue and Early American Textbooks. See another 1876 entry for Culver.)

1855-1858 - Progressive Readers, by Lucius Osgood.

(1855 publisher unknown. John A. Nietz said this series was first published from 1855 to 1858, and Nietz mentioned it on pages 93-94 and 103 of his book, *Old Textbooks*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961. Nietz said, "These constituted the most popular series of textbooks ever published in Pittsburgh." The series was unrelated to the once very widely used *The Progressive Series* by Salem Town and Nelson M. Holbrook which was being published by 1859. See the 1870 entry for the revision of the Osgood Progressive Series as Osgood's American Series. From Nietz' description, both the 1855 and 1870 materials appear to have used the meaning approach.)

1855 Lovell's Progressive Readers, No. 1, J. E. Lovell. Published by Durrie & Peck, New Haven.

(Harvard copy of book one of the second series. It uses a Code 7, phonic approach to words. See 1836 *The Young Pupil's Second Book*, Lovell, New Haven, per Clifton Johnson, p. 261. On page 300, Johnson also mentioned Lovell's *The Young Speaker*, New Haven, 1844. The 1836 and 1844 copies were part of the first series. Whether the first series also rated a Code 7 phonic code is unknown, but Lovell's second and phonic series was unusual even in 1855, since the similar series (Swan's, Tower's), used phonics intentionally at the first grade only for elocution, not decoding. Perhaps Lovell was inspired by the new Pitman print to write a beginning phonic reader in regular print. Lovell's second series dated from 1855 to 1857, and was still in print in 1876, according to the 1876 American Catalogue. The American Catalogue listed J. E. Lovell's Progressive Series of Readers, five volumes, for the years 1855-57, being published

by “Peck” in 1876. Early American Textbooks lists on page 92 Lovell’s Progressive Readers, No. 4 of 1857 published by Durrie & Peck of New Haven, and No. 5 of 1859 published by Peck, White & Peck of New Haven.

It is surprising that the Lovell’s ground-breaking “sound”-oriented readers were printed in Yale’s New Haven, since so many “meaning” oriented people were associated in some way with Yale over the years. Those “meaning” oriented authors included the Scot, William Russell, in the 1820’s. Barnard recorded that when Russell was in New Haven, he taught in the New Township Academy and the “Hopkins Grammar School - the preparatory classical seminary connected with Yale College.” Russell became the first editor of the change-agent American Journal of Education in 1826, and in it he vehemently pushed the teaching of beginning reading by “meaning,” and promoted the establishment of government schools in place of private schools. Woodbridge, a Yale graduate and associate of Gallaudet, was the second editor. Holbrook, a Yale graduate, was personally responsible (as recorded by Blumenfeld) for initiating the drive for government schools in America in 1826, which government schools have used the “meaning” method in reading since their very inception. So was Gallaudet a Yale graduate and a tutor there while Woodbridge and Holbrook were students. Gallaudet also worked very hard for the establishment of government schools and promoted the “meaning” reading method for hearing children. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, who first introduced de l’Epee’s defective deaf-mute methods in America when he founded his school for the deaf in 1817, wrote a “meaning”-method reader, The Mother’s Primer, for hearing children in 1835, and had a letter promoting the “meaning” method published in 1830 in Woodbridge’s American Annals of Education (formerly the American Journal of Education). So did Russell publish “meaning” approach reading books in the 1840’s, but the books of the “elocutionist” Russell were loaded with “elocution” so accidentally taught some phonics. William Torrey Harris, who attended Yale in the 1850’s, was the principal author of the massively used Appleton phony-phonics “meaning” series in 1878, which series was most responsible for pushing the many Leigh phonic-print series out of the government schools. Frank E. Spaulding, who was on the staff of Yale by the 1920’s or before, was the principal author of the similar and massively used “meaning” method 1907 Aldine readers.

The International Congress of Psychology in 1929, of which J. McKeen Cattell was President, was an exceedingly influential meeting to which Pavlov of the Soviet Union and luminaries from other countries came, and it was held at Yale. The spread of the “global” (“meaning”) reading method all over Europe after 1929 (except in the Soviet Union) and in America (where it was called instead the sight-word (“meaning”) method, may very possibly have been influenced by the ideas of the top psychologists who attended that meeting at Yale. Certainly Cattell’s ideas were out of line compared to ordinary Americans, not just concerning his endorsement of the sight-word method. As quoted elsewhere, The New York Times reported on September 3, 1929:

“Dr. J. McKeen Cattell in his presidential address (said) (t)he objects of the sciences were more ideal than the objects of the churches.... The practices of the scientists, he added, are more Christian than those of the churches.... ‘When in the fullness of time there is a family of the nations, when each will give according to its ability and receive according to its needs... this will be due in no small measure to cooperation among scientific men of all nations in their common work. And it may be that psychology... shall lead them. It is the object of psychology to describe, to understand, and to control human conduct....’“

The phrase, “to control human conduct” should send chills up anyone’s spine who does not look with favor upon rule by “Big Brother.” That Yale University should have, in effect, acted as host to a man making such grossly offensive remarks, which were apparently received without much stir by the audience of psychologists, hardly adds to Yale’s luster, any more than the fact of its having been associated in some way with some of the most prominent promoters of the “meaning” method in teaching



reading for over a century, from at least the 1820's to at least 1929. Lovell's phonic reading series of 1855, published in New Haven where Yale is located, was apparently sharply different from those other "meaning"-method materials which came from men who, at one time, had some kind of association with Yale in New Haven, Connecticut.

1855 The Young American's Series, a Catalogue, Farmer, Brace & Co, New York, late Pratt, Woodford & Co. (Harvard copy. Lists many publications, including Denman's reading series, and testimonials.)

1855 Little Teacher, First Book in Reading, on Word Method, 10c. 16c. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. (Harvard copy. Still listed as for sale in 1876 American Catalogue. Apparently Code 1. Note that it has no connection with the McGuffey series that the company was publishing at the same time.)

1855 Fisher's Pictorial Primer, Published by Fisher & Brother, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Baltimore. (Harvard copy. This 24-page toy book is too short to code but uses possibly a Code 4 approach.)

1855 Practical Reader. R. Culver. \$1. Lippincott. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. See another 1876 entry for Culver.)

1855 Fisher's Holiday Primer, Published by Fisher & Brother, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore. (Harvard copy. Confused content in this toy book, possibly about Code 4 despite total disorganization of content.)

1855 North Carolina Readers, Frank McKinney Hubbard, Books 1, 2, Calvin Henderson Wiley, Book 3. Published in 1876 by "Barnes," according to the 1876 American Catalogue. See Early American Textbooks, page 90, for Hubbard's The North-Carolina Reader, No. 2. published in 1859 by A. S. Barnes & Burr, New York; E. J. Hale & Son, Fayetteville, N. C., and W. L. Pomeroy, Raleigh, N. C., and page 112 for Wiley's The North-Carolina Reader, published in 1851 by Lippincott, Grambo & Co. of Philadelphia. It was probably much the same as Wiley's Book 3 listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, published by Barnes in 1855. Barnes issued an 1886 edition of Hubbard and Wiley's North Carolina Readers, listed in the 1885-1890 American Catalogue.)

1856 English Reader. Lindley Murray, Lippincott. 45c.(Listed in 1876 Catalogue under 1856. Apparently a new edition of Murray's 1799 text, also published by "Murphy" for 35c.)

1856 Leach's Complete Spelling Book, by Daniel Leach, A. M., Superintendent of the Public Schools of Providence, Published in 1857 by H. Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. For Upper Grades.)

1856 The Mother's Primer, Published by Richard Marsh, 138 William Street, New York, New York.

(Harvard copy. Code 4 approach, 24 pages. Inside pages read, instead of The Mother's Primer, The Illustrated Primer. Similar appearance and size of this book to Cooledge's primers. By 1856, Marsh had obviously moved out of the old publishing area of Pearl Street, and out of Mahlon Day's former premises at 374 Pearl Street, possibly because of the area's having becoming an infamous slum, as indicated earlier. Yet Harper & Brothers were located at 317 to 321 Pearl Street as late as 1860, and possibly after that date. Early American Textbooks, page 63, shows a title page of a book by A. S. Barnes & Co., 111 and 113 William St. (Corner of John Street), 1866. Therefore, the William Street area was apparently a new location for New York publishers. See other Marsh entries.)

1856 Hayes' and Zell's Pictorial Primer, An Introduction to the New Pictorial Speller and Definer, Published by Hayes & Zell, 193 Market Street, Philadelphia, Copyrighted in 1856 by S. C. Hayes. (Harvard copy. Code 1 book, 48 pages.)

1856 Sargent's Standard School Primer. Epes Sargent, Published in 1872 by John L. Shorey, Boston; W. I. Pooley & Co., New York. (Harvard copy, Code 1. See later entries on Sargent.)

1856 Tower's Pictorial Primer, The Child's Book for Home and School. David B. Tower. Published by Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company, Boston. (Harvard copy. Tower's authorship is questionable if the record shows that Tower died before the end of 1856, which other data suggests. See the discussion under 1853, above.)

1857 Vocal Culture and Elocution. 480 pages. Robert Kidd. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati; Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia; Clark & Maynard, New York. (Listed in Early American Textbooks, page 35. See 1870 entry below.)

1857 New High School Reader, \$1.25. W. H. McGuffey. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. It seems almost certain that the company was only using McGuffey's name, and that he did not compile the reader.)

1857 Little Boys' and Girls' Own Primer by Mrs. Teachem, Kiggins and Kellogg, Publishers, New York. (Harvard copy. Sixteen-page toy book, mixed-up material, Code 4 category. American Antiquarian Society has The American Illustrated Primer, N. Y., no date, Kiggins and Kellogg, 24 pages. Also have the American One Cent Primer, 8 pages, on which one page is printed upside down. Pagination includes cover. AAS also have another toy book by Kiggins and Tooker. Was Kellogg, obviously a low-quality publisher, the forerunner of Colonel Parker's 1880's publisher, E. L. Kellogg & Co., who published the School Journal, or of T. D. Kellogg, another publisher listed later in the 1870's?

1857 Oram's First Book; an Inductive and Progressive Primer. 128 pages. Elizabeth Oram. Published by D. Fanshaw, New York. (Listed on page 72 of Early American Textbooks, but no further information is available. Should not be confused with Oram's American Primer of 1811 or 1812, an 1829 copy of which is in the Library of Congress and an 1816 copy of which was in the Lenox Collection per Reeder in 1900, p. 41.)

1857 American Phonetic Primer, Elias Longley. Published in 1860 by Longley & Co., Publishers, Cincinnati, Ohio. (See the earlier entry for Longley's material. This book was a Harvard copy in the Code 10 Pitman phonetic alphabet. It was reportedly highly successful for teaching reading, which it certainly should have been, but it also reportedly adversely affected children's later spelling accuracy. Longley had an extensive list of publications, including those on Pitman shorthand. In the 1876 American Catalogue, E. Longley's Phonetic Primer and Phonetic First Reader of 1857 were being published by "Stevens," so the publishers apparently had changed by that time. See the previous 1850 entry on Longley and the text of this history for a report on the relatively brief use of Pitman materials in Syracuse and elsewhere.)

1857 The New York School Primer, A First Book of Lessons, Arranged in a Simple and Interesting Manner, Philip J. Cozans, Publisher, 107 Nassau Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Toy book, 36 pages, inept Code 6. Early American Textbooks shows on page 69 American Pictorial Primer, no date, Philip J. Cozans, New York. See 1852 entry for Huestis and Cozans and an 1860 questionable entry for them which is probably actually before 1857.)

1857 The Smaller Standard Speller, Containing Classified Exercises for Oral Spelling; Also, Sentences for Silent Spelling, By Writing From Dictation, Sargent's School Series, Epes Sargent. Published by Phillips, Sampson and Company, Boston. (Harvard copy. Not intended as a beginning book. See other Sargent entries.)

1857 The Progressive Pictorial Primer, By An Eminent Practical Teacher. Published in 1862 by Bazin and Ellsworth, Boston; Bailey and Noyes, Portland, Maine. (Harvard copy, Code 1. The author's actual identity is curiously veiled by the publisher. Yet the book is credited to David B. Tower by the same publisher in their promotional literature, perhaps posthumously and wrongly so, from its non-phonetic nature. Conceivably Tower contracted to write it, but died and it was written by another. See the discussion under 1853 above on Tower's materials.)

1857 Tower's Little Primer for the Youngest Class in Primary Schools. Anna E. Tower. Published by Brown, Taggard & Chase, Boston. (Harvard copy. Code 3. See the discussion on this book under the 1853 entry for Tower's First Reader, The Gradual Primer or Primary School Enunciator, by David B. Tower. The use of "Tower" in the title of her low-code book suggests a deliberate and dishonest attempt to capitalize on the fame of the well-known Tower high-code readers by David B. Tower.)

1857 The Word Method Primer, Webb, W. H. Published in 1863 by Sheldon & Company, 335 Broadway, Cor. Worth St., New York. Copyrighted in 1857 by Sheldon, Blakeman & Co.

(Code 1. Harvard's 1863 copy gave no author's name but internal notes show it was written by a woman and was meant to accompany John Russell Webb's series. Her initials were later given in the 1876 American Catalogue. Controlled vocabulary listed on page 38 (105 words), page 83 (159 words), and page 108 (204 words), totaling 468 words for the whole book.

See note on U. S. Spelling Book, 1851, for earlier publishers of John Russell Webb's books. Nila Banton Smith dated John's First Book or The Child's First Reader by John Russell Webb to 1846, and said Webb completed his series of Normal Readers by 1855. See lengthy discussion on Webb readers in Appendix C and in the body of this history.)

1857 The Elementary Spelling Book, Revised Edition, Being an Improvement on "The American Spelling Book," The Cheapest, the Best, and the Most Extensively Used Spelling-Book Ever Published. Noah Webster, Publ. D. Appleton & Co., 443 and 445 Broadway, New York.

(Harvard copy, perhaps Code 5. About one half of the first pages for the children, pages 16-19, cover the syllabary and blends, while the other half of pages 16-19 are straight sight-word meaning-bearing sentences! The rest of the revised edition has also made a similar mighty shift from "sound" to "meaning." This gutted 1857 revision carries an:

"Advertisement

The recent publication of the improved abridgments of Dr. Webster's AMERICAN DICTIONARY has made it necessary to revise the ELEMENTARY SPELLING-BOOK, that in its notation, as well as in Orthography and Pronunciation, the series may be consistent.... by the new system, the nicer shades of difference in the vowel sounds are given...."

It was signed by W. G. Webster, New York, May, 1857. The revision was copyrighted in Connecticut in 1857 by Webster's children: Emily W. Ellsworth, Julia W. Goodrich, Eliza S. W. Jones, William G. Webster and Louisa Webster, "surviving children of the late Noah Webster, LL. D."

It seems probable that at the time Webster's son was busy marking all the speller's word lists to show "the nicer shades of difference in the vowel sounds," some educational "expert" was helping him by writing the new sight-word material that was inserted so extensively. Those changes made the 1857 edition unusable as a beginning text to teach reading by "sound."

Page 14, "Key to the Sounds of the Pointed Letters," had originally been Noah Webster's work. The new key dropped the numerals Webster had used and employed symbols ("points") to indicate the different letter sounds. Yet Noah Webster's original 1783 key remains one of the most brilliant achievements in the English language. With the use of Webster's numerals over the letters, once a reader became familiar with them (plus the marking of silent letters), no special alphabet was necessary to teach beginning reading by "sound." Neither was any respelled pronunciation necessary as with the keys that appear in today's dictionaries, where one whole word is compared to another, so that the pronunciation from a keyed word can be transferred to the unknown word, which is usually differently spelled from the key word. We all know how difficult and irritating it is to use such dictionaries keys to determine the correct pronunciation of a printed word. By contrast, with the use of Webster's relatively brief letter key, the pronunciation could be obtained directly from the marked letters on the dictionary's entry for that word.. Neither was any actual respelling of words necessary to show pronunciation with Webster's key, except for a very tiny handful such as "one (wun)" It is extraordinary - no, it is absolutely mind-boggling - that this sound-key achievement of Webster's for the teaching of beginning reading - and for the users of adult dictionaries - has never been explicitly acknowledged!

It was Noah Webster's all-purpose, one-step, do-it-yourself sound key which separated Webster's speller from the many competing with it after about 1818, when spellers first appeared with a shortened sound key - although Webster's had not been long. In contrast, after Webster's had first appeared in 1783, and until about 1818, competing spellers had simply imitated Webster's extraordinarily original key (although Webster's 1783 phonic key had itself obviously been inspired by Sheridan's phonic 1780 dictionary).

Such competing spellers after about 1818 required the mental respelling of vowel letters in unknown words so that the vowels in the unknown words would match the vowel spellings in the key of sample whole words printed by the author at the top of each page. That first mental respelling step was necessary before any unknown words could be decoded and pronounced. Decoding and pronouncing therefore became the second step in what was actually two-step phony phonics.

It was phony, because a habit of thinking was established that, without the use of the author's sample whole words as a printed key, unknown new words could not be pronounced solely from their spellings. In contrast, Webster's students memorized Webster's key with its variant English vowel pronunciations, and carried that do-it-yourself key with them mentally throughout life. (That they memorized the key is confirmed by quotations from that period given elsewhere in this history.) Therefore, after children left Webster's keyed spelling columns in his speller where pronunciation on all words was precisely given, the mental use of his short, memorized key still enabled them to achieve approximate pronunciations on anything in print.

1857 The National Pronouncing Speller, Richard G. Parker and J. Madison Watson, Published in 1858 by A. S. Barnes & Co., 51 and 53 John Street, New York.

(Harvard copy. The back of Harvard's copy of Tower's 1841 Gradual Reader carries many endorsements, including a letter dated April 28, 1841, from the "Grammar Masters" of the Boston Schools. One of those signing was Richard G. Parker, Johnson School. This Harvard copy of the National speller carries a note dated January 24, 1860, that it was the "Gift of Richard G. Parker of Cambridge," Class of 1817. See other entries on Parker.)

1857 Fourth School Reader. D. Fellowes, Claxton (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. No other record. Early American Textbooks shows on pages 221-222 that two of Joseph Ray's arithmetic texts, on which Wilson, Hinkle & Co. of Cincinnati were the principal publishers, had Philadelphia editions published in 1845 and in 1866 by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger. They are therefore presumably also the "Claxton" indicated in the 1876 American Catalogue. Claxton apparently had a reading series. See other Claxton entries taken from the 1876 American Catalogue on Claxton.)

1857 The American Historical Reader. J(oshua) L. Tracy. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co. and Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, both of Philadelphia.

(Listed in Early American Textbooks, page 188, as published by Lippincott and containing 456 pages. Listed in 1876 American Catalogue as published not only by Lippincott but by Claxton, for \$1. See Claxton's 1857 Fourth School Reader, above, and other entries for Claxton, on whom the only records I have found are their listings in the 1876 American Catalogue, and some Philadelphia reprints of McGuffey's and Ray's books listed in Early American Textbooks. Early American Textbooks lists The Practical Reader, 504 pages, by Richard Culver, published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, in 1855, also listed in the 1876 Catalogue, possibly being part of a Lippincott series along with Tracy's book in the 1850's. Early American Textbooks shows on page 84 that Grigg & Elliot's Third Reader of 299 pages was published in 1857 by Lippincott.)

1857-1866 The National Series [a Code 1 "meaning" approach]. National School Primer 25c, National First Reader 38c, Second 63c, Third \$1, Fourth \$1.50, Fifth \$1.88, Richard Green Parker and James Madison Watson. A. S. Barnes & Burr, New York (1876 American Catalogue under Readers; Harvard copy of 1858 Primer and 1860 First Reader; Many copies listed in Early American Textbooks. See the discussion in the body of this history on this series, and elsewhere in this appendix and Appendix C.)

1858 The Third Primary Reader, G. S. Hillard. Hickling, Swan & Brewer, Boston; Ingham and Bragg, Cleveland. George S. Hillard (Harvard copy. See discussion in text and other appendix on Hillard. The Hillard series which began to come out in 1855 was the apparent replacement for the Worcester series which had been published by this company's predecessor, as discussed elsewhere in this history. See Appendix C for the sequence of publishers.)

1858 National School Series - The English Speller, by David Price (Readers by Parker & Watson), A. S. Barnes and Burr, 51 and 53 John Street, New York. (Harvard copy. See the discussion on Parker and the National School Series in the text of this history, elsewhere in this appendix and in Appendix C.)

1858-1867 Union Series of Readers, 7 volumes: Union Pictorial Primer, 20c, In Leigh's Orthog. 25c, Union Reader No. 1, 28c, In Leigh's Orthog., 32c, No. 2, 50c, No. 3, 75c, No. 4, \$1.25, No. 5, \$1.50, No. 6 Rhetorical Reader, \$1.88. Charles Walton Sanders. Ivison, Phinney, Blakeman & Co., New York ( In 1876 Amer. Cat.; Nos. 1, 3, 5, in 1912 U. S. Cat. by American Book; Writer has personal copy of Union Pictorial Primer, which is listed here under 1866.)

1858 Pictorial Primer. Charles W. Sanders. 18c. Ivison. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. See other entries on Sanders.)

1858 The National School Primer, Richard G. Parker and J. Madison Watson, Published in 1859 by A. S. Barnes & Co., 51 and 53 John Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Code 3. The National Series had a Primer and First to Fifth Readers. The series appeared gradually, from 1857 to 1866. Under "Leigh" in the Primer section of the 1876 American Catalogue is shown "National primer, in phonetic type. 25c. Barnes." See discussion of the several Barnes series in the text, in this appendix and Appendix C.)

1859 Analytic and Phonetic Word Book. 30c. Rev. J. C. Zachos. Wilstach. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. See other entries on Zachos, here, in Appendix C, and in the text.)

1859 The Idea of a Graded School, Daniel C. Gilman (Harvard copy of speech. See discussion in this history on Gilman and Royce.)

1859 The First Primary Reader, George S. Hillard, published by Hickling, Swan, & Brewer, Boston. (Harvard copy. See discussion in text and Appendix C on Hillard's first series which began to come out in 1855, and on his other materials. This book, but not the rest of the 1855-1859 series, was listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as still available from Taintor of New York.)

1859 Learning to Spell, to Read, to Write and to Compose, all at the Same Time, J. A. Jacobs, Principal of Kentucky Institution for the Education of Deaf Mutes. (Harvard copy. An advertisement on the back of Johonnot's The Sentence and Word Book, D. Appleton & Co., Publishers, 1885, lists under Orthography and Orthoepy, Jacob's Learning to Spell, to Read, to Write and to Compose, All At the Same Time - 332 pages, 514 illustrations. The book, endorsing phonics for hearing children, therefore remained in print for a long time. Jacobs claimed his deaf children made more progress in reading than hearing children using the ordinary methods of the day. See discussion on Jacobs in text of this history.)

1859 The North-Carolina Reader, No. 2, Frank McKinney Hubbard, A. S. Barnes & Burr, New York; E. J. Hale & Son, Fayetteville, N. C.; W. L. Pomeroy, N. C. (Page 90, Early American Textbooks. See earlier entries.)

1859 The Illustrated Primer, Published by George W. Hobbs, Charlestown, Massachusetts. (Harvard copy. Semi-toy book, some old-speller parody, Code 4.)

1859 Vermont Speller, or Progressive Lessons in the English Language, in Two Parts. R. McK. Ormsby and Rev. Charles W. Cushing and R. Farnham. Published in a Fourth Edition by A. Low, Ag't., & Co., Successors to R. Farnham, Jr. & Co. (Harvard copy. Code 8.)

1859 National Elementary Speller, A Critical Work on Pronunciation, J. Madison Watson. Published in 1864 by Barnes & Burr, 52 and 53 John Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Part of the National series of Parker and Watson.)

1859 The Progressive Speller for Common Schools and Academies, Salem Town and Nelson M. Holbrook, copyrighted in 1859 by Nelson M. Holbrook. Published in 1860 by Bazin & Ellsworth, Boston; and Bailey and Noyes, Portland, Maine. (Harvard copy. See discussion of this series elsewhere in this appendix and in the text of this history.)

1860? First Footsteps in the Way of Knowledge, American Tract Society, 150 Nassau Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Code 1. Apparently totally ignored syllable step. Table of contents shows: alphabet, then in sequence 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 letter words, all in context, no lists. Book totaled 154 pages. Six-letter words were finished on page 133. Six-letter words like four- and five-letter words sometimes had two-syllables.)

1860? Great Picture A,B,C, Gallery of Animals, Published by Fisk and Little, Booksellers and Stationers, No. 82 State-Street, Albany, N. Y. (Harvard copy. Toy book. Apparently meant only to teach alphabet by amusement. Back cover showed company published many children's books, including Marks' Toy Books, and Grandpa Pease's New and Original Pictorial Books, of which this was one from inside page.)

1860? Little People's ABC, Huestis and Cozans, Publisher, 107 Nassau Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Sixteen-page toy book, only as high as Code 3 because of abbreviated but mutilated syllabary. Otherwise, Code 1.)

1860? Exercises in Orthoepy, Being an Introduction to a Forthcoming Reader, James Jennison, "Cambridge? 186-?" (Harvard note on Harvard copy. Jennison's comments reflect attitudes of the period on readers and the important place of elocution in education.)

1860 Lu-Lu Tales, The Lu-Lu Alphabet. Howe & Ferry, 76 Bowery, New York. On the back cover, with listing of books including Alphabet Arranged As A Story (this book) appeared "Lu-Lu Books Published by Raynor, Howe & Ferry." (Harvard copy. Straight ABC book with sentences for letters, not to teach reading but to be read to child. Page 1 of Early American Textbooks lists three books by Mrs. Pamela Atkins Chandler Colman. One is New Stories for Little Boys: Original and Selected. New York: Samuel Raynor, 1852. 96 p. This note follows: "This small (10x12cm.), delightful book aims to entertain boys by writing about animals, birds, and folk heroes. One of the stories in this "Lulu Series" related the adventures of Bucephalus, Alexander the Great's Horse." Perhaps Mrs. Colman wrote other Lu-Lu stories for Raynor, Howe & Ferry.)

1860 The National First Reader or Word-Builder, Revised Edition, Richard G. Parker and J. Madison Watson, Copyrighted 1860 by A. S. Barnes & Burr. Published by A. S. Barnes & Company, New York, Chicago, and New Orleans as part of the National Series which appeared from 1857 to 1866. (Harvard copy. Code 1 approach. Uses whole words to build other longer words, which is what was meant by "building." The error on "sound" is shown when words are built from the word, "one": one, tone, stone, etc.)

1860 The Standard First Reader, Part Two, With Spelling and Defining Lessons - Sargent's Standard Series. Epes Sargent. Published in 1865 by John L. Shorey, Boston; J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, W. I. Pooley & Co., New York. University Press, Cambridge: Printed by Welch, Bigelow and Company.

(Harvard copy. Code 1. Preface: "As in the author's previous work for the young, the principle here adopted, that the system of teaching children familiar words in little stories, at the outset, before drilling them in meaningless syllables, is the most effective process of instruction in reading." A table gives "exercises" in vowel sounds, obviously for elocution. This was apparently part of Sargent's "Old ser. of readers" listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as published by Shorey: Standard primer, 24c. - Standard first, 35c. - second 56c. - third, 70c. - fourth, \$1.12 - fifth, and first class reader, \$1.38. Also listed was Sargent's "New ser. of readers:" Standard primer 24c. - Standard first, 35c - second 56c. - third, 70c. - Intermediate, 80c, fourth, \$1.12. - fifth \$1.38. The date of the new series is not known. Starting about 1871 and later, Epes Sargent was a co-author with Amasa May of another series, published by Butler, not Shorey.)

1860 Descriptive Catalogue of Town and Holbrook's Progressive Series of Textbooks for Common Schools, High Schools and Academies. Published by Bazin and Ellsworth, Boston. (Harvard copy, with annotated comments. See other entries in this appendix on this publisher, and the discussion in the text of this history.)

1860 Reading Without Tears, or a Pleasant Mode of Learning to Read, By the Author of "Peep of Day," &c., &c. (Mrs. Favel Lee Bevan Mortimer), Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square, New York.

(In 1876 American Catalogue: \$1.25, in 2 parts, 1, 60c, 2, 75c. Harvard has copy. English reprint, Code 3 at beginning, rhyming-word lists, then used in context, Code 5 later. Introduces syllabary and silent letters on pages 32-33 of 136-page book, too late. Mrs. Mortimer previously wrote Reading Disentangled, widely used in England, discussed in text of this history and in Appendix C, which used two-step phony phonics. Reading Without Tears was in print by Longwood in the 1912 and 1928 United States Catalog, appearing in 1928 after the entry, Reading - Psychology. An 1865 edition by Harper is listed in Early American Textbooks on page 102. See Little Pet Primer under 1863 which uses a variation of this title in its own title.

1860 The First Reader of the School and Family Series, Marcius Willson, Published by Harper & Brothers, 327 to 331 Pearl Street, New York.

(This six-volume series was listed in the 1876 American Catalogue: Primer, 25c, First reader 40c. - Second, 60c. - Third, 90c. - Fourth, \$1.35. - Fifth, \$1.80. Harvard's copy of The First Reader shows it rates Code 1 to Code 3:

“Directions to the Teacher. A few general principles that were laid down in the Primer, are repeated here. Children may be taught to call words at sight, as well as letters. They should begin to read at the same time that they begin to learn the Alphabet, and in this way they will probably be able to read, by rote, several pages before they have learned all their letters. When they have completely mastered the Alphabet, (but not till then,) they may be required to spell the principal words in the Reading Lessons.”

To “spell” at this point in time for beginners usually meant only naming the letters in a sight word while looking at it “on the book,” not remembering the letters orally or in writing with the book closed, which was called “off the book.” Obviously, spelling “on the book” was very easy. Reeder discusses Marcius Willson's books on page 55.)

1860 Willson's School and Family Series, The Primer, Harper & Brothers, New York. (Harvard copy. Straight Code 1 at beginning, possibly Code 3 later because of some sight-word lists on page 29, page 43, and probably elsewhere, with certain sight words arranged phonically: bat, cat, etc., may, hay, etc. The Pronouncing Lesson, page 10, recommended that teacher pronounce sentences first, children imitating her, before reading words in lists. Opposed “old” method of spelling words first, which only meant naming the letters in the sight words while looking at them, before reading.)

1861 The Child's Own Primer, T. W. Strong, Printer and Publisher, 98 Nassau Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Inept Code 2 toy book.)

1861 The Pictorial Primer, Mamma Lovechild Series, By Mamma Lovechild, Published by T. W. Strong, 98 Nassau Street, New York. Back cover: “Strong's New Toy Books,” an extensive list. (Harvard copy. Toy book, obviously a story and picture approach to be read to a child, not for instruction.)

1861 Sanders' Union Reader, Number One, for Primary Schools and Families - Sanders Union Series, Charles W. Sanders, A. M. Published by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York and Chicago. (Harvard copy. Code 1. See discussion of Sanders' books elsewhere in this appendix, in Appendix C, and in the text of this history.)

1862 De Wolf's Instructive Speller, Designed to Secure a Thorough Knowledge of the Elementary Sounds, and Correct Habits of Pronunciation and Orthography, Containing Dictation Exercises and a Complete Study of Derivative Words. D. F. De Wolf. Published by Sargent, Wilson, & Hinkle, Cincinnati, Ohio. (Harvard copy. Back cover advertises the 11 books of the McGuffey Series, including



McGuffey's Newly Revised Eclectic Spelling Book, the 10 books of Ray's arithmetic and algebra series, the three books of Pinneo's grammar series, Object Lessons of Lilienthal and Allyn, Kidd's Elocution and Vocal Culture, Chapman's Agricultural Chemistry, De Wolf's Instructive Speller, Heman's Young Ladies' Reader, The Young Singer (two books), and The Little Teacher or Word Method. That is hardly an impressive catalogue of textbooks in 1862 by a company which has been described as being, about that time, the largest textbook company in the world! Compare that textbook list, for instance, to the list of textbooks given in the 1860 catalog of Bazin and Ellsworth, a relatively small publisher, shown previously, and to others mentioned in this history.)

1862 Truth Vindicated, A Correction of Sundry Falsehoods and Misrepresentations in a Circular Signed by Oliver Ellsworth and Addressed to School Supervisors, Committees and Teachers of the State of Maine, Published by Swan, Brewer & Tileston, Boston. (Harvard copy. Contains their refutation of Ellsworth's charges concerning Hillard's 1855-1859 series, which they published. Also contains their annotated brochure on their own publications. Whether "truth" lay on Ellsworth's side or their side, the fact is that Ellsworth was apparently out of business when the 1876 American Catalogue of books in print was published, while the Swan, Brewer & Tileston books had been those adopted in Boston from the late 1850's. Those facts suggest the possible use of change-agent tactics by Swan, Brewer & Tileston, the publishers of this brochure. Such tactics have tended historically to be highly successful. However, the Brewer company itself also was out of business by late 1876 or 1877, being replaced in Boston by Wm. Ware, and in New York by Taintor. The record on the Brewer company's widely used Franklin readers and on Leigh print, discussed in the text of this history, strongly suggest the possibility that the Brewer company was, itself, forced out of business about 1877 on the issue of Leigh print. See earlier entries on Ellsworth.)

1862 Alphabet ABC Objects, McLoughlin Bros., Manufacturers of Toy Books, Games, &c., &c., 24 Beekman St., N. Y. (Harvard copy. Toy book. ABC book, not to teach reading. Long list of their toy book series on the back cover.)

1862 Monteith's First Lessons in Geography on the Plan of Object Teaching, Designed for Beginners - National Geographical Series. James Monteith. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York. (Harvard copy. Note that Barnes was publishing a geography series as well as a major reading series and many other textbooks in 1862. McGuffey's publishers obviously were far from being the dominant textbook company at that time or later, as has been so wrongly claimed.)

1862 Object Lessons Prepared for Teachers of Primary Schools and Primary Classes. A. S. Welch. A. S. Barnes & Co., New York and Chicago. (Harvard copy. Another of Barnes' very large textbook list.)

1862 Suggestions on the Principles and Methods of Elementary Instruction, H. B. Wilbur, M. D., Superintendent of the New York State Asylum for Idiots. Published by J. Munsell, Albany, New York. (Harvard copy. Bears the April 6, 1863, notation, "Gift of Thos. Hill., Pres., Harv. Coll. (1843). Wilbur's comments have been discussed in the body of this history.)

1863 To Readers of the Maine Teacher, Published January 19, 1863, by Brewer & Tileston, Boston. (Harvard copy. Brewer & Tileston's reply to Oliver Ellsworth's response to their pamphlet defending their school publications against his charges. See the 1862 entry on the pamphlets.)

1863 Little Pet Primer (on cover, repeated inside, but adding:) "Hobart Hall" Reading Without Tears, for All Good Children, By Their Loving Friend, The Rector. Published by Alexander Fleming, No. 657 Sixth Avenue.

(Honest, inept attempt to teach by sound: Code 6. Early American Textbooks shows an undated copy on page 71. The title is obviously a variation on Favel Lee Bevan Mortimer's Reading Without Tears, published first in England and republished at least as early as 1860 by Harper, which edition is listed above.)

1864 Easy Lessons: Key to National School Tablets. S. R. Scofield. 25c. Barnes. (In 1876 American Catalogue, presumably part of Barnes' National series, listed elsewhere.)

1864 The Primer or First Reader, New Series, G. S. Hillard and L. J. Campbell. Published by Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co., New York; William Ware & Co., Boston, "Successors to Brewer & Tileston."

(Harvard copy, with a librarian's notation that it was published cir. 1878. It is notably NOT in Leigh print as were pre-1876 surviving first readers I have seen. It is Code 3. The picture alphabet even has erroneous "sound" entries, as owl for "o" and ship for "s." Harvard library has Leigh's Pronouncing Edition of Hillard's Primer, published in 1872 by Brewer and Tileston of Boston and J. W. Schermerhorn & Co., New York, which edition had been transposed into Leigh print in 1866. Reeder discussed Hillard on page 50. See other comments on Hillard elsewhere in this appendix, and in the body of this history and in Appendix C.)

1864 Hillard's Second Reader, Leigh's Hillard's Second Reader, prepared by Edwin Leigh, Published in 1876 by Brewer and Tileston, Boston, and J. W. Schermerhorn & Co., New York.

(Harvard copy. The reader had first been published in 1864 and had been transposed into Leigh print in 1868. It is also listed in Early American Textbooks. See the many other entries on Hillard, Leigh, Brewer & Tileston, etc., in this and Appendix C and in the body of this history.)

1864 Harper's School and Family Series. Willson's Larger Speller, A Progressive Course of Lessons in Spelling, Arranged According to the Principles of Orthoepy and Grammar, with Exercises in Synonyms, for Reading, Spelling and Writing; and a New System of Definitions, by Marcus Willson. Harper & Brothers, New York.

(My copy. In the Preface, Willson referred to his Primary Speller but said in some schools only one Speller is used. This is the probable reason Willson began this book with four pages of straight sight-word material: words and phrases next to pictures illustrating them. He preceded these pages, which had no phonetic arrangement at all, with the following:

"I. CALLING WORDS AT SIGHT. DIRECTIONS. - Direct the attention of the pupil to the pictures in the lessons of the next page: ask him what each represents; lead him to associate the words with the pictures, until he can call the former at sight, first in order, and then promiscuously when the pictures are covered by the hand or a piece of paper.... After the pupil has thus learned to call, at sight, all the words in the first six lessons, let him go back to the word hat, at the beginning of the first lesson, and learn the letters which form the word; let him then spell the word, at first with the aid of the book, and then without it when the word is pronounced by the teacher. Let him go through all the words in lessons 1, 2, 4, and 5, in the same manner. Although these six lessons contain all the letters of the alphabet - most of them repeated many times - yet the pupils may, after this, be occasionally exercised upon the alphabet separately, which will be found on page 12. They should also learn to write the Script letters on their slates."

Unlike the earlier lessons, Lesson 7 had a phonetic arrangement, beginning with three-letter short "a" words, bat, cat, fat, hat, mat, etc. However, since the beginning students had already been taught "hat," as

one of the sight words, this phonetic table became two-step whole word phonics, Code 3. Yet even the Code 3 phonetic effect was weakened because of the directions to the teachers:

“Before the words in the following spelling Lessons are studied by the pupils for the purpose of spelling them, the teacher should read them aloud to the class, and the pupils should pronounce each word after him; and this should be continued until each pupil can call the words readily at sight. The sentences in the Exercises should also be read aloud to the pupils before the latter are required to read them. After the pupils have read the sentences in the Exercises, let them spell the principal words in each.”

Whether the teacher was to read later lessons to upper grade students as well is unknown. After the beginning of the book, the speller gave considerable attention to words spelled under particular vowel sounds, as “gulf, dove, monk” and other attempts at patterning. Despite the inadequacy of such tables which mixed together different spellings for the same sound, the book might have rated perhaps Code 6 overall, because of the attention to phonetic elements, if the sight-word beginning had been omitted.)

1864 Hillard’s Second Reader (cover). New Series for Primary Schools. The Second Reader (title page). G. S. Hillard and L. J. Campbell. Brewer & Tileston, Boston; Eldredge & Bro., Philadelphia; Bailey & Noyes, Portland, Maine. (Harvard copy. Teaches phonics for enunciation, too late and with wrong approach and wrong arrangement. See comments elsewhere in this appendix, in Appendix C, and in the body of this history on the Hillard and Campbell materials. This book was available after 1866 in regular print and in Leigh pronouncing print.)

1864 The Phonic Primer and Reader, A Rational Method of Teaching Reading by the Sounds of the Letters Without Altering the Orthography, Rev. J. C. Zachos, For Sixteen Months a Missionary to the Colored People of Paris Island, Port Royal, South Carolina. Printed by John Wilson and Son, 50 Water Street, Boston. (Harvard copy. Code 10. Discussed in this history. Still in print by Lee & Shepard in 1876 as “Phonic primer, and primary reader” according to the American Catalogue, as well as “Analytic and phonetic word book. ‘59. 39c, Wilstach” about which nothing is known.)

1864 United States Primer. Mrs. O. Bronson. American Tract Society, New York. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue as in print for 15 cents. No other information on this primer is available. See 1850 entry for their Picture Alphabet and 1860(?) First Footsteps in the Way of Knowledge, a Code 1 book. Copies of the 1850 and 1860(?) texts are in the Harvard library. See also the 1867-1868 entries for United States Reading Books, First and Second, by American Tract Society, also known only from the American Catalogue.)

1865 or Before - Southern Series of Readers, six volumes. R. Sterling. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as in print in 1876 by two companies, Agar and Burke. Early American Textbooks lists on page 107 Our Own Fourth Reader, 1865, published by Sterling & Albright, Greensboro, N. C., and Owen & Agar, New York:

“Part of the series of readers especially written for students in the southern schools during the American Civil War.”

Early American Textbooks also lists on page 73 Sterling’s Southern Pictorial Primer, published in 1866 by R. Sterling & Son, Greensboro, N. C., and Owens and Agar, New York. Pages 8 and 9 from Sterling’s Pictorial Primer are shown on page 72, indicating it was a probable low code, “meaning,” text. The primer was listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as the Southern Primer written by R. Sterling and published by Agar. However, this might cause confusion with the book which came out in 1839, The

Southern Primer, or Child's First Lessons in Spelling and Reading, by T. N. M., still being published in 1860, as indicated earlier.)

1865 Chaudron's Confederate Spelling-Book, by A. De V. Chaudron, Mobile, 5th edition, 40th thousand. (Listed by R. R. Reeder, pages 51-52 who quoted this from its preface written during the Civil War in the South:

“In former times the country was overrun with an endless number of competitive school books in every line of instruction. The present condition of the country has delivered us from this evil. Will that last hereafter?....”)

1865 The Normal Speller, Albert N. Raub. (Per Nietz, p. 37. Nietz said Raub published The Normal Primary Speller in 1866, and said elsewhere that Raub later had readers. See Raub's materials entered later. On page 102, Early American Textbooks lists Albert N. Raub's The New Normal Fourth Reader, American Book Co., no date, and Fifth Reader, The Werner Co., Chicago and New York, 1878. That 1878 date is almost certainly wrong, as The Werner Co. appears from other sources only in the 1890's.

1865 Phonic Primer and Primary Reader, Published By A Committee Under the Auspices of The American Phonic Association for the Advancement of Reading Among the Unlettered Classes, Boston. Copyright 1865 by J. C. Zachos. Sold by Nichols & Noyes; Walker, Wise & Co. (Harvard copy. Code 10. Gift to Harvard of Rev. John C. Zachos of Newton, November 2, 1865.)

1865 Large Letters for Little Ones, Hurd and Houghton, 401 Broadway Corner Walker Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Probably only meant to teach alphabet. Each page has a capital letter, illustration, and sentence. Other children's books they published were listed on the back cover. Hurd and H(oughton) in Cambridge later was apparently the same company. “Houghton” apparently was the “Houghton” of Houghton, Mifflin, the apparent successor. See the discussion in this history on the background of the New York branch.)

1866 The Freedman's Reader. Spelling Book, American Tract Society, Boston. (Harvard copy. Code 1, to judge from beginning pages.)

1866-1871 Analytical Series. 9 volumes. First to sixth and intermediate, and first and second available in Leigh print. Richard Edwards, President of the Illinois State Normal University, and J. Russell Webb (1824-1887). Published in 1866 by Mason Brothers, N. Y.; Mason & Hamlin, Boston; Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago. In 1876 by Taintor of New York and Sherwood of Chicago.

(Harvard copy of Analytical First Reader, Code 1 material. The First Reader, and presumably the second, was not published in Leigh print until 1871. The 1871 Leigh copyright date appears on the Harvard copy of the Analytical First Reader in Leigh print. This series is discussed elsewhere in this appendix and Appendix C, and in the body of this history. Harvard library has another copy of the Analytical First Reader published in 1871 with Geo. and C. W. Sherwood, Chicago, on the cover and on the title page, but followed on the title page with Taintor & Co., N. Y. in small letters. Illustrated on pages 78-79 is the series' “Sentence Builder” chart for classroom use, in which word cards were inserted by the teacher or children, very like the Breakthrough to Literacy materials of the 1970's from England, which was also published in the United States.)

1866 Analytical Second Reader - Analytical Series. Richard Edwards, President of the Illinois State Normal University, and J. Russell Webb, Author of the Normal Readers and the Word Method. Copyrighted in 1866 by Mason Brothers, New York, and published (unknown date) by Taintor & Co.,

678 Broadway, New York, and Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago. (Harvard copy. See other entries on this series.)

1866 The Franklin Alphabet and Primer, Davis, Porter & Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Code 3 type of toy book. Not consistent, sometimes gives a sight-word pattern on short vowels next to alphabet pictures. See 1867 toy-book set from this company.)

1866 The Union Pictorial Primer (On cover.) Sanders' Union Pictorial Primer, Introductory to the Union Readers (on title page.) By Charles W. Sanders, A. M. Published in 1867 by Ivison, Phinney, Blakeman and Company, 47 & 49 Greene Street, New York. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers for 20c which showed it was also available in Leigh orthography for 25c. My non-Leigh copy. The Preface states, "...The book is so arranged as to be adapted to the word method, the phonetic method, or to the ordinary method, - that of teaching the names of the letters first, - just as the teacher may prefer..." Yet the book is Code 1 material, despite that claim. Sanders' materials are discussed in the text of this history, elsewhere in this appendix, and in Appendix C.)

1866 Hillard's Primer, Leigh's Pronouncing Edition, Edited in Pronouncing Orthography by Edwin Leigh. Published by Brewer & Tileston, Boston.

(Harvard note on this copy indicated that it was published in 1866. Leigh print turned this Code 3 material into Code 10 material. This series is discussed at length elsewhere.)

The back cover of this 1866 Leigh-print phonic edition had testimonies on its effectiveness from many notables: the superintendent (unnamed) of the St. Louis schools; N. A. Calkins who was, possibly then but definitely later, Assistant Schools Superintendent in New York; and S. S. Greene, President of the National Teachers Association and presumably the S. S. Greene who was with the Normal Department of Brown University and who was superintendent of schools in Providence, Rhode Island. Greene gave a luke-warm endorsement: "I believe Dr. Leigh's plan will be successful."; Testimonies were also given by Superintendent John D. Philbrick of Boston; Richard Edwards, President of the Illinois State Normal University; Thomas Hill who was the President of Harvard; etc.

Calkins, Greene and Edwards continued to prosper, but their names were associated most with teaching beginning reading for "meaning," despite their endorsements on this early (possibly initial) Leigh-print edition. It was a different matter for those who had effectively promoted "sound" in beginning reading.

Brewer & Tileston who apparently were the first to publish Leigh-print materials disappeared as publishers after 1876, as discussed elsewhere. The publishers then became Wm. Ware of Boston and Taintor of New York. Taintor was also a publisher of the famous sight-word series by Webb. See the discussion in the body of this history on the post-1876, post Brewer & Tileston non-Leigh editions of Hillard's materials.

The unnamed St. Louis Superintendent who had endorsed Leigh print was replaced by his subordinate, William Torrey Harris, in 1868. Harris became the principal author of the phony-phonics, Code 3, 1878 enormously successful Appleton readers which crowded Leigh print out of almost all American schools and which, unlike earlier widely used series, apparently never had an edition in Leigh print. Yet, in 1880, Harris "resigned" from St. Louis, which continued to use Leigh print, which means they were not using his Appleton series. That strongly suggests that Harris was no longer popular in St. Louis and did not resign, but was fired. However, Harris prospered mightily in later years, and eventually was appointed head of the Washington, D. C. bureau which was concerned at that time with U. S. education.

Thomas Hill, who had given his endorsement for the use of “sound” in beginning reading on three programs: Pitman’s, Leigh’s and Zachos’, was replaced as President of Harvard in 1869 by Charles William Eliot, who never endorsed “sound” in beginning reading but who campaigned mightily for “meaning” in reading materials for some thirty years. Hill faded almost totally from the public scene immediately afterwards, but Charles William Eliot is famous, even today, in education “history.”

Philbrick, who later said the word method must fall before the phonetic because of the great success of Leigh print in Boston, was fired as Boston superintendent in 1878 and Philbrick’s once-famous name would be recognized today by almost no one. Philbrick was replaced by a superintendent who in effect threw out the phonic Leigh print that Philbrick had introduced in Boston, by distributing guidelines to primary teachers which, in effect, mandated the teaching of beginning reading by “meaning” in Boston.

These developments suggest coordinated and effective change-agent activity in opposition to Leigh “sound” materials and in promotion of “meaning” materials. However, the Harris “resignation” from St. Louis in 1880, and the continued use of Leigh print in St. Louis, suggests the change-agents may have stubbed their toes there.)

1866 Kindergarten Spelling Book. Ella Little, Lee & Shepard, Boston. (Harvard copy. Code 10. See discussion in the text of this history and in Appendix C on this publisher of phonic materials.)

1866 First Lessons in Reading On A New Method of Teaching the Reading of English By Which the Ear Is Trained to Discriminate the Elementary Sounds of Words and the Eye to Recognize the Signs Used for These Sounds in the Established Orthography. William A. Wheeler, Associate Editor of Webster’s Dictionaries, and Richard Soule, Associate Editor of Worcester’s Quarto Dictionary. Lee & Shepard, Boston.

(Harvard copy. Code 10. “Preface: This book has been prepared by the subscribers substantially on the plan proposed by the Rev. John C. Zachos, and with his concurrence...” See earlier entries in this appendix on Zachos. This material, Zachos, and Lee & Shepard are discussed in this history and in Appendix C.)

1866 to About 1871 - Some Edwin Leigh editions in his pronouncing print were listed under his name in Early American Textbooks. Others were listed elsewhere in Early American Textbooks. Half of those listed under Edwin Leigh’s name have been clearly dated in error. For instance, Taintor was not in business in New York in 1864, but is listed as having published a Leigh edition there in 1864. Edwin Leigh only published his pamphlet describing his method in 1864, and it was apparently about two years before major publishers hired Leigh to edit their beginning books in pronouncing print. Most such editions apparently came out between 1866 and 1873. Some of the dates shown under Edwin Leigh’s name in Early American Textbooks are apparently the original copyright dates of the books in question, and not the dates at which the materials were transposed into Leigh’s pronouncing print.

Shown below are those texts which appeared directly under Leigh’s name in Early American Textbooks, page 91, and which therefore were obviously among those texts with Leigh editions.

Analytical First Reader. Edwin Leigh. Chicago: Geo. and C. W. Sherwood; New York: Taintor & Co., 96 p. Listed were 1866 and 1886 editions. Taintor did not move to New York until 1867, so that 1866 reference is wrong. More importantly, the Leigh-print edition of Edward’s and Webb’s Analytical First Reader was not copyrighted until 1871, so that is the obvious date it first became available. A Harvard copy in pronouncing print of this text carries Leigh’s copyright date of 1871. The other date shown in Early American Textbooks for this Analytical material in Leigh print was 1886. If that date is

correct, which also seems very unlikely, it would be for a very surprising and very late Leigh edition. Yet I have found nothing published in Leigh print after 1876.

Analytical Second Reader. Chicago: Geo. & C. W. Sherwood; New York: Taintor & Co., 1864. 160 p. The date of the Leigh edition is clearly wrong, since Leigh only published his essay in 1864. Furthermore, Taintor did not move to New York until three years later. Presumably, the second reader became available in Leigh print either in 1871 with the first reader, or slightly afterwards.

The Franklin Second Reader. Edwin Leigh. New York: Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co., Boston: William Ware & Co., 1873. 154 p. These companies apparently did not appear as publishers of the Franklin materials until after Brewer & Tileston went out of business in 1876 or 1877. The date is the copyright date of the reader itself and possibly of the Leigh version.

Leigh's Hillard's Second Reader. Boston. Brewer & Tileston. 1868. 168 p. This is the correct date for the Leigh edition of the Second Reader, shown on copies at Harvard and the Library of Congress.

Leigh's Hillard's Second Reader. Boston: Brewer & Tileston; New York: J. W. Schermerhorn & Co., 1874. 168 p. This is probably the publishing date of this particular edition.

Leigh's McGuffey's New Primary Reader. Cincinnati: Wilson, Hinkle & Co., 1868. 144 pages. This is the correct date for the McGuffey pronouncing print edition, since it is also listed in the 1876 American Catalogue under Primers.

1866 The Phonic Primer and First Reader by Theo. E. Heidenfeld. New York: G. Lauter, 13 North William Street, For Sale By Howe & Ferry, No. 76 Bowery, New York. Copyright 1866 Theo. E. Heidenfeld and G. Lauter. (Library of Congress copy. The "Preface" endorsed the German "Phonic Method" and opposed the prevalent American spelling (ABC) method. The Preface stated further, "In this country, several able teachers have attempted to introduce the 'Phonic Method,' - but for various reasons very few have succeeded..... there are not many teachers who thoroughly understand the system, - and last, though not least, it is extremely difficult to supersede the old system, which for years has prevailed in this country with regard to primary reading."

The method used in Heidenfeld's book was the German analytic-synthetic method, in which words are pulled apart to analyze ALL their phonemes, and then the isolated phonemes are used to build new words. From the first few pages of photocopies which I have, Heidenfeld's book seems to rate a Code 10. The 1876 American Catalogue listed the 1875 Phonetic Readers: Phonetic Primer and First Reader, Phonetic Second Reader, Phonetic Third Readers, by T. E. Heidenfeld, published by L. W. Schmidt, New York. Therefore, the 1866 material must have been revised in 1875. Heidenfeld's books are also listed on pages 70 and 87 of Early American Textbooks. His material was one of the many phonetic approaches published in the accelerating shift to "sound" of the 1860s and 1870's, which naturally-occurring shift abruptly stopped when the widely publicized move back to "meaning" began about 1873. That change-agent move back to "meaning" in the teaching of beginning reading was apparently initiated by Farnham's paper on the sentence method at the 1873 National Education Association meeting. The move back to "meaning" in beginning reading was then associated from 1875 with Colonel Parker of Quincy, Massachusetts, and his promoters and followers in Boston, and with the Franklin and the Appleton readers, etc. All these developments are discussed at length in the body of this history.)

1866 The Southern Pictorial Primer or First Reader, George F. Holmes, Richardson & Company, New York (Listed in Early American Textbooks) See later entries on Holmes' materials, and a summary under the 1870 entry.

1866 The Southern University Series: The Southern Pictorial (2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th) Readers, the last 1869, George F. Holmes, Richardson & Company, New York (Listed in Early American Textbooks). See other Holmes entries and a summary under 1870.

1866 Elementary Spelling Book, George F. Holmes, University Publishing Company, New York (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue) See other Holmes entries and a summary under 1870.

1866 Common School Primer, Morton. (In 1876 American Catalogue. Possibly part of a John P. Morton & Co. series)

1866 The Primary Union Speaker, John Dudley Philbrick, Superintendent of the Public Schools of Boston, and Author of the American Union Speaker, Taggard & Thompson, Boston.

(The fact that Philbrick wrote these two books demonstrates the importance of teaching “elocution” in the government schools of the 1860’s, something which is almost totally absent in our schools today.

This Harvard copy of Philbrick’s book was autographed by Philbrick to S. A. Green, Harvard, ‘51. Green undoubtedly donated it to Harvard, just as he donated so very many beginning reading texts to the Harvard libraries as shown by their inscriptions. Dr. S. A. Green should NOT be confused with the pro-sight-word “expert,” S. S. Greene, whose work is discussed in Appendix D.

It should be remarked that the writing of this history, which has been so overwhelmingly dependent for nineteenth-century materials on Harvard’s extraordinary textbook collections, would probably have been impossible except for Dr. S. A. Green’s massive donations of reading books of the nineteenth century to the Harvard libraries, which donations Green made over many decades.

Dr. Green is very likely a descendant of the original Green in the Massachusetts colony in the mid-seventeenth century, who became the second printer in what is now the United States. Many of Green’s descendants also became well-known printers in New England.)

1867 Common School Reading, J. Swett. Available for \$1.25 from A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago and New Orleans, and for \$1.50 from A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco. Swett was an author with Josiah Royce and Charles H. Allen on A. L. Bancroft & Co.’s, 1883 Bancroft’s Readers. (In 1876 American Catalogue)

1867 Pictorial Primer, George F. Holmes, University Publishing Company, New York (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue) See other Holmes entries, and summary under 1870.

1867 Card Primer (Harvard copy. Code 1 toy book, alphabet, short 2-, 3-, 4-, 5-letter word lists and reading paragraphs. Full high-quality drawn picture on back cover, and high-quality drawn picture on front cover but bottom missing. Title page missing. Publisher unknown. No record of book entitled, “Card Primer,” in the 1876 American Catalogue of books in print.)

1867 Davis, Porter & Coates, Philadelphia publisher, put out a series of five little toy books which run from page 1 on the first book to page 36 on the last book. Obviously, Davis, Porter & Coates broke up an earlier 36-page toy book into five separate parts, beginning each with a cover and title, and the alphabet in capital and small letters. One of the five-book series is missing, so apparently it was not in the Harvard library unless I overlooked it. The series is as follows: 1. The Little One’s Alphabet (pages 1-6); 2. The Easy Primer in Little Words (pages 7-12); 3. Missing; 4. The Easy Lesson Book (pages 20-30); 5. My Little Primer (pages 31-36). The material is Code 3, two-step whole word phonics.)



1867 A Lecture Before Massachusetts Teachers Association, Henry F. Harrington. (Harvard copy. In 1880, Harrington wrote a meaning-approach speller which was not published by Harper Brothers, New York, until 1884. The delay was presumably caused by the war Colonel Parker et al had declared after 1875 against spelling books.)

1867 The Analytical Speller, Containing Lists of the Most Useful Words in the English Language, Progressively Arranged and Grouped According to their Meaning, Richard Edwards, President of the Illinois State Normal University, and Mortimer A. Warren, Principal of Avery Normal Institute, Charleston, S. C. Copyrighted in 1867 by Geo. and C. W. Sherwood, Chicago. Taintor & Co., 678 Broadway, N. Y.; Geo. and C. W. Sherwood, Chicago. (Harvard copy. This “speller” was meant to accompany the famous “word-method” Edwards-Webb Analytical Series. It was an 1867 curiosity, because the spelling emphasis was not only on “meaning,” which was to be expected, but on sentence-making. The “Preface” stated:

“This book is an attempt to substitute intelligent, thoughtful work for the unmeaning drill of the old fashioned Spelling-books. The spelling lessons, as here given, consist of words related to each other in meaning and so arranged that even where they are not understood by the children, their meaning may be easily learned.... The spelling lesson is an exercise upon which the pupil drills for many years. Whatever it contains, therefore, becomes a fixture in the mind, - it is forever remembered. Even the unmeaning columns of the olden time were thus retained. Who that used the old Webster’s Spelling-book has forgotten that ‘Sha-dy’ came next after ‘Ba-ker’ in the column? [Ed.: This is an exceedingly unlikely claim, that children memorized all the columns of words in the Webster spellers! Anyway, the examples he gave would have been in the far later two-syllable word section, and not at the beginning.] Now, this being so, is it not worth while to give the matter thus remembered as great a value as possible? Is there not a great gain effected when the words are made to have a meaning to the child? when the word to be spelled is associated with an idea of which he is, or must become, the master? Is it not useful to awaken in this exercise as many as possible of his faculties? Is it not a law of the mind that every faculty employed about the acquisition of a thought is a separate link for holding that thought? Is it not true that a word remembered by its form alone is more imperfectly remembered than one that, in addition to its form, has the association with a living idea - to assist the memory?”

This 1868 material, with its “psychological” underpinnings and its use of whole sentences to teach by “meaning” is a curious foreshadowing of the Boston school materials that surfaced about a decade later immediately after Superintendent Philbrick was fired. The general period of 1867 or so appears by other indications to have been the start of the Agassiz-inspired educational reforms, of which firing Superintendent Philbrick who endorsed “sound” for beginning reading appears to have been one in 1878. It would be of interest to see if any recorded tie existed by 1867 between the Agassiz change-agent Cambridge clique and the co-authors of this book, Edwards and Warren, or their publishers, Geo. and C. W. Sherwood of Chicago, and Taintor & Co. of New York.

This book is a failure as a spelling book but has some isolated worthwhile material.)

1867 My First Alphabet, Published by George Routledge & Sons, London and New York. (Harvard copy. British content. Not for teaching reading, but only the alphabet. It shows a picture and word for each large and small letter. The company advertised its “3 Penny Toy Books” - My First Alphabet, The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe, Little Bo Peep, Mother Goose, The Five (sic) Little Pigs, The Babes in the Woods, The House that Jack Built, Little Red Riding Hood, and one other. See later entries for Routledge.)

1867 *The Progressive First Reader for Primary Classes in Our Public and Private Schools*, New Edition, Revised and Enlarged, Salem Town and Nelson M. Holbrook, Published by Oliver Ellsworth, Boston. (Harvard copy. See earlier entries on the Town and Holbrook materials. The cover shows that by 1867 Ellsworth was publishing not just the *Progressive Pictorial Primer* but the *Progressive Pronouncing Primer*, obviously a move toward “sound” in beginning reading in the increasingly “sound”-conscious Boston of the 1860’s. Yet this once very widely used series was apparently out of print when the 1876 *American Catalogue* was published, only nine years later. This *First Reader* is not a beginning book, but new words are marked diacritically. In “Remarks to Teacher,” besides discussing the table of elementary sounds on which pupils were to be drilled, it said, “The meaning of the key-marks, and the orthography and pronunciation of the spelling lessons, should be so thoroughly learned that each word can be pronounced at sight.” Was the increased emphasis on “sound” in the newer Ellsworth materials the reason for their apparently rapid demise?

#### 1867 *Ragged Dick*, by Horatio Alger

(According to Lawrence A. Cremin in his book, *American Education, The National Experience, 1783-1876*, Harper & Row, 1980, page 260, this was apparently Horatio Alger’s first book, and it was published in 1867. Alger eventually produced 108 novels, with an estimated sale until after World War I of 100 million copies. Compare that possibly reliable estimate for Alger’s books to the obviously inflated “estimate” for the McGuffey readers, discussed earlier, of 122 million! The 100 million figure for Horatio Alger sales obviously demonstrates his enormous success. Of course, all of those sales were made outside of school influence, and only for the reading pleasure of children and adolescents.

Using a rough readability measure, Alger’s books work out to at least the upper eighth grade level, and frequently higher, while novels written for adolescents today rate about a fourth or fifth grade level (as I know from rating such books while taking a course on adolescent literature during the 1970’s). Alger’s novels glorified free private enterprise, hard work, personal responsibility, uncompromising honesty and individualism. These qualities rarely appeared in the adolescent novels I reviewed, but the books did often contain a heavy emphasis on sexual urges, which emphasis was totally missing from Alger’s books.

Alger’s novels disappeared from public libraries about the time of World War I, in the general time-frame when most of America’s intellectual elite were embracing various versions of socialism, the antithesis of the Alger world view. I was able to read some of Alger’s addictive books as a child - and loved them, as did my age-mates - only because some copies were found in the attics of relatives and friends during the 1930’s.

On page 61, *Early American Textbooks* lists five novels by Horatio Alger, stating he had written over 100.

On pages vi and vii of his Introduction to the 1967 Holt, Rinehart and Winston reprinting of two of Alger’s stories under the book title of *Strive and Succeed*, S. N. Behrman said:

“When I was a boy in Worcester, Massachusetts, I read Alger as omnivorously as [Henry] Ford and [George] Eastman and the others did, with, alas, less flourishing results.”

He had already listed James B. Duke, James A. Farrell, Darwin P. Kingsley, David Sarnoff, Julius Rosenwald, General Goethals, Thomas A. Edison, John D. Rockefeller, Joyce Kilmer, and John Drew as having been readers of Alger’s books. He continued,

“I read them for excitement, encouragement, and fun. I took an Alger a day from the Worcester Public Library. I read Alger and Shakespeare indiscriminately; I was steeped in both. It was not at all a bad combination.... Since the Algers disappeared from the Worcester Public Library by 1907, I must have gobbled them all before I was fourteen. The Algers disappeared, not by edict, but by passive resistance on the part of the librarians, or, possibly, atrophy of demand. There was a storm of protest in Worcester about the unavailability of the Algers, not by the young, who had picked up other favorites, but by irate oldsters. A stormy article appeared in the Worcester Gazette on August 10, 1907, headed: DEMAND RETURN OF BOYS’ BOOKS SOME DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC LIBRARY DIDN’T KNOW POPULAR VOLUMES WERE BEING THROWN IN WASTE HEAP.... Alger helped Shakespeare to make a reading addict out of me very early, so that he did, in a way, as much for me as he did for Henry Ford.... The other day I got a pleasant letter from an unknown correspondent... who confesses to being eighty.... He writes: ‘The first time my brother (who was two years older than I) got his library card, he took a Horatio Alger book out of the Pratt Street library in Baltimore.... We read it while walking home for our Sabbath midday dinner. By afternoon we had finished it and walked back to the library. That was at least a mile. Joe returned the book and asked for another. This was refused: the rules didn’t permit books being taken out more than once a day....’ The Dictionary of American Biography says of Alger that ‘he was the most successful writer of boys’ stories in the whole of American literature.’”

Yet Alger’s novels were read as avidly by girls, such as the few stray copies that my sisters and I found to read in the 1930’s. He continued, saying,

“Well now, after sixty years, I have read two more Algers, the two contained in this volume.” [Ed. Strive and Succeed contains *The Store Boy, or The Fortunes of Ben Barclay*, and *Julius, The Street Boy Out West*.] “I hope the Worcester Public Library doesn’t hear about it but, if it does, I can assure it that I have emerged unscathed. I don’t know any comparable reading experience: it is like taking a shower bath in sheer innocence....”

Horatio Alger’s “capitalistic” books have very possibly been on what amounts to a probably unconscious book-burning list of the liberal left for many years, which is a very possible reason that Alger’s novels disappeared from public libraries such as Worcester’s by the time of World War I. Yet, since about the time of World War I, the liberal left hypocritically has been publicly on record as vociferously opposing censorship for ALL books, particularly in government schools, EXCEPT, of course, for the censorship of the Bible in government schools.)

1867-1868 United States Reading Books, First 20c, Second 40c. American Tract Society, New York. (In print in 1876 according to the United States Catalogue. No other information is available on them. See 1850, 1860(?), and 1864 entries for the American Tract Society.)

1868 First Book in Spelling and Reading. Noble Butler. John P. Morton & Co., Louisville, Kentucky (1876 American Catalogue)

1868 The Little Reading-Book, in Words of One Syllable. 32 p. London, Edinburgh, and New York. T. Nelson and Sons (In Early American Textbooks)

1868 The Phonic Reader, No. 1, A. 112 pages. Knell and J. H. Jones. 27c. Published by Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio; Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia; Clark & Maynard, New York. (Listed in Early American Textbooks, page 90, and in 1876 American Catalogue. The Knell and Jones Phonic Reader was mentioned by F. Buisson of France in his report of the 1876 Philadelphia

Exposition. See Appendix C and comments in the body of this history. See other entries for Claxton and Clark & Maynard.)

1868 McGuffey's New Eclectic Primer; in Phonetic Type. New Edition. Edwin Leigh. 20c. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers.)

1868 McGuffey's New Primary Reader; in Phonetic Type. New Edition. Edwin Leigh. 35c. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Readers and in Early American Textbooks.)

1868 The American Speller, Henry N. Day. Charles Scribner & Co., 54 Broadway, New York. (Harvard copy. Code 7, in the very unlikely event it was ever used for any beginners. Preface: "To spell is to name the alphabetic sounds that make up a written word....")

1868 Reynold's New Pictorial Reader for Schools and Families - Second, J(ames) Lawrence Reynolds. Published by Walker, Evans & Cogswell Co., South Carolina.

(Harvard copy. Reynold's 6-volume series of readers are listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as published by "Duffie," consisting of Pictorial Primer, Primary Reader, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Readers. Early American Textbooks on page 102 lists Reynold's New Fourth Reader published in 1870 by Duffie & Chapman, Columbia, S. C., and E. J. Hale & Son, New York. From the few photocopies I have available of the Harvard Second Reader, I believe Reynold's was probably a Code 1 series. Reynold's series was discussed by Reeder, page 52. See the body of this history for reports on the use of Reynold's series at teachers' institutes in the South.)

1868 Parents' Gift; or Reading Book for Little Children. R. Collins. Claxton. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. Claxton is Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, listed in Early American Textbooks as Philadelphia publishers of two of Ray's arithmetics. See other entries for Claxton.)

1868 Readers, Six Volumes, M. A. Newell and W. R. Creery, P. Kelly & Co.

(Listed in 1876 American Catalogue, as is the Grammar School Spelling Book by W. R. Creery, and the 1871 Illustrated Primary Spelling Book, New Edition by W. R. Creery, both published by P. Kelly & Co. On page 98, Early American Textbooks lists The Fifth Reader by M. Alexander Newell, with no mention of Creery, published in 1883 by John B. Piet & Co. of Baltimore. A later American Catalogue lists the Grammar School Speller by M. A. Newell and W. R. Creery published in 1885, but the publisher is shown as Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati, the publishers of the McGuffey Readers. No other references have turned up anywhere concerning readers or spellers by Newell and Creery, which is surprising since they remained in print for close to twenty years, from 1868 until 1885. They were out of print by the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published. See the entry in Appendix C.)

1869 Reading and Elocution. Mrs. A. T. Diehl. \$1.40. Ivison. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. See other entries for Mrs. Diehl.)

1870 Rhetorical Reader. 384 pages. \$1.25 Robert Kidd. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Readers and in Early American Textbooks. See 1857 entry.)

1870-1872 Osgood's American Series of Readers. Published by A. H. English & Co., Pittsburgh.

(The 1855 Osgood Progressive Series, listed previously, was revised in 1870-1872 as Osgood's American Series of Readers, Primer to Sixth and was listed as such in the American Catalogue for 1876.)

Also printed by A. H. English & Co. was Osgood's American Primary Speller. The series was apparently being sold by 1881 by Sheldon. It was not in print in 1912 according to the 1912 United States Catalog. From Nietz's description of the series and reproduction of a primer page, the 1855 series - and probably the 1870 series - was a meaning approach.

Both the 1870-1872 Osgood readers and the 1855 Progressive Series were listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, but the Progressive series appeared as a "new" 1868 edition by English. However, as an apparent misprint, those Progressive materials published by English were not placed under Osgood's name but under the name, "P. O'Shea." "O'Shea" published readers with the title, the Illustrated Progressive Series of readers. There is probably no connection between the English and O'Shea materials, aside from the use of the word, progressive, in their titles.

Both the 1855 (as revised in 1868) and 1870 Osgood series were apparently out of print by the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published.)

1870 The Golden First Reader (96 pages), Miss Anne M. Mitchell. Presbyterian Publications Committee, Philadelphia; A. D. F. Randolph & Co., New York (Listed in Early American Textbooks, page 95. Listed as in print by "Pres. Bd." for 25c in the 1876 American Catalogue. Also listed under Primers is her Golden Primer. No other information is available. See entries under 1876.)

1870 The Institute Reader and Normal Class Book for the Use of Teachers' Institutes and Normal Schools and for Self-Training in the Art of Reading. William H. Cole. Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati; Clark & Maynard, New York.

(Harvard copy. Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. Preface:

"Teachers' institutes are now held periodically in nearly every county of the states in which Free Schools have been established, and Normal Schools are annually increasing in number and influence. The Author's experience in such schools satisfies him that, while there are many excellent works on Elocution, and numerous valuable series of Readers, no single book has yet been presented to the public which contains all the varieties of exercises in the different grades and styles that is necessary in presenting to teachers the subject, How to Teach Reading.... It is mainly to meet this evident want of a reading book for training schools, that the present work has been prepared...."

See comments on this material in Appendix C and in the body of this history.)

1870-1872 Holmes Readers (First to Sixth), George F. Holmes, University Publishing Company, New York (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue)

See the earlier entries on Holmes' books, dating from 1866. According to Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, the Department of Education Library has a copy of The Southern Pictorial Primer, or First Reader by George F. Holmes, published by Richardson & Company in New York in 1866, a year before the University edition. Also shown in Early American Textbooks is the Southern University Series, The Southern Pictorial Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Readers, all 1866 except the last which was 1869, and all published by Richardson & Company, New York. Early American Textbooks also has an entry for University Series - Holmes First Reader, New York and Baltimore, University Publishing Co., 1870, as well as second to sixth readers. The second and third readers have editions of 1870 and 1871, the fourth and fifth an edition of 1870, and Holmes Sixth Reader by University Publishing has an edition of 1872. For the New Edition, Early American Textbooks lists G. F. Holmes' and L. W. Anderson's Holmes Third Reader, New Edition, New York: University Publishing Company, 1887.

It appears that the Holmes "University" series had a standard edition and a Southern edition, and the Southern "University" edition was published by Richardson & Co. and moved into the Southern states by 1866, only a year after the Civil War ended, before the standard edition was put out by University Publishing Company. The Holmes readers are Code 2 materials.

1871 Thinker Series of School Readers, 4 nos. Joseph Bartlett Burleigh. LL. D., Claxton.

(Shown as published in 1871 in the 1876 American Catalogue, but no other record. The company was Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger of Philadelphia, who appear in Early American Textbooks as Philadelphia publishers of two of Ray's Arithmetics. See other entries for Claxton taken from the 1876 American Catalogue.

See the 1851 entry for The Child's Little Thinker, A Practical Spelling Book, Containing Easy, Gradual and Progressive Lessons in Pronouncing, Spelling, Reading, Thinking, and Composing, Arranged on a New and Original Plan, by Joseph Bartlett Burleigh, LL. D., published in 1854 by Lippincott, Grambo Co., Philadelphia. The Claxton "Thinker Series" was by Burleigh, and was most probably dominantly a Code 1 approach like the 1851 book. Burleigh's upper-level reader, The American Manual, was mentioned earlier as published by Lippincott. See the 1876 entry from the 1876 American Catalogue on other Burleigh material published by Lippincott.)

1871 Leigh's Pronouncing Edition. Analytical First Reader - Analytical Series. Richard Edwards and J. Russell Webb. (Harvard library has two copies of Edwin Leigh's Code 10 version, one apparently wrongly dated by the library 1870 and one dated 1871. The standard print edition was first published in 1866. This carries a copyright date for the Leigh edition of 1871, the obvious first appearance of the Leigh edition.)

1871 The American Spelling Book, American School Series, Noble Butler. Published in 1874 by John P. Morton and Company, Louisville, Kentucky. Electrotyped by Robert Rowell, Louisville, Kentucky. (Harvard copy. See discussion in Appendix C and in the body of this history on Noble Butler and the Morton company.)

1871 A Juvenile Reader, Which Aims at Securing the Advantages of the Phonetic System By Teaching First the Strictly Phonetic Part of the English Language and Subsequently Some of Its Irregularities, Without Altering the Forms of Our Letters, Including, Also, First Lessons in Drawing. Elizabeth Hoxie. Published by William H. Huse & Co., Printers, Newburyport, Rhode Island. (Harvard copy. Wrong phonic approach, using Latin vowels, and so cannot be given a meaningful code. Like Elizabeth Peabody's book given earlier, to whom she refers. Confused make-up, apparently meant to teach sounds from whole words.)

1871 Child's First Lesson-Book. \$1.25. Routledge. (Listed under Primers in the 1876 American Catalogue. See other Routledge entries.)

1871 The New American First Reader, Epes Sargent and Amasa May. Copyrighted by E. H. Butler & Co., Washington, D. C. Published by J. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia.

(In 1876 American Catalogue. 6 v.: First reader, 20c - Second 30c - Third 50c - Fourth 60c - Fifth 90c - Etymological reader, 1.50. Harvard copy of First Reader. Not enough photocopies available for me to judge firmly, but an apparent Code 7 which permitted sight teaching if desired. See material on Sargent and May, and the Butler company in Appendix C and the body of this history. See the two earlier series by Sargent alone which were published by Shorey which rated Code 1.)

1871-1875 New York Readers and Spellers. New Edition. Four volumes: Nos. 1, 2, 3, and New York Spelling Book, or Fourth Book. Claxton. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. Presumably revisions of Samuel Wood's old materials dating from 1806. Claxton is Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, listed in Early American Textbooks as Philadelphia publishers of two of Ray's arithmetics. See other entries for Claxton.)

1872 School Stories with Questions. 101 pages, John R. Keep, Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, Columbus, Ohio (In Early American Textbooks.)

1872 Word-book of Spelling, Oral and Written. William Swinton. Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York (In 1876 American Catalogue. See Appendix C for Swinton's other books published by Ivison.)

1872 Facts and Fancies for School-day Reading. New ed.'72. Mrs. C. M. Sedgwick. 75c. Putnam. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)

1872 The New American Primary Speller, No Author Given, The New American Series, J. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. From the few photocopies available, it appears to be analytic phonics.)

1872 The New American Pronouncing Speller, E. H. Butler & Co.'s New American Series, by S. Mecutchen. Published by J. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. A poor phonic arrangement. See the readers of this series by Epes Sargent and Amasa May, and the discussion on these materials in Appendix C and the body of this history.)

1872 The Fourth Reader, Cowperthwait & Co.'s Educational Series. Lewis B. Monroe, Dean of Boston University School of Oratory. Published by Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.

(Harvard copy. Monroe's materials are discussed in the body of this history and in Appendix C.)

1872 The Rational Phonetic Primer, An Introduction to the Series of Rational Readers. Dr. Ad. Douai, Published by E. Steiger, New York.

(Harvard copy. Code 10. Shown in 1876 American Catalogue as having a second edition in 1874. Also shown were the Rational Readers, 1873-1874: First Reader, Second Reader, and Third Reader. Early American Textbooks, page 81, shows the Manual for Teachers, An Introduction to the Series of Rational Readers, New York, E. Steiger, 1872, and, on page 69, The Rational Phonetic Primer, 1872. The cover of the Harvard 1872 text showed that E. Steiger published other German-American primers and texts. The Ward phonetic series of the 1890's also used the adjective, "rational." Ward may have been influenced in writing his 1890's phonetic series by the 1872 Douai phonetic series, which Douai said was inspired by German materials.)

1872?-1875 The Independent Series [a partial phonics approach]. J. Madison Watson. (See Watson's earlier series with Richard G. Parker.) A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans.

(Harvard has a copy of the 1875 The Independent Primary Reader; the Library of Congress has a copy of the 1872 Independent Child's Speller; Barnes' series were cited at length in Barnes' advertisements in the back of Barnes' texts. The Independent Series was listed in the 1876 American Catalog as a seven-volume series: Independent Primary Reader 25c, not published until 1875, First Reader 25c, presumably dating from about 1872, Second 50c, Third 75c, Fourth \$1, Fifth \$1.25, Sixth

\$1.50. At some point before 1876, the original Independent First Reader was published in Leigh type by Barnes, and is shown in the 1876 American Catalogue as Independent First Reader, in Phonetic Type - 25c, by Edwin Leigh. The Independent First Reader had not been strongly phonic and had therefore been published in Leigh type. Presumably, the 1875 non-Leigh-print Independent Primary Reader was meant by Watson to be phonically competitive with his earlier Leigh-print beginning book since the Harvard copy rates a Code 7.)

1872 The New Japan Pictorial Primer, 43 pages. William Elliot Griffis. A. L. Bancroft and Co., San Francisco (In Early American Textbooks)

1873 The First Reader of the New Japan Series. 60 pages. William Elliot Griffis. San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co.; Yokohama: Stone & Chipman, (In Early American Textbooks)

1873 Nursery Reading Book. 75c. Published by M. Taylor. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. No further information is available on it. See other 1873 entry on Taylor.)

1873 Introductory Reading Book. 4th Edition. E. C. Pomeroy. 50c. M. Taylor. In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers. Early American Textbooks listed a later 1878 edition, recording it as "The Introductory Reading-Book. E. C. Pomeroy. Buffalo, N. Y.: Otto Ulbrich, 1878. 143 p."

Early American Textbooks reproduced the first page on page 94. That selection indicates the book was preceded by another book which was probably a sight-word primer. That Pomeroy's material had a fourth edition by 1873 and was still in print in 1876 indicates it had some popularity. It most probably was a reading series, but no further information is available on it. It obviously changed publishers sometime between 1873 and 1878, probably after 1876. See the other 1873 entry on the publisher in 1873 and possibly in 1876, Taylor, who might also have been located in Buffalo like the 1878 publisher, Ulbrich. Whether there was any relation to the Taylor of the Ivison group, listed directly below, or to Baker and Taylor is unknown.

1873 Word-primer: Beginner's Book in Oral and Written Spelling, by William Swinton. Published by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. (In 1876 American Catalogue. See Appendix C for other books by Swinton published by Ivison.)

1873 The American Educational Readers, New Graded Readers. (7 vols. listed in 1876 American Catalogue: No. 1, 25c, In Leigh's Orthog. 30c, 2, 40c, In Leigh's Orthog. 50c, 3, 50c, 4, 80c, 70c [sic], 5, \$1.20.) Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor and Co., New York - Chicago. Buisson reviewed the First Reader in his report on the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition. On page 75, Early American Textbooks shows American Educational Series - The Graded Second Reader. New York and Chicago: Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor, & Co. 1875.

Early American Textbooks also shows on the same page the First, Second, and Fourth Readers of The American Educational Readers, dating them to 1873, but wrongly showing their 1873 publisher as American Book Co. Since American Book Co. was not formed until 1890, and one of its predecessors was Ivison, it is apparent that American Book reprinted some of Ivison's materials after 1890, but showed their 1873 copyright date. This material is discussed elsewhere. It was apparently low-code, except in Leigh print.)

1873 The Franklin Primer or First Reader, George S. Hillard and L. J. Campbell.

(The nine-volume Franklin series and the earlier Hillard series, the New Series of Readers, obviously the 1864 one with Campbell, are listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as published by Taintor and Ware. A single text by Hillard, First Primary Reader, obviously from the first 1850's series, is shown as



published only by Taintor. As mentioned elsewhere, the 1876 American Catalogue was not published until 1880, so it would probably have reflected the change in company names to Taintor of New York and Ware of Boston which probably took place in 1877, not 1876.

Harvard has two copies of The Franklin Primer or First Reader, NOT in Leigh print, which were printed after 1876 by University Press, first when it was held by Welch, Bigelow & Co., and then when it was held by John Wilson & Son. Both copies show the publisher as Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., N. Y. and Wm. Ware & Co., successors to Brewer & Tileston, Boston. These two editions with their convoluted backgrounds are discussed at length in the body of this history. The Franklin Primer or First Reader is Code 1 at the beginning, and Code 3 later only because of reviewing some sight words by phonic analogies. The New York Public Library has no Hillard first readers, but does have an Appleton first. The New York Public Library beginning reading book collection is very unsatisfactory and incomplete.)

1873 Monroe's First Reader - Revision. Lewis B(axter) Monroe. Published by Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia. (Harvard copy. Mixed sight and sound approach: effect Code 3. Harvard library also has an 1875 copy. See other entries in this appendix and in Appendix C on Monroe, and in the body of this history. The 1876 American Catalogue lists L. B. Monroe's six "Readers" as published by Cowperthwait.)

1873 The First Reader. Lewis B(axter) Monroe. Edited in Pronouncing Orthography by Edwin Leigh. 96 p. Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia. (In Early American Textbooks, p. 95. Also lists a German bilingual edition of 1877. The Leigh edition was not listed with Monroe's materials in the 1876 American Catalogue so possibly was withdrawn by that date. Monroe was a Bostonian, and that is where the hostility to Leigh obviously originated.)

1873-1876 Model Readers, 4 vols., John Russell Webb (1824-1887), Published by "Sherwood."

(Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue. Listed under the same initials shown were Normal Readers, Taintor, 5 volumes, no date. See the extensive reporting elsewhere in this history and in Appendix C on Webb's "meaning" materials and on Sherwood and Taintor.)

1873 Pacific Coast Series (Original Edition - First to Fifth Readers) The Pacific Coast First Reader. 56 p., The Pacific Coast Second Reader, 120 p., The Pacific Coast Third Reader, 216 p., Annie Wilson Patterson, editor of First, Second, and Third; The Pacific Coast Fifth Reader, 312 p., S. L. Simpson, editor of Fifth. (Editor of Fourth unknown.) A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco

(In Early American Textbooks, p. 84, 99, 100, 107. See Appendix C and the body of this history concerning these readers and the 1883 revision on which Josiah Royce worked.)

1874-75 Pacific Coast Series. (Revised Edition) The Pacific Coast First Reader. Rev. ed., 60 p. (1874), The Pacific Coast Second Reader. Rev. ed., 120 p. (1874), The Pacific Coast Third Reader. Rev. ed., 216 p. (1874), The Pacific Coast Fourth Reader. Rev. ed., 240 p. (1874), The Pacific Coast Fifth Reader. Rev. ed., 312 p. (1874), The Instructive Reader. 321 p. (1875). (In 1876 American Catalogue and Early American Textbooks, p. 84, 99, 100, 107)

1874 The Young Catholic's Illustrated Speller, Published by the Catholic Publication Society Co., Lawrence Kehoe, Manager, 9 Barclay Street, New York. (Harvard copy. Discussed in Appendix C and the body of this history.)

1874 The Catholic National Series - The First Reader, Rt. Rev. Richard Gilmour, Bishop of Cleveland, Published by Benziger Brothers, New York, Cincinnati, St. Louis. (Harvard copy. See the discussion on this material elsewhere in this history and in Appendix C. The 1876 American Catalogue lists Catholic National Readers, 4 volumes, by R. Gilmour. The 1876-1885 American Catalogues show that the fifth reader of this series was published by Benziger in 1877.)

1874 Literary Reader. G. R. Cathcart. \$1.60. Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue.)

1874 Word Method for Beginners, American (Standard) School Series, Wm. J. Davis, Published by John P. Morton & Co., Louisville, Kentucky. (Listed on the back cover of Harvard's copy of the 1871 The American Spelling Book by Noble Butler. See discussion on the Morton company in Appendix C.)

1875 Illustrated Primer (40 cents) Lothrop (In 1876 American Catalogue. See other Lothrop entries in this and Appendix C.)

1875 New England Primer (Facsimile) 12c. Cong. Pub. - Same. With Hist. Sketch. 1875. 30c. Munsell. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers.)

1875 Choice Readings, Third edition. \$1.50. Mrs. A. T. Diehl. Claxton. (In 1876 American Catalogue. Claxton is Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, listed in Early American Textbooks as Philadelphia publishers of two of Ray's arithmetics. The March, 1880, Supplement at the end of the 1876 American Catalogue showed Claxton's address at that time as 624-628 Market Street, Philadelphia. See other entries on Mrs. Diehl.)

1875 Nursery Primer and Self-Teaching Reader, for Beginners. 30c. Shorey. (In 1876 American Catalogue. Presumably this is John L. Shorey who had published the Boston editions of Epes Sargent's series from 1865, according to the listings in Early American Textbooks. The title of this text is intriguing but the approach and the author are unknown. It was apparently the publisher Shorey's last effort, as his name seems to have disappeared from the records after this date.)

1875 The Graded-School Third Reader, Eclectic Educational Series, T. W. Harvey, A. M., Published by Wilson, Hinkle & Co., 137 Walnut Street, Cincinnati and 28 Bond Street, New York.

(Harvard copy. Stamped, "Complimentary Copy, M. W. Tewksbury, N. E. Agent, 8 Hawley St., Boston - Opinion Desired." Also stamped "Harvard College Library, From the Gift of Charles Herbert Thurber, 1927." The Harvey series put out by Wilson, Hinkle & Co., the publisher of McGuffey's, is discussed in the body of this history and in Appendix C. It is listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as containing five volumes.)

1875 Macmillan Reading Books, 7 vols., Primer, Books 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, Macmillan, Publisher. (These English materials are listed in the 1876 American Catalogue with American prices: Primer, 10c. - Bk. 1, 15c. 2, 20c. 3, 25c. 4 40c. 5 50c. 6: Introd. to English Literature. \$1. See Appendix C and the body of this history for other materials by Macmillan.)

1875 Word Method: A New Method of Teaching Reading, Founded on Nature and Reason, New Edition. 30c. John Russell Webb (1824-1887). Published by E. B. Smith & Co., Detroit; Nichols & Hall, Boston. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers, as published only by Smith, this full title being taken from an existing library copy. See other entries on Webb Materials principally by John Russell Webb but also by W. H. Webb.)

1875-1876 Readers - First, Second, Progressive Third Reader, J. M. Elgas. Published by Pustet. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue with the author's initials, "J. M." Early American Textbooks shows on page 82 Third Reader for the Use of Catholic Schools. Matthew J. Elgas. Published by Fr. Pustet, 1875, New York and Cincinnati.)

1876 and Before - Listing of McGuffey's as it appeared in the 1876 American Catalogue, before the 1879 revision: New Eclectic Series. New Ed. 8 v. - New Eclectic Primer, 16c, First Reader, 18c, Second Reader, 35c, Third Reader, 50c, Fourth Reader, 60c, Fifth Reader, 95c, Sixth Reader, \$1.15. Pictorial Eclectic Primer, 12c. W. H. McGuffey, Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. Under "Primers" in the 1876 American Catalogue appeared the Leigh-print McGuffey texts published by Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.

1876 and Before - American First Class Book, 95c. National Reader. 63c. New Reader. 45c. The Young Reader. 15c, by J. Pierpont. Published by Lippincott. (In 1876 American Catalogue. Lippincott apparently became the last publisher of the famous Pierpont readers dating back to the 1820's, some under new titles.)

1876 and Before - Elementary Reader. Noah Webster. Per Doz., Net. \$1.20. Appleton. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue)

1876 and Before - Elementary Spelling Book. Noah Webster. Per doz., net. \$1.20. Appleton.

(Listed in 1876 American Catalogue, under Spellers. Immediately under it is Speller and Definer, 25c, published by Morton. That would have been the book written by Noah Webster's son, not Noah Webster, and which was published by Coolidge in the 1840's, discussed elsewhere in this history. Coolidge about that time had the Webster speller as well, and was publishing sight-word primers, to be used before Webster's speller. Another undoubtedly popular spelling book before 1876 was W. H. McGuffey's New Eclectic Spelling Book, listed in 1876 at 18c a copy. Yet that obviously would not have been very competitive with Webster's 10c a copy, when sold in a package of 12.

Under Spellers, the 1876 American Catalogue listed at least 138 different titles of spellers, or more if new editions are counted. Some of the materials, like Webster's and McGuffey's, had been on the market since before 1840. They were meant for levels from primary to high school. The probability is that the sales of most of that vast number of spellers were wiped out by the Quincy anti-speller influence some time after 1876. The 1876-1885 American Catalogue and 1885-1890 American Catalogue listed new spellers published in those intervening years, producing this pattern: 1877-3, 1878-3, 1879-4, 1880-0, 1881-3, 1882-0, 1883-0, 1884-7, 1885-4, 1886-2, 1887-1, 1888-4, 1889-5, 1890 (incomplete) - 2. Except for what may have been three laggard spellers finally published in 1881, the pattern suggests that, starting in 1879 and continuing into 1883, little market existed for spellers. Then there was a sharp increase in the popularity of spellers starting in 1884. Those statistics confirm J. H. Stickney's statement in *Word by Word: Primary Spelling Book of Ginn*, copyrighted in 1889, that the speller had gone out of favor because of "expert" influence but was returning because of massive spelling failures.

As discussed elsewhere, by 1885, Appleton's was speaking of sales of Webster's speller of over a million a year. It appears likely that Webster's sales had also sharply declined after 1875 and then picked up again about 1883, possibly in part because many of the pre-1876 spellers had probably gone out of print by 1883. McGuffey's publisher obviously moved to capture part of that rapidly expanding market, because the price of the W. H. McGuffey "Alternate Speller" published in 1888 by Van Antwerp was only 14c, making it more competitive with Webster's, which had probably increased in price from the 10c in lots of 12 that had been published for 1876. Webster's was a heavily phonic speller and so, most probably, was the new McGuffey. As Stickney's 1889 speller demonstrated, there must have been a

market for such heavily phonic spellers by that date or she never would have written hers, particularly since she was the author of a sight-word reading series. It should be emphasized, however, that the use of a speller as a BEGINNING book had ceased almost everywhere in America not long after 1826. Spellings, after that change-agent period, were not used until after a child had been taught sight-word primers.)

1876 or Before - Young Ladies' Progressive Reader; for Higher Classes in Cath. Schools, \$1.25. P. O'Shea, New York. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)

1876 or Before - Normal Primary Speller, Normal Speller, Rev. Ed. Albert Newton Raub. Sower (In 1876 American Catalogue under Spellings. See Porter & Coates; Werner; American Book)

1876 or Before - Children's Friend's Reader. \$1. F. P. Wilmsen. Sower. (In the 1876 American Catalogue under Readers.)

1876 or Before - Historical Shakespearian Reader, J. W. S. Hows, \$1.50. Shakespearian Reader. J. W. S. Hows. \$1.50. Appleton. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue. See other entries for Hows by Butler.)

1876 or Before - Junior Ladies' Reader. J. W. S. Hows. \$1.50. Ladies' Book of Read. and Recitation. J. W. S. Hows. \$1.88. Ladies Reader. J. W. S. Hows. \$1.75. Primary Ladies' Reader. J. W. S. Hows. 60c. Published by Butler. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue. See Appleton entries on Hows.)

1876 or Before - Biographical Sketches: Designed as a Reader for Schools. Lord T. B. Macauley. \$1. Appleton (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue.)

1876 or Before - First Book of Spelling and Reading Lessons. 18c. Second Reader for Catholic Schools. 33c. Benziger. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue. See the other entry in this appendix and in Appendix C on Benziger's series for Catholic schools.)

1876 or Before - Reader and Book of Knowledge. J. Comly. 48c. Lippincott. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue.)

1876 or Before - Questional Reader and Union Speaker. R. Culver. \$1. See 1855 entry for Culver. Lippincott. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue.)

1876 or Before - Phonic Primer, and Primary Reader. 35c. Rev. J. C. Zachos. Lee & Shepard, Boston. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. Also see 1859 Zachos text published by Wiltstach, and other entries on Zachos in this appendix, Appendix C, and the text.)

1876 or Before - Nelson's Picture Primer. 25c Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. See Chapter 46 for information on the Nelson materials.)

1876 or Before - Advanced Reader. \$1.25. Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York (In 1876 American Catalogue. See Chapter 46 for information on the Nelson materials.)

1876 or Before - Royal Readers (8 vols. # 1 and Sequel, 2 and Sequel, # 3, 4, 5, 6.) Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York (In 1876 American Catalogue. See Chapter 46 for information on the Nelson materials.)

1876 or Before - Senior Reader, \$1.25. Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York (In 1876 American Catalogue. See Chapter 46 for information on the Nelson materials.)

1876 or Before - Copy-Book Primer: Elements of Reading and Writing Combined. 30c. J. D. Love. A. S. Barnes & Company, New York, Chicago and New Orleans (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers.)

1876 or Before - National Primer, in Phonetic Type. A. S. Barnes & Company, New York, Chicago and New Orleans. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. The "Phonetic Type" was undoubtedly Leigh's material.)

1876 or Before - First Lessons in Spelling and Reading, Methodist Book Concern, Nashville, Tennessee? (Shown there by Vail in McGuffey history, p. 53. Listed in 1876 American Catalogue, Per doz. \$1.80. No other information is available on this material.)

1876 or Before - Spelling and Reading Book. Methodist Book Concern, Per dozen, \$1.80. (In print in 1876, according to the "Readers" section of the 1876 American Catalogue. No other information is available on this text.)

1876 or Before - Riverside Greeks, Published by Hurd and Houghton.

(Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, not under "Readers." Also shown were Riverside Juveniles - House that Jack Built, Riverside Press; Centennial Guidebook - 1876. Hurd and Houghton shown earlier at a New York address were actually a Boston firm, which was the obvious reason for their use of the name, "Riverside." In the 1883 American Catalogue, "Houghton" (apparently the successor, Houghton, Mifflin) was shown with a Riverside Literature series including works such as Longfellow's. The literature theme and the "Riverside" press appear to be tied to the drive for the use of "literature" in school readers, promoted by President Charles William Eliot of Harvard, possibly since 1869, as discussed elsewhere. Harvard is, of course, also situated along the Charles River's "riverside" in Cambridge, across from Boston. See the discussion of the Riverside materials in the body of this history and in Appendix C.)

1876 or Before - Christian School Books, 6 v.: ABC Book, Primer, First Reader, Second, Third, Appendix to Third, Treasures for the Memory and Heart, N. Y. Ref. Ch. Bd. (This church series is listed as in print in the 1876 American Catalogue but no other information is available on it.)

1876 or Before - Step by Step: Child's First Lesson Book. 25c. Keystone (Publisher. Listed under Primers in 1876 American Catalogue. No further information is available.)

1876 or Before - Crayon Reader. W. Irving. \$1.25. Putnam. (Listed as in print in the 1876 American Catalogue. No other information is available.)

1876 or Before - Pretty Primer for Good Children. 10c, 15c. J. E. Potter (Publisher. Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers.)

1876 or Before - Spelling Made Easy. 10c, 15c. J. E. Potter (Publisher. Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Spellers.)

1876 or Before - Illustrated Primers. Four Volumes: The Alphabet, Little Words, Spelling Made Easy, Easy Lessons in Reading. 25c each. Routledge. (Listed as in print in 1876 in the American Catalogue under Primers. Routledge was presumably George Routledge & Sons, London and New York. See earlier and later entries for Routledge.)

1876 or Before - Living Letters: Alphabet, With Short Stories on Each Letter. 25c. American Sunday School Union. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (?) (Listed as in print in 1876 in the American Catalogue under Primers.)

1876 or Before - Little Helps for Our Little Ones; or, Reading a Pleasure, Not a Task. (One syllable). 50 c. Routledge. (Listed as in print in 1876 in the American Catalogue under Primers. Routledge was presumably George Routledge & Sons, London and New York. See earlier and later entries for Routledge.)

1876 or Before - New Colored Illustrated Primer, Comp. Alphabet and Easy Words, and Easy Spelling and Reading. 50 c. Routledge. (Listed as in print in 1876 in the American Catalogue under Primers. Routledge was presumably George Routledge & Sons, London and New York. See earlier and later entries for Routledge.)

1876 or Before - Routledge's Illustrated Reading Book. \$1. Routledge. (Listed as in print in 1876 in the American Catalogue under Readers. Routledge was presumably George Routledge & Sons, London and New York. See earlier and later entries for Routledge.)

1876 or Before - Primary Lessons. 10c. West. Tr. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. No further information is available.)

1876 or Before - Infant Reader. 50c. Pres. Bd. (Listed as in print in 1876 American Catalogue. No other information is available. See Presbyterian Board entries for 1876 and 1870.)

1876 or Before - Pictorial First Book for Little Boys and Girls. 50c. Pres. Bd. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. No other information is available. See other Presbyterian Board entries for 1876 and 1870.)

1876 or Before - Beeton's Pictorial Speller, Published by American News and Nelson (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue under Spellers. No further information is available. Nelson is very possibly the famous British publisher.)

1876 or Before - High School Literature: Sel. of Readings. 3d ed. \$1.75. J. F. Monmonier and J. N. McJilton, Barnes. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)

1876 or Before - Everlasting Victoria Primer. 50c. W. & A. Scribner. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. See Scribner in Appendix C.)

1876 or Before - Mavor's Alphabet Spelling and Reading Book. 25c; Mavor's Illustrated Linen Primer, 25c, Mavor's Illustrated Primer, 25c. W. & A. Scribner. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. It is very unlikely that these texts are anything but a play on the name of the early nineteenth century books from England by Rev. Mavor. See Scribner in Appendix C.)

1876 or Before - Warne's Large Type Linen Alphabet, Spelling and Reading. 50c; Warne's Large Type Linen Primer, 25c; Warne's Large Type Primer, 25c; W. & A. Scribner. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. These texts by "Warne," who does not appear in American sources, may also be based on materials from England, as Scribner's Mavor materials were. See Scribner in Appendix C.)

1876 or Before - American Primary School Reader, 2 v., J. B. Burleigh. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia, according to 1876 American Catalogue. See earlier entries on Burleigh.

1876 or Before - Euphonic Spelling-Book and Reader. E. Hazen. J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia. (In 1876 American Catalogue. See earlier entries from 1829 on by E. Hazen, presumably the same man.)

1876 or Before - American School Primer. Collins & Bro. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. No further information is available.)

1876 or Before - Illustrated Prog. Ser. of Readers. 8 v. P. O'Shea was shown as author and the publisher simply as O'Shea. This was listed in the 1876 American Catalogue and shown underneath this entry for P. O'Shea was an 1868 "new" Progressive series published by English, and not "O'Shea," Listing a "P. O'Shea" as author of both materials published by "O'Shea" and by "English" very probably is in error. The publisher, "O'Shea" also published three volumes of the Christian Brothers series. See discussion in Appendix C.)

1876 or Before - Cassell "New Code" Readers, 9 volumes. Cassell. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue with American prices. See the British section of this history concerning the English publisher, Cassell, who apparently did little further business in America after the 1880's. The March, 1880, Supplement to the 1876 American Catalogue showed the name and New York address of this London, England, company as Cassell, Pelter, Galpin & Company, and included two full pages listing their general publications between 1876 and 1880, suggesting they were making a real attempt in 1880 to enter the American market.)

1876 or Before - Christian Brothers Readers. 4 v. Strong. (Listed as in print by Strong in the 1876 American Catalogue. See the 1842 entry for this series. The 1876 American Catalogue also listed as in print under "Primers" this entry for Strong: C. J. Cannon, Lessons for Young Learners, two volumes. Under "Readers," besides the above, was listed Universal Reader, Compiled for [Catholic] Schools, 50 cents, Strong. Under "Spellers" appeared C. J. Cannon's Practical Spelling Book for 25c by Strong, and T. Carpenter's Speller, 25 cents, Strong. No further information is available on Strong, who published the Christian Brothers readers in 1876 along with O'Shea and D. & J. Sadlier.)

1876 or Before - Metropolitan New Series of Readers, 6 volumes, and Metropolitan Old Series, First and Second, Published by Sadlier. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue. They also published the Christian Brothers readers. See the other appendix and the body of this history concerning Sadlier.)

1876 or Before Primary Lessons, or Child's First Book. A. D. Wright. Appleton. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. See 1842 entry for another book by Wright, which includes a discussion of this book.)

1876 or Before - Young Ladies Reader. \$1.25. Mrs. M. A. Sadlier. D. & J. Sadlier (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)

1876 or Before - Introduction to English Reader, Lindley Murray, 31c. D. & J. Sadlier (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers. Presumably prepared from Murray's 1799 or later texts.)

1876 Sadlier's Excelsior Readers; by a Catholic Teacher. 4 volumes. Sadlier's Excelsior First Reader, 25c, Second 50c. Third 75c Fourth \$1. W. H. Sadlier. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)

1876 Select readers, 3 vols. Friends Bk. St., No. 1, 10c. - 2, 20c. - 3, 55c. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers, presumably Quaker materials.)

1876 Sheldon's Readers, E. A. Sheldon, Published by Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York. (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, as New edition - six volumes, 1876 - Primer First through Fifth, "Adapted

to Phonic Mode of Teaching,” which was not true. Sheldon’s phonics, despite his obvious good intentions, rates only as whole-word, phony phonics. The Library of Congress has one of the texts which includes the manual. E. A. Sheldon’s materials are discussed in the body of this history and in Appendix C. His materials should not be confused with the readers published shortly afterwards by the Sheldon company, which company was apparently totally unconnected with the famous E. A. Sheldon of Oswego Normal School, New York State.)

1876 Primary Reader for Deaf Mutes, William H. Latham, Wilson, Hinkle & Co. Cincinnati and New York. (Listed in Early American Textbooks. In print in 1928 according to the United States Catalog by American Book Company, the successor company. No further information is available on this curious book published in 1876 by the publishers of the McGuffey series.)

1876 Illustrated School Books: Readers. (Primer, First-sixth and Young Ladies Illustrated Reader) J. L. Spalding. Cath. Pub. (Listed in 1876-1885 American Catalogue and discussed in the text of this history.)

1876 Pictorial Primer, or First Reader for Parochial Schools. 25c. Barthel. (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers. No further information is available.)

1876 Good Behavior: First Class Reader for District Schools. 25c. Cheney. (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue)

1877 That Comic Primer. F. Bellew. 50c. Carleton (Listed in 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers. Probably not a true child’s primer but a parody, like the 1880 Benjamin Franklin Primer, listed below. The public was possibly being exposed to much publicity on the subject of primers after the Quincy program began in 1875.)

1877 Baby’s Own Primer. Lothrop. (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers. See other Lothrop entries in this appendix and Appendix C.)

1877 The Phono-Syllabic Reader, Ohio Book Company, Cincinnati, Ohio - 100 pages. (Shown in Early American Textbooks, page 101. No other information is available.)

1877 Classical English Reader. H. N. Hudson, \$1.25. Ginn. (Listed in 1875-1885 American Catalogue. Not a beginning reader, but a possible response to Harvard President Charles William Eliot’s and his associates’ campaign for “real” literature in children’s readers.)

1877 Kellogg’s Readers, First Reader. (Phonetic.) T. D. Kellogg, New York, 111 pages. (Shown in Early American Textbooks, page 90. Also shown is First Reader (Phonic.) Rev. Ed., New York: T. D. Kellogg, 1878, 123 pages, and under it “1887, 194 pages,” inexplicably to be considered the same as the 1878 book. No other information is available on these materials which remained in print for at least ten years but which were not listed in the American Catalogues. Apparently T. D. Kellogg was not connected with E. L. Kellogg & Co., the publisher of the change-agent School Journal.)

1877 A Primary Spelling Book of the English Language, Loomis Joseph Campbell, Published by Wm. Ware & Co., Boston, University Press: Welch, Bigelow & Co., Cambridge. (Harvard copy. This “meaning” -approach material by Campbell, the co-author of the Hillard and Campbell readers, is discussed in Appendix C and in the body of this history. It was not included in the American Catalogue list of spellers published between 1876 and 1885.)



1877 The Anglo American Primer, Elieza Boerdman Burnz, Burnz & Co., Fonetice Publisherz, No. 33 Park Row, New York. (Harvard copy. "Speling taut by pronunsiashun. Pronunsiashun taut by speling." Appalling material, which remained in print in another version for some years. See the entry in Appendix C. This was not listed in the 1876-1885 American Catalogue.)

1878 Appleton's School Readers. The First Reader, by Wm. T. Harris, Andrew J. Rickoff, and Mark Bailey. Reading Charts Prepared by Rebecca D. Rickoff. Published in 1883 by D. Appleton and Company, 1, 3, and 5 Bond Street, New York.

(Harvard copy. Listed in the cumulative American Catalogue for 1876-1884 showing first through fifth readers, but nothing was said about a Leigh print edition, although virtually all earlier widely used series had Leigh print editions at the primer levels. The omission of a Leigh pronouncing print edition at the primer levels in 1878 is striking and critical, as Appleton's was a Code 3 phony phonics reader of enormous influence. The Farnham 1873 NEA paper had initiated the powerful and "respectable" "expert" opposition to Leigh print, but it was the vastly used Appleton series which probably struck the death blow to Leigh print and to most of the movement in America towards real phonics in beginning reading. Phonics survived, however, in much of the Midwest, where the Appleton's series' arch-foes, the 1879 McGuffey phonic readers, were widely used.)

The New York Public Library catalog shows that the library has a copy of the Appleton First Reader, but not of the first reader of the other critical series of the period, Hillard and Campbell's Franklin series.

Early American Textbooks, page 86, lists under the Appleton readers The Minnesota Text Book Series by D. D. Merrill of St. Paul, Minnesota, of 1878, so Appleton's was possibly a Minnesota state adoption in 1878, the very first year that Appleton's was published. Simultaneous publication in Minnesota recalls the fact that the Bancroft California series of 1883, only five years later, also had simultaneous (though apparently unofficial) state editions in Indiana and Missouri, as discussed elsewhere in this history. Listed for Minnesota Text Book Series are the Second and Third Readers of 1878, as well as the First Reader of 1887. See the discussion on Appleton's readers in Appendix C and in the body of this history.)

1878 Webster-Franklin Primer or First Reader, G. S. Hillard and L. J. Campbell, Published by Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., New York, and Wm. Ware & Co., Successors to Brewer & Tileston, Boston. (Harvard copy. This is an edition in Webster spelling of the Franklin Primer, but not in Leigh print. See the earlier entries on Hillard and Campbell in this appendix and in Appendix C, and in the text of this history.)

1878 Large Picture Primer. 75c, 50c. Routledge. (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue. See earlier entries on Routledge and entries in Appendix C. Routledge was apparently George Routledge & Sons of London and New York.)

1878 Popular Reading. Mrs. A. R. Diehl. \$1.50. 2nd Ser. 1882, \$1.50. Carleton. (Listed in 1876-1885 American Catalogue. See other entries for Mrs. Diehl.)

1878 After Kindergarten, What? Primer of Reading and Writing. 3 parts. 45c. Elizabeth P. Peabody and Mrs. Mary Mann. Steiger (publisher). (The March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue shows the company name and address as E. Steiger, 25 Park Place, New York. This entry is shown in the 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers. See other entries for Mary Peabody Mann and Elizabeth P. Peabody. See also the 1872 entry for E. Steiger on unrelated books.)

1878 Normal Readers, First through Fifth, Albert N. Raub. (The cumulative American Catalogue for 1876-1884 shows "Normal readers, 5 v. [1878]. Porter & C.," listing Normal first, second, third, fourth and fifth readers. Reported by Nietz on page 102. On page 2082 of the 1912 United States Catalog, under "Readers, Normal," appears "Raub, A. N. New normal readers..." It lists 1st through 5th but gives a publication date of 1906 by American Book, so there was apparently a 1906 revision. See the entry in Appendix C on Raub.)

1878 Easy Reading (25c). Lothrop (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue. See other Lothrop entries in this appendix and Appendix C.)

1879 Linen Primer. Lothrop (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers. Such "indestructible" primers were apparently popular. See Scribner's. See other Lothrop entries in this appendix and Appendix C.)

1879 My Indestructible Primer. 60c. Lippincott. (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers. See other Lippincott entries in this appendix and Appendix C.)

1879-1881 McGuffey's Revised Eclectic Readers, Henry H. Vail, Editor, Published by Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. (Code 10. Note the late arrival of the phonic McGuffey material. The McGuffey materials are discussed at length in Appendix C and in the body of this history. Listed in 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Readers.)

1879 Reading Book of English Classics for Young Pupils. C. W. Leffingwell. \$1.50. Putnam. (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue. Not a beginning book, but an apparent early reaction to the call for classics for children emanating from President Charles William Eliot of Harvard and from his associates.)

1879 Six Popular Tales, Authorized for Use in the Boston Public Schools, Selected and Arranged by Henry Cabot Lodge. Copyrighted by him in 1879 and printed at the Press of Rockwell & Churchill, Boston. (Harvard copy. This was not listed in the 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Readers or Primers. This book is discussed in the body of this history. It obviously was using the "real-literature" approach for beginners. The approach was being promoted by the change-agents who were opposed to Boston Schools Superintendent Philbrick, who had been fired the year before, in March, 1878.

The fact that Lodge, before he was thirty years old, published a book for primary school children in the Boston schools certainly suggests that young Lodge, who was well known by young William James, was part of the Boston-area group which was concerned with "improving" primary school education. That was the group responsible for firing Philbrick. The fact that Philbrick was fired ("lost his place") because of the efforts of that group (the Adamses being specifically named) is confirmed beyond any doubt by the editorial from a Syracuse newspaper which is quoted in the body of this history.)

1879 Selections from American Authors, A Reading Book, by Samuel Eliot. (Listed in the New York Public Library under call number RNPF, although the writer has not seen the book. It would appear that Samuel Eliot, who replaced Philbrick as Boston Schools Superintendent in March, 1878, prepared "suitable" material for reading instruction by 1879, very soon after taking over as Schools Superintendent. "Selections from American Authors" was obviously "real literature" and not just "scraps" in "A Reading Book," as might have been expected from Samuel Eliot, the change-agents' new broom. Boston Schools Superintendent Samuel Eliot's 1879 book presumably joined the above 1879 book by Henry Cabot Lodge, as also being "Authorized for Use in the Boston Public Schools.")

1879 Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book, by Phillip Findlay, Published in 1880 by Estes & Lauriat, Boston, and printed by University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge. (Harvard copy. This

book is not listed in the 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Readers or Primers. It is discussed in the body of this history. This 1879 book possibly joined Samuel Eliot's and Lodge's 1879 books in the Boston primary schools, although it did not carry the notation that it was authorized for use there. However, the fact that it was printed by University Press suggests that it may have joined those books. The connection of the University Press to the change-agents' work at that time is discussed in the body of this history. )

1880 Stories for Language Lessons: Reading Pastime for Little Beginners (50c) Lothrop (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Readers. See other Lothrop entries in this appendix and Appendix C.)

1880, 1883 Little Folks Reader (\$1) Lothrop (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Readers. See other Lothrop entries in this appendix and in Appendix C.

1880 Words and Numbers. 18c. H. Sawyer. H. A. Young (publisher). (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers. No other information is available.)

1880 The Benjamin Franklin Primer. 10c. N. Y. News.

(In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers. In October, 1981, it was listed in the Library of Congress catalog, in the section for "Primers, 1870-1950," as 24 pages, and published in 1880 by Boston School Supply Co., Boston, Mass. The Library of Congress catalog described it as "A satire on the primers and first readers in common use." Why the American Catalogue, which was a contemporary catalog, listed the original publisher in 1880 as N. Y. News, while the Library of Congress showed the 1880 publisher as Boston School Supply Co., is not known, but the Library of Congress catalog card did refer to another edition.

Some time ago, I saw a copy of this book, and it was obviously not a child's book but a parody on children's primers. That suggests that the public had been exposed to considerable and not very welcome publicity on primers by 1880. The period from 1875 to 1880 was Colonel Parker's "Quincy" era, and the period in which Hillard and Campbell's 1873 Franklin series was in wide use. It was also the period in which Leigh-print primers were finally chased out of most American schools (and the Leigh-print Franklin edition apparently disappeared from the Boston/Cambridge area by 1878). The use of the word, "Franklin" in the title of this 1880 parody suggests that the parody was quite pointed and referred particularly to that Hillard and Campbell series (and its fading Leigh-print version). The Franklin primer must have been widely publicized by 1880 or the parody would have been meaningless.)

1880 Supplementary Reading - First Book - Primary Schools, Francis W. Parker, Supervisor of Schools, Boston, and Louis H. Marvel, Superintendent of Schools, Gloucester, Massachusetts. Published by Leach, Shewell, and Sanborn, Boston and New York.

(Harvard copy, marked by the library as an 1884 edition, showing 1880 and 1881 copyright dates by the authors. "Rev. Ed. ['82]" of Supplementary Reading for Primary Schools - First Book, and Second Book, were listed in the 1876-1884 American Catalogue as published by "R. S. Davis, (B.)", about which company no information is available, but the original edition was not listed in the 1876-1884 American Catalogue. Since the revised edition came out in 1882, and the Harvard copy of the original edition carried the library's note that it was printed in 1884, apparently there were two versions in print by 1882, published by different publishers. This appalling Code 1 material is also listed in Appendix C and discussed in the body of this history. Marvel was also co-author with Sarah E. Sprague of the D. D. Merrill Readers in St. Paul (listed in Appendix C), according to page 107 of Early American Textbooks.

The name "Sanborn" in the title of the publisher of Parker's and Marvel's book also appeared in some of the following sequential companies who published the Town and Holbrook, and for a time the Tower, materials. However, whether the "Sanborn" who disappeared from the following company titles some time before 1860 was related to the Sanborn who appeared in the company name of Leach, Shewell and Sanborn in 1880 and who published Parker's and Marvel's book is unknown.

1848 - Sanborn and Carter, Portland, Maine  
1856 - Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company, Boston.  
1857 - Sanborn, Bazin & Ellsworth, Boston.  
By 1860 or earlier - Bazin & Ellsworth, Boston.

Some time after 1862, Bazin & Ellsworth of Boston became simply Oliver Ellsworth of Boston. The company was apparently out of business by the time the 1876 American Catalogue was published.

1880 The Self-Instructing Christian Home Reader, Part I, Rev. F. A. Armstrong, Published by Stephen Payson & Co., St. Louis, Missouri, Bible and Sunday School Book House.

(Harvard copy. Code 10 material, and very, very clever for self-instruction in learning to read. Apparently Armstrong's adaptation of Leigh's approach. Copyrighted in 1880 but "specimen pages" from 1879, with notation, "Address orders to Rev. F. A. Armstrong & Son, Christian Home Press, Kirkwood, St. Louis County, Missouri." Not listed in the 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers or Readers.)

1880 A Graded Spelling Book, by H. F. Harrington. Copyrighted in 1880 but not published until 1881 by Harper & Bros., New York. (Harvard copy. Listed in the 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Spellers as "'81 ['80]." The back cover of this book advertised Swinton's Language Primer and other Swinton grammars. However, Swinton's readers were published by Ivison, not Harper. See Appendix C for both publishers.)

1880 Institute Reader, Ivison (Listed in the 1876-1884 cumulative American Catalogue, during the time that teacher-training "institutes" were so very influential in America, as discussed in the body of this history. See a similar book listed in this appendix which was published in 1870 by Wilson, Hinkle and Company, the publishers of the McGuffey Readers.)

\*\*\*\*\*

By March, 1880: The March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue contained pages submitted by some publishers (but far from all) of books they had published since the cut-off date for the compiling of the 1876 American Catalogue of books in print in that year. The lists were very extensive. Covering all topics, they undoubtedly also covered some books on reading instruction which may very well not be included in this list. However, those 1880 lists have not been searched for new titles on reading instruction.

THE READER IS CAUTIONED THAT APPENDIX B DOES NOT PRETEND TO BE A COMPLETE LIST OF BOOKS ON READING INSTRUCTION, BUT ONLY REFLECTS INFORMATION FROM THOSE SOURCES WHICH HAVE BEEN AVAILABLE TO THIS AUTHOR. IT SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE REPRESENTATIVE.

FOR MATERIALS AFTER 1880, CONSULT APPENDIX C.

# **APPENDIX C**

## **A Partial Annotated List of Children's Beginning Reading Texts Published After 1880 Listed Chronologically Under Publishers' Names**

### **Table of Contents** **Appendix C**

Although this appendix concerns books published after 1880, entries before 1880 are given if post-1880 publishers of children's reading instruction texts had also been in business before 1880 and had published reading instruction texts at that time. Showing the earlier reading instruction texts of those publishers is necessary in order to show the historic influence of those publishers. However, despite the inclusion of pre-1880 texts for long-lived publishers, the fact is that the vast majority of companies which published American reading instruction materials before 1880 were not in business after that date and so do not appear in this appendix.

Furthermore, even most of the publishing companies shown in this post-1880 list are no longer in business, although some of them were once of great importance. However, a small number of the oldest companies shown in this list are still in business today, although usually as divisions of larger and often non-publishing companies. Some of the most prominent of those oldest publishers which still exist, at least in some way, are Ginn, Macmillan, Houghton Mifflin, Harper, Scribner, Heath, Silver Burdett, Rand McNally, American Book Company, and Scott, Foresman.

Shortly after it went into business, Scott, Foresman bought out the earlier Sherwood Company, according to Volume 2 of *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, by John Tebbel, published by R. R. Bowker, New York, in 1975. Through that 1894 purchase of the Sherwood company, Scott, Foresman qualifies as one of the oldest surviving and continuous publishers of American children's readers. That is because by at least 1866 the already existing Sherwood company of Chicago had become the Chicago publishers of Webb's already famous and widely-used sight-word readers. Webb's readers originated in 1846, according to Nila Banton Smith, and her claim seems to be confirmed by the fact that a surviving 1850 copy is listed in *Early American Textbooks*, which is the bibliography published by the United States Department of Education.

The entries in this appendix are arranged by publishing companies, with each company's published works listed in chronological order in each company's section. The companies themselves are listed in the order of their first appearance in the sources available to me which have shown the companies to be publishers of children's reading instruction texts.

Both the most popular authors and the names of their publishing companies have changed very frequently, even though the publishing companies themselves may have stayed in business under new names. Therefore, usually shown below in this table of contents for each company's series of entries are only the company's principal author or authors (listed first), and/or the dominant publishing company name (listed last). However, in some cases, only a principal author or a principal company are listed. Because of the constant changes in names and emphasis, it has been very difficult to arrange the material in a more easily usable table of contents. The following table of contents has been the best approach available to deal with the mass of data.

To make that material in the following table of contents somewhat easier to read, the entries have been broken down into ten-year periods, to show the time period in which the company names first appear

in this appendix. However, it should be emphasized that some of the very oldest companies are continuing to publish right up to the present time, even though they may be only subsidiaries of other companies, and some of the far more recent companies have been out of business for a very long time. Furthermore, the date at which a company first appears in this appendix in no way suggests that the company was founded in that year, but only that the year was the first time the company is known to have published children's reading instruction texts. For instance, the Appleton company had been in business many years before the year in which a reading instruction text was apparently first published by Appleton.

Although this arrangement in Appendix C is, admittedly, very difficult to use, it is nevertheless the only arrangement which makes it possible to understand the historical development of the multitudinous publishers of reading instruction materials for American children, and the relationships of those publishing companies to each other in the historical record. The necessary and great complexity of this table of contents should emphasize how utterly ridiculous is the McGuffey Myth.

The explanatory Preface to this Appendix C is its first entry.

	<u>Page Number</u>
#Preface To Appendix C	1302
#Publishers First Appearing in This List Before 1830	3121
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>American Sunday School Union</li> <li>American Tract Society</li> <li>Worcester/Cummings, Hilliard &amp; Co., to Hillard/ Brewer &amp; Tileston</li> </ul>	
#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1830 and 1840	1334
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gallaudet/Readers for Teaching the Deaf</li> <li>Angell/E. H. Butler</li> <li>Peter Parley (S. G. Goodrich)/John P. Morton Co.</li> <li>McGuffey's (Part of American Book Co. in 1890)</li> <li>Sanders/Iverson</li> <li>Appleton</li> </ul>	
#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1840 and 1850	1362
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tower/Lee &amp; Shepard</li> <li>Brothers of the Christian Schools/Cumiskey</li> <li>Monroe/Cowperthwait</li> <li>Webb's/Sherwood (See later Scott, Foresman)</li> <li>Lippincott</li> <li>Putnam</li> <li>Parker and Watson/Barnes</li> </ul>	
#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1850 and 1860	1384
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lothrop (See later Interstate)</li> <li>Willson/Harper (See later Harper and Row)</li> <li>Methodist</li> <li>Osgood/English</li> <li>Sheldon Company</li> <li>Judson, Bender/Maynard, Merrill</li> </ul>	

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1860 and 1870** 1392

Houghton, Mifflin  
E. A. Sheldon/Scribner  
Taintor  
Porter and Coates  
Holmes/University Publishing  
Ginn  
Routledge  
Newell/P. Kelly  
Strong  
D. & J. Sadlier  
O'Shea  
Bancroft/St. Louis/Indiana/Flanagan  
T. Nelson

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1870 and 1880** 1445

Catholic School Bk., Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss  
Spalding/Catholic Publication Society Company  
Bishop Gilmour/Benziger  
Macmillan  
Sower  
Wm. H. Sadlier  
Kellogg  
Burnz  
D. D. Merrill  
Estes and Lauriat

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1880 and 1890** 1465

Cleveland/Leach, Shewell & Sanborn  
Benjamin Franklin Primer/N. Y. News (a parody)  
Murray-Blaisdell/Little, Brown & Co.  
Hunt & Gourley  
Alphabetic Reading Charts  
Charles A. Story/United States Phonetic  
Wm. A. Campbell/Thomas Kelly  
Estabrook & Payne  
Peabody/John P. Murphy  
Arnold - Forster  
Buckwalter/Simmonds - Peckham  
Bardeen  
Concordia  
California State Series  
Interstate (See earlier Lothrop)  
Boston School Supply  
Knudsen/Golden Bros.  
Belford  
Heath  
Pollard

Brann/T. Kelly  
Hansell  
Mrs. E. J. Richmond/Phillips & H.  
Silver Burdett

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1890 and 1900**

1486

Heilprin/Babyhood Publishing Co.  
American Book  
Knoflach/Stechert  
Spears and Augsburg/New England Publishing Co.  
Excelsior/Geo. W. Crane & Co.  
Noble, Moses, Shearer/B. F. Johnson Pub. Co.  
F. Lillian Taylor/Werner  
Hervey and Hix/Longmans  
Alexander Melville Bell/Volta  
Dean, Thompson, Powers/Morse Co.  
Wagner/Whitaker  
Taylor, Smedley, Olsen/Eaton; Hall & McCreary  
Edwards, Elson, Gray/Scott, Foresman (See Webb's/Sherwood)  
Nash/Thompson, Brown & Co.  
McBride  
Milton Bradley  
Reformed/Pitman  
Holton, Sprague, Dopp/Rand McNally  
Lida McMurry, Bloomington, Illinois  
Lizzie Wooster/Wooster & Co.

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1900 and 1910**

1515

Buswell/Wheeler  
Funk and Moses/Funk and Wagnall's  
Moran, Warner/Hinds  
Bryce and Spaulding/Newson  
Johnson, Maguire/F. A. Owen Publishing Company  
Frank Beard/Hertel, Jenkins & Co.  
Grover/Mentzer  
Globe School Book, World Book Co.  
Southern Publishing Association  
Howell/Noble and Noble  
Chadwick, Sprague/Educational Publishing  
McIntyre/Morang  
Cox/Century  
Summers/Beatty's  
F. Akin, First Book in Phonics  
Alexander, Betts, Baker/Bobbs-Merrill

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1910 and 1920**

1533

Smith/Clark  
O'Donnell, Flesch/Row Peterson, Harper & Row



Saalfield  
Dulaney  
Doran  
Donahue  
Hale/Pacific  
Woodward  
Valentine/Warne  
Hailman, Davidson, Anderson/Laurel  
Lyons & Carnahan  
Dressel, New Barnes/Laidlaw  
Arnold/Iroquois  
O'Neil/Stokes  
Firman/Winston

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1920 and 1930** 1546

Clinton/Benson  
Mitchell/Dutton  
Thompson/Wagner, Harr  
L. R. Smith/Whiteman, Albert  
Burnett/Ryerson  
Corona Readers, Egan  
Renouf  
Natural Readers/Ambrose  
Strang/Oxford  
Talbert/Doubleday  
Parnly  
Sister Mary Domitilla/Ideal Catholic Readers  
Shields/Catholic Education Press  
McLaughlin and Sister Mary Ambrose

**#Publisher First Appearing in This List Between 1930 and 1940** 1549

Mae Carden

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1940 and 1950** 1549

Gillingham/Orton  
Schoolfield and Timberlake/Phonovisual  
O'Donnell and Munro, Janet & John Books

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1950 and 1960** 1550

Phonetic Keys, Sloop, Harris/Economy  
Daniels, Diack/Chatto and Windus  
Frances A. Hall, Linguistica  
Sheldon/Allyn & Bacon  
Romalda Spalding, The Writing Road to Reading/William Morrow, New York  
Gibson and Richards  
Parker, Englemann, SRA - Martin/IBM

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1960 and 1970** 1559

Bloomfield  
Follett Publishing  
Omar K. Moore  
Catherine Stern/L. W. Singer  
McQueen and Others/Open Court  
Eleanor Johnson/Amer. Education Publications  
Downing, Mazurkiewicz and Tanyzer/i.t.a.  
Buchanan, Sullivan Associates/McGraw Hill  
Allen and Allen/Teachers College Press, Columb.  
Carillo/Chandler  
Gattegno/Encyclopedia Britannica  
Teaching Machine/Grolier  
Brennan and Ameer, Reading in  
a Nutshell/Colfax Press, Wayne, N. J.  
Harcourt Brace  
Marie LeDoux, Play'n'Talk  
Priscilla McQueen, McQueen Basic Readers  
Murray, Ladybird/Wills & Hepworth

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1970 and 1980** 1571

Alpha-One Letter People  
Addison-Wesley  
Sue Dickson - Sing, Spell, Read & Write  
Bremner-Davis Educational Systems  
Sister Monica Folzer, Professor Phonics  
Dr. Joyce Morris, Language in Action  
Alpha to Omega, Hornsby and Shear  
Developmental Learning Materials  
Teacher Text by Harris and Sipay  
Kathryn Diehl - G. K. Hodenfield  
Educators Publishing Service  
Charlotte Lockhart  
The Colemans/Literacy Press

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1980 and 1990** 1578

Blumenfeld/Paradigm Company  
Aukerman/John Wiley (A reference for  
reading series)  
Hooked on Phonics/Gateway Ed. Prod.,  
Orange, California  
Scholastic

**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1990 and 1995** 1581

Dr. Joyce Morris, The Morris Montessori Word List  
Mona McNee, Step by Step  
(Replaced in 2000 with C-A-T=cat: Teach Your Child to Read with Phonics)

Modern Curriculum Press  
EL-HI Textbooks and Serials in Print, 119th Edition, 1991, and Other Editions  
Sue Lloyd, The Phonics Handbook  
Phyllis Schlafly  
The Beginning Reading Instruction Study (A reference for reading series)

## **#Preface To Appendix C**

Appendix C lists all American texts known to me to have been published since 1880 and so is an extension of Appendix B which lists texts known to me to have been in use in America up to 1880.

As indicated on the Table of Contents, the entries are in a different form. Publishing companies are listed in the order of their appearance in the records available to me of children's reading instruction texts, and, under those company names (or the names of their successors), their publications are then listed in chronological order. For publishers already in business by 1880, any pre-1880 children's reading instruction texts known to me are listed again in that publisher's section of this appendix, even though those titles had appeared in Appendix B.

The year of 1930 marked the advent of the deaf-mute-method W. S. Gray and A. I. Gates readers, which very soon produced legions of functional illiterates in America, as attested by reports by the early 1940's. (See Mitford Mathews' *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, 1966.) The Gray and Gates 1930 deaf-mute-method readers produced an astonishingly massive, incredibly rapid and exceedingly peculiar shift from "sound" to "meaning" in American beginning reading instruction, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, and from the Canadian border to Mexico. The very numerous earlier beginning reading texts in America, most of which had used supplemental but real phonics, astonishingly went out of use almost totally before about 1933 or 1934, which certainly indicates the massive use of improper influence.

The "experts," who were largely at American universities insulated from voters at the polls but who were nevertheless in control of American education from the top, had thrown the switch to activate the installation of the deaf-mute-method in American schools in 1930. The current had then flowed obediently through all the "experts" nasty organized power structure which controlled "teacher certification," "administrator certification," "textbook certification," and a great deal more. The fact that this terrible thing happened after 1930 should remove any support for governmental "certification" of textbooks, texts, teachers, or anything else in education. It should put back into its proper place the Bill of Rights amendment which guarantees freedom of the press and freedom of speech in every area, and one of those areas is most emphatically the education of American children. The Bill of Rights obviously guarantees parental freedom in the choice of textbooks, texts and teachers for their own children, and governmental agencies have no business whatsoever forcing themselves into what is the natural relationship between parents and children. The terrible state of education in America today is the direct result of having permitted that unlawful intrusion.

The "experts" power structure in the early part of the twentieth century was exceedingly effective and has even been labeled the "Education Mafia." Anyone publicly disagreeing with the edicts of the Education Mafia on beginning reading instruction after 1930, like Mae Carden or Dr. Orton, rapidly became marginalized or discredited. The Saturday Evening Post article of September 9, 1961, "These Children Love to Read," by Frances Rummel, on Mae Carden's extremely effective phonic reading materials, gives sad, concrete facts on the influence of that power structure into the 1960's.

Many of the multitudinous pre-1930 reading texts which effectively disappeared with the 1930 advent of the deaf-mute-method readers had been in print for decades. Many texts published as early as 1880 were still in use as late as 1928 according to the United States Catalog, which was published in 1928. That 1928 catalog is obviously an excellent source for the enormous numbers of titles of reading instruction materials that were still available in 1928 but that disappeared after 1930. That catalog has been drawn on extensively in compiling this appendix.

This appendix also includes titles of materials published after 1930 which were cited in works by Nila Banton Smith, Samuel Blumenfeld, Jeanne Chall and Rudolf Flesch, and titles from some other post-1930 sources. However, other than Gates' and Gray's readers, Nila Banton Smith listed almost no materials printed between 1930 and 1940. Despite the fact that an enormous number of different reading instruction materials had been published in 1928, as proven by the United States Catalog, few other reading series were in use from about 1930 to 1940, the years when the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method readers were invading American schools en masse. Yet, despite the Depression, new textbooks were being published in subjects other than reading instruction. That suggests that the publishers of textbooks in these other subjects were aware that the reading textbook market had been closed to them and that it would be pointless any longer to try to publish for it.

Nila Banton Smith's listing of new reading series published after 1940 until the date of her revised book in 1965 appears adequate. Those post-1940 new reading series were almost all deaf-mute-method "meaning" series, just like Gray's and Gates', until the publication of Dr. Rudolf Flesch's *Why Johnny Can't Read* in 1955 resulted in a few truly phonic series. In that book, Flesch mentioned a few supplemental phonic materials that were available in 1955. Smith's listings, in combination with Jeanne Chall's listings and textbook ratings in *Learning to Read, The Great Debate* (McGraw Hill 1967, second and third editions 1983 and 1996, Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace), Samuel Blumenfeld's listings and textbook ratings in *The New Illiterates* (1973), and Rudolf Flesch's listings and textbook ratings in his 1955 book and his 1981 *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read* provide what is probably an adequate source for titles published in the United States from 1940 to 1981.

These sources also provide an adequate guide for methods in use after 1930, which have, at all times since 1930, remained overwhelmingly based on the deaf-mute "meaning" method, with context-guessing and so-called "intrinsic phonics." Since 1981, many reading series have incorporated the so-called "whole language" method in beginning reading, but that should more appropriately be labeled the "educational malpractice" approach. Dr. Patrick Groff of San Diego University, who has written so extensively and effectively on the subject of reading instruction, has discussed many of the current reading materials and methods in his writings, particularly "whole language" materials. There is therefore no necessity to review "whole language" materials here.

Further concerning reading instruction materials possibly published from 1930 to 1940, the 1928-1932 Cumulative Book Index under "Readers" had many titles, but the vast majority were either individual story books, foreign publications, Catholic school series, or reprints of earlier general series. The very few entries after 1930 or for which no date is given in the 1928-1932 Index and which appear to be reading series for general use are vague. In any event, they obviously had little influence so no attempt is made to add them to this list.

Concerning those titles published only after 1932 but before 1940, a review of publishing records after The Cumulative Book Index, 1928 - 1932, might turn up other series before 1940, but it is unlikely they were of importance, which is the probable reason that Smith omitted mentioning any before 1940. Yet two series known to be published in the 1930's and which Smith did not date to that period were Mabel O'Donnell's 1936 series and *The Child Development Readers* by Julia L. Hahn, published by Houghton, Mifflin Company in 1939. Smith did list the O'Donnell 1936 series, dating it to the 1940-1950 period but failed to list Hahn's 1939 series. Yet Hahn's 1939 series might well be considered, anyway, to be included appropriately in the 1940-1950 period.

Surprisingly, a virtually useless source for the compilation of this bibliography has been the *American Book Publishing Record - Cumulative - 1876-1949, An American National Bibliography*, "production for 1876-1949, as cataloged by the Library of Congress and the National Union Catalog." It was published in 1980 (obviously in a later edition than the original edition) by R. R. Bowker Company, New York, who

may also have published the first and probably far earlier edition. The reason it was useless is not solely because of the way the entries were catalogued, which made it difficult and for some purposes impossible to use, but the fact that it contained serious omissions.

For instance, it apparently totally omitted the critically important Appleton Readers of 1878. Furthermore, it showed few other works by the Appleton Readers' once well-known authors. It listed only two entries for the enormously famous and prolific author, and principal author of the Appleton series, William Torrey Harris (one on Hegel), although Harris is reported elsewhere to have published about 500 books and articles. The only entry for Rebecca Rickoff who wrote the once massively used Appleton charts is #372, "A Sup. First Reader 1892, Amer. Bk." Mark Bailey, a co-author of the Appleton reading series, has only two works on elocution listed. Andrew Rickoff, (1824-1899), another co-author, has an 1877 entry for "Past and Present of our Common School Ed.", and five arithmetic texts, but NO reading entries. This "record" which dutifully reported on OTHER Appleton books dropped the critically important Appleton reading series, along with most of the unrelated works by its well-known authors, into a black hole! Yet, surprisingly, the American Book Publishing Record - 1876-1949, which presumably only starts its listings in 1876, does have entries for some reading materials published BEFORE 1876!

Another surprisingly insufficient source is the New York Public Library catalog. In 1982, before the library had converted its index drawers to index volumes, it had two partial drawers of cards under the heading, "Primers - American." A rough breakdown of the dates of those primers revealed the following entries (but I wish to emphasize that this was only a very rough count). The dates used are the original publication dates of the books, if known:

Before 1800 - 6; 1801-1810, 5; 1811-1820, 7; 1821-1830, 12; 1831-1840, 15; 1841-1850, 16;  
1851-1860, 6; 1861-1870, 4; 1871-1880, 1 (McGuffey's 1879 book one, but not Appleton's)  
1881-1890, 3; 1891-1900, 4; 1901-1910, 5; 1911-1920, none; 1920-1930, 3, 1931-1945, 6.

As is apparent from the listings of primers given in Appendix B and Appendix C of this history, the New York Public Library holdings of primers in 1982 were not only very inadequate but totally disproportionate in terms of time periods. From 1851 to 1890, most of the great many possible entries were missing. Also missing was most of the vast selection of primers (and "book-one" editions, equivalent to primers) from 1911 to 1928, which were listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. In 1930, all those earlier primers had been displaced by the Gray and Gates deaf-mute-method primers. The 1982 listings in the New York Public Library card catalog showed the same lopsided, disproportionate pattern as the bibliography to Nila Banton Smith's "history," in which most of the materials published in the years from about 1860 to 1890 were omitted.

Furthermore, in the 14 entries from 1901 to 1947, none were for the famous 1930-and-later-editions of primers by Gates or Gray. Nor did I recognize any of those 1901 to 1947 primer names in 1982, which means they were not well-known primers (though I probably would recognize some now). Why should a library collect any primers at all, if most of the historically important and massively used ones are going to be omitted? The lop-sided inadequacy of the New York Public Library holdings of American reading-instruction primers in 1982 seems to need an explanation, since, on the face of it, it was irrational.

Omitted from this Appendix C are almost all of the many supplementary reading series which were issued after about 1880. With few exceptions, those series which are listed in this Appendix C were intended to be the principal reading materials in American classrooms. Some few series out of the great number of series published before 1880 are also shown here in Appendix C, as well as in Appendix B, if they were listed as still in print in the 1912 United States Catalog. Most of these few pre-1880 materials still for sale in 1912 were also still for sale in 1928 according to the United States Catalog of 1928. The only other pre-1880 series or reading books shown here in Appendix C as well as in Appendix B are those

known earlier series or reading books put out by publishers who also had post-1880 reading materials, or earlier material which is related in some way to post-1880 material.

The method of listing starts as chronological. However, after a publisher's name is entered under the first date at which it is known to have published a series or a reader, all of the publisher's subsequent series or single primers are shown in that same listing. The reason for this is that so many large publishers constantly revised their series that it would be misleading to enter each revision with no reference to its previous editions. Also, such a listing makes it possible to see the relative importance of each publisher at each period of time and the great longevity of some important publishers. Although the frequent company name-changes tends to obscure the fact, some of these companies began publishing reading materials in the early nineteenth century.

One exception to the practice of listing by publishers, rather than authors, is when a publisher, like American Book, reprinted a series which had originally been published by another company. For such reprints, the name of that final publisher is added to the original publisher's listing. A second exception is in the case of the Webb readers, which appeared to travel from one publisher to another over a period of many years. For this reason, the Webb readers are listed separately. It is evident that publishers often sold the rights to such readers. Furthermore, publishers apparently sometimes licensed other publishers to print additional copies of their materials, in which case the secondary publisher's name appeared on the editions. With the use of copyright information on such textbooks and other editions, I have attempted to sort out the name of the dominant publisher in such cases.

Further information on the changes in publishers' names might be obtained from a publication listed in the American Catalogue for 1885-1890: Reference Directory of the Booksellers, Stationers, and Printers in the U. S. and Canada, an annual from 1886 to 1889 and possibly later, published by A. C. Farley & Co. However, tracking such changes in publishers' names and successors except in an informal fashion is beyond the scope of this appendix. To some extent, more precise information is available from a few reference books on the publishing industry for those who wish to obtain it. An excellent source book which only came to my attention when my book and its appendices were almost completed is *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, by John Tebbel, in four volumes, published by R. R. Bowker, New York, starting in 1972. Tebbel states, however, that very great deficiencies still exist in the history of American publishing.

This listing is only tentative and is certainly not presented as final and authoritative. The reason for this is not solely because more time would be required to prepare such a list. Almost the only materials available to prepare this list have been copies or photocopies of surviving textbooks, some entries in nineteenth century journals, incomplete catalogs such as the American and the United States, *Early American Textbooks (1775-1900)* which I have found sometimes to be in error, and a few very inadequate books written on early American textbooks. Therefore, not enough material has been available to prepare such a definitive listing.

The great numbers of educational journals in the nineteenth century, which also carried advertising, would be a great aid to increasing this listing, if the time and effort could be applied to traveling to the many libraries which carry spotty collections of such journals, which journals have sunk into educational oblivion. Almost the only old journals checked by "experts" are those put out by Columbia Teachers College (*Teachers College Record*) and the University of Chicago (*Elementary School Journal*) published since about 1900. Yet those two universities are where the principal activists, Cattell, Dewey, Judd, Thorndike, Gates and Gray were located. "Experts" sometimes do cite Henry B. Barnard's *American Journal of Education* from the mid-nineteenth century which is, indeed, excellent, although Barnard was heavily biased in favor of government-controlled education.

The titles published after 1900 were taken largely from the United States Catalogs which listed books actually in print and for sale in the years of 1912 and 1928. My comments on certain of those titles are the result of my examination of actual copies. However, my examination was far more infrequent for books published after 1900 than for books published before that date. It is probable that many American titles are omitted from this listing after 1900, as the bulk of my library research time has been spent on texts published between 1800 and 1900. Most of the comments I have made in this history concerning textbooks published before 1900 were the result of my evaluation of photocopies I made of pertinent portions of textbooks in the enormous (and praiseworthy!) Harvard Library collection. In the summer of 1986 at Harvard, I made over 8,000 of these photocopies on over 400 textbooks.

Harvard's enormous textbook collection which was the source for most of my pre-1900 information was apparently well under way by 1860. The Harvard Library has an 1840 edition of *The Reader's Manual* by John Hall. Written on the copyright page is the notation, "1861, Oct. 1. By exchange of duplicates." With whom the exchange was made is not indicated, but the note implies the existence of a textbook collection by 1861. Another is a written notation on the copyright page of Henry Butter's *Gradations in Reading and Spelling*, published in Philadelphia in 1836. The written note reads, "1860. Aug. 11, Gift of Ticknor and Fields." Ticknor and Fields were Boston publishers. One of the most interesting of the textbook gifts was a very worn (and obviously heavily used) 1829 copy of *The National Spelling Book and Scholar's Guide on a New Plan*, Published by Charles Hoag, Concord, New Hampshire, on which no author's name appeared. This speller was in the pattern of those pre-1826 spellers which seemed to ape Webster's in teaching by "sound" but which actually moved heavily towards "meaning," and this one certainly did, rating perhaps a Code 7. Very possibly the original edition was earlier than 1829. That copy was particularly interesting because of the very faint and hard-to-read written note on the "Preface" page, which seems to say: "1861. Febr.(?) 23, Gift of The Family of Rev. Sam'l Willard (or possibly Hillard) of Deerfield, D. D. (H. C. 1808)." Reverend Willard (1776-1859), who did live in Deerfield, is credited with having written the religious *Franklin Primer* of 1802 as well as the series of readers starting with the non-religious *Franklin Primer* of 1826. Reportedly, Willard went tragically blind many years before his death in 1859. A possible date for Willard's graduation from Harvard College of 1808 is a little surprising, however, since he would have completed the religious primer in 1802 at the age of 26 but would not have graduated (presumably as a Doctor of Divinity) until 1808 at the age of 32. Conceivably he was a preacher before graduation. Deerfield is in Franklin County, 33 miles north of Springfield, on the Connecticut and Deerfield Rivers. Franklin County (and possibly Deerfield) is where the convention was held which adopted the 1826 *Franklin Primer*. Deerfield is the location of the Deerfield Academy established in 1797. It appears likely that Willard was associated with that academy and with the organizing of that 1826 Franklin County convention.

It appears that by 1861 an elaborate printed form had been prepared to paste into such gifts of old books, which form carried Harvard's seal. This suggests old books were being received in some numbers by 1861, though of course the seals could have been pasted in at a later date, since the copies also seem to carry a simple written note on the donor's name. (Presumably, Harvard could provide the actual history of its remarkable textbook collection.)

An 1820 copy of B. D. Emerson's *Third Class Reader* carried that pasted-in seal, with the written notation, "The Gift of Caroline L. Sawyer of Cambridge, 2 Sept., 1861." Two texts in 1863 carried the pasted-in seal, on which had been printed, not written, "The Gift of George Livermore, Of Dana Hill, Cambridge. 1 May, 1863," which suggests "George Livermore" gave enough books, and considerably more than two, to justify printing the seal. One of the two books was Jasper Hazen's 1823 copy of his 1822 *The Primary Instructor* (sic) and *Improved Spelling Book*, and the other was Kay's *Infant and Primary School Reader & Speller*, No. 1, of 1839, published in 1840. A very great number of the readers and spellers contributed over many years were "The Gift of Samuel A. Green, M. D. of Boston, (H. C. 1851)." The date of Dr. Green's graduation and his great interest in acquiring old textbooks for the



Harvard library suggests the textbook collection may well have been started before 1851 while Green was still a student. What is obvious, however, is that Harvard already had by the 1860's what was a remarkable collection of old textbooks, including old beginning reading textbooks, and it would have been available in the 1860's for those who were concerned with methods used in elementary education, such as Agassiz of Harvard and those associated with him.

However, I chose only a small selection of texts to review from Harvard's large collection of reading books published after 1900, and I chose those texts because I knew they had been in wide use after 1900. My review of actual textbooks I saw which were published after 1900 includes those relatively fewer textbooks published after 1900 which I saw at the Harvard Library, a few copies purchased in used book stores, and those I saw at the United States Department of Education library and at a few other places.

The titles of the texts published after 1900 also included those I obtained from the American Catalogue of Leypoldt of 1905, which Catalogue attempted to list books published between 1900 and 1905.

It is probable that many texts which were published between 1912 and 1928 were out of print at the time the United States Catalog was prepared in 1928, which showed books actually for sale in that year. One such series which was not listed in the 1912 catalog and which was out of print by 1928 was the famous Beacon series of 1912. It had apparently appeared too late for inclusion in the 1912 catalog. For most such series published between 1912 and 1928 which were out of print by 1928, I have no record. Therefore, as mentioned, in no sense can this listing be considered complete.

Even the American and United States Catalogs are themselves incomplete. For instance, the Passaic Primer of 1903, presently in the Library of Congress collection, which is a critically important book since it was the forerunner of the massively used 1907 Aldine readers and was written by the same authors, is not listed in the American Catalogue or the United States Catalogs.

Nor can this Appendix C even be considered complete from 1880 to 1900, as the Harvard collection of reading texts, from which most of the names of the texts for that period came, does not contain all the reading texts published before 1900, even though it is the largest collection of textbooks in America. Certainly the large collection of the U. S. Department of Education does not contain all reading texts, since it is smaller than Harvard's, though it has many reading texts Harvard does not.

However, it should be manifestly obvious that, if Government education agencies were capable of doing ANYTHING competently, they would at least have authorized the preparation and maintenance of a complete, properly indexed and annotated list of American textbooks, and a very representative selection of them as well! Yet no collection of textbooks the size of Harvard's private collection - and certainly no complete and properly annotated list of American textbooks - exists in Washington, despite the fact that we have had Federal agencies concerning education ever since the 1860's! The Government publication, *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, which was published by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Washington, D. C., in 1985, is woefully incomplete, even though its compilers obviously tried to produce a good catalog with what was apparently limited assistance. Furthermore, the large textbook collection of the U. S. Department of Education has been shockingly neglected and underfunded by the department's management, who ordered its librarians to stop their partially completed work of cataloging and arranging the collection, which fact was reported to me some years ago by one of their librarians.

Some of the titles from 1928 to 1930 were obtained from Nila Banton Smith's *American Reading Instruction*, and the titles she listed before that date have been compared to other sources. Also used was the list of beginning readers from Arthur I. Gates' article, "Problems in Beginning Reading, Suggested by

an Analysis of Twenty-One Courses,” from Teachers College Record, March, 1925. Gates said he had selected this list of twenty-one beginning readers out of a longer list, all of which he said had been widely used in 1925. Gates’ statement about a very, very long list of beginning readers in wide use in 1925 is very arresting, when compared to Jean Chall’s comment in her 1967 book that, only shortly before, the Scott, Foresman readers and the Ginn readers had accounted for an astonishing 80 per cent of all American reading textbook sales. (It was customary at that time for elementary schools to use two different series simultaneously, which means that each of those two series had about 80 per cent, not 40 per cent, of all American reading book sales!)

The United States Catalogs of 1912 and 1928 are a remarkable source of information. The history of such catalogs in the United States is given in the preface to the 1928 edition. The first was A Catalogue of All the Books Printed in the United States with Prices and Places Where Published Annexed, Published by the Booksellers in Boston, January, 1804. Next was the Bibliotheca Americana, 1820-1861, compiled by O. A. Roorbach. Following that was the American Catalogue, 1861-1871, compiled by James Kelley, and next the American Catalogue of 1876, compiled under the direction of F. Leypoldt. The “Preface” to the 1928 United States Catalog said Leypoldt’s work contained:

“books in print July 1, 1876... This was continued by seven supplements, bringing its record down to 1910, when it was discontinued.... The next ‘books in print’ appeared... as the ‘United States Catalog, Books in Print, 1899....’ the second edition, 1902....”

It said the much enlarged third edition of 1912 was replaced by the 1928 edition. The 1899 and 1902 United States Catalogs have not been consulted in compiling this history, but only the editions of 1912 and 1928. Leypoldt’s American Catalogs were consulted up to and including the edition for 1900-1905.

As stated earlier, the listing in this Appendix of reading texts in America does not pretend to be a complete one, but only a representative one for books in probable use in American schools after 1900. What the huge size of the listing which follows establishes, particularly since it is incomplete despite its size, is that it was most unnatural for the Scott, Foresman reading series (“Dick and Jane”) to have blanketed American schools after 1930. It was unprecedented for a single series such as “Dick and Jane” to have been the dominant series in use in almost all American schools for decades, with most other series such as Macmillan’s only being used as secondary series. Concerning these secondary series published after the arrival of the deaf-mute-method readers in 1930, all modeled on Gates’ and Gray’s materials with the use of high-frequency controlled vocabularies and phony phonics, most probably did not even reach the market until after 1939, except for Mabel O’Donnell’s series which came out in 1936. In 1939, Houghton, Mifflin published the Child Development Readers by Julia L. Hahn. Nila Banton Smith’s Learning to Read Series was published by Silver, Burdett from 1940.

America’s involvement in World War II from 1941 to 1945 obviously interrupted the publication of reading textbook series. Therefore, it was not until 1948 that Arthur Gates’ student, David Russell, and others published The Ginn Basic Readers, and Emmett Betts, a major “expert,” produced Betts’ Basic Readers published by American Book Company. That these series were not dominant, even after 1940, is evident from the “Dick and Jane” jokes which have entered American culture as testimony to the vast use of that viciously damaging series. It was also exceedingly unnatural for virtually all earlier series from before 1930 totally to have disappeared after 1930, particularly since a few had been continuously in print for almost a century before 1930, and many had been in print for thirty, forty, and fifty years.

Demonstrating the longevity of some of these earlier materials, the 1928 Catalog showed that very old primers had still been available in that year. Eulalie Osgood Grover’s Sunbonnet Babies Book which dated back to 1902 was still being published in 1928 by Rand and selling for \$1.00. E. M. Cyr’s Interstate Primer and First Reader dating back to 1886 was on sale by Lothrop for 50 cents. Sarah Fuller’s

Illustrated Primer dating to 1888 was sold by Heath for 64 cents. Even Sanders' Primary School Primer of 1840 and Sanders' Union primer of 1866 were still on sale by American Book Company!

Since book companies were apparently printing many old primers on which they still had the plates, an explanation appears in order for American Book Company's having dropped some time before 1928 the truly phonic material by Rebecca Pollard of 1887, just as an explanation appears in order for Ginn's apparently taking the 1912 and 1921-1922 Beacon phonic series off the American market before 1928. However, after 1900, "supplemental phonics" had been taught outside the "reading" lessons, even when the book is used as a sight-word book. The net effect for most beginners after 1900, therefore, was to begin by "sound" and not by "meaning."

To give an idea of the huge volume of reading materials available in 1928, given immediately below are lists of just the primers shown in the 1928 United States Catalog for sale by American Book Company and Ginn, apparently the two largest textbook publishers of the period. These lists necessarily, of course, omit any of their reading series which began with a "Book One" instead of a primer, so the actual totals of beginning reading books published by just these two companies are greater. In addition, a great number of primers are listed in the 1928 edition of the United States Catalog, and a vast number of readers, all published by a large number of different publishers. The original dates of publication of these primers, if they were given, follow the titles below, though in some cases prior information indicates the dates are only of reprints. That these two companies alone were selling so very many primers in 1928, many of which were very old, gives a very different picture of the reading textbook market in the 1920's than is generally understood to have been the case.

The point of this list is how sharply it contrasts to the 1930's, when Gates' and Gray's primers had pushed almost all other primers out of the schools and the primers shown below, some of which had been for sale for almost a hundred years, went out of print.

Also notice that the extensive list of old texts argues with the McGuffey Myth. Significantly, American Book Company was apparently disinterested enough in the primer and book one of the phonic 1879-1881 McGuffey series, which they had copyrighted under their name in 1896, to release the copyrights on the phonic primer in 1909 to Henry H. Vail. Vail discussed the numerous editions of the McGuffey Readers in *A History of the McGuffey Readers*, Cleveland: The Burrows Company, 1911. American Book Company released the copyright on phonic book one to Vail in 1907 (which Vail copyrighted again in 1920). That Vail obtained ownership of at least part (and perhaps all) of the 1879-1881 series copyrights about the time he left American Book Company hardly suggests that American Book Company considered the phonic 1879-1881 McGuffey series to be very important at that time. Whether Vail also had the copyright on the 1879 McGuffey readers above book one after 1907 is unknown but appears likely. Vail's interest in the readers in 1911 when he published his history (which significantly was not published by American Book Company) may not simply have been nostalgia. It may have concerned his desire to increase the sales of the 1879-1881 series, and therefore his royalties on these books which were still published by American Book Company in 1928. If that were the case, Vail's history becomes even more of a vested-interest account, although it is apparently an honest one.

It is Vail's phonic 1879 McGuffey series which is most known today. However, the original 1836-1838 sight-word McGuffey series presently being published by Mott Media of Milford, Michigan, is becoming more widely known (with which Mott Media sells some good supplementary phonic materials). The 1901 sight-word McGuffey revision put out by American Book Company appears to have almost totally disappeared, but a copy of that sight-word Book One is in the Department of Education Library in Washington, D. C. Yet it is unlisted in *Early American Textbooks*. The sight-word 1901 McGuffey series represented an about-face on beginning reading methods, returning to almost pure "meaning" and rates perhaps no more than a Code 2. This 1901 series is almost totally forgotten, and so

very possibly might the memory of the phonic 1879 McGuffey's series have disappeared, like the memory of all the rest of the nineteenth century reading series, if it had not had Vail's 1911 history to keep it alive. No one ever wrote such a history about the enormously used sight-word Sanders readers dating from 1840, or others like them. However, the "experts" had Vail's convenient 1911 history in the 1920's to distort and blow up into the McGuffey Myth to make it appear that the sales of American reading books had always been almost monopolized by only one publisher, and so the McGuffey series survived in the public memory while others passed into oblivion.

The McGuffey Myth provided a convenient tool after 1930 to explain away the near monopoly of American schools by Scott, Foresman's "Dick and Jane" deaf-mute readers. Yet the "experts" need not have bothered to invent the myth. So little attention has ever been given to beginning reading by the public that no one noticed it when the near-monopoly take-over occurred. Nor has anyone publicly noticed it to this day. Nor to this day has anyone tried to find out exactly how it was achieved. It was, truly, an impressive achievement to blanket three thousand miles of America from coast to coast, and from the Canadian border to Mexico, with these poisonous books in only a handful of years, and to displace the hosts of reading series used in America before, and then to have no one publicly question that achievement.

The great number of books listed under the heading, "Primers," in the 1928 United States Catalog, just for the American Book Company and Ginn Company, is shown below. They are nevertheless just a small part of the total number of primers that the catalog showed for all American publishers in 1928.

Published by American Book Company:

Appleton's Chart Primer (Appleton's series came out in 1878 but Appleton's Chart Primer by Mrs. Rebecca D. Rickoff in 1884.)

Baker, T. O. Action Primer '06

Beebe, E. M. Picture Primer. '18

Brown, C. L., and Bailey, C. S. Jingle Primer. '06

Coe, I., and Specht, L., Easy Steps in Reading. '23

Hyde, A. Primer. '08

McElroy, M. J. Child's First Book in Reading. '27

McGuffey, W. H. Revised Eclectic readers; primer, rev ed 24 cents; chart primer per doz \$1.20 '96.  
(These both were apparently the 1881 phonic primer, part of the 1879 series, and not the Baldwin sight-word revision of 1901.)

Monroe, L. B. Chart-primer. '05. New Primer. '90

(These dates are wrong, and so is the author's name on at least one of the two items. Professor Lewis B. Monroe died before 1882. His widow wrote Monroe's New Primer, published originally by Cowperthwait in 1882. An undated copy is in the Harvard libraries which was published by the Butler company. Mrs. Monroe's book is the second book listed above. Also in the Harvard Libraries is a copy of the 1884 The Chart Primer, part of a different series published by the Butler company called Butler's Series, on which Samuel Mecutchen was the editor, and that may be the first book listed above. Mecutchen had also been editor of the 1872 speller for Butler's New American Series of 1871 by Epes Sargent and Amasa May. See page 326 of The School Journal for October 2, 1897, on two sets of charts published by E. H. Butler & Co. One set of charts was based on Professor Monroe's original series. They were called Monroe's Primary Reading Charts and had been in print by 1875 or before, since they were advertised on an 1875 copy of Professor Monroe's fourth reader published by Cowperthwait in 1875. They were, however, wrongly called "Munroe's... Chart Primer" in the January, 1879, issue of Primary Teacher. From the illustration in the 1897 article, Professor Monroe's charts were different from the "New Primer" of 1882 by his widow. It appears probable that the Chart-primer listed above

was Mecutchen's 1884 material, because the 1897 article also reproduced a chart from the Chart-primer series and it exactly matched a page in Harvard's copy of The Chart Primer on which Samuel Mecutchen had been editor. The confusion resulted apparently because E. H. Butler & Co. had become the publisher for all these books and charts by the 1890's: Professor Monroe's and Mrs. Monroe's, originally published by Cowperthwait, and Mecutchen's which were originally published by Butler. Since the Butler company went out of business apparently before 1900 and American Book Company instead of Butler had been publishing these materials for almost thirty years by 1928, the original history of the materials had apparently been buried.)

Morrow, J.: Language Lessons for Little People. '12.

Sanders, C. W.: Primary School Primer, Union Pictorial Primer, '93.

(Obviously a reprint: the Primary School Primer came out in 1840 and the Union Pictorial Primer in 1866.)

Scripture, M.: Baldwin Primer. '99

(Baldwin rewrote the McGuffey series in 1901, according to Vail. Baldwin had written a series for Harper in 1888, and then his own series, Baldwin's School Reading By Grades, 1897-1899. M. Scripture is probably the wife of the psychologist, Scripture, referred to in Huey's The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading, 1908. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, lists a copy of The Baldwin Primer of 1899 with the author shown as May Kirk, which was presumably Mrs. Scripture's maiden name, or a pseudonym).

Stewart, S. T., and Coe, I. First Days in School. '99.

Swinton, W.: Primer. (Originally came out in 1883.)

Werner Primer for Beginners in Reading. (It came out in 1895.)

Turpin, E. H. L.: Rose Primer '05

White, E. G.: Pantomime Primer. '14

This list makes it clear that American Book Company chose to reprint many very old sight-word materials in 1928, although they had strangely dropped Rebecca Pollard's once widely-used synthetic phonics material that had appeared in the 1880's. Baldwin, who was the author of two earlier sight-word series, Harper's and "Baldwin's," had rewritten in 1901 the 1879 McGuffey series with a sight-word book one. That 1901 series was not preceded by a primer. "May Kirk's" 1899 primer was apparently an addition to the earlier sight-word "Baldwin" series.

The Catalog lists the following primers on sale by Ginn in 1928:

Published by Ginn

Barnes, W., and Lane, M. A. Easy Primer

Blodgett, F. E. and A. B. Blodgett readers: primer (1904)

Field, W. T. Field Primer. '21

Field, W. T. and Martin, K. Field-Martin Primer. '25

Ketchum, I. A. and Rice, A. L. : Land of Play. '26 Ginn.

Learn to Study Readers: First Lessons in Learning to Study. '26

McCloskey, M. O.: Primer. (1909)

Noyes, M. I., and Guild, K. L.: Sunshine Primer. '06

Peabody, S. C.: Step by Step. (1902)

Talbert, L. E.: Expression Primer

The primer entries in the Catalog did not, however, include all Ginn's beginning reading books, some of which were shown under "Readers," any more than the entries under primers showed all the American Book Company beginning reading books. For instance, under "Readers" in 1928 appeared an entry for the whole E. M. Cyr sight-word reading series which Ginn had been publishing since the early 1890's, and Cyr's first book was meant as a sight-word primer. The total number of beginning books for both

companies was therefore considerably larger than those shown under the heading, "Primers" in the 1928 United States Catalog.

Despite Ginn's continuing to publish its early 1890's Cyr sight-word readers, Ginn had apparently stopped publishing its far newer and extremely popular 1912-1921 Beacon phonic series some time before 1928. That matched the peculiar action of American Book Company in dropping publication of the once widely used Rebecca Pollard phonic materials. However, the Beacon series apparently continued to be published by Ginn's branch in England.

The listing follows of hundreds of reading series beginning with a primer or book one and primers which were not part of a reading series. Most are known to have been published in America at some time after 1880. It is emphasized again that this is only a partial listing.

The only readers published before 1880 which are shown below are those which were still in print when the 1912 United States Catalog was published, or those which were in some way related to readers published after 1880. However, considerably more background information is given on these early readers which survived over many years than on other readers. Many of these highly successful and very early readers were still in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published.

To show the longevity of the readers and as a confirmation of the entry, the latest known catalog listing is sometimes shown in the headings, such as the 1900-1905 American Catalogue, or the 1912 or 1928 United States Catalog. For the many materials not listed in these catalogs, the primary source of the information on the material is shown instead. That source is usually a surviving copy or another reference work.

## #Publishers First Appearing in This List Before 1830

1817(?) (Referred to by Nietz, p. 26)  
Union Speller  
American Sunday School Union  
1826 (Harvard copy - Code 4)  
Union Spelling and Reading Book  
American Sunday School Union  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
1832 (Nietz, p. 16)  
The Union Spelling Book  
American Sunday School Union  
1853 (Harvard copy - Code 1)  
Union Primer  
American Sunday School Union  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
1876 or Before (In the 1876 American Catalogue.)  
Living Letters: Alphabet, With Short Stories on Each Letter. 25c.  
American Sunday School Union.  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (?)  
1876 (Mentioned by F. Buisson, as shown below)  
Union Sunday School - Primer  
American Sunday School Union?  
1912 or Before (In 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs)  
Union Primer (Possibly different editions from the 1853 one)  
American Sunday School Union  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (?)

Sunday schools before 1826 in America and Great Britain had primarily been schools to teach reading to the disadvantaged, and not schools to teach religion. As mentioned, Carey's publishing of a speller as early as about 1796 may have been in connection with the Sunday schools which he was helping to promote.

According to Lawrence A. Cremin in *American Education - The National Experience - 1783 - 1876* (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York: 1980, pages 66-69), the idea of Sunday schools arose in England during the 1780's and was then used in America in the following twenty years or so in Philadelphia, Boston and Pawtucket. In the first part of the nineteenth century, the Sunday school was numbered among other types of schools such as church schools, charity schools, private schools, and various incorporated schools. The Sunday school existed originally to teach reading and writing on Sunday to children who worked during the week, and it was also intended to keep them off the streets on Sunday. In 1815, such Sunday schools were few and meant for poor children. Yet, by 1830 they had changed into institutions that catered to all children and whose purpose was primarily to teach religion. Cremin said, however, that such Sunday schools frequently preceded the establishment of common schools in new towns. Cremin quoted the following from the Indiana Sabbath School Union in 1827:

“Let Sabbath schools be established wherever it is practicable. They will answer the double purpose of paving the way for common schools, and of serving as a substitute till they are generally formed.”

Cremin stated that in 1817 the American Sunday-School Union put out its first book, Mary Butt Sherwood's Little Henry and His Bearer. That was a sad story about an English orphan who taught the Bible to another child in India, which story had originally been published in England. An astonishing total of over 6 million copies of similar stories had been printed for Sunday school students by 1830. Cremin said that another organization which had been founded in 1825, the American Tract Society, put out 3 million such works in the following five years, and by 1865 had published 20 million bound books, each of which had 12 or more such tracts, and it also had put out about 250 million single pamphlets.

It is clear that developments in the "Sunday schools" paralleled developments in the government schools. Starting in 1817, the once unorganized and independent Sunday schools appear to have been taken over by the same kind of highly organized activists as those working for government schools, and a review of Sunday school reading texts shows the same shift from "sound" to "meaning" that is to be found in the texts that were used in government schools. It should be noted that Dr. Keagy also worked to promote Sunday schools. As discussed in this history, Keagy was the government school activist who openly endorsed the deaf-mute reading method to teach beginning reading apparently as early as 1819 and certainly by 1826.

Nietz had commented on page 27:

"In fact, when the American Sunday School Union was formed in 1824 (sic), public schools existed only in New England and in New York State."

Cremin commented on page 70 that some publications of both groups were also meant to be used for reading instruction, as a series of reading books, and both groups published primers. He thought that their reading materials were just as graded in difficulty as the McGuffey readers.

In mentioning McGuffey's series, Cremin commented that it was only one of many American series of the time, and that it was used for the most part only in the Ohio Valley and in parts of the South. In the literature, I have found no one, other than Cremin, who has ever acknowledged that fact. The fact that he debunked the McGuffey Myth is greatly to Cremin's credit. Although Cremin clearly deflated the McGuffey Myth, it still persists.

The record suggests the Sunday schools on both sides of the Atlantic were taken over by government-school activists about 1817. The fact that the above 1826 Harvard text published by the American Sunday School Union rates only a Code 4 tends to confirm that supposition.

The above 1853 Harvard text listed other locations and sects comprising the American Sunday School Union. It used a Code 1 "meaning" approach, and it contained remarkably little religious material. Those last two facts suggest that John-Wood Sessional-School-type activists may have comprised its Committee of Publication, which consisted of 14 members from the various denominations. This 1853 American Sunday School Union text was very different from Harvard's copy of Reverend Martin Ruter's 1853 The New American Primer and Juvenile Preceptor published by Carlton and Phillips, New York, for the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Reverend Ruter's text rated a Code 7, was very like the old analytic phonics spelling books, and began with a syllabary and blends. Reverend Ruter's text also had much gentle and truly religious content. The contrast therefore was sharp both in religious tone and in the instructional methods between Reverend Ruter's 1853 Code 7 text and the Code 1 1853 American Sunday School Union text prepared by some nameless committee.

When Ferdinand Buisson of France visited the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exposition, he also visited American schools and listed in his report, as described in this history, the reading texts he saw in use. He gave a passing mention to "Union Sunday School - Primer."



From Buisson's description, it was a sight-word text and may have been the 1853 edition of the Union Primer in the Harvard library, published by the American Sunday School Union at Philadelphia. That was a sight-word text and obviously inexpensive. All materials of the American Sunday School Union seem to have used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1825 (Cremin, p. 66-70, the date the Society was founded)  
?The Tract Primer? See 1830 below. Probably first published 1825.  
American Tract Society  
1830 (Early American Textbooks, under Primers)  
The Tract Primer, 108 pages (and another undated copy)  
Author Unknown  
American Tract Society, New York  
1835? to 1843? (Early Amer. Text., date not given)  
The History of Jonah, 156 pages  
Gallaudet, Thomas Hopkins  
American Tract Society, New York  
1835? to 1843? (Early Amer. Text. copy from 1896)  
Scripture Biography for the Young, 200 pages  
(Thwaite said, p. 233, Gallaudet wrote seven scripture biographies from 1835 to 1843)  
Gallaudet, Thomas Hopkins  
American Tract Society, New York  
1850 (Harvard copy)  
Picture Alphabet  
American Tract Society, New York.  
1860(?) (Harvard copy - Code 1)  
First Footsteps in the Way of Knowledge  
American Tract Society  
150 Nassau Street, New York.  
1864 (1876 American Catalogue)  
United States Primer, 15c  
Bronson, Mrs. O.  
American Tract Society, New York.  
1867-1868 (1876 American Catalogue)  
United States Reading Books, First 20c, Second 40c.  
American Tract Society, New York.  
1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
United States Primer  
United States Second Reading Book  
American Tract Society  
In 1988 in The New Big Book of Home Learning by Mary Pride  
Pictorial Tract Primer, \$6.50  
(Reprint of Classic Primer.)  
(Also Primer, \$5)  
Cumberland Missionary Society, Inc.  
Rt. 2, Box 446, Evensville, Tennessee 37332

Mary F. Thwaite in From Primer to Pleasure in Reading, The Horn Book, Inc., Boston, 1963, 1972, wrote:

“The American Tract Society was formed in 1825 by an amalgamation of the two largest societies, those of New York and New England. Many of the first tracts issued were reprints of those already circulated by the New England Tract Society, which had seventy-five children’s tracts when the merger took place... an attempt was made to compete with the chapbook and other secular wares....”

Sunday schools were discussed by Lawrence A. Cremin on pages 66-69 of his book, *American Education - The National Experience - 1783 - 1876* (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York: 1980). According to Lawrence A. Cremin, the idea of Sunday schools arose in England during the 1780’s and was then used in America in the following twenty years or so in Philadelphia, Boston and Pawtucket. In the first part of the nineteenth century, the Sunday school was numbered among other types of schools such as church schools, charity schools, private schools, and various incorporated schools. The Sunday school existed originally to teach reading and writing on Sunday to children who worked during the week, and it was also intended to keep them off the streets on Sunday. In 1815, such Sunday schools were few and meant for poor children. Yet, by 1830 they had changed into institutions that catered to all children and whose purpose was primarily to teach religion. Cremin said, however, that such Sunday schools frequently preceded the establishment of common schools in new towns. Cremin quoted the following from the Indiana Sabbath School Union in 1827:

“Let Sabbath schools be established wherever it is practicable. They will answer the double purpose of paving the way for common schools, and of serving as a substitute till they are generally formed.”

Cremin stated that in 1817 the American Sunday-School Union put out its first book, Mary Butt Sherwood’s *Little Henry and His Bearer*. That was a sad story about an English orphan who taught the Bible to another child in India, which story had originally been published in England. An astonishing total of over 6 million copies of similar stories had been printed for Sunday school students by 1830. Cremin said that another organization which had been founded in 1825, the American Tract Society, put out 3 million such works in the following five years, and by 1865 had published 20 million bound books, each of which had 12 or more such tracts, and it also had put out about 250 million single pamphlets.

Cremin commented that some publications of both groups were also meant to be used for reading instruction, as a series of reading books, and both groups published primers. He thought that their reading materials were just as graded in difficulty as the McGuffey readers.

In mentioning McGuffey’s series, Cremin commented that it was only one of many American series of the time, and that it was used for the most part only in the Ohio Valley and in parts of the South. In the literature, I have found no one, other than Cremin, who has ever acknowledged that fact. The fact that he debunked the McGuffey Myth is greatly to Cremin’s credit.

No copy is available of 1825 material which must have been published by American Tract for teaching beginning reading.

Gallaudet’s having published the materials listed above demonstrate that he worked actively with the group, as Keagy also worked actively with Sunday school groups. Was Gallaudet perhaps influential in founding the group in 1825? Did Gallaudet have anything to do with preparing their primer, of which a copy survives from 1830? I have not seen the primer so cannot give it a code number.

The 1850 *Picture Alphabet* is a toy book, about 2 1/2 by 4 inches. Its intent obviously was only to teach the alphabet from whole words while the book was being read to beginners, as the first pages are reading text composed of words with an emphasis on initial letters.

The 1860 (?) copy apparently totally ignored the syllable step and rates a Code 1. The table of contents showed the alphabet, followed by in sequence 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 letter words. The words were all used in meaningful contexts, and not given in lists. The book totaled 154 pages, and six-letter words were finished by page 133.

The 1864 text was listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as in print for 15 cents, but no other information is available on it. Nor is other information available on the 1867-1868 readers listed as in print in the 1876 American Catalogue for 20 cents and 40 cents. Nor is information available on the American Tract Society material listed in the 1912 United States Catalog, which may or may not have been the same as the earlier material. The nineteenth-century material of the American Tract Society possibly all used A MEANING APPROACH.

The New Big Book of Home Learning by Mary Pride (Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois: 1988) described the Pictorial Tract Primer, a reprint of a classic primer, for sale for \$6.50 by the Cumberland Missionary Society, Inc., Rt. 2, Box 446, Evensville, Tennessee 37332. The word, "tract," in the title certainly suggests it was originally published by the American Tract Society. However, it apparently used a "sound" and not a "meaning" approach. The use of "pictorial" in its title suggests it may originally have been published after about 1828, and possibly considerably after.

Mary Pride described it as "very lovely," and said it included "ba, be, bi, bo, bu" (obviously at least part and possibly all of the classic syllabary), and she said it used "phonics instruction," presumably in addition to the syllabary. It also included Dr. Isaac Watt's First Catechism, The Children's Scripture Catechism, Easy Questions for Little Children, and Scripture texts in an alphabetical form. Its format suggests it was modeled after the "New England Primer" type of catechism.

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THE PREDECESSOR TO THE THREE HILLARD SERIES WHICH WERE WIDELY USED FROM THE 1850'S INTO THE 1880'S WAS THE WORCESTER SERIES OF THE 1820'S. TO HELP SORT OUT RELATIONSHIPS, OTHER CONTEMPORARY MATERIALS ARE LISTED BELOW AS WELL.

1825 (Early American Textbooks, page 101)  
The American First Class Book  
Pierpont, John  
Cummings, Hilliard & Co. and Richardson & Lord, Boston  
1826 (Early American Textbooks, page 97)  
The English Reader, Edited by Rensselaer Bentley  
Holbrook & Fessenden, Brattleborough, Vermont  
1826 (Harvard copy)  
Worcester's Primer  
Worcester, Samuel  
Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, Boston  
1826 (Early American Textbooks, page 101)  
The American First Class Book  
Pierpont, John  
Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins and Richardson & Lord, Boston  
1830 (From Nov. 8, 1830 copyright information on 1845 copy below)  
A Second Book for Reading and Spelling, New Edition  
Worcester, Samuel  
Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, Boston  
1831 (Early American Textbooks, page 64)

The Infant School Manual, or Teacher's Assistant  
Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, Boston  
1832 (Early American Textbooks, page 84)

Peter Parley's Book of Curiosities, Natural and Artificial  
Goodrich, Samuel (Pseudonym: Peter Parley)  
Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, and Waitt & Dow, Boston.  
1833

The National Reader  
Pierpont, John  
Carter, Hende and Co. and Hilliard, Gray, and Co., Boston  
1836 (Vail, pages 42-44. Vail's citation of Hende was probably only as a co-publisher. In confirmation of that probable fact, see the 1843 entry below on which Hende and the Jenks company were co-publishers on material written by the long-standing activist, William Russell)

The Worcester Readers  
Worcester, Samuel  
Charles J. Hende, Boston  
1837 (Early American Textbooks, page 78)

Boston Reading Lessons for Primary Schools (142 pages)  
Charles J. Hende, Boston  
1838 (Vail, pages 42-44)

The Worcester Readers  
Worcester, Samuel  
Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, Boston  
1841 and before (Names of texts, from 1845 copy below)

Worcester's First Book, or Primer  
Worcester's Second Book for Reading and Spelling  
Worcester's Introduction to Third Book, with Rules and Instructions for avoiding common errors  
Worcester's Third Book for Reading and Spelling, with Rules and Instructions for avoiding common errors.  
Worcester's Fourth Book for Reading, with Rules and Instructions.  
Publisher uncertain in 1841  
1840's? - 1828 copyright on 178th ed., (Harvard copy)

National Spelling Book or Pronouncing Tutor  
Emerson, Benjamin Dudley, Principal of Adams Grammar School, Boston, Jenks & Palmer, Boston  
(Copy advertised their Worcester's readers)  
1843 (Early Amer. Textbooks, p. 36. See other entries on Russell.)

Lessons in Enunciation, 81 p.  
Russell, William  
Charles J. Hende, and Jenks & Palmer, Boston  
1845 (Writer's copy bought at a New York City street book fair)

Second Book for Reading and Spelling, New Edition  
Worcester, Samuel  
Jenks & Palmer, Boston  
1854 (Vail, pages 42-44)

The Worcester Readers  
Worcester, Samuel  
Jenks, Hickling & Swan, Boston  
1855-1859 (In 1876 American Catalogue)

The Hillard Series  
Hillard, George Stillman  
Hickling, Swan & Brewer, Boston (By 1876 had become Brewer & Tileston)

1858 (Harvard copy)  
 The Third Primary Reader  
 Hillard, George Stillman  
 Hickling, Swan & Brewer, Boston; Ingham and Bragg, Cleveland  
 1863-1864 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 The New Hillard Series (some levels possibly earlier or later)  
 (Primer and Second Reader Available in Leigh Type)  
 Hillard, George Stillman and Loomis Joseph Campbell  
 Brewer & Tileston, Boston  
 1871-1873 (In 1876 Amer. Cat. and 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Book)  
 The Franklin Series  
 (Primer and Second Reader in Leigh Type listed only in the 1876 but not 1912 catalog.)  
 Hillard, George Stillman and Loomis Joseph Campbell  
 (The Sixth Reader and Speaker by Hillard with Homer B. Sprague)  
 Brewer & Tileston, Boston (and other pubs. including Taintor of N. Y.)  
 1879 (Early Amer. Textbooks, p. 78-9; Harvard copy of one-volume Franklin Primer and Advanced  
 First Reader)  
 The Franklin Advanced Readers (at least to third)  
 Campbell, Loomis Joseph  
 Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co, New York; William Ware & Co., Boston  
 1886 (In 1912 United States Catalog by American Book)  
 New Franklin Series  
 Campbell, Loomis Joseph  
 Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co.. N. Y. and William Ware & Co., Boston  
 (Brewer & Tileston apparently went out of business by 1877)  
 1892 (1890-5 Am. Cat. as new series; 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Bk.)  
 New Franklin Series  
 Campbell, Loomis Joseph  
 Sheldon & Co., New York and Chicago

The Hillard reading series have been discussed at length in this history. Copies are available in the Harvard libraries. However, as with so many reading series, the Library of Congress only has the second-grade book of the 1863-1864 edition (in Leigh print), but none of the primers for any Hillard editions.

The popular 1855-1859 series by George Stillman Hillard and its very popular revision in the early 1860's with Loomis Joseph Campbell were out of print by 1912. However, the Franklin series Hillard wrote with L. J. Campbell and Homer B. Sprague in the early 1870's was still in print in 1912, but had apparently long since ceased being available in Leigh type. Also still in print were The New Franklin Readers by L. J. Campbell alone, but not his series, The Advanced Franklin Readers written from about 1879.

By 1863 through 1878, Hillard's and Campbell's publisher's name was Brewer & Tileston, located in Boston. Brewer & Tileston apparently went out of business and the Hillard rights went to the Taintor company in 1878, which company had already been publishing Hillard and Campbell's (with Sprague) Franklin materials for some time. It was Taintor alone who published from 1879 The Franklin Advanced Readers and by 1884 The New Franklin Readers, both series written solely by L. J. Campbell. From entries on pages 69, 78 and 79 of Early American Textbooks, it can be seen that Taintor published The New Franklin Readers until 1888 but at some point passed the rights to Sheldon & Company. Sheldon apparently went out of business by 1899, after briefly merging with the Butler company. The Hillard-Campbell (with Sprague) Franklin materials and Campbell's New Franklin Readers eventually

ended up being published by American Book by 1912, but all the Hillard and Campbell reading texts were out of print by 1928.

The actual dates of name changes on the Boston publisher, Brewer & Tileston, until its 1878 disappearance are unknown. However, the records show that the name had been Brewer & Tileston in 1863, Hickling, Swan & Brewer in 1858, Jenks, Hickling and Swan in 1854, and Jenks & Palmer in 1845. These four Boston companies were obvious successors to one another. However, Jenks & Palmer in 1845 was either a successor to a previous publisher, Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, or had bought out that company, as the above entries suggest.

Richardson, Lord & Holbrook is known from the 1830 copyright date mentioned above to have been publishing at least from 1830, and, according to Vail, they continued to publish to at least 1838. The company was publishing as Richardson & Lord as early as 1825, as shown by the above entry for Pierpont's reader. Richardson, Lord & Holbrook published the Code 1 Worcester readers at least from 1830. As will be shown, Richardson & Lord probably were co-publishers of the Worcester Primer from its date of first publication, 1826.

The records also show that the publishers of the Hillard books from 1858 had previously been the 1840's and 1850's publishers of the Worcester Readers. Therefore, the Hillard books from 1858 were the publisher's replacement for its former series, the Worcester books, which it no longer published. The Hillard publishers had been the ultimate successors of the company, Richardson & Lord, which had been the probable co-publishers of the first pure Code 1 reading book ever published in America, the Worcester Primer in 1826. (The Angell Code 1 series did not appear until 1830, in Rhode Island and probably Philadelphia, and the Bumstead Code 1 materials did not appear until 1838 in Boston.)

Although an intriguing similarity is noticeable on both the names and the time frame, the "Holbrook" of Richardson, Lord and Holbrook is not the arch-activist Josiah Holbrook (1788-1854) of that period, whose activities have been outlined so well in Samuel Blumenfeld's book, *Is Public Education Necessary?* and who is discussed in Appendix B under an entry for the Bumstead readers.

The "Holbrook" of Richardson, Lord & Holbrook is discussed in *A History of Book Publishing in the United States, Volume I*, by John Tebbel, published by R. R. Bowker, New York, on pages 455-456. Tebbel wrote that "Holbrook"'s father, John Holbrook (1761-1838) only began publishing in 1808, in late middle age. The firm he founded, Holbrook, Fessenden & Porter, obtained the rights to Webster's speller. At that time, Webster leased his rights to local printers. Despite the elder Holbrook's entering the publishing business in 1808, the elder Holbrook never became very active in it, although his two of his sons and two of his sons-in-law did, keeping up the company he had started. One of his sons-in-law, Joseph Fessenden (1777-1835) became the elder Holbrooks's partner in 1820. The Panic of 1837, and other circumstances, according to Tebbel, caused the firm to close by 1839. Tebbel reported that after the elder John Holbrook died in 1838, one of his sons, John Calvin Holbrook, became a partner in the firm of Richardson, Lord & Holbrook of Boston. However, that 1838 date reported by Tebbel for Holbrook's joining Richardson and Lord may be in error. The 1830 copyright date shown above indicates that John Calvin Holbrook's association with that firm dates at least from 1830, not from 1838.

Available information on the publishers of the Worcester series from the 1826 original publication date of the Worcester Primer to the 1854 date, the last available, is shown above. It is followed by information on the apparent replacement for the Worcester series, the various Hillard editions. However, included with the information on the Worcester readers is some information on other materials from early publishers which provides background information and helps to sort out the relationships.

In his 1911 history of the McGuffey readers, Vail had made the following comments on pages 42 to 44 on the Worcester readers.

“On October 1st (1838) Benjamin F. Copeland and Samuel Worcester brought suit in the court of the United States against Truman & Smith and William H. McGuffey for infringement of copyright....

“The Worcester Readers had a short and inconspicuous life. When this suit was brought, their publishers were Richardson, Lord and Holbrook of Boston. In 1836 Charles J. Hendee published them, and in 1854 they appeared with the name of Jenks, Hickling & Swan of Boston. These several publishers were probably gobbled up by some imaginary Book Trust sixty years ago.”

He was wrong. The Worcester readers had lasted from 1826 until after 1854, and it was their publishers who retired them for a newer series: the Hillard books, which must be considered as their immediate descendant. The publishers of the Worcester readers in 1854, Jenks, Hickling & Swan, under the new name of Hickling, Swan & Brewer, became the publishers of the enormously successful Hillard series in 1858 and of its revisions. Under that successful publisher's name on the title page of the third book of Hillard's series appeared “Cleveland: Ingham and Bragg.” So Bragg had joined the competition to McGuffey's by 1858, and when he later became a partner in Wilson, Hinkle & Company, the publishers of McGuffey's, Bragg was changing sides in the textbook wars of the period.

The names of the publishers of the Worcester Readers before Jenks, Hickling & Swan in 1854 can be sorted out, using the information above in combination with Vail's comments. The entries shown above for other texts published in that period demonstrate that books sometimes had two publishers in Boston at the same time, who obviously were closely cooperating companies. As demonstrated by the listing above, the original publishers of Worcester's 1826 primer also co-published books in Boston in 1826 with Lord and Richardson. Therefore, the fact that the surviving Worcester copy of 1826 shows the publisher as Hilliard, Gray, Little and Wilkins, Boston, cannot rule out the possibility that it was also published by the proven associate of that company in 1826, Lord and Richardson, who are known to have been its publisher only a few years later.

The fact that Hendee also was a publisher, according to Vail, also does not rule out the fact that he may have been so at the same time that Richardson, Lord and Holbrook were publishers. Note that the proven dates for Richardson, Lord and Holbrook publication of the Worcester readers come before and after the date given for Hendee, which certainly seems to argue that they remained publishers during that period.

It is extremely interesting that there is a tie between the Boston publishers of The Worcester Primer, the Code 1 1826 text, and the Boston publishers of The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book, Gallaudet's 1830 text which used a Code 1 approach and which was meant for both hearing and deaf children, although it was not a beginners' book. As shown in the entry below concerning books for the deaf, The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book by Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet was simultaneously published in 1830 by the two Boston publishers, Richardson, Lord & Holbrook and Carter & Hendee (as well as by both a Hartford and a New York publisher). Therefore, the Gallaudet entry proves that the two Boston publishers did act as co-publishers on at least one Code 1 book in addition to The Worcester Primer. Yet, since Boston had other publishers besides these two companies, pure chance should have dictated the use of different publishers on these two presumably unrelated books of 1826 and 1830.

The record suggests, therefore, that Richardson and Lord (and by 1830 Richardson, Lord and Holbrook) were the publishers of the Worcester Readers, possibly from their origin with the publication

of the critically important Code 1 Worcester Primer in 1826. They were certainly publishers in 1830, almost immediately after the origin of the Code 1 Worcester series. Richardson, Lord and Holbrook were replaced as publishers by Jenks and Palmer, who may have been their direct successors or their purchasers. Jenks and Palmer then evolved, through management changes, into the company which published the widely used Hillard readers.

Early American Textbooks stated on The National Reader of 1833 by John Pierpont, published by Carter, Hendee and Co. and Hilliard, Gray, and Co., Boston, "One of the many readers written by Pierpont, this one replaced Murray's English Reader as the adopted textbook in Boston."

As shown above, the almost uniformly used English Reader for upper grade students before 1826 was published in 1826 in an edition "edited" by Rensselaer Bentley, and such an "edited" edition had been unheard of. Murray's English Reader had been published, like Webster's speller, by many companies, but no where is there any indication that anyone had ever "edited" it before. It was simply as "standard" as Webster's speller, but apparently, like Webster's, was a target of the change-agents. Bentley went on later to write a picture primer (identifying words by pictures, not sound). It is intriguing that Bentley's queer version of the English Reader came out in the change-agent year of 1826. Murray's English reader about that time was "patriotically" being changed for Pierpont's American series in many places. However, the real hostility to Murray's reading series which was eventually replaced by Pierpont's series may have arisen from the fact that Murray's began with a Code 10 spelling book for beginners, like Webster's Code 10 speller. To displace Murray's Code 10 book, it was probably necessary to replace the whole Murray series. Pierpont's series, when it began, did not have a book for rank beginners. When Pierpont's beginner's book was finally added, in the 1830's, it was, not surprisingly, a Code 1 text! By then, both Murray and Webster's materials for beginners had been largely removed from the schools.

It is possible to sort out other facts on the publishers of the Worcester readers from the various sources. Jenks & Palmer's 170th edition of Emerson's National Spelling Book or Pronouncing Tutor with an 1828 copyright date was obviously published by Jenks and Palmer many years after 1828. However, Early American Textbooks lists copies of that speller published in 1829 and 1830. In those years, Emerson's speller was in the very act of displacing Webster's speller, and its publisher at that time was Richardson, Lord & Holbrook of Boston. Richardson, Lord & Holbrook were the publishers of Emerson's change-agent speller. The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge published in 1843 a 32-page pamphlet, Report of the Committee on Spelling Books, a copy of which is presently in the American Antiquarian Society library. It confirms that Emerson's speller was the most used in Massachusetts in the 1830's and by then had displaced Webster's. The activism against Webster's Code 10 speller has been discussed in this history. It is obvious that Richardson, Lord & Holbrook had a crucial place in the displacement of Webster's Code 10 speller.

The Harvard copy of Emerson's speller by Jenks & Palmer of uncertain date also advertised Worcester's 1826 and later Code 1 reading series being published by Jenks & Palmer at the time.

The 1845 copy of Worcester's Second Book for Reading and Spelling carries this notation: "Worcester's Reading Books, Published by Jenks & Palmer, and For Sale By the Booksellers Generally," followed by the five book series which have been shown above as in print by 1841. Confirmation that they were all in print by that date is given by G. B. Emerson's 1841 remarks to be quoted shortly. The remarks of G. B. Emerson (not B. D. Emerson, the spelling book author) were preceded by this statement from the publisher:

"The above form a complete series of Reading Books which are not surpassed by any other works for this purpose now before the public.... This series of Readers has been introduced into



numerous Seminaries and Schools in the United States, and wherever used, the books have given satisfaction.

“George B. Emerson, Esq., an eminent teacher of Boston, remarks in a letter to the Publishers, [Ed, whether Jenks & Palmer or Richardson, Lord & Holbrook is not clear] dated October, 1841, - ‘Ever since I first became acquainted with Mr. Worcester’s books they have seemed to me better adapted, than any other series that has come to my knowledge, to the capacities and wants both of learners and teachers of the Elementary Schools. They are not, like most others intended for this purpose, a mere compilation; to a great extent they are original....’ And in regard to the Introduction to the Third Book, just published, Mr. Emerson adds, ‘I welcome this as an addition to an invaluable series.’”

The Introduction to the Third Book was therefore published in or shortly before 1841. These comments are followed with the copyright notice from the District of Massachusetts, indicating that “A Second Book for Reading and Spelling. By Samuel Worcester. New Edition.” had been copyrighted on November 8, 1830, by Richardson, Lord and Holbrook. The Worcester materials, of course, used A MEANING APPROACH.

According to Biographical Dictionary of American Educators, edited by John F. Ohles, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, George Stillman Hillard (1808-1879) the author of the original and later Hillard series, graduated from Harvard in 1828. Hillard taught school for two years before entering Harvard Law School. He graduated from law school in 1832 and actively practiced law. Hillard edited The Christian Register, a weekly Unitarian paper, with George Ripley. Hillard was part-owner and associate editor of the Boston Courier (1856-61) and held various elected offices in Massachusetts. He wrote many books besides his schoolbooks, which presumably grew out of his having edited five volumes of the Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser in 1839. He was also on the Board of Overseers of Harvard in 1871-1875.

According to Nietz’ history, the revised Sixth Reader of Hillard’s series in 1863 had an “Introductory Treatise on Elocution” by Professor Mark Bailey of Yale. Bailey later was one of the authors on the Appleton 1878 series. (The earlier Hillard series had been labeled in reverse: the sixth was the first, etc.)

Both the Franklin Series and the New Franklin Series, either the 1886 Taintor or 1892 Sheldon versions, were on sale in 1912 by American Book Company, according to the 1912 United States Catalog. They were not listed for sale in the 1928 United States Catalog. The Franklin Series and Hillard’s earlier series have been discussed at length in the text of this history. They used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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#### READERS FOR TEACHING THE DEAF

1830 (Harvard Copy)

The Child’s Picture Defining and Reading Book

Gallaudet, Rev. Thomas Hopkins, Principal of the American Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb.

H. & F. J. Huntington, Hartford; Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, and Carter & Hendee, Boston; Jonathan Leavitt, New York

1836 (In Early American Textbooks)

The Deaf and Dumb (Apparently not a reader but may be of interest)

Mann, Edwin John

D. K. Hitchcock, Boston

1872 (In Early American Textbooks)

School Stories with Questions. 101 pages  
 Keep, John R. -  
 Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, Columbus, Ohio  
 1876 (In Early American Textbooks, page 90)  
 Primary Reader for Deaf Mutes, 169 pages  
 Latham, William.  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati and New York  
 1886 (In Early American Textbooks)  
 First Lessons in English, for the Use of the Deaf. 116 pages  
 Sweet, Caroline C.,  
 The American Asylum, Hartford, Connecticut  
 1888 (Still in print in 1928 United States Catalog)  
 An Illustrated Primer  
 Fuller, Sarah, of Horace Mann School for the Deaf, Boston  
 D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, N. Y., Chicago, London  
 1893 (In Early American Textbooks)  
 Story Reader, 122 pages  
 Hammond, Ida V.  
 The American Asylum, Hartford, Connecticut

The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book is discussed at length in Appendix B, under the 1830 date, and most of Gallaudet's long Preface is quoted. The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book was not a beginning book but was meant for both deaf and hearing children, with Code 1 philosophy. It contained philosophy like Keagy's 1826 primer and was the forerunner to Gallaudet's The Mother's Primer of 1835.

The Mother's Primer was written to teach hearing children to read by using the deaf-mute approach of Gallaudet's school for the deaf, with "frustration levels" for the introduction of "new" sight words, even though such "frustration levels" are not mentioned in the book. They become evident only through a word count. That word count demonstrates that, on the average, the introduction of "new" words in selections in The Mother's Primer does not exceed ten per cent of the total number of different words in those selections. Even today in "reading experts" theory, if reading selections for learners do not contain 90% or more of already taught sight words, such selections are considered to have fallen below the "frustration level." The fact that The Mother's Primer was written for hearing children by Gallaudet, and The Mother's Primer itself, had been buried since long before 1930, until Blumenfeld dug them up and discussed them in his 1973 book, The New Illiterates. In that book, Blumenfeld identified the deaf-mute approach of The Mother's Primer as the precursor to William Scott Gray's 1930 deaf-mute-method Scott, Foresman readers. As has been shown in this history, Gallaudet's general sight-word approach, in its unrefined form, unlike The Mother's Primer which used "frustration levels," had also been used in most American reading series from 1826 until the twentieth century, which fact was buried under the avalanche of publicity promoting the McGuffey Myth.

Sarah Fuller's An Illustrated Primer was written for deaf-mute children but was also suggested for use with hearing children. E. B. Huey praised it, recommending its use for hearing children, in his 1908 book, The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading. The associations of both Fuller and Huey are of interest. As discussed, Fuller was in the Boston schools, in their school for the deaf, both before and after the promoter of the Leigh phonics "sound" method, Superintendent Philbrick, was fired. During that period, as has been discussed, William James most probably was among the activists promoting the "meaning" method to teach beginning reading. The near penniless E. B. Huey, judging from a letter in the Cattell manuscript files in the Library of Congress, had apparently been recruited to psychology by James McKeen Cattell. Huey may well have been in debt to Cattell for getting financial assistance for graduate

school, for which assistance from Cattell Huey had specifically asked in that early letter, which has been quoted previously. The psychologist, Cattell, was a close friend of the psychologist, William James, from sometime before 1893, as demonstrated by another letter from the Cattell manuscript files which has been quoted previously. The Fuller primer for the deaf, which Huey recommended also for hearing children, was still in print in 1928, sixty years after it first appeared! It is obvious the book received “expert” endorsement, and probably not just from Huey, Cattell’s apparent protege.

No other information is available on the other materials for the deaf which have been cited above.

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## **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1830 and 1840**

- 1830 (Library of Congress 1830 copy; Harvard's 1848 reprint)  
Angell's Readers  
Union No. 1, or Child's First Book,  
The First of a Series of Spelling and Reading Books in Six Numbers  
Angell, Oliver (1787-1858), Teacher in Providence, R. I.  
Cory, Marshall and Hammond, Providence, R. I.  
(E. H. Butler & Co. of Philadelphia published the 1848 reprint)  
(Publishers in 1833: Marshall, Clark & Co., School Book Publishers,  
Pennsylvania School Book Depository, Phil., per Harvard 1833 brochure.)  
1850 (The writer has 5th Reader; Early Am. Texts lists 1st., 2nd.)  
Angell's Readers, New Edition, No. 1 to No. 6  
Angell, Oliver (1787-1858) Prin., Franklin H. S., Providence, R. I.  
E. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia  
1871 (1876 Amer. Cat.; Early Amer. Text., Harvard Copy 1st Reader)  
The New American Series, 6 v.: First reader, 20c - Second 30c - Third 50c - Fourth 60c - Fifth 90c -  
Etymological reader, 1.50  
Sargent, Epes and Amasa May  
(Sargent's earlier series was still being published by J. L. Shorey.)  
J. H. Butler & Co., Phil., Copyrighted E. H. Butler & Co., Wash., D.C.  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Junior Ladies' Reader. \$1.50.  
Ladies' Book of Read[ing]. and Recitation. \$1.88.  
Ladies Reader. \$1.75.  
Primary Ladies' Reader. 60c.  
Hows, J. W. S. (See Appleton entries for Hows)  
E. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia  
1882 (Harvard copy with date of copyright)  
Monroe's New Primer  
Mrs. Louis B. Monroe  
(Prof. Monroe's earlier series was also published by Cowperthwait)  
Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia (This Harvard undated copy was published by E. H. Butler & Co.,  
Philadelphia. Apparently this new series was first published by Cowperthwait of Philadelphia, who may  
have been bought out about 1890 by Butler, who apparently still used the original plates with the original  
dates.)  
1883 (In 1876-1885 Amer. Cat. In 1912 U. S. Cat. pub. by Amer. Bk.)  
Butler's Series of Readers - First through Fifth  
Mecutchen, Samuel, Editor  
J. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia (Pre-1884 sometimes J. H., not E. H.)  
1884 (Harvard copy)  
The Chart Primer  
Mecutchen, Samuel, Editor  
E. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia  
1895 (Harvard copy. In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Hazen's Primer and First Reader (Second, Third, Fourth-Fifth)  
Hazen, Marshman Williams  
E. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago  
1899 (In 1912 United States Catalog - Harvard Copy)  
The Progressive Course in Reading

Aldrich, George I. and Alexander Forbes  
Butler, Sheldon & Co., New York - Philadelphia - Chicago

Union No. 1, or Child's First Book of the Angell series was originally copyrighted on June 9, 1830 by Cory, Marshall & Hammond of Providence, Rhode Island, and presumably they copyrighted the other books in the series. In 1833, Marshall, Clark & Co., School Book Publishers (Pennsylvania School Book Depository, No. 4, North Fifth Street, Philadelphia), produced a brochure for the Angell readers with attached letters of recommendation, a copy of which is in the Harvard library. The action and support of school activists is marked on the letters of recommendation. It is of great interest that a highly organized, massive and successful push for government schools to replace private and religious schools took place in Pennsylvania in 1830 and shortly afterwards, and that the Rhode Island publisher of this Code 1 series had moved its headquarters to Pennsylvania some time between 1830 and 1833. That is only one of the hosts of circumstances that link the push for government schools to replace private and religious schools with the push to replace "sound" with "meaning" in teaching beginning reading. Samuel Blumenfeld's book, *Is Public Education Necessary?*, gives the background on the Pennsylvania drive for government schools.

The Angell reading-disability-producing series was obviously widely used (presumably in the new government schools) since it remained in print for many years. However, the Angell series was not in print when the 1876 United States Catalogue was published. Whether E. H. Butler is a successor to Marshall, Clark & Co. of Philadelphia, which was itself presumably associated with Cory, Marshall & Hammond of Providence, is unknown. Angell's materials which have been discussed in this history and in Appendix B used a Code 1, pure MEANING APPROACH.

Sargent's two original series were not published by Butler. Sargent's old series, in print by 1856, was being published by John L. Shorey of Boston, as well as Sargent's new series of unknown date, according to the 1876 United States Catalogue, at the same time that Butler was publishing the Sargent and May 1871 series. A copy of Epes Sargent's 1856 Sargent's Standard Primer published by John L. Shorey of Boston is in the Harvard library, with a notation that its publication date was 1871. It is straight Code 1 "meaning" material, recommending even that the alphabet itself not be taught before a long list of sight words has been learned. However, the 1871 Sargent and May series published by Butler made some use of real phonics, though it was still sight-word material. That was during the brief revival period for phonics, largely associated with Leigh pronouncing print, from 1864 to about 1873. The 1871 Sargent and May First Reader, a copy of which is in the Harvard library, rates perhaps a Code 7 as it used A MEANING APPROACH WITH SOME REAL PHONICS.

Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900 lists copies of Butler's Series under Samuel Mecutchen's name as editor on page 95. Harvard library has a copy of Mecutchen's The Chart Primer of 1884. The first-through -fifth-book series was in print by American Book Company in 1912 according to the United States Catalog, but not in print in 1928.

A "Chart Primer" was listed in the 1928 United States Catalog as published by American Book Company and was attributed to L. B. Monroe as author. This may be a mistake. If the listing meant Mecutchen's material, Mecutchen's Chart Primer was still in print in 1928. If it meant Monroe's material, Monroe's was still in print in 1928.

L. B. Monroe, elocution instructor of Boston, wrote a reading series about 1871-1873, published by Cowperthwait & Company of Philadelphia. (It may have been a revision, since Early American Textbooks showed a first reader by Monroe in 1864. However, that date may be wrong, since Early American Textbooks showed some other dates that were clearly wrong. An advertisement in The American Teacher by Cowperthwait in September, 1883, refers to Monroe's Readers as having been in

print for eight years, which would only be from 1875. Therefore, the 1871-1875 series may have had an 1875 revision.) The Primary Teacher of January, 1879, referred to “Munroe’s... Chart Primer,” but the material was actually called Monroe’s Primary Reading Charts. In 1882, Professor Monroe’s widow wrote Monroe’s New Primer, published by Cowperthwait of Philadelphia and (apparently later) by E. H. Butler & Co. of Philadelphia. (The 1883 advertisement in The American Teacher referred to the New Primer, and Monroe’s Advanced First, Second and Third Readers, also written by Mrs. Monroe, as “Monroe’s Supplementary Readers,” meaning that they were supplementary to Professor Monroe’s series, still on sale.) As discussed previously, all these materials qualify as sight-word readers using inadequate phonics, although Mrs. Monroe’s material is sharply superior to the earlier material of Professor Monroe.

As mentioned, in 1883, E. H. Butler & Co. had published Butler’s Series on which Samuel Mecutchen was editor. References to Butler’s charts appeared in later material. The probability is that Butler’s charts were those associated with the Mecutchen series, and not Monroe’s. The 1928 United States Catalog may be wrong in attributing the Chart Primer being published by American Book Company in 1928 to L. B. Monroe, since it may have been Mecutchen’s.

Harvard has a copy of an 1884 Mecutchen book, Butler’s Series - The Chart Primer which carries the notation, “A Reproduction in book form of Butler’s Series of Reading Charts,” and it was a meaning approach with incomplete phonics. The Mecutchen primer was most probably the book still being reprinted in 1928 by American Book Company. If it were Professor Monroe’s material, it could have been a meaning approach with such inadequate phonics it rated as a meaning approach with phony phonics. However, if it were Mecutchen’s material listed above, as appears likely, it was Code 4, A MEANING APPROACH WITH INCOMPLETE PHONICS.

Hazen’s 1895 series included the Primer and First Reader, and Second, Third, and Fourth-Fifth Readers. It was still in print in 1912, published by American Book Company. The Harvard copy of the Primer and First Reader show it used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The 1899 Aldrich-Forbes Progressive Course five-book series was being published by American Book at the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published. It should not be confused with the Progressive Road to Reading by Burchill, Ettinger and Shimer, published by Silver Burdett in 1909. The first and second Aldrich-Forbes books are listed in Early American Textbooks, and Harvard has a copy of the First Book, published in 1899 by American Book Company. Considering that early 1899 publishing date, it is possible the Butler company and the Sheldon publishers who had merged by 1899 were absorbed by American Book about that time, particularly since both Sheldon and Butler seem to disappear from the records after 1899. The beginning of the 1899 Aldrich-Forbes First Book used the standard approach of the time: sight words in sentences with many pictures, and directions to introduce phonetic lessons later. Too few photocopied pages are available to judge, but the probability is that the book used the standard inadequate phonics, which in actual practice would have been phony phonics. Yet the growth in extensive “supplementary” phonics drill at the blackboard by first-grade teachers was increasing in 1899, so first-grade teachers began to make up for the inadequacies of such primers. The complete First Book most probably used A MEANING APPROACH WITH INADEQUATE OR PHONY PHONICS.

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1835 (Library of Congress copy)

Peter Parley’s Primer

Copyrighted in Massachusetts in 1835

Published by T. T. Ashby in Philadelphia in 1835.

1836 (Harvard has Little Reader, 2nd bk, pub. R. W. Pomeray, Phil.)

Parley’s Series of Readers

Goodrich, Samuel G. (pseudonym: Peter Parley)

Otis, Broaders & Co., Boston, and other publishers

1851 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Mother's Primer  
 John P. Morton & Co., Louisville, Kentucky  
 1857-58 revision (In 1876 Amer. Catalogue and 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Goodrich's First-Sixth Readers  
 Revised by Noble Butler  
 John P. Morton & Co., Louisville, Kentucky  
 1866 (In 1876 American Catalogue and 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Common School Primer (Possibly part of a John P. Morton & Co. series)  
 Morton  
 1868 (In 1928 United States Catalog and 1876 American Catalogue)  
 First Book in Spelling and Reading.  
 Butler, Noble  
 John P. Morton & Co., Louisville, Kentucky  
 1869-1875 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 New First-Fifth School Readers  
 Butler, Noble  
 John P. Morton & Co., Louisville, Kentucky  
 1874 or Earlier (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 The American Primer, Pictures and Words for Teaching Little Children to Read and Write (48 p. Listed on p. 69 of Early American Textbooks)  
 (Possibly this was the same as Wm. J. Davis' Word Method for Beginners, 1874 or earlier, advertised as mentioned below)  
 The American (Standard) School Series  
 Davis, William J.  
 John P. Morton & Co., Louisville, Kentucky  
 1912 or Earlier (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Child's First Book: Reading and Spelling  
 Morton

In 1836, Parley's Series of Readers contained four books: Parley's Picture Book or First Reader, Parley's Little Reader, Parley's Common School Reader, and Parley's School Library, or Universal Reader. A portion of the second book is discussed elsewhere in this history, based on Harvard's 1836 copy. The Library of Congress has a copy of Peter Parley's Primer, apparently not part of the series unless its name was later changed to Parley's Picture Book or First Reader. The Library of Congress copy of the Primer was copyrighted in Massachusetts in 1835 and published by T. T. Ashby in Philadelphia in 1835. Its only use of "sound" was in the incomplete syllabaries at its beginning. The method used in the rest of the Primer was totally "meaning," with a heavy emphasis on pictures.

Whether the Goodrich reading series above the level of the primer may have also been in print before 1836 is not known. Goodrich's First through Sixth Readers were still in print in 1928 according to the United States Catalog, listed under "Butler, N." and they were presumably the original series as revised by Noble Butler in 1857. If so, they had an astonishing longevity, from about 1835 to after 1928. Still in print in 1928 by Morton were Noble Butler's New First-Fifth School Readers, dated 1869-1875 per the 1876 American Catalogue. Also in print by Morton was Noble Butler's 1868 First Book in Spelling and Reading.

Vail said (page 61):

"The Goodrich Readers published by Morton & Griswold in Louisville, Kentucky, were perhaps the most constant competitors with the McGuffey Readers in the early years throughout

the states of the Mississippi Valley. These were prepared by S. G. Goodrich, the author of the popular 'Peter Parley Tales.' The readers were originally published in Boston and some copies bear the imprint of Otis, Broaders & Co. They were first copyrighted in 1839 (sic) and were frequently revised. They finally became the property of the Louisville publisher. Mr. Smith [Ed.: McGuffey's publisher] and Mr. Morton kept up a most vigorous schoolbook war, especially in Ohio, Tennessee, and Kentucky in the years from 1845 to 1860."

William G. Webster, Noah Webster's son, wrote A Sequel to Webster's Elementary Spelling Book or a Speller and Definer sometime before or in 1847, which was published by George F. Cooledge & Bro., New York, who by that time or shortly after became the publisher of Noah Webster's speller, claiming sales of a million copies a year by 1848. William G. Webster's Sequel was also published by Morton & Griswold, of Louisville, Kentucky, as well as by J. B. Lippincott of Philadelphia. Morton & Griswold therefore had early ties to Eastern publishers which might account for their acquiring the Goodrich series. The original Goodrich readers used a meaning approach. So, presumably, did the 1857 revised readers. A PROBABLE MEANING APPROACH.

Concerning Morton's 1851 Mother's Primer, it was listed as in print in 1928 in the United States Catalog. Some time ago, I saw a Mother's Primer of about 1850 which was not Gallaudet's Mother's Primer and this may be it. PROBABLY A MEANING APPROACH.

An advertisement for the Davis primer on the back of Harvard's 1874 copy of The American Spelling Book by Noble Butler read:

"Word Method for beginners, by Wm. J. Davis. Pictures and Words on CARD. PRIMER, printed in large type and appropriately illustrated. Pronounced superior to all other methods for teaching little children to read."

The Davis primer also was listed on page 69 of Early American Textbooks, as shown above. Webb's "word-method" books had been popular since the 1840's, and dropped the oral spelling of sight words. As shown under McGuffey's publisher's name elsewhere, that publisher had also produced a "word-method" reader in 1855 in obvious competition to Webb, and, as this entry shows, so did the publisher, John P. Morton, in Louisville. The 1928 United States Catalog dated this primer which was still in print in 1928 to 1874, but the dates the Catalog gave for other materials were frequently wrong. No date appeared for the Davis primer in Early American Textbooks. The Davis primer may have originally been published considerably before 1874, which was the date of the book carrying an advertisement for it as well as the date given in the 1928 United States Catalog.

The advertisement on the 1874 book was followed with advertisements for Noble Butler's own books, implying they were all in "The American (Standard) School Series." At the end was advertised, "Also Butler's Goodrich Readers - Six books." In the 1912 United States Catalog, Davis' book appeared as American Primer, but Noble Butler's series was not related to it, instead appearing as New School Readers, which implied no connection to Davis' book. The same was true in the 1928 United States Catalog. The listing for the book by Davis in the 1928 United States Catalog read, "American Primer 25 cents '74 Morton. Pictures and words (cards) and American Primer \$4.50 Morton." Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, shows a copy, "The American Primer. Pictures and Words for Teaching Little Children to Read and Write. Louisville: John P. Morton and Co., no date, 48 p." The Goodrich, Noble Butler and Davis material were probably all based on A MEANING APPROACH.

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ACCORDING TO VAIL, THE MCGUFFEY SERIES HAD FIVE EDITIONS. THE THREE MAJOR ONES ARE INDICATED WITH ASTERISKS.



\* 1836-1838 (Republished 1982 by Mott Media, Milford, Mich. 48042).  
 McGuffey Readers, Original Edition  
 McGuffey, William Holmes, and Alexander Hamilton McGuffey  
 Truman and Smith, Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1847 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Hemans' Young Ladies' Reader. \$1.25  
 Pinneo, T. S.  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1855 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Little Teacher, First Book in Reading on the Word Method. 10c, 16c.  
 W. B. Smith & Company, Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1857 (In Early American Textbooks, page 35)  
 Vocal Culture and Elocution. 480 pages.  
 Kidd, Robert (See his 1870 text below)  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati; Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfiner, Philadelphia; Clark & Maynard, New York.  
 1857  
 New High School Reader. \$1.25.  
 McGuffey, W. H. (This is obviously only the company's use of his name)  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio.  
 1868 (In 1876 Amer. Cat.; in Early Amer. T.; in F. Buisson's 1876 Philadelphia Exposition Report in France)  
 Knell, A. and J. H. Jones  
 The Phonic Reader, No. 1, 112 pages. 27c.  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio; Claxton, Remsen & Haffelinger, Philadelphia; Clark & Maynard, New York.  
 1868 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers.)  
 McGuffey's New Eclectic Primer; in Phonetic Type. New Edition. 35c  
 Leigh, Edwin  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1870 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)  
 Rhetorical Reader. \$1.25  
 Kidd, R.  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1875 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Eclectic Educational Series, The Graded-School Readers, First-Fifth,  
 Harvey, T. W.  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1876 (Listing of McGuffey's in 1876 American Catalogue)  
 New Eclectic Series. New Ed. 8 v. - New Eclectic Primer, 16c, First Reader, 18c, Second Reader, 35c, Third Reader, 50c, Fourth Reader, 60c, Fifth Reader, 95c, Sixth Reader, \$1.15. Pictorial Eclectic Primer, 12c.  
 McGuffey, W. H.  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1876 (In 1912 United States Catalog, by American Book)  
 Latham, William H.  
 Primary Reader for Deaf Mutes  
 Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1878 (In Early Amer. Textbooks, which also lists 2nd and 5th readers pub. in 1897 by Tiernan Printing Co., St. Louis, Missouri.)  
 A Fonetic Furst Redur

Vickroy, T. Rhys  
 Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 \* 1879-1881 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog, Reportedly Still in Print)  
 McGuffey's Revised Eclectic Readers (Second Major Edition)  
 Vail, Henry H., Editor  
 Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1886 (In Early American Textbooks, under "Spellers," page 114)  
 List of New Words by Lessons of the Primer and McGuffey Readers, 80 p.  
 [Ed.: Surprising use of the ABC word method on the 1879 phonic series)  
 Blewett, Scott H. and Ben Blewett, comp.  
 Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati and New York  
 1887-1888 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 McGuffey's Alternate Series, First through Sixth Readers  
 Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 1887-1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 McGuffey's Natural History Readers  
 Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
 \* 1901 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 The New McGuffey Readers  
 Baldwin, James, Editor  
 American Book Company, New York and Cincinnati  
 1980? (Writer's own copies)  
 McGuffey Readers, 1836-1838 Original Series (Slight revisions)  
 Mott Media  
 Milford, Michigan  
 1980? (In The New Big Book of Home Learning, by Mary Pride)  
 McGuffey Readers, 1879-1880 Edition  
 Thoburn Press  
 (Thoburn also publish a 10-booklet Short Vowel and a 10 booklet Long Vowel Reading Series)  
 Fairfax Christian Bookstore  
 P. O. Box 6941  
 Tyler, Texas 75711  
 1980? (In The New Big Book of Home Learning, by Mary Pride)  
 Moore-McGuffey Readers (Colored illust., some editing and rewriting)  
 4 volumes  
 Hewitt Research Foundation  
 Washougal, Washington

American Book Company's other publications are listed later, under its own name, starting in 1890.

Henry H. Vail discussed the numerous editions of the McGuffey Readers in A History of the McGuffey Readers, Cleveland: The Burrows Company, 1911. Vail said (page 4):

"For half a century the present writer has had personal knowledge of the readers. At first, as a teacher, using them daily in the class room; but soon, as an editor, directing the literary work of the publishers and owners.... For more than seventy years the McGuffey Readers have held high rank as text-books for use in the elementary schools, especially throughout the West and South. But during this time these books have been revised five times.... (page 5:) Each of these revisions has constituted practically a new series although the changes have never included the entire contents."

The original McGuffey series of 1836 had been published by Truman and Smith of Cincinnati, which company became just W. B. Smith in 1841, and W. B. Smith & Company in 1852. The name became Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle in 1863, and Wilson, Hinkle & Co. in 1868. In 1877, the firm became Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. All of these changes were partial, former members remaining in each new company. Vail was "given an interest in the profits" in 1871, after he had been "for some years" an employee, and became a full partner three years later (page 54). However, Vail said (pages 55 and 56):

"The American Book Company became, on May 15, 1890, the owners, by purchase, of all the copyrights and plates formerly owned by Van Antwerp, Bragg, & Co. The four active partners in that firm, each of whom had then been in the schoolbook business some twenty-five or thirty years, entered the employ of the American Book Company. Mr. Bragg and Mr. Hinkle remained in charge of the Cincinnati business. Mr. Vail and Mr. Ambrose went to New York: the former as editor in chief, the latter was at first treasurer but later became the president.... This sale, completed May 15, 1890, did not then include the printing office and bindery belonging to the firm. These were used by the firm of Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. until January 1, 1892, in manufacturing books ordered by the American Book Company....

"The latest revision of the McGuffey Readers, five books, was prepared and published by the American Book Company in 1901, under the same general direction as the revision of 1878; but the actual work was done by Dr. James Baldwin, who was the author of the Harper Readers and of Baldwin's Readers.... These books acquired at once a large sale, and the sales of the previous editions are still remunerative."

Vail did not mention that there had been a series called McGuffey's Alternate Series, with a first through sixth reader, published by Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. in 1887-1888, in an obvious response to the great flurry of emphasis on "supplementary reading" which had been started by Colonel Parker in Quincy in the 1870's. Copies of these books are listed in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*. They were still in print and for sale by American Book Company in 1912, according to the 1912 United States Catalog, but were not listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. Nor did he mention McGuffey's Natural History Readers, published in 1887 and 1888, which were listed in the 1885-1890 American Catalogue. That was obviously another supplementary series, in response to the Agassiz "natural history" influence.

In his book praising the McGuffey readers, Vail also did not adequately emphasize the enormous competition which existed for even its most successful edition of 1879. Yet, despite such continuing competition, the company apparently greatly increased in size after that 1879 edition.

Useful testimony about such competition on all schoolbooks, obviously including readers, came from Gilman H. Tucker of American Book Company, New York, in *The School Journal* of July 17, 1897, page 65. American Book Company had owned the McGuffey readers for the previous seven years by 1897. Tucker said in 1897, in his article, "Education from a Publisher's Standpoint,"

"Competition among publishers has never been more rife than in the past ten years, and such a thing as a possible monopoly is absurd...."

Tucker said this despite the fact, referred to elsewhere, that the *Indiana School Journal* in 1890 estimated that the newly formed American Book Company controlled about 80 percent of the textbook market. In 1890, American Book Company had been formed by the merger of four other companies, of which Van Antwerp was one, and the buying out of Harper's textbooks. Yet reading book titles which increased after 1890 suggest that by 1897 American Book Company's share of the reading textbook market had greatly shrunk.

Vail said concerning the sales of the earliest editions (page 47):

“In a first reader printed in the fall of 1841, there are two pages of advertising matter, in which Truman and Smith claimed to have sold 700,000 of the Eclectic Series.”

It should be noted that by 1848 the publishers of Webster’s spellers were claiming sales of 1,000,000 copies a year, as mentioned earlier. This should be compared to the total sales for the McGuffey Readers at all levels, plus their speller, of only 700,000 copies over a period of five years from 1836 to 1841. A copy of The Sanders Series, The School Reader. First Book, printed by Sage & Brother of Rochester, carried a date on its title page of 1844 and the “Preface” was signed by Charles W. Sanders in New York and dated September, 1840. The copyright date also read 1840. An advertisement on the back cover of this copy which was printed by Sage & Brother, presumably in 1844, read,

“Such has been the demand for these Books, that, although recently published, more than 2,000,000 have already been sold.”

If the Sage & Brother cover with that claim was printed at the same time as the title page with the date, 1844, which title page carried Sage & Brother’s name as well as the publisher Mark H. Newman of New York, that indicates the Sanders Series sold 2,000,000 copies from September, 1840, to 1844, a four year period. Yet McGuffey’s only sold 700,000 from 1836 to 1841, a five-year period which overlapped the period given for Sanders’ sales.

However, whether any of these claims were credible may be questioned, since they were used as advertising tools. There was no way to check on their authenticity at that time, since America had no Bureau of Internal Revenue which might threaten to pore over a company’s profit-and-loss statements (nor did we even have a national debt)!

The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York, June, 1878, carried chapters from the book, Roderick Hume, by the Managing Editor, C. W. Bardeen, one of which chapters was titled, “A Change of Text-Books.” (A copy is in Appendix A.) The chapter poked fun at the swarms of book agents which descended on schools in those days, and it poked fun at their inflated claims. One agent said to Hume, who was a school principal in a village:

“All the big cities use (our books) exclusively. They have just been re-adopted in Boston, and when Smintheus’s tried to displace us in Hong Kong, we not only held them in there, but drove out theirs for ours in Yang tsi Kiang.”

Note the implication that “Boston” was a kind of authority. Hume decided to write leading publishers for sample copies:

“So he got what addresses he could from the advertisements in a school journal...”

Education journals were numerous in 1878. One of the book company answers read:

“We are delighted to get your letter, intimating that at last you are prepared to adopt a uniform set of books. News of your remarkable success at Norway had already reached us, and we have been hoping that our Mr. Hook would find time to call upon you. Don’t fail to come and see us, the first time you visit the city. Our establishment turns out fifteen million books an hour.... Our publications are used in all the best schools.... Most of (our books) are in such universal use that you may feel under obligation to adopt them, because children who move into or out of your village will thus have the same books which are already in use.”

Most book companies were more than willing to send sample copies:

“Other letters flowed in, followed by express packages, till Roderick’s shelves, and table, and floor, were successively over-flowed...”

Bardeen was associated with schools in the 1870’s and knew the real state of things. So did his contemporaries. His contemporaries must have been very familiar with high-pressure salesmanship and overblown advertising from book companies or Bardeen would never have chosen to parody them. Publishers’ claims for book sales in the 1870’s and for years before and afterward, therefore, may reasonably be taken with grave reservations.

The McGuffey readers were issued in Leigh phonetic print from about the late 1860’s as were most popular reading series at that time (which, of course, was an implicit admission that they were sight-word, and not phonic, readers). McGuffey’s publishers also produced a sight-word reader whose title suggests that the reader dropped the oral spelling of sight-words, in imitation of Webb’s highly popular materials known as the “word-method” readers. The McGuffey company’s version in 1855 was entitled, *Little Teacher, First Book in Reading on the Word Method*.

The company also produced in 1868 *The Phonic Readers* by A. Knell and J. H. Jones, a phonics series, so they were obviously trying to cover all bases in order to meet the competition. Surprisingly, they also published a reader for deaf mutes in 1876, *Primary Reader for Deaf Mutes*, by William H. Latham, which was still in print by American Book Company in 1928. They also published *A Fonetik Furst Redur*, by T. R. Vickroy in 1878, an obvious entry into the “fonetic” spelling field. Presumably, the Vickroy material was not successful. Copies of higher books in the Vickroy series were later printed in 1897 in St. Louis by Woodward & Tiernan Printing Company, so the publishers dropped the series and Vickroy probably arranged to have it reprinted himself.

In 1875, the publishers’ new Eclectic Educational Series, *The Graded-School Readers*, by T. W. Harvey was not too successful. As a result, the 1879 revised edition of McGuffey’s was prepared by the successor company, Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. The 1879 material was the most successful revision of all, according to Vail, and it undoubtedly did have enormous sales in the Midwest. Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co. became part of American Book Company in 1890 which put out *The New McGuffey Readers*, a sight-word series, written by Baldwin in 1901. Both the phonic McGuffey’s of 1879 and the sight-word McGuffey’s of 1901 were in print in 1928. McGuffey’s of 1879 probably still had a good sale in 1928 as it was listed in the United States Catalog under its own name, as well as in the general list of readers.

As discussed elsewhere, the American Book Company was founded in 1890, as a merger of Ivison; Appleton; Barnes; and Van Antwerp, Bragg. The Board of Education of Lyndhurst (then Union Township), New Jersey, listed township book adoptions on August 30, 1889, including Conklin’s *Grammar*, copyrighted by D. Appleton and Company in 1888. In November, 1889, the board approved a bill to Ivison, Blakeman & Company, for books and supplies of \$117.46, to D. Appleton for books of \$26.05, to A. S. Barnes for books of \$17.15 and to N. J. News Co. for books and supplies of \$57.22. The Board also approved a budget of \$200 for books in the coming year (presumably the school year 1890-1891). On June 27, 1890, Principal Banks complained of the failure to purchase books, which suggests that all the books adopted the previous August which were listed in the minutes may not have been received, including Conklin’s *Grammar*. The following November 1, 1890, \$161.40 was paid to American Book Company, followed in February, 1891, with \$9.06 to Arel and Co., and another \$22.96 to American Book. For the 1891-92 year, the book budget was \$250, and a total of \$111.24 was paid to Baker and Taylor by March, 1892.

It is apparent that in these three successive years the Board was purchasing the bulk of its materials from companies which acted as book agents and general school supply houses. In 1889, the agent obviously was primarily Ivison, Blakeman & Company, in 1890 American Book Company, which had resulted from the merger of Ivison Blakeman and three other companies and the buyout of Harper's textbook list, and in 1891 Baker and Taylor. Ivison, Blakeman, A. S. Barnes and Appleton who had supplied books and supplies in 1889, became American Book by 1890. American Book Company then continued to be a book agent as well as publisher. Note, however, that in 1889, before the merger, and at the height of McGuffey's sales, Lyndhurst was not buying from McGuffey's publishers, Van Antwerp, Bragg.

The great size of the merger which produced American Book Company is shown by the resultant exceedingly long lists of grammar and spelling books which became available for sale by the new company. That list was printed inside the covers of an old Union Township Conklin's Grammar given to the Lyndhurst Historical Society. (It was from my attic. It had the signature of my late uncle, William Rodgers, all over it, made when he was presumably about 12 years old. My grandparents must have had to buy the book, probably printed about 1891, since their son had obviously spoiled it.) The book shows "From the press of D. Appleton & Company" on the title page (obviously the original publishers of the Conklin grammars) and above it "American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, Chicago." Inside both covers were listed an astonishingly great number of language books and spelling books which American Book by then was marketing, which books had previously been marketed by the five former publishers: Ivison, Appleton, Barnes, Van Antwerp, and Harper.

Earlier McGuffey editions had been sight-word readers, although the 1838 McGuffey speller was phonetic and was intended for beginning readers. If that speller had been used first as Alexander McGuffey recommended (although it probably rarely was used first) the series could have been taught phonetically. The 1879 and most widely used edition, however, was: A PHONIC APPROACH.

The New McGuffey First Reader, published by American Book Company in 1901 as the first book in their revised series by Baldwin, was a sight-word Code 2 approach, perhaps rating a Code 3 at the most. Although a copy is in the Department of Education Library in Washington, no mention was made in Early American Textbooks, which was prepared from material in this library, of the existence of the 1901 sight-word McGuffey series. Parts of the "Preface" to the 1901 First Reader make it very clear that it was, at the best, a "phony phonics" approach, and very weak "phony phonics," at that. Since I have turned up no other record or copies of this reader, portions are quoted at length below for the assistance of any interested persons.

"The New McGuffey First Reader has been prepared in conformity with the latest and most approved ideas regarding the teaching of reading, and its lessons embody and illustrate the best features of the word, the phonic, and the sentence or thought methods.

"While all the stories in this book are new, or have been rewritten especially for its pages, care has been taken to preserve the distinguishing characteristics which have given to the McGuffey Readers their unparalleled popularity and usefulness.

"The gradation both in thought and in words has been carefully maintained, and the work provided enables the pupils to advance by easy and evenly progressive stages from the beginning to the end.

"Only a few new words are introduced at each lesson, and these are repeated frequently in succeeding lessons until the pupils are able to recognize them without difficulty.

“From the first lesson script is presented in connection with the printed forms of words, the frequency of its use diminishing as the printed forms become more familiar.

“The sounds of the letters are taught, in the order of the alphabet, by appropriate exercises after the various reading lessons. The phonic elements and the common diacritical marks are learned one at a time and in a manner that is both natural and easy.”

The next page, page 4, has the alphabet, both small and large, and a full-page picture on the following page 5, headed FIRST READER. Page 6 has a picture of a boy in the middle. On the top are “a boy I see,” separated, with script versions underneath each printed word. Next to the picture of the boy, on the right side of the page, the words are repeated in print, going down: “boy I see a boy.” Finally, at the bottom comes the “important” thought built from the disjointed practice sight words: “I see a boy” (no period) in both print and script. Page 7 has, across the top in print with script under it: “girl can and the girl.” A picture of a boy and a girl are in the middle of the page, with this world-shaking sight-word prose under it: “I see a girl. I see a boy. I see a boy and a girl. The boy can see the girl. I can see the girl and the boy. I can see the girl.” The last sentence was the only one repeated in script after the print. Each sentence was on a separate line, followed by a period, except the last script sentence.

Page 8 introduced the first so-called phonics on the bottom, On the top were the words: “man has hat run” in print and script, with a picture underneath. Then came the sentences: “See the man! See the boy and the man. The man has a hat. Has the boy a hat? The boy can run. Can the man run? The man can see the boy run.” The last sentence was repeated in script, with a period. Underneath came the “phonics,” with a short sign over each a: “a man can has hat a.” The intent was to show the short sound of a, but no distinction was made concerning the use of the article “a” on the same page, which has a short u sound. The sight words on the top of page 8 were: “doll have any,” followed by sentences in print: “I have a hat. I have a doll. See my doll! Can the doll see? I can see my doll. Has the doll a hat? My doll has a hat. The girl has a doll and a hat.” The last sentence was repeated in script. At the bottom were the short a words: “a can has hat have a,” with the short sign over each a. Yet, when used as words (and “a” is a word) three of the six are irregular. “Has” contains the “z” sound for the letter “s,” instead of the “s” sound in the sight-word already taught, “see,” The article, “a,” is pronounced with a short “u” sound. The letter “a” in “have” is pronounced with a short sound despite the fact that the word ends in a silent “e” which normally gives the pronounced vowel the long sound. The silent “e” is not mentioned and remains unnoticed and untaught by the McGuffey reader at this point. The result of including three phonic exceptions in a list of only six words presented to rank beginners is sure to be phonic confusion in the minds of those rank beginners.

Sight words continued to be introduced on each page. Page 10 had “play may take ball.” Page 11 had “baby little big.” On the bottom of these pages long “a” words were shown: “may play take baby,” but in no way did that mean the long “a” sound was being taught. Note the different vowel patterns in these words, with no explanation on the fact that only a certain very few, and very specific, vowel patterns will produce the long “a” sound. Yet the children were not being taught those fundamental vowel patterns, without which it is impossible to read English by letter “sound” and without which English can only be read by word “meaning.”

There are three vowel patterns in these four words (may, play, take, baby), and each vowel pattern would be taught in a series of specific lessons in phonics programs, with days being spent on drilling on each pattern until the children learn it. The first vowel pattern in these four words is the vowel combination, “ay,” which produces the long “a” sound (may, play, day, etc.). The second vowel pattern is the fact that a syllable ending in a vowel is usually long (as in no, go, and the first syllable, ba-, of ba-by). The third vowel pattern is the fact that a silent “e” at the end of a word usually makes the first vowel long

(as in take, ride, code, etc.) Without explanation on the vowel patterns in these words, the words must necessarily be perceived only as meaning-bearing wholes, with little or no reference to sound.

Page 12 introduced “dog it he with” as sight words, and the “phonics” on the page was the sound of the letter “b” at the bottom in “big boy ball baby.” Note that only two letter sounds have been mentioned in all the words up to this point (“a” and “b”) and the rest of their phonic construction was totally ignored.

The “sounds” were obviously being introduced as letters of the alphabet in alphabetical order: first long and short “a” on pages 8 to 11, then “b” on page 12, etc. The whole alphabet would eventually be covered, but only long, long after a massive load of sight words had been taught. Long before the “teaching” of the alphabet was completed, conditioned reflexes would have been formed to read words only as meaning-bearing wholes instead of as syllables formed from the sequential sounds of letters. At the best, the 1901 McGuffey rates a Code 3: phony phonics on whole sight words. This was an extraordinary and inexplicable change of emphasis from the enormously successful and truly phonic 1879 McGuffey edition put out eleven years before American Book Company took over, and which 1879 edition was still on the market for years after 1901. Therefore, the 1901 New McGuffey series by American Book Company, like many other materials American Book was marketing in 1901 and which were still in print in 1928, was a SIGHT WORD SERIES WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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THE SEQUENCE OF THE IVISON COMPANIES IS DISCUSSED BELOW:

1838 (Harvard copy 1844)  
Sanders Spelling Book  
Sanders, Charles Walton  
Gould, Newman and Saxton, New York, New York  
1840 (1876 Amer. Cat.; Primer in 1912, possibly 1928, U. S. Cats.)  
Sanders Series, 5 vols. plus 1840 Primer listed later below  
(In 1876 American Catalogue for sale by Ivison with 1st 28c, 2d 50c, 3d 75c, 4th \$1.20, 5th \$1.25. 1840 Primer not listed in 1876, but 1858 Pictorial and 1866 Union were listed. 1840 Primer, and 1858 and 1866 Sanders’ primers were listed for sale by American Book in 1912 U. S. Catalogue. Only two Sanders primers were listed in 1928 U. S. Catalogue, “Primary School Primer” and Union Pictorial Primr... ‘93.” The date of the last is either wrong or a revision. Whether the former was based on the 1840 or 1858 primer is unknown.)  
Sanders, Charles Walton  
Mark H. Newman, New York, New York  
1840 (Harvard copy published in November, 1846, or after)  
The Sanders Series- School Reader. First Book  
Sanders, Charles W.  
Mark H. Newman & Co., New York  
1844  
The Sanders Series, The School Reader. First Book  
Sanders, Charles W. (Copyright 1840)  
Sage & Brother, Rochester, New York (Apparent agent of Newman, New York)  
1840 (Harvard copy published in 1854 or after, and an earlier one)  
Sanders’ The Primary School Primer  
Sanders, Charles W.  
Ivison & Phinney, New York, Successors to Newman and Ivison  
1855 (Ad. on McElligott’s Young Analyzer, pub. by Ivison, 1855)  
American Lessons in Reading and Speaking  
Leavitt, Joshua (See Appendix B, for his series pub. by Jewett, N. Y.)  
Ivison & Phinney, New York



1858 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)  
Pictorial Primer. 18c.  
Sanders, Charles Walton  
Iverson.

1858-1867 (1876 Amer. Cat.; Nos. 1, 3, 5, in 1912 U. S. Cat. by American Book; Writer has personal copy of Union Pictorial Primer.)

Union Series of Readers, 7 volumes: Union Pictorial Primer, 20c, In Leigh's Orthog. 25c, Union Reader No. 1, 28c, In Leigh's Orthog., 32c, No. 2, 50c, No. 3, 75c, No. 4, \$1.25, No. 5, \$1.50, No. 6 Rhetorical Reader, \$1.88

Sanders, Charles Walton  
Iverson, Phinney, Blakeman & Co., New York (By 1867)

1872 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Word-book of Spelling, Oral and Written  
Swinton, W.

Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York

1873 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Word-primer: Beginner's Book in Oral and Written Spelling  
Swinton, W.

Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co.

1873 (In 1876 American Catalogue, some pages reproduced by Buisson)  
The American Educational Readers

New Graded Readers, (7 vols., No. 1, 25c, In Leigh's Orthog. 30c, 2, 40c, In Leigh's Orthog. 50c, 3, 50c, 4, 80c, 70c [sic], 5, \$1.20.

Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York and Chicago

1874 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Literary Reader  
Cathcart, G. R.

Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York

1881 (From 1885 advt., address on Appnd., 1876 Am.Cat. Auths. etc.)

Six-book supplementary series of Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co.

(Advertised in Appleton's Sentence and Word Book by James Johonnot in 1885, by which time Appleton was presumably the publisher: "Designed to connect with any of the regular series of readers," which remark proves that nothing like a near-monopoly existed on readers in 1885.)

Book of Tales, School Readings

Easy Steps for Little Feet: School Readings

Golden Book of Choice Reading

Readings in Nature's Book

Seven Am. Classics

Seven British Classics

W. Swinton and G. R. Cathcart

Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., 138-140 Grand Street, New York

1882-1886 (In 1928 United States Catalog published by American Bk.)

Swinton's Readers (Primer and First Reader through Sixth)

Swinton, William

Iverson, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., New York

By 1890, Iverson, Blakeman & Company merged with three others, Van Antwerp, Barnes and Appleton, to form the enormous American Book Company. (The Taylor of the company had dropped out by 1889, perhaps being the Taylor in Baker and Taylor Company.) As quoted elsewhere, the Indiana School Journal in 1890 reported that the merger gave the new company, after it almost immediately acquired the Harper elementary textbook rights, control of 80 percent of the American elementary schools

textbook market. Yet, before the 1890 complex merger and the buyout of Harper's book list, Ivison already had a very complex history. In the nineteenth century, book companies formed and reformed as partners or blood relations of partners shifted in and out. Perhaps nowhere is the family tree of a publishing company more tangled than in the Ivison background.

The final Ivison company grew from at least four root companies. These four had either merged with, took over, or contained a partner who joined the concern which ultimately became the final Ivison company. These four were the Phinney root, the Newman root, the Ivison root, and the Blakeman root. Most probably "Taylor" was also a root, but no information is available on it. Of them all, Blakeman ultimately appeared to be the most powerful.

As mentioned in Chapter 18, the use of the asterism has been exceedingly rare in the hundreds of reading instruction texts which I have reviewed. The use of the printer's mark, the asterism (three asterisks in the shape of a triangle) is meant to direct attention to an item, just as a pointing finger or an arrow is sometimes used for that purpose by a printer. Also as mentioned in Chapter 18, I was intrigued by the use of the asterism on two texts using the "meaning" method after 1826 to teach beginning reading, because the placement of the asterism on those two texts suggested that it could have served as a "flag" to enlist the cooperation of like-minded people in the promotion of those two books. Also mentioned in Chapter 18 was the fact that one of the rare appearances of the asterism was much later on Swinton's Second Reader, copyrighted in 1883 by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor and Company.

Because the printer's mark, the asterism, appeared on the Swinton "meaning"-method readers which were published by the Ivison company in which Blakeman was a partner by 1883, it is of interest to find that one of the other rare occurrences of the asterism on textbooks had been on an advertisement on a book published in 1858 by what was probably the first company in which Blakeman had been a partner. That book was the United States Spelling Book, and its publishers were Lamport, Blakeman & Law in 1858. The back cover of that 1858 book listed many books published by that company, but the asterism only appeared before a paragraph describing Webb's series of Normal Readers, one of the most notorious of the early "meaning"-method series. Although Lamport, Blakeman & Law were the publishers of the Webb readers in 1858, those readers followed Blakeman as he went from company to company in the following years. Blakeman apparently only relinquished his connection with the Webb readers when he joined the Ivison group. There was a very good reason for his doing so at that time, since Ivison was the publisher of the massively successful, and competitive, Sanders "meaning"-method reading series.

However, it is tempting to conclude that Blakeman had arranged to have the asterism placed on that advertisement for the Webb "meaning" readers in 1858, and that he also had it placed years later on the Swinton "meaning" readers published by Ivison in 1883, in both instances to request the cooperation of fellow activists in the promotion of those series (as may have been true earlier with Russell and his associates, as discussed in Chapter 18). A group of like-minded men in those years might very well have shared some agreed-upon significance for the use of the asterism. Blakeman eventually became president of the huge, new American Book Company in 1890, which, as discussed, had been formed by the merger of four of the five largest textbook publishers in the United States, and the buying-out of the textbook line of the fifth company.

In *A History of Book Publishing in the United States, Volume I*, by John Tebbel, R. R. Bowker, New York, 1972, Tebbel referred to the Phinneys. Tebbel said that Henry and Elihu Phinney were publishers, printers, and booksellers in Cooperstown, New York. Their father, Judge Elihu Phinney had also had a printshop, and sold books and published a newspaper. It is interesting that Fenimore Cooper worked in Judge Phinney's printshop, setting type. (It seems likely that Cooperstown took its name from the family of the author, Fenimore Cooper.) By 1820, Judge Elihu Phinney's sons, Henry and the younger Elihu, had a stereotype foundry with plates of the Bible, from which plates they printed about 200,000 Bibles. They

had five presses, and from them they printed in addition some 60,000 schoolbooks and 200,000 toy books. The grandson, Henry F., who was the oldest son of the younger Elihu., became a partner in the Cooperstown firm in 1839, but then he left in 1854 for New York, where Tebbel said he became a member of the firm, Ivison, Phinney, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. However, as will be shown, that form of the company name did not arrive until later, but it seems undoubtedly true that Henry F. Phinney joined the developing Ivison company in New York in 1854.

According to *Early American Textbooks*, page 164, H. and E. Phinney of Cooperstown had published a textbook as early as 1816, a first edition of John Smith's *A New Compend of Geography*. In 1846, H. & E. Phinney of Cooperstown published Salem Town's 1844 *First Reader*, Code 4 "meaning" material, a copy of which is in the Harvard library. (The most reliable information on publishing companies comes from such surviving copies, despite the fact that stereotyped plates were sometimes used for years which carried the name of an original but defunct publisher. However, such copies often carried current advertising and testimonials or reprinted front and back covers of a current publisher which makes it possible to date them fairly accurately.) Yet Town's principal publisher in 1848 and probably in 1846 was apparently Sanborn & Carter of Portland, Maine. According to page 110 of *Early American Textbooks*, some of Salem Town's material was also published between 1859 and 1861 by Phinney & Co. of Buffalo, and Phinney, Blakeman & Mason of New York, but these companies most probably were formed from other descendants of the original Phinney family, since its descendant Henry F. Phinney had joined the developing Ivison company in New York City before those dates, in 1854.

Concerning "Blakeman" in the developing Ivison firm name, Blakeman played hop-scotch between companies before settling into the Ivison company, if the "Blakeman" in so many contemporary titles is the same man. That appears probable, since the appearances of that name are sequential. When the new American Book Company was formed in 1890, Birdseye Blakeman became president. That man may well have been the same Blakeman in the following entries, with the earliest entry in 1854. If he had been 30 years old at that time, he would have been 66 at the time of the 1890 merger.

As already mentioned, that Blakeman also appears to have carried the rights to the Webb readers with him, except on his last move. In 1854, Blakeman had apparently been a member of Lamport, Blakeman & Law, which published Josiah Miles' *United States Spelling Book*, a copy of which is in the Harvard library. According to advertisements on that copy, in 1854, Lamport, Blakeman & Law were also publishing "Mr. Webb's Readers," the famous Code 1 "meaning" series. *Early American Textbooks* shows an 1856 copy of Webb's *Normal Reader No. 2*, published by Sheldon, Lamport & Blakeman of New York. Therefore, Sheldon by 1856 had apparently replaced Law in that 1854 firm but presumably in a dominant position. The name had changed again by 1857, when Sheldon, Blakeman & Company of New York took out a copyright on *The Word Method Primer*, by W. H. Webb, an addition to the J. R. Webb series. Yet, by 1863, as shown by a Harvard copy of that book, it was being published by Sheldon & Co., New York, instead of Sheldon, Blakeman & Company. As will be shown, the record indicates that when Blakeman left that firm some time before 1861, he took the J. R. Webb readers with him, but not *The Word Method Primer* of W. H. Webb, which had been copyrighted in 1857 by the Sheldon company.

Blakeman had finally joined the Ivison company some time before 1867, since my 1867 copy of *The Union Pictorial Primer* by Charles W. Sanders shows it was published by Ivison, Phinney, Blakeman and Company, 47 and 49 Greene Street, New York. Yet that would not have been Blakeman's second completely new company affiliation, but his third, since he presumably had been a member of "Phinney, Blakeman & Mason" of New York in 1861, as shown above. (As mentioned, that company presumably contained a different "Phinney" from the developing Ivison company.) Mason Brothers, New York, the probable successor to Phinney, Blakeman & Mason, continued to publish the Webb readers after Blakeman left, so Blakeman must have carried most of the Webb rights with him to Phinney, Blakeman & Mason, but obviously must have been obliged to leave the solitary rights to the 1857 W. H. Webb book

with Sheldon, since it had been copyrighted in their joint company name, Sheldon, Blakeman & Company, in 1857.

Mason Brothers apparently retained the rights to the Webb readers after Blakeman left but may have shared them with a co-publisher, the Sherwood company of Chicago. Sherwood appears to have become the owners of the later Webb and Edwards/Webb books sometime after the Mason company disappeared from New York. Taintor was apparently Mason Brothers' successor in New York, to whom they presumably sold out in the late 1860's. Taintor was publishing Webb's Normal readers in 1876, according to the 1876 American Catalogue, so Taintor presumably had bought the rights from Mason Brothers. Taintor and Sherwood of Chicago continued to publish Webb materials, as discussed elsewhere. The Sherwood company apparently eventually became sole owner of Webb's materials, and was bought out in 1894 by the young firm of Scott, Foresman, according to Volume 2 of *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, by John Tebbel, published by R. R. Bowker, New York, in 1975.

Yet Blakeman, who had apparently once owned the Webb sight-word readers, had by the late 1860's become a partner in the Ivison company which instead was publishing the enormously used Sanders sight-word readers. If that Blakeman and Birdseye Blakeman were the same man, then he prospered mightily, because Birdseye Blakeman became President of the new American Book Company in 1890. After also acquiring almost immediately the Harper elementary textbook list, Blakeman's company then controlled 80 percent of the American elementary textbook market in 1890, according to the *Indiana School Journal* article discussed elsewhere.

By 1873, as shown by page 75 of *Early American Textbooks*, the Ivison developing company name had reached an intermediate form, Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., dropping "Phinney." Page 75 shows Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. as publishers of *The American Educational Readers*, on which no author is shown (or known). By 1889 or before, the company had become Ivison, Blakeman and Company. Yet American Book Company, formed in 1890 from Ivison and three other companies, was obviously still publishing those 1873 plates after 1890, as some copies listed on page 75 of *Early American Textbooks* show American Book Company as the publisher of the *American Educational Readers* under the date of 1873.

The history of the Ivison root is far easier to trace than the Blakeman or Phinney root. The name, J. C. Ivison of Auburn, New York, first appeared on a Harvard copy of an early edition of *The Sanders Series - School Reader - First Book*, by Charles W. Sanders. Internal testimonials show the book was published after October, 1846, but most probably almost immediately after, so it can reasonably be dated to November or December, 1846. The publishing data on that copy shows Mark H. Newman & Co. of New York as the principal publisher, and the other publishers were Wm. H. Moore & Co. of Cincinnati; J. C. Ivison & Co. of Auburn; Mills, Crandall & Mosely, Cazenovia; and Griggs, Bross & Co. of Chicago. A Harvard copy of a later but uncertain date of Sanders *The Primary School Primer* by Sanders carries the note that it was published by Ivison & Phinney of New York, "Successors to Newman and Ivison." Therefore, at some time after November, 1846, someone from the Ivison company of Auburn, New York, had joined with Newman of New York, New York, to form Newman and Ivison, and then, by 1854, according to Tebbel's statement above, Phinney, originally from Cooperstown, had replaced Newman of New York to form the new company, Ivison & Phinney of New York.

Concerning the Newman root, which disappeared by 1854 with the advent of Phinney, the Newman name first appeared on Harvard's copy of an 1844 reprint of the 1838 speller of Sanders. It showed the publisher as Gould, Newman, and Saxon of New York. (The Gould was no apparent relation to the other Gould companies mentioned by Tebbel, and Saxon is unknown.) The speller had been copyrighted in 1838 and presumably was set in print on stereotype plates in 1838 with the name of that original 1838 publisher, although the copy was printed apparently in 1844. The copy carried the notation that two

million copies of Sanders' readers and spellers had been published. A Harvard copy of a Sanders' The Primary School Primer made the same claim and can be dated to 1844, but it shows the publisher as Mark H. Newman of New York. By the time that Sanders Primer was copyrighted in 1840 and was set in type on stereotype plates, the publisher's name was changed to Mark H. Newman of New York. (On that primer printed in 1844, W. H. Moore was shown as an associated publisher in Cincinnati).

The Newman company name had changed again by about late 1846. As shown above, a Harvard copy of Sanders Series - School Reader - First Book, carrying testimonials through October, 1846, was published by the new firm, Mark H. Newman & Co. of New York. That copy showed affiliated publishers: Wm. H. Moore & Co., Cincinnati; J. C. Ivison & Co., Auburn; Crandall & Moseley, Cazenovia; and Griggs, Bross & Co., Chicago. That was the first appearance of the Ivison name: it was the affiliated Auburn publisher of the Newman company of New York some time after October, 1846.

Also as mentioned above in discussing Ivison, Harvard library has a copy of Sanders' The Primary School Primer, and though it carries no identifiable date, it was obviously printed later than Sanders' First Book just mentioned that appeared after October, 1846. It was that Primer of uncertain date that carried the publisher's name, Ivison & Phinney, New York, "Successors to Newman and Ivison." Yet it still showed among its affiliated publishers the name of J. C. Ivison & Co., Auburn. The appearance of Phinney's name places the date of that copy probably after 1854. Therefore, sometime after October, 1846, the firm name Mark H. Newman & Co., which had first appeared as Mark H. Newman, changed again to Newman and Ivison, and, probably in 1854, to Ivison and Phinney. Ivison and Phinney were the publishers of Sanders' enormously used readers, which by that time (presumably not long after 1854) had sold 3,000,000 books, according to that Harvard copy. The powerful Ivison company had finally arrived in earnest by 1854 when Phinney joined with Ivison, but it was no longer merely a series of roots but had become a very large tree.

According to the 1928 United States Catalog, American Book Company in 1928 were still publishing the Primary School Primer of 1840 and the Union Pictorial Primer of 1866 by Sanders but were not publishing the rest of those two series by Sanders. The 1912 United States Catalog showed that the first Sanders series was no longer in print in 1912 except for the Pictorial Primer and the Primary School Primer published by American Book Company. Of Sanders' Union series by 1912, the Union Pictorial Primer was available from American Book Company, but only levels one, three and five of the Union readers. The Union Series had come out in 1861, but the Union Pictorial Primer only in 1866. The original Sanders series had enormous sales and was very widely used between 1840 and the 1860's, particularly in New York State. That series was only one among many other successful series on the market at that time, but one of the best-selling. Sanders Spelling Book, published in New York in 1838 by Gould, Newman and Saxton, was "for sale by the principal booksellers in the United States," two years before Sanders published his readers. In his 1838 speller, Sanders said, "It is hoped that the subject of elementary orthography will soon receive its appropriate attention in our primary schools," which, of course, is a confirmation that the speller was no longer used as the beginning book by 1838, although it had been the beginning book before 1826. Sanders' was a Code 10 speller, but obviously Sanders thought in 1838 that such spellers had not been used for beginning readers for some time. Sanders' readers for beginners, when published in 1840, were all Code 1 sight-word materials. Sanders' readers used A MEANING APPROACH.

The American Educational Readers of 1873, on which no author is known, reportedly had a Leigh print edition, which suggests they used A MEANING APPROACH, PROBABLY WITH PHONY PHONICS.

On Swinton's Readers, Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, have five levels listed, all published by Ivison between 1882 and 1886. Harvard has a copy of the Primer and First Reader published by

American Book in 1890. (An internal note said the material sometimes was published in two volumes.) Swinton's readers have already been discussed in this history. Despite his disarming remarks about his concern for teaching phonics, his approach when carefully analyzed turns out to be pure Code 3, phony phonics.

In the preface addressed, "TO SCHOOL OFFICERS," on an 1890 American Book Company edition of Swinton's Primer and First Reader, this appeared:

"Method. - The word method is used alone where it serves best, the phonic method is used alone where it serves best, and at a later stage the two are combined where such combination is most helpful....

"Gradation. - Each word is registered at the head of the lesson in which it first occurs....

"Script. - Since children are now taught the first steps of reading by means of words and sentences written on the blackboard, this knowledge should be utilized as an aid in learning the printed word. Hence, in the Primer, script is introduced at once, and forms a very prominent feature of the book. The words and sentences for copying are given in a script with guide rules (representing a section of the child's slate) to aid in the first steps of transcription. The simple and beautiful script has been engraved expressly for this book.

"Practice Sentences. These Reviews are designed to test the child's power of rapidly recognizing words already learned, and to fix their image and import by reiterated use in new relations. The drill thus afforded must double the class-room utility of these Primer lessons."

That was followed by the section, "AUTHOR TO TEACHER":

"The more successful you are in teaching primary reading, the less will you be disposed to make a fetich (sic) of any so-called 'method.' Children have been taught to read by every method and by no method, - and it would puzzle the wisest to tell exactly how a child does learn to read our anomalous mother tongue."

Before 1875, Leigh's phonic "sound" materials had been incredibly successful in comparison to "meaning" materials, as Superintendent Philbrick of Boston (among others) had documented. Yet by ignoring and thereby denying Leigh's success, this 1890 edition of Swinton's widely used book, which had been copyrighted in 1883, simply rewrote history and promoted the lie that it did not matter whether "sound" or "meaning" was used to teach beginning reading. Swinton then made the following comments under "General Principles."

"The three recognized systems of teaching the first steps in reading are the Alphabetic, the Phonic, and the Word systems.... As to the old "a-b-c" device, it is now generally conceded that it is a mistake to begin by teaching the complete alphabet. It does not teach to read, since the names of the letters furnish only a slight clew to the sounds of a given word.... It is a work of supererogation, however, to decry the alphabetic system, since its doom is long since spoken; and indeed the only danger is that, in the revolt from the abuses of that system, we may forget that there is such a thing as the alphabet.... Under the guidance of a wise teacher, the alphabet presents none of its traditional terrors: it is taught incidentally and insensibly.

"The re-action from the "a-b-c" plan resulted in the so-called word-method. This is the "look-and-say" principle, by which the word in its entirety (and without reference to its component elements as addressed either to eye or ear) is taught as the sign of an idea. This is

undoubtedly an admirable mode of imparting to the beginner not only his first little stock of words, but also that considerable class of familiar child-terms - as one, eye, said, who, know, etc. - that present phonic anomalies. But here its usefulness ends.

“English is not Chinese, in which each individual word is represented by a synthetic symbol, - as many symbols as words. Underneath all its anomalies and exceptions, our English alphabet is phonetic, and its characters represent with more or less fidelity the component elements of the spoken word. It would appear rational, therefore, that we should begin as soon as possible to put the child in possession of those phonic constants and fruitful analogies that come to view in our mother tongue. This will the soonest enable him to pass from the known to the unknown - the soonest enable him to help himself to the knowledge of new words.”

Swinton’s “fruitful analogies” were actually two-step, whole-word phony phonics, just like that promoted in the 1883 Boston reading curriculum.

In this 1890 printing of his 1883 book, Swinton used the phrase, “from the known to the unknown.” That had been taught as an important maxim at teachers’ normal schools, probably ever since the late 1880’s, and it continued to be emphasized for many years afterwards. It probably resulted from the massive influence on elementary education of the DeGarmo/ McMurry brothers group, who had returned in the late 1880’s from their study in Germany. As C. H. Judd commented in his May, 1926, article in Teachers College Record, J. M. Cattell and others had brought laboratory methods in psychology back to America, but Charles A. McMurry and his brother, Frank M. McMurry, and Charles DeGarmo, brought with them the pedagogical “psychological” ideas that had grown out of the influence of Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) and his 1831 Letters Regarding the Application of Psychology to Pedagogy. (Herbart’s first published work came out in 1816.) One of the pedagogical dogmas being promoted at this time, possibly originating with that Herbartian influence, was always to proceed from the “known to the unknown.” The dogma popped up in the prefaces meant for teachers in reading instruction books of the period, as with this 1890 preface by Swinton (which preface was possibly rewritten in this 1890 printing from the first printing in 1883. The 1883 edition would have come out before the greatly increased Herbartian influence). The dogma showed up again in the 1905-1906 series of articles in the widely-read publication, The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York. As The School Bulletin article put it:

“Too much cannot be made of this pedagogical aphorism, attach the unknown to the nearest relative known.”

Swinton’s preface addressed to teachers continued:

“On this sound principle the phonic method proceeds. But just as we have seen that by its devotees the word system is carried to a point where it ceases to be valuable and should give place to the phonic method, so on the other hand the latter is often brought into use too early, - at a stage where words should be learned as words, without analysis of their parts. To embarrass the tyro with the intricacies of phonic markings is to sacrifice practical utility to the one-sidedness of theory.

“The fact is that learning to read a language like ours... requires great toil and trouble. The child should have all possible help - help from every device, from every “method.” And the merit of any system of teaching primary reading must be judged not by its conformity with this or that theory, but by the Baconian test of its ‘fruit.’”

Note Swinton’s indirect attack on Leigh one-step, true phonics, with Swinton’s claim that the “intricacies of phonic markings” “embarrass the tyro.” Swinton referred to the fact that a “Baconian” test

on any “theory” was its “fruit,” but he broke his pompous commandment by burying the fact that the “fruit” of Leigh’s “phonic markings” had always been enormous success. Furthermore, nowhere in any of the commentaries of the period that I have seen on Leigh print have I ever found it stated that children found Leigh print at all difficult to learn or to use, and children transferred to normal print at second grade with no difficulty. Therefore, Leigh-print “phonic markings” certainly did not “embarrass the tyro,” as Swinton claimed in this 1890 preface meant for teachers. Furthermore, Swinton’s use of such terms as “Baconian” and “theory” was hardly everyday, “high-frequency” vocabulary for elementary school teaching in America in 1883, any more than it is in America in 1995, but it did make him sound very “scientific” in his discussion of “education,” just like Agassiz and his followers in the 1870’s and later. Swinton’s elevated verbiage did tend to obscure the fact that the statement he was making to first-grade teachers about the utility of “phonic markings” was just a bald falsehood.

Swinton went on:

“This ‘Primer’ has been prepared under the conviction just expressed, and the attention of the teacher is invited to the following noticeable features of the book: -

“Word-Method. - This plan is used in imparting the first stock of words. The word is taken as the unit; but it is vitalized by its connection with a little phrase, forming a very simple model of sentence. [Sic. Did he really mean to say, “model of sentence”? However, notice he starts with sentences.] To each such phrase the name “idiom” has been given, and special attention is called to the use made of this instrumentality. Thus in the first lesson (p. 15) cat and a cat are taught in connection with the idiom “It is.”....

“Phonic Analysis. - So far the teaching is purely by the word system. But from the start a beginning in phonics has been made....”

Swinton specifically referred to phonic “analysis.” The analysis was of whole words, when one whole meaning-bearing word, already learned as a sight-word, was to be compared to a “new” meaning-bearing words, so as to see like parts and so as to commit the new word to memory. That is two-step, phony phonics, and it is the same as the soundless “analysis” made by deaf students in memorizing the “look” of their sight words.

“Pictures and Stories. - The series of lessons from p. 29 onwards consists of little stories in connection with pictures. The stories have been so composed as to present in the vocabularies a sufficient number of words suitable for phonic teaching. Hence the vowels are set forth in the regular order of the “shorts” and “longs;”....

“While a progressive phonic drill is thus provided for, other words necessary to the telling of the story with naturalness and vivacity - simple as words, but not yet within the child’s power to analyze phonically - are taught “by sight,” on the word-method. To confine the vocabularies of primary reading-lessons, as is often done, to two or three-letter words of regular formation, inevitably leads to “It is by it,” “He is in it,” and the like inanities, in which, to an imagined simplicity and regularity, all that makes the value and virtue of a piece is sacrificed.

“In teaching these lessons constant reference should be made to the pictures. The principle of association comes powerfully into play here. The picture suggests the whole story, and the parts of the picture suggest the words used in telling the story. These words are such as children daily use, and the ideas and fancies they express are childlike. It may be added, that, in order to make sure that these little pieces come home to the child-mind, each lesson has been carefully tested on



the black board with classes in the school-room, and such lessons as could not be made to interest the pupils have been rejected.

“Vocabulary and Gradation. - All words not already taught are registered at the head of the lesson in which they first occur, - a desideratum hitherto unattained in any other primary Reader. [Ed.: As this history makes clear, that is not true.] Inspection of these vocabularies will make manifest the very great care that has been exercised in maintaining systematic gradation throughout the series of lessons. The several vocabularies taken together constitute the entire body of words used in the Primer, and the review of these word-lists from time to time will afford ample drill in oral spelling.

“Practice Sentences. - The educational value of the review lessons entitled ‘Practice Sentences’ will be readily recognized. If primary Readers are often chargeable with not being simple enough, they are still more open to the objection of not being long enough simple. It is too often the case, that, in the rapid succession of lessons, words learned to-day are forgotten to-morrow. It is not enough that a child should see a word once or twice: he should see it many times; for, as reiteration is the only way in which words are learned through the ear, so it is the only way they are learned through the eye. In accordance with this principle, the words already learned are reiterated in the Practice Sentences in new and varied uses and relations. Words thus learned can hardly fail to be thoroughly mastered.

“Script. = - The very important part assigned to script in this Primer will at once strike the eye, and it will be welcomed by all progressive teachers.”

Note the implication: If a teacher did not welcome it, she could not consider herself “progressive,” and that was something the nineteenth-century media assured her was a very desirable thing to be. Most of the teachers in 1890 (and 1883 when this book was first published) were ingenuous, young, small-town girls or unmarried middle-aged women, whose maiden state at their advanced age made them already very low in status. At that point in time, they were systematically paid about half of the salary paid to men teachers for the same job, which seems almost unbelievable today. Swinton was a “man,” and therefore he was automatically assumed to be a far more weighty thinker than the low-status women teachers. Furthermore, most of those women did not have enough sophistication to deal with the kind of propaganda that Swinton was writing, or they would have been able to tell Swinton and the whole Ivison company that they could just go and chase themselves.

Swinton continued:

“In the classroom the child first sees words and sentences in the form not of printed characters, but as written by the teacher on the blackboard. It is therefore desirable, that, when he comes to the reading of printed words, he should do so in connection with the graphic forms with which he is already somewhat familiar....

“...All the ruled script is intended to be copied on the slate, and it is earnestly recommended that this pleasant and profitable task should be begun as early as possible. The child has full possession of a word only when he can write it correctly.”

Swinton obviously was teaching sight-words along with two-step, whole-word phony phonics, was endorsing the use of picture clues for guessing, and was even expecting children to copy short, “meaning-bearing” script sentences before they knew any letters of the alphabet. No record exists of which I know which reports that Swinton ever taught beginning reading, so he was obviously not qualified to write a beginning reading book. This 1890 copy of Swinton’s beginning reading book, which was first published in 1883 by Ivison, one of the largest American publishers, was an abomination. Yet it

was massively sold in America, undoubtedly because it received promotion from all the “right” people in “education.”

Swinton’s readers were listed both in the 1912 and 1928 United States Catalog as still in print in those years. Swinton’s readers used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS

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1838 (In Early American Textbooks under Spellers)  
The Symbolical Spelling Book in Two Parts, Part I (Code 1 material)  
Hazen, E. (First published in 1829 but not by Appleton, and later by many publishers)  
D. Appleton and Company, New York; Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia  
1842? (Library of Congress 1846 Copy)  
Primary Lessons  
“Being a speller and reader, on an Original Plan in which one letter is taught at a lesson with its power, an application being immediately made of each letter thus learned and those words being distinctly arranged into reading lessons.”  
Albert D. Wright  
New York, D. Appleton & Co.; Philadelphia, G. S. Appleton.  
1842? (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Primary Lessons, or Child’s First Book  
Wright, Albert D.  
Appleton  
1844 (Harvard Copy)  
Very Little Tales for Very Little Children, in Single Syllables of Three and Four Letters - from Sixth London Edition  
(Unnamed author refers to “herself”)  
D. Appleton and Company, New York; Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia  
1848 (Copyright date: printed 1850)  
Little Annie’s First Book in Words of Three Letters  
“By A Mother”  
Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia, D. Appleton & Co., New York  
1849 and Later (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Mandeville’s Series (1849 Primary Reader at Harvard Library. 7 vols.  
listed in 1876 Am. Cat.: first reader, 20c, second 40c, third 60c, fourth 60c, fifth \$1, Course of Reading, \$1.25. Elements of Reading and Oratory. \$1.25.)  
Mandeville, Henry  
D. Appleton and Company, New York; Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia  
1850 (Harvard Copy)  
Little Annie’s ABC, Showing the Use and Sounds of the Letters, in  
Words of One Syllable (Inside title page reads, Little Annie’s Primer)  
(No phonics: letters demonstrated in whole sample words)  
Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia; D. Appleton & Co., New York  
1876 and Before (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue)  
Elementary Spelling Book, Per Doz., Net \$1.20 (Apparently in the Objectionable 1848 Revision)  
(After Webster’s death, his spelling book was greatly revised for the worse in 1848 from the good 1829 edition, which Webster had prepared himself from his brilliant 1783 original))  
“Webster, Noah” shown as author, but objectionable non-phonetic revisions were NOT his work.  
(See Cooleage of New York in Append. B, publisher of Webster’s 1829 speller in the 1840’s)  
Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia; D. Appleton & Co., New York  
1876 and Before (Listed in the 1876 American Catalogue)  
Elementary Reader, Per Doz., Net. \$1.20.  
Webster, Noah

Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia; D. Appleton & Co., New York  
 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Historical Shakespearian Reader, \$1.50.  
 Shakespearian Reader. \$1.50.  
 Hows, J. W. S. (See other entries for Hows by Butler)  
 Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia; D. Appleton & Co., New York  
 1876 or Before (In the 1876 American Catalogue.)  
 Biographical Sketches: Designed as a Reader for Schools.  
 Macauley, Lord T. B., \$1.  
 Geo. S. Appleton, Philadelphia; D. Appleton & Co., New York  
 1878 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog by American Book)  
 Appleton's School Readers  
 Harris, W. T.; Andrew J. Rickoff; Mark Bailey  
 D. Appleton and Company, New York  
 1878 (In Early American Textbooks)  
 The Minnesota Textbook Series (Version of Appleton's)  
 D. D. Merrill, Publishers, St. Paul, Minnesota  
 1881 (From 1885 advertisement and 1876 American Catalogue Appendix, Authors and Titles)  
 Six-book supplementary series sold by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co., but later by Appleton  
 (Advertised in Appleton's Sentence and Word Book by James Johonnot in 1885, by which time Appleton  
 was presumably the publisher: "Designed to connect with any of the regular series of readers," which  
 remark proves that nothing like a near-monopoly existed on readers in 1885.)  
 Book of Tales: School Readings  
 Easy Steps for Little Feet: School Readings  
 Golden Book of Choice Reading  
 Readings in Nature's Book  
 Seven American Classics  
 Seven British Classics  
 W. Swinton and G. R. Cathcart  
 Originally published by Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor & Co. later by Appleton  
 1882 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 157. Street address from March, 1880, Appendix to 1876  
 American Cat.- Authors and Titles)  
 A Geographical Reader  
 Johonnot, James  
 D. Appleton, 1, 3 and 5 Bond Street, New York  
 1882 or Before (Adv. in back of 1883 Harvard copy of 1st Reader)  
 Appleton's Elementary Reading Charts, Forty-six Numbers, With Supporter, \$10.00  
 Rickoff, Rebecca D. (See her 1882 or 1882 article below)  
 D. Appleton & Co., New York, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco  
 1884 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 Appleton's Chart Primer, 40c  
 Rickoff, Mrs. Rebecca D.  
 Appleton  
 1884-1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 Appleton's Instructive Reading Books: Natural History Series (6 vols.)  
 Johonnot, James  
 Appleton  
 1885 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog by American Book, Harvard Copy)  
 The Sentence and Word Book  
 Johonnot, James  
 D. Appleton and Company, New York

1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Companion First Reader  
Woods, M. J.  
D. Appleton and Company, New York  
1887-1889 (In 1885-1890 American Cat., four of seven in 1928 United States Catalog  
under Readers - Historical)  
Appleton's Instructive Reading Books: Historical Series (7 vols.)  
Johonnot, James  
D. Appleton and Company, New York  
1889 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Word Manual to Accompany Appleton's Readers  
Harper, W. R.  
D. Appleton and Company, New York  
1892 (1890-95 American Cat., An 1894 Copy in Early Amer. Textbooks)  
A Supplementary First Reader, 122 p., 25c.  
Rickoff, Rebecca D.  
American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago

The Harvard 1844 copy of *Very Little Tales for Very Little Children*,... First American From the Sixth London Edition, was a sight-word text, and it showed the American publishers as D. Appleton Co., New York and Geo. S. Appleton, 138 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia. This 1844 copy reported that it was the fourth Appleton edition in eighteen months. The 1844 sight-word text reprinted from the London original is the second earliest Appleton children's reading text that I have found.

The first text that I found was the 1839 reprint of Hazen's 1829 material, listed above. Appleton had apparently only entered the reading text book field with that 1839 reprint. Yet he did so squarely on the side of "meaning" to teach beginning reading, which is suggested by his reprinting of Hazen's sight-word book and his reprinting of the London sight-word material. Wright's material listed above was possibly published as early as 1842 but it definitely was published by Appleton in 1846, and Wright's material appears also to have used a "meaning" sight-word approach in reading instruction, with only phony phonics.

Yet D. Appleton would have been 54 by 1839 when he reprinted Hazen's material, so he had almost certainly been publishing other kinds of materials for many years. The *Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, The Viking Press, New York, 1953, shows on page 56:

"Appleton, Daniel, 1785-1849, American publisher, founder of a large publishing house."

Harvard library has a copy of *Little Annie's First Book in Words of Three Letters*. It advertised other books in what was obviously a series: *Very Little Tales for Very Little Children in Single Syllables of Three and Four Letters*, and *Little Lessons for Little Learners, in Words of One Syllable*, by Miss Barwell, Author of *Mamma's Bible Stories*; *Little Annie's Second Book in Words of One Syllable*, and *Mother Goose in Hieroglyphics*. It included a list of other Appleton books, with Miss Sinclair's *A Series of Tales* and its review in the *Edinburgh Advertiser*; *Divine and Moral Songs* by Isaac Watts; Maria Edgeworth's books, and Mrs. Sherwood's books.

The "Advertisement" on *Little Annie's First Book* read:

"The Idea on which this little book is founded, although not an original, is a useful one. It was suggested by Mr. Wood, of the celebrated Edinburgh Sessional School. It is simply this: That as soon as a child learns the letters of the alphabet, and even while engaged in learning them, he

should be taught their use and sound in real words, such as he is uttering every day, and not in unmeaning syllables, which convey to his mind no ideas, and are associated with no real objects.... Uttering sounds without meaning and being told that b,a, spells ba, he justly esteems rather dry work.

“But at the moment he is able to connect the sounds he is acquiring with the object he sees, he may easily be induced to learn his letters without repugnance.”

At the end of the 1850 edition is a catalog of Appleton books, listing Appleton’s New Cheap Juvenile Library - 12 volumes, including those mentioned. The 1848-1850 Appleton materials were obviously somewhat outdated British (or Irish) reprints unprotected by copyright in the United States (on at least one of which Appleton took out an American copyright). Miss Edgeworth and Mrs. Sherwood had published books roughly in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. At that time, Isaac Watts’ material from the eighteenth century was still popular, which it apparently no longer was by 1850 when it was published by Appleton. The massive trans-Atlantic enthusiasm for John Wood and his “improvement” of teaching beginning reading by “meaning” instead of “sound” dated from about 1828 into the 1830’s. John Wood was very old news by 1850, and so were books specifically endorsing his approach.

Wright, who published about 1846 Primary Lessons, or Child’s First Book, had published in 1839 for older students the very poor and elaborate Elements of the English Language and Analytical Orthography. His book teaching elocution to much older students had been published for years by other companies than Appleton but was out of print in 1876, judging from the 1876 American Catalogue. Considering the great failings of that upper-grade work, Wright’s Primary Lessons used PROBABLY AN INADEQUATE PHONETIC APPROACH TO TEACH ELOCUTION, NOT DECODING.

Mandeville’s reading series published by Appleton from 1849 rates a Code 4 approach in the teaching of reading. Sometimes both its content and its pedagogy are rather appalling. A somewhat heated contemporary essay against the series is contained in a pamphlet now in the American Antiquarian Society library in Worcester, cited in Appendix B. The complaint was that the series was often vulgar both in content and language, and was a bad influence on children. Although some of the complaints seem unreasonable today, some of the content was objectionable, even by today’s lower standards. However, a review of the material shows that its “pedagogy” was even worse than its content. It was still in print when the 1876 American Catalogue was published but out of print when the 1912 United States Catalog came out.

The 1876 American Catalogue listed Noah Webster’s Elementary Spelling Book, his Elementary Reader, and his son’s Speller and Definer as available from Appleton. As mentioned in the above listing, Webster’s excellent 1829 edition of his speller had been “edited” very much for the worse in 1848 after Webster’s death. Appleton obtained the copyrights on this objectionable 1848 Webster spelling book edition in 1855, apparently from Cooledge, who had them in the 1840’s. Another undoubtedly popular spelling book besides Webster’s before 1876 had been W. H. McGuffey’s New Eclectic Spelling Book, listed in 1876 at 18c a copy. Yet that obviously would not have been very competitive with Webster’s 10c a copy, when sold in a package of 12.

Under Spellers, the 1876 American Catalogue listed at least 138 different titles of spellers, or more if new editions are counted. Some of the materials, like Webster’s original materials and McGuffey’s, had been on the market since before 1840. They were meant for levels from primary to high school. The probability is that the sales of most of that vast number of spellers were wiped out by the Quincy anti-speller influence some time after 1876. The 1876-1885 American Catalogue and 1885-1890 American Catalogue listed new spellers published in those intervening years, producing this pattern:

1877-3, 1878-3, 1879-4, 1880-0, 1881-3, 1882-0, 1883-0, 1884-7, 1885-4, 1886-2, 1887-1, 1888-4, 1889-5, 1890 (incomplete) - 2.

Except for what may have been three laggard spellers finally published in 1881, the pattern suggests that, starting in 1879 and continuing into 1883, little market existed for spellers. Then there was a sharp increase in the popularity of spellers starting in 1884. Those statistics confirm J. H. Stickney's statement in *Word by Word: Primary Spelling Book* of Ginn, copyrighted in 1889, that the speller had gone out of favor because of "expert" influence but was returning because of massive spelling failures.

As discussed elsewhere, by 1885, Appleton's was speaking of sales of Webster's speller of over a million a year. It appears likely that Webster's sales had also sharply declined after 1875 and then picked up again about 1883, possibly in part because many of the pre-1876 spellers had probably gone out of print by 1883. McGuffey's publisher obviously moved to capture part of that rapidly expanding market, because the price of the W. H. McGuffey "Alternate Speller" published in 1888 by Van Antwerp was only 14c, making it more competitive with Webster's, which had probably increased in price from the 10c in lots of 12 that had been published for 1876. Webster's objectionable 1848 revision was still a heavily phonic speller for use above the beginning reading level, and so, most probably, was the new McGuffey. As Stickney's 1889 speller demonstrated, there must have been a market for such heavily phonic spelling books by that date at second grade and above or she never would have written hers which was meant to be used at second grade and above, particularly since she was the author of a sight-word reading series.

It should be emphasized, however, that the use of a speller as a BEGINNING book had ceased almost everywhere in America not long after 1826. Spellers, after that change-agent period, were not used until after a child had been taught sight-word primers.

Appleton's 1878 reading series was still in print in 1928 by American Book Company, who were also still printing Appleton's Chart Primer. Its principal author, Harris, was an exceedingly influential man, and Appleton's was historically a critically important series, as attested to in Vail's 1911 history of the McGuffey readers, and as previously outlined at length in this history. *Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900*, also shows an Appleton version published as *The Minnesota Textbook Series*, and lists a copy of *The First Reader* published in 1887, and a second and third in 1878. Concerning that material, see later entries on the D. D. Merrill Company. The Appleton series used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Concerning the reading charts Mrs. Rickoff wrote for the Appleton Readers, perhaps as early as 1881, the following excerpts are from an article she wrote in *The Primary Teacher*, Boston, page 151, apparently the December, 1881, issue:

"Appletons' Elementary Reading Charts. By Mrs. Rebecca D. Rickoff. The WORD AND PHONIC METHOD is too often understood to mean merely the union of naming words at sight with spelling words by sound. That the Word and Phonic Method as used in APPLETONS' READERS means much more than this, it is the aim of these charts to illustrate. It is their design to set forth, in a graphic way, the importance of the word as a whole; the principle which underlies the representation of an idea by a printed word; the relations of the words, one to another, in phrase and sentence; and the value of phrasing in making the thought clear.

"Another feature of the Appleton Method, one which is prominent in the First Reader and is given its due importance in the Second, is here treated at much length, and "pictured out" in a way that, it is hoped, will prove acceptable to both teacher and pupil. It is the obtaining of the correct sound of the letter from the analysis of the spoken word..."

Rebecca Rickoff then said, correctly, that children found it hard to distinguish sounds in isolation, without a word example. Yet no competent synthetic phonic method ever tried to teach letter sounds without such spoken “word” examples, back to the days of Noah Webster! However, phonically-trained children never learned those examples as sight words, while in the Appleton method they were learning the examples and many other words besides as sight words. Of course, Mrs. Rickoff’s argument was meant to support her use of phony phonics: learning and using many meaning-bearing whole words in sentences first, to be remembered as whole sight words, and only later slowly learning letter sounds from some of those memorized whole sight words.

Johonnot’s The Sentence and Word Book was still in print in the 1912 United States Catalog for sale by American Book Company, and four books from his history series were still in print in 1928 by American Book Company. Johonnot is discussed at length in this history. The complete title of his 1885 book was The Sentence and Word Book, A Guide to Writing, Spelling and Composition by the Word and Sentence Methods. By James Johonnot. “The letter killeth; but the spirit giveth life.”

Johonnot had the following note “To Teachers” at the beginning:

“Why This Book Was Made.

In teaching reading, those who practice the word and sentence methods have met with a serious difficulty. They cannot find, in sufficient number, simple lessons with words expressing the ideas of home and of youthful experience. The ordinary reading-lessons do not contain these words, and the teacher has not time to search them out, and arrange them in proper sentences....

“The Plan.

To the end that all words may be associated with the ideas which they represent, the plan adopted is as follows:

1. The words are all used in sentences, or are so arranged that they may be put into sentences by simple substitution.
2. New words are used in illustrative sentences, which, in most cases, so fully express the meaning that formal definitions are unnecessary.....

“How the Plan is Carried Out.

1. The first twelve pages are in script, giving enough of script-work for one school term....
2. In every sentence something of interest is told, so that the language is kept subordinate to thought.

“How to Use the Book.

1. The first lessons should be introduced by means of the objects designated in each....
2. The sentence which in recitation is read from the board, after recitation should be copied from the book. Words are learned by copying them, and correct copying implies close observation....

“What will Come of It.

1. The pupils learn the form and meaning of words incidentally, while copying, and in the endeavor to express their own thoughts.
2. They find words in sentences and spell them by writing; their school-work thus conforming to subsequent practice....

“Some Other Points

...the object of this book is to render the acquisition of language, on the part of the pupil, as nearly unconscious as possible....

“To Teachers

First of all, and above all, in every lesson given to pupils, teach the thought.

In the very first lessons in which graphic language is involved, teach reading and writing together....

Give the first lessons in writing slowly, carefully, and patiently, until the pupil acquires the art of copying correctly.

Teach the forms of the letters by the observation which comes from correctly copying them.

Teach the names of the letters by speaking them as if known - one or two at a lesson.

Make a point of teaching the names of the letters quite early in the course.

Teach the alphabet in its order as soon as the forms and names of the letters are known.

Change from script to print at the end of a two or three months' course.

Let the test of spelling be the ability of the pupil to spell words correctly in daily original written work.

Again teach the thought first, last, and always.”

This 1885 Johonnot textbook is the last school text to have promoted the unbreakable-sentence (“thought”) thesis that had first surfaced in Farnham’s Binghamton in 1870. The unbreakable-sentence thesis did not appear again until William James stated it, implying it was his own inspiration, in his 1890 psychology book.. Johonnot’s The Sentence and Word Book for teaching reading is unbelievably bad and uses a pure MEANING APPROACH.

As discussed elsewhere, Appleton merged with three other publishing companies, Van Antwerp, Ivison and Barnes, to form American Book Company in 1890, in which year American Book also took over the textbook listings of the Harper company.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1840 and 1850**

1841 and later (In 1876 Amer. Catalogue Published by Lee & Shepard)

Tower’s Readers, 7 volumes (emphasis on elocution)

Lee & Shepard’s 1876 prices: First, 25c, Second, 45c, Intermediate, 50c, Third Gradual, 60c, Fourth, 75c, Fifth, 90c, Sixth. \$1.

Tower, David Bates

Daniel Burgess & Co., New York; Sanborn, Bazin, and Ellsworth of Boston and their predecessors, until published by Lee & Shepard of Boston an unknown time before 1876, per 1876 American Catalogue

1853 (In Early American Textbooks)

First Lessons in Language

Tower, David Bates and Benjamin Franklin Tweed

Crosby, Nichols & Co., Boston

(Later material by Tweed and Tower was published by Lee & Shepard, whose books are shown below.)

1857 (Harvard copy)

Tower’s Little Primer for the Youngest Class in Primary Schools

Tower, Anna E.

Brown, Taggard & Chase, Boston

1866 (Harvard copy)

Kindergarten Spelling Book (highly phonic material)

Little, Ella



Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 1866 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 First Lessons in Reading: A New Method....  
 (Based on Rev. Zachos' highly phonic material)  
 Wheeler, William A. and Richard Soule  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 By 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Phonic Primer, and Primary Reader, 35c  
 Zachos, Rev. J. C.  
 (See Appendix B for 1859 Zachos book published by Wilstach)  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 By 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Gradual Speller and Complete Enunciator  
 Tower, D. B.  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 By 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Grammar School Speller  
 Tweed, B. F.  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 By 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Normal Writing Speller, per doz. \$2.40  
 Williams, J. D. and Packard, S. S.  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 1880 (In Early Amer. Textbooks; related material pub. by Harper)  
 First Lessons in Natural History and Language  
 Tweed, Benjamin Franklin and L. W. Anderson  
 (Anderson was co-author on the 1887 new edition of Holmes Readers published by University Publishing Company)  
 Harper and Bros., New York  
 1885 (In 1885-90 Amer. Cat.; 1912, 1928 U. S. Cat. pub. by Lothrop)  
 Graded Supplementary Readers  
 Tweed, Benjamin Franklin  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston; C. T. Dillingham, New York  
 1891 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue, p. 212)  
 Yellow Ribbon Speaker: Readings and Recitations  
 Shaw, A. H. and others  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 1891-1894 (P. 193, 1890-95 Am. Cat; in 1928 U. S. Cat. by Lothrop)  
 Picturesque Geographical Readers, Bks. 2-5 (1912 U. S. Cat.: Bks.1-6)  
 King, C. F.  
 Lee & Shepard, Boston  
 1894 (In 1890-95 Am. Cat.; in 1912 U. S. Cat., p. 2020 by Lothrop)  
 Primary Script Reader, on Form and Elementary Science  
 Oliver, F. E.  
 Lee & Shepard  
 1897 (P. 233, 1895-1900 Am. Cat.; in 1928 U. S. Cat. by Lothrop)  
 Picturesque Geographical Readers, Book 6: Northern Europe  
 King, C. F.  
 Lee & Shepard

The 1866 Kindergarten Spelling Book used what appears to be a correct phonic approach, from the few photocopies I have from Harvard's copy. It used A PHONIC APPROACH.

Wheeler and Soule, both editors on dictionaries, wrote that their 1866 material was based on Reverend Zachos' phonic method. Zachos has been discussed in this history. The material used A PHONIC APPROACH.

Therefore, in 1866, Lee & Shepard had spearheaded part of the phonic movement by publishing phonic materials based on Reverend Zachos' method, and by 1876 were the publishers of Tower's earlier readers which, because of their emphasis on elocution, could be used to teach phonics. Yet the puzzling phony phonics 1857 primer by Anna E. Tower, whose relationship to David B. Tower is unknown, which was published by a different publisher, raises unanswered questions. A non-phonetic pictorial primer perhaps wrongly credited to Tower, published by Bazin and Ellsworth, Boston, from 1857, raises similar questions. This is discussed elsewhere in this history.

In 1880, Harper had published Tweed's material blending natural history with language, a clear tie to the Agassiz influences, showing that Tweed, some of whose material had been published previously by Lee & Shepard, had become au courant. Then, by 1885, a great change had also taken place in the emphasis of the formerly pro-phonics Lee & Shepard materials, when the company published Tweed's supplementary readers. Such supplementary readers demonstrated an unmistakable influence from Colonel Parker's Quincy. Tweed's supplementary readers survived until 1928, at which time they were still being published by Lothrop. Lee & Shepard appear to have merged with Lothrop about the turn of the century since they seem to disappear from the records about then, after which some of their materials continued to be published by Lothrop. By contrast to Lee & Shepard, Lothrop had shown heavy influences from the movers-and-shakers by publishing "meaning" method material like Cyr's in the 1880's, and, although in business since about 1850, had published no pro-phonetic material during the enthusiasm for phonics in Boston in the 1860's and 1870's. This period has been discussed elsewhere in this history. "Lothrop" still had material in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published. A 1975 copy of the sixth edition of How to Increase Reading Ability by Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay listed publishers in Appendix C, and showed Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., Inc., at 105 Madison Avenue, New York, New York. At what time the name change was made from Lothrop Publishing Company is unknown.

Tweed's Graded Supplementary Readers were listed in the American Catalogue for 1885-1890, and were said to consist of 12 parts, per dozen 48 cents. Contents for the 1st Year Primary: Pts. 1, 4, 7, 10 - 20 cents; 2nd Year Primary: Pts. 2, 5, 8, 11 - 20 cents; 3rd Year, Primary: Pts. 3, 6, 9, 12 - 20 cents. The publishing of such supplementary reading materials was an obvious result of Colonel Parker's influence, and Parker himself published supplementary reading materials for primary grades which can only be described as appalling. What Tweed's materials were like is unknown. However, such supplementary materials were regarded with contempt by Philbrick, the fired superintendent of schools in Boston, who referred to them as rubbish in 1885, as quoted elsewhere in this history.

Tweed's 1885 materials were listed in Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, with the notation that The Graded Supplementary Reader, First Year consisted of 24 pages, and so did the Second Year Reader. The material was still in print in 1912 according to the United States Catalog as Graded Supplementary Readers, 12 parts, paper, 60 cents, 3 volumes, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, and "bds. ea. 20 cents" by Lothrop of Boston. Tweed's materials remained in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published. Tweed's materials almost certainly used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1842 (In 1876 American Catalogue; in Early American Textbooks)  
The Second Book of Reading Lessons (144 pages)

Brothers of the Christian Schools  
Eugene Cummiskey, Philadelphia

This text is listed on page 78 of Early American Textbooks. The series is listed for sale by others in the 1876 American Catalogue as "Christian Brothers. Readers. 3 v., First Reader, Second, Third." Those later editions of the material are shown in this listing under entries for the D. & J. Sadlier company and the O'Shea company. The material was also published by 1870 by a company named Strong, on whom no information is available. The series was revised in 1884 by John P. Murphy, as described later.

An advertisement on the back cover of Harvard's 1885 copy of The Metropolitan Spelling Book, published by D. and J. Sadlier of New York and Montreal read, "The cheapest school books ever issued for use in Catholic schools." The advertisement apparently meant the Christian Brothers first through fourth readers which were listed immediately afterwards. The 1842 book published by Eugene Cummiskey of Philadelphia, listed above, was the apparent forerunner or the same material as the Christian Brothers series Sadlier was advertising in 1885.

The 1876 American Catalogue had listed "Sadlier" (no initials) as a publisher of Christian Brothers Readers (First, Second, Third Readers) but showed they were also published by the O'Shea and Strong companies. Strong also published a Fourth Reader, and so did D. & J. Sadlier, according to an advertisement on their 1885 textbook mentioned above. By 1884, The Christian Brothers New Series - Primer, was published by De La Salle Institute, but the publisher John P. Murphy was shown as holding the copyright. The Harvard libraries have a copy of that 1884 book. The Christian Brothers readers were apparently out of print by the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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COWPERTHWAIT: FROM 1847 OR BEFORE POSSIBLY TILL 1890 OR AFTER

1842 (Harvard copy published in 1847)

Introduction to the Pictorial Reader

Bentley, Rensselaer

Geo. F. Coolidge & Brother, 323 Pearl Street, New York;

Pratt, Woodford & Co., New York;

Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia

1850 (Harvard copy published in 1852)

The Primary School Spelling Book, Designed for Primary and Intermediate Schools

Swan, William D., Principal of the Mayhew School, Boston,

Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.

1851 (In Early American Textbooks, page 92)

The National Speaker.

Maglathlin, Henry B

Boston: Robert S. Davis; New York: G. F. Coolidge (sic) and Bro.; Philadelphia: Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co.

1854 (Harvard copy published in 1856)

Primary School Reader, Part First, New Edition, Revised and Improved.

Swan, William D.

H. Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.

1856 (Harvard copy published in 1857)

Leach's Complete Spelling Book (for upper grades)

Leach, Daniel, A. M., Supt. of the Public Schools of Providence

H. Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.

1864 (In Early Amer. Textbooks, page 95. This date may be wrong.)

The First Reader, 96 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1869 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Primary Spelling book, 25c.  
 Swan, William D.  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1871 (Early American Textbooks, p. 97)  
 The Fifth Reader  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1872 (Harvard copy and Early American Textbooks, p. 97)  
 The Fourth Reader, Cowperthwait & Co.'s Educational Series, 235 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter, Dean of Boston University School of Oratory.  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.  
 1872 (Early American Textbooks, p. 97)  
 The Sixth Reader, 408 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1872 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Large Spelling Book, New Ed. 28c.  
 Swan, William D.  
 Cowperthwait  
 1873 (In Early American Textbooks, Pages 95 and 97)  
 The First Reader, 96 p.  
 The Second Reader, 160 p.  
 The Third Reader, 224 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1873 (Harvard copy. Harvard also has 1875 copy)  
 Monroe's First Reader - Revision  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.  
 1873 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 95)  
 The First Reader. Edited in Pronouncing Orthography by Edwin Leigh.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.  
 1875 or Before (Ad. in Monroe's 4th reader pub. 1875 by Cowperth.)  
 Monroe's Primary Reading Charts  
 (Wrongly called "Munroe's Chart Primer," Jan., 1879, Primary Teacher)  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia.  
 By 1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Monroe, L. B. Readers. 6 v. First reader, 30c, Second 50c, Third 70c, Fourth \$1; 84c, Fifth \$1.25, Sixth \$1.50. (Monroe's primer not listed)  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Complete Spelling Book. New ed. 32c.  
 Leach, Daniel  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1877 (Early American Textbooks, page 95)

The First Reader (German bilingual edition) 96 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1882 (Copyright on Harvard undated copy)  
 Monroe's New Primer  
 Monroe, Mrs. Lewis Baxter  
 E. H. Butler & Co., Phil. (Reprint: first published by Cowperthwait)  
 1882 (Early American Textbooks, p. 95)  
 The Advanced First Reader, 112 p.  
 The Advanced Second Reader, 160 p.  
 Monroe, Mrs. Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1882 (Early American Textbooks, p. 95)  
 Monroe's New First Reader, 112 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 E. H. Butler & Co., Phil. (Reprint: first published by Cowperthwait)  
 1884 (In 1885-1890 Amer. Cat. and Early American Textbooks, p. 97)  
 Monroe's New Fifth Reader. 432 p. \$1.  
 Monroe, Louis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Phil.  
 1884 (In 1885-1890 Amer. Cat. and Early American Textbooks, p. 97)  
 Monroe's New Fourth Reader, 320 p. 75c  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Phil.  
 1885 (Early American Textbooks, p. 95)  
 Monroe's New First Reader, 112 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Phil.  
 1885 (Early American Textbooks, p. 95)  
 Monroe's New Second Reader, 160 p.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 E. H. Butler & Co., Phil. (Reprint: first published by Cowperthwait)  
 1889 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 Word List and Speller. 18c.  
 Monroe, Lewis Baxter  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia  
 1890 (Early American Textbooks, p. 71)  
 Monroe's New Primer. Part Two. 80 p.  
 (No author shown)  
 Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia

The 1842 Rensselaer Bentley book listed above on which Cowperthwait was one of the publishers in 1847 was not a beginning book. However, its make-up suggests its book one used a sight-word approach. See entries for Bentley elsewhere. Bentley used A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1850 Swan speller, on which Cowperthwait was one of the publishers in 1852, could be Code 4 to 6, probably Code 5, depending on how it was taught. However, it was not meant for beginners. Swan's materials, which were published widely, have been discussed elsewhere. The 1852 copy above listed other publishers in other cities. For New York, Geo. F. Coledge was shown, and for Boston, Phillips, Sampson & Co. Other publishers were shown in Baltimore, Charleston (S. C.), Louisville, St. Louis,

Cincinnati, Nashville, Memphis, Lexington, Macon, and Buffalo. The copy showed it had been adopted in Cincinnati and elsewhere. See other entries on Swan.

Swan's Primary School Reader, Part First, rates a Code 6. It taught phonemes but in many, many sight words. Reeder, page 50, wrote concerning Swan. See discussion of Swan's materials in earlier Swan entries. Swan's materials used A MEANING APPROACH WITH INADEQUATE PHONICS.

Professor Lewis B. Monroe was in charge of elocution for the Boston schools at the time of Alexander Melville Bell's visit in 1868, which has been discussed in this history. Also discussed were Professor Monroe's readers, published by Cowperthwait since 1864 if an entry in Early American Textbooks is correct, but at least since 1871. However, Early American Textbooks made many errors on dates, so the 1864 date would have to be confirmed.

The Leigh pronouncing-print 1873 edition listed above was not included with Monroe's materials in the 1876 American Catalogue so it possibly was withdrawn by that date. It is also possible that the later 1875 revision (if such a revision were made) of the Monroe series did not provide for a Leigh edition. Monroe was a Bostonian, and Boston is where the hostility to Leigh's pronouncing print obviously originated.

Professor Monroe died some time before 1882, in which year his widow wrote Monroe's New Primer, which was far better phonic material than her husband's earlier edition. It was first published by Cowperthwait. It was later published by E. H. Butler & Co., and a copy of the beginning-level book is in the Harvard libraries. Butler apparently bought the rights and the plates about 1890 or so.

Also in the Harvard libraries is a copy of the 1884 The Chart Primer, part of a different series published by the Butler company called Butler's Series, on which Samuel Mecutchen was the editor. See page 326 of The School Journal for October 2, 1897, on two sets of charts published by E. H. Butler & Co. One set of charts was based on Professor Monroe's original series (a mixed sight and sound approach which in effect was Code 3). They were called Monroe's Primary Reading Charts and had been in print by 1875 or before, since they were advertised on an 1875 copy of Professor Monroe's fourth reader published by Cowperthwait in 1875. (They were, however, wrongly called "Munroe's... Chart Primer" in the January, 1879, issue of Primary Teacher.) From the illustration in the 1897 article, Professor Monroe's charts were different from the "New Primer" of 1882 by his widow. The 1897 article also reproduced a chart from the Chart-primer series and it exactly matched a page in Harvard's copy of The Chart Primer on which Samuel Mecutchen had been editor. The Chart-primer listed in the 1928 United States Catalog may have been Mecutchen's 1884 material, and not L. B. Monroe's, as stated in that catalog. The possible confusion on the author of The Chart Primer resulted because E. H. Butler & Co. had become the publisher for all these books and charts by the 1890's.

By the 1890's, the Butler material included Professor Monroe's, whose original series had been published by Cowperthwait. From the dates shown on other titles, Professor Monroe's material dated from at least 1871 (although this may refer to a second series, if the entry for an 1864 book is correct). It is probable that the series was revised again in 1875, since The American Teacher for September, 1883, carries an advertisement by Cowperthwait & Co., which refers to Professor Monroe's series having been in print for eight years, which would have been since 1875. It also advertised Mrs. Monroe's materials as "Monroe's Supplementary Readers," including Monroe's New Primer, Monroe's Advanced First Reader, and Second and Third.

The Cowperthwait advertisement in the September, 1883, issue of The American Teacher included these comments:

“Cowperthwait & Co.’s Latest Publications. Something New & Practical for Teaching Young Pupils. How to Use the English Language. How to Talk, over 200 illustrations, Intro. price 42 cts. How to Write, over 150 illustrations, Intro. price. 60 cts. These two books, prepared by W. B. Powell, A. M., Supt. of Schools, Aurora, Ill., are the result of many years of successful effort in training children to talk and write correctly. Their purpose is to guide the young learner in the correct use of language at the time when he is ACQUIRING A VOCABULARY, and FORMING HABITS OF SPEECH.....

“Parker’s Arithmetical Charts Prepared by Francis W. Parker, Superv. of Public Schools, Boston; formerly Supt. Schools, Quincy, Mass. These charts present the latest and best methods of teaching beginners in Arithmetic, and wherever used will render unnecessary the ordinary text books in Primary Arithmetic, thus saving both time and expense. The Charts comprise FIFTY NUMBERS, printed on manila parchment paper 26[?] x 30 inches in size, and bound in the same manner as Monroe’s Reading Charts. Price per Set of 50 Nos., \$7.00; Back Frame or Easel, 50 cts.

“Monroe’s Primary Reading Charts. The best and most popular Reading Charts yet issued, and the only series giving a scientific and practical system for teaching reading. EXPLICIT DIRECTIONS are given on the margin of the Charts, so that the most inexperienced teacher may understand how to use them. Price per set of 50 Nos., \$7.00; Back Frame or Easel, 50 cts.

“Monroe’s Supplementary Readers.

	Introduc.
Monroe’s New Primer.	80 pp. 15 cts.
Monroe’s Advanced First Reader	112 pp. 20 “
Monroe’s Advanced Second Reader.	160 pp. 30 “
Monroe’s Advanced Third Reader.	208 pp. 42 “

“MONROE’S READERS have been for the past eight years the leading series before the public, and it is no exaggeration to say that they are almost unanimously acknowledged by disinterested parties to be the best series published. After so long an experience with these books, we frankly say that we do not know how to improve the series as text-books from which to teach reading.

“There is, however, a growing demand for more reading-matter in the lower grades and classes, and to meet this demand, MONROE’S ADVANCED OR SUPPLEMENTARY READERS have been prepared by MRS. LEWIS B. MONROE, who wrote the lower books of the original series.

“In preparing these new books, advantage has been taken of all the recent improvements in typography and engraving: the best artists, such as Fredericks, Northam, White, Schell, Sheppard, Cary, etc., have been engaged, and it is believed that no handsomer school-books have ever been issued.

“SCRIPT LESSONS have been largely introduced, and the greatest care has been taken to secure the standard forms of writing letters, such as are given in the most carefully-prepared copy-books. The different books of the series contain many other new features, the advantages of which will be apparent on examination.

“Specimen Copies of any of the above-named books will be mailed on receipt of the Introductory price, which will be refunded if the books are either adopted or returned to us.

Cowperthwait & Co., Philadelphia. New York. 16 Astor Place: Wm. H. Whitney, Agent. Boston. 16 Bromfield St.: E. C. McClintock, Agent. Chicago, 132[?] Wabash Ave.: F. B. Belden, Agent.”

By 1883, the 1878 Appleton series and the 1879 McGuffey series had been engaged in a titanic textbook war, according to Vail who worked for the McGuffey publishers and knew that to be so from personal knowledge. Furthermore, as discussed elsewhere in this history, contemporary sources make it very clear that Appleton’s was the dominant publisher in America at that time, McGuffey’s being largely limited to the Middle West. Therefore, the statement in this advertisement, “MONROE’S READERS have been for the past eight years the leading series before the public” is just so much advertising fluff.

Colonel Parker’s arithmetic materials were being published by Cowperthwait in 1883, so the Cowperthwait company was obviously well acquainted with Colonel Parker. It is amusing that Cowperthwait made no mention that the supposed demand for supplementary reading which they were attempting to fill, and the supposed demand for the teaching of script to beginners which they were also attempting to answer, had both originated with Parker at Quincy! The supposed demand for these materials was undoubtedly being made by the “experts” writing for the educational journals and giving the teacher institutes, all of which glorified Parker, and from the superintendents of schools who respectfully fell in line behind the “experts.” The demand was undoubtedly not coming from in-service classroom teachers, who normally had nothing to say anyway about what textbooks were ordered by their “supervisors” for them to use.

It is possible that Butler and Cowperthwait had some business relationship in 1883, since the Butler advertisement was on the top half of page 29 in the September, 1883, copy of *The American Teacher*, and the Cowperthwait advertisement was on the bottom half. At the very least, it seems very likely that Butler bought out Cowperthwait after 1890 and continued to print Cowperthwait’s earlier plates, showing the original copyright dates, but with the title pages of the new editions carrying E. H. Butler’s name. American Book Company used the same practice on some of its 1890’s reprints of books originally printed under other publishers’ names. American Book reprints showed the original copyright dates but not the original publishers. If the E. H. Butler company bought out Cowperthwait and acquired its plates some time after 1890, that would explain Cowperthwait’s disappearance after 1890.

Professor Monroe’s materials originally published by Cowperthwait combined sight-words and phonics and qualify, therefore as SIGHT WORDS WITH PHONY PHONICS. Mrs. Monroe’s materials originally published by Cowperthwait were far better and qualify as a DOMINANTLY PHONIC APPROACH.

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THE FOLLOWING ENTRIES CONCERN GEO. SHERWOOD & COMPANY OF CHICAGO, WHO WAS BOUGHT OUT BY SCOTT, FORESMAN IN 1894, AND THE HISTORY OF BOOKS THAT WERE IN IN SOME WAY ASSOCIATED WITH THE WEBB “WORD METHOD” READERS:

1846 (Per Nila B. Smith)  
John’s First Book or the Child’s First Reader  
Webb, John Russell

1850 (In *Early American Textbooks*, p. 111)  
Webb’s Normal Reader No. 1  
Webb, John Russell

Huntington & Savage, New York; H. W. Derby & Co., Cincinnati;  
H. Crittenden, St. Louis

1854 or Before (From an advertisement on the back of Harvard’s 1854 copy of Miles’ *United States Spelling Book*)  
Webb’s Series of Normal Readers 1-5:



Normal Primer; Primary Lessons: A Series of Large Cards to be Used in Connection with the Primer and No. 1

Webb, John Russell

Lamport, Blakeman & Law, 8 Park Place, New York.

1856 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 111)

Webb's Normal Reader No. 2

Webb, John Russell

Sheldon, Lamport & Blakeman, New York

1857 (Harvard copy)

The Word Method Primer

Webb, W. H.

Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., New York

(Harvard's 1863 copy by Sheldon & Co., New York, copyrighted by Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., New York, in 1857, gave no author's name but internal notes show it was written by a woman and was meant to accompany John Russell Webb's series. Her initials were later given in the 1876 American Catalogue. Controlled vocabulary listed on page 38 (105 words), page 83 (159 words), and page 108 (204 words), totaling 468 words for the whole book.)

1866 (Harvard copy)

Analytical First Reader

Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb

Mason Brothers, New York; Mason & Hamlin, Boston; Geo. and C. W. Sherwood, Chicago.

1866-1871 (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Analytical Readers (9 vols., 1st and 2nd in regular and Leigh print)

(Harvard copy of 1st in Leigh print carries a copyright date of 1871)

Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb

Publishers: Sherwood, Taintor

1866 or later (Harvard copy)

Analytical Second Reader

Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb

Taintor & Co., 678 Broadway; Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago.

1867 (Harvard's 1868 copy)

The Analytical Speller

Edwards, Richard (Illinois State Normal University), and Mortimer A. Warren, Principal of Avery Normal Institute, Charleston, S. C.

Copyrighted by Geo. and C. W. Sherwood, Illinois

Published by Taintor & Co., 678 Broadway, New York and Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago

1867 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 82)

Analytical Series. Fourth Reader.

Edwards, Richard.

Taintor & Co., New York; Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago

1868 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 111)

Webb's Word-Method, Rev. ed.

E. B. Smith & Co., Detroit; Nichols & Hall, Boston

1871 (Harvard copy)

Analytical First Reader, Leigh's Pronouncing Edition

(Carries a copyright date for the Leigh edition of 1871)

Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb

Chicago: Geo. & C. W. Sherwood; Taintor & Co., New York (on cover).

Taintor & Co., 678 Broadway, New York; Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago (on title page. Large print was used in each case for the name given first.)

1873-1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Model Readers, Four Volumes.  
 Webb, John Russell  
 Publisher: Sherwood

1875 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Word Method: New Method of Teaching Reading. New Edition  
 Webb, J. Russell  
 Publisher: E. B. Smith (See 1868 entry above on Smith of Detroit, and  
 Buisson's comments in the history concerning the use of Webb's materials in Michigan.)

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)  
 Word Method Primer  
 Webb, W. H.  
 Publisher: Sheldon (See 1857, before Sheldon and Blakeman separated)

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Normal Readers, 5 vols.  
 Webb, J. Russell  
 Taintor

1877 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 82)  
 The Student's Reader  
 Edwards, Richard and Henry L. Boltwood  
 Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago

1880 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 82)  
 Student's Series. Second Reader  
 Edwards, Richard  
 Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago

1881 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 82)  
 Student's Series. Fourth Reader.  
 Edwards, Richard, and Henry L. Boltwood.  
 Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago

1886 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 First and Second Reader Combined  
 Boyden, Helen W. (First name shown, page 78, Early American Textbooks)  
 Publisher: Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago

1887 (In 1885-1890 Am. Cat.)  
 Institute, Grammar and High School Reader  
 Boltwood (No Initials)  
 Publisher: Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago

1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 New Model First Reader  
 Webb (No initials given)  
 Publisher: Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago

1889 (In Early American Textbooks, page 98)  
 The New Model First Reader Sentence Method  
 (No author given)  
 Geo. Sherwood & Co., Chicago

1897 (In Early American Textbooks, page 78)  
 First Reader (96 p.)  
 Boyden, Helen W., Revised by Florence Holbrook (See 1886 Boyden entry)  
 Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago

1897 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 82)  
 Second Reader. Third Reader.

Edwards, Richard, Rev. by Florence Holbrook (See 1867 Edwards entry)  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago

The entries in Early American Textbooks have sometimes been incomplete and with dates which were obviously wrong according to other sources. It lists two series for Edwards, his Analytical and his Student's Series, yet the latter does not appear in the contemporary American Catalogues either under "Student's Series" or Edwards' name, while the works above by other authors published by Sherwood in the 1880's do appear. The Student's series of the 1880's may have been a revision of Edward's Analytical series, on the lower books of which J. Russell Webb worked.

What is apparent from all of these entries is that the publishers of materials associated with Webb changed frequently in earlier years. (See the amusing fiction in Appendix A which was written in 1878, "A Change of Text-Books," by C. W. Bardeen, referred to elsewhere in this history. It mentioned a word-method series which had constantly changed its publishers. That amusing fictional detail may have been based on the facts about Webb's widely-used word-method series.) The name of the original publisher of Webb's series is unknown. Webb's material and the material which resulted from it ended up being published by Taintor and Sherwood through the 1870's, by Sherwood in the 1880's, and finally by Scott, Foresman who bought out Sherwood in 1894. According to *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, Volume 2, by John Tebbel, published by R. R. Bowker, New York, in 1978, Scott, Foresman was a relatively new firm when it bought out George Sherwood Publishing Company in 1894.

On the closely printed back cover of Miles' United States Spelling Book, published by Lamport, Blakeman & Law of New York in 1854, which advertised their many materials, appeared an advertisement for Webb's Normal Readers. It was followed by a paragraph which read:

"These readers are used in the principal cities and villages throughout the United States, and are rapidly coming into use in the smaller towns of the country. Their merits have been fairly tested, and they have universally been pronounced superior to any series of Readers extant; not only for the improvement in the system of teaching, which is the WORD METHOD; but also in the high moral tone and inspiring character of the pieces selected. The author, Mr. Webb, was recently from the State Normal School at Albany." [Ed.: Farnham and Johonnot were also Albany Normal School students, as discussed elsewhere in this history. It is highly probable that they knew Webb.]

"They are the best Practical Readers that have come under my notice; they are all and everything they should be." Hon. S. S. Randall, Deputy State Sup't Com Schools."

On the 1857 copy of *The Word Method Primer*, published by Sheldon, Blakeman & Co., appeared the same kinds of advertisements on the back cover. The section on "Webb's Series of Normal Readers" remained very much the same, including the same paragraph quoted above. However, they had added *The Word Method Primer* to the list of books, and had changed the number of pages on Normal Reader No. 2 from 168 to 180 pages, and on Normal Reader No. 5 from 583 pages to 480 pages, so those levels must have been revised.

None of these materials appeared in the 1912 United States Catalog, so they were presumably all out of print shortly after the turn of the century. By 1912, Scott, Foresman, who bought out Sherwood, was publishing Elson's series of readers, eventually revised by William Scott Gray as the "Dick and Jane" 1930 deaf-mute-method series. The Sherwood materials, including those of Webb, used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Florence Holbrook did the three 1897 Scott, Foresman revisions listed above of three reading instruction texts from two earlier reading series.. The probability is that the entire two series, Edwards' and Boyden's, were revised, and not just the three levels of those series listed above on which firm records exist. James A. Bowen is listed with Florence Holbrook in Early American Textbooks as an author on the Rand, McNally Introductory Geography in 1899. The fact that Florence Holbrook was a co-author on that text suggests that the "Holbrook" who was a co-author on a Globe company text, listed later, may also be the same woman since her work with Bowen identifies her as someone who would work as a co-author. It is also probable that those two Holbrooks, on the 1905 Globe material and on the 1899 Rand, McNally materials, are the same as the Florence Holbrook who revised the Geo. Sherwood & Co. materials for Scott, Foresman in 1897 and who wrote the Hiawatha Primer published by Houghton, Mifflin in 1898.

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ENTRIES ON J. B. LIPPINCOTT CO.

By 1847 or earlier (From advertisement on the back of Harvard's copy of Cooledge's 1847 The Illustrated Primer)

A Sequel to Webster's Elementary Spelling Book

William G. Webster (Noah Webster's son)

George F. Cooledge & Brother., New York; Morton & Griswold, Louisville, Kentucky; J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia (See the entry under Morton and the text of this history for information on the Cooledge company.)

1851 (Early Amer. Textbooks, p. 112. Also see material published by Barnes.)

The North-Carolina Reader

Wiley, Calvin Henderson

(Later readers by Wiley and Hubbard pub. by Barnes and others)

Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia

1851 (Harvard copy, published in 1854.)

The Child's Little Thinker. A Practical Spelling Book, Containing Easy, Gradual and Progressive Lessons in Pronouncing, Spelling, Reading, Thinking, and Composing, Arranged on a New and Original Plan, Burleigh, Joseph Bartlett, LL.D.

Lippincott, Grambo Co., Philadelphia.

1852 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Spellers)

Pictorial Definer

Bentley, Rensselaer (See earlier entries for Bentley by other pubs.)

Published both by Claxton and by Lippincott of Philadelphia

1854 (Early American Textbooks and 1876 American Catalogue)

The National Reader. 300 p.

Pierpont, John (See earlier publishers)

Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia

1855 (Early American Textbooks and 1876 American Catalogue)

Pierpont Readers, Revised and Improved Edition: The Young Reader; New Reader; National Reader; Amer. First Class Book,

Pierpont, John

J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia

(In 1855 Early Am. T. entry also W. J. Reynolds, & Co. Boston, "etc.")

1855 (In 1876 American Catalogue and Early American Textbooks)

Practical Reader. 504 pages, \$1

Culver, Richard (See another 1876 entry for Culver.)

J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia

1856 (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue under 1856)

English Reader 35c

Murray, L. (Apparently a revision of Murray's popular old reader of 1799)  
 Published by both "Murphy" for 35c and Lippincott for 45c  
 1857 or Before (In 1876 Amer. Catalogue and Early Amer, Textbooks.)  
 Grigg & Elliot's New Series of Common School Readers (4 vols.)  
 (Third Reader of 299 p. pub. 1857 by Lippincott per Early Amer, Text.) (Originally published by Grigg & Elliot)  
 J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia  
 1857 (1876 American Catalogue and Early American Textbooks)  
 The American Historical Reader. (456 pages - \$1.)  
 Tracy, Joshua L.  
 Pub. by J. B. Lippincott & Co. Philadelphia, and Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia. (See other Claxton entries.)  
 1860 (Harvard copy)  
 The Standard First Reader, Part Two, With Spelling and Defining Lessons- Sargent's Standard Series.  
 Sargent, Epes.  
 Pub. in 1865 by John L. Shorey, Boston; J. B. Lippincott, Phil.: W. I. Pooley & Co., New York. Shown on the Harvard copy was University Press, Cambridge: Printed by Welch, Bigelow and Company.  
 1876 or Before (In the 1876 American Catalogue.)  
 Reader and Book of Knowledge. 48c  
 Comly, J. (See many earlier entries on Comly's books)  
 J. B. Lippincott & Co. Philadelphia  
 1876 or Before (In the 1876 American Catalogue.)  
 Questional Reader and Union Speaker. \$1.  
 Culver, R. (See 1855 entry for Culver)  
 J. B. Lippincott & Co. Philadelphia  
 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 American Primary School Reader, 2 vols,  
 Burleigh, J. B. (See other entries on Burleigh)  
 J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia  
 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Euphonic Spelling-Book and Reader.  
 Hazen, E. (See earlier entries on E. Hazen, presumably the same man.)  
 J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia  
 1879 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers)  
 My Indestructible Primer. 60c. (One of the popular linen primers?)  
 J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia  
 1881 (P. 112-113 Early American Textbooks, p. 101 5th by Amer. Bk. 1895)  
 The Popular Series (First-Fifth, possibly a primer)  
 (No known connection to Willson's earlier books for Harper)  
 Willson, Marcius  
 J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia  
 1889-1890 (In 1885-1890 Amer. Cat.; In 1912 U.S. Cat. by Amer. Bk.)  
 Lippincott's New Series (Listed in Early American Textbooks, page 81)  
 Four volumes: The Beginner's Reading Book (Harvard copy) and Teacher's Edition; Second Reading Book; Third Reading Book; Fourth Reading Book Davis, Eben H., Superintendent of Schools, Chelsea, Massachusetts  
 J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia  
 1891 (In Early American Textbooks page 81)  
 Lippincott's New Series  
 Part II of the Beginner's Reading-Book. (332 pages).  
 University Publishing Co., New York (Licensed from Lippincott?)

1899 (In Early American Textbooks page 81)  
 Lippincott's New Series.  
 Part I of the Beginner's Reading-Book. (48 pages)  
 University Publishing Co., New York (Licensed from Lippincott?)  
 1910 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 The A.B.C. Primer  
 Lewis, Homer  
 J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia  
 1910 and later (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Lippincott Readers (1910 Lipp. Primer by H. Lewis only; Books 1st-5th)  
 Lewis, Homer and E. P. Lewis  
 J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia  
 1925 (In 1928 United States Catalog and N. B. Smith page 175)  
 Lippincott's Silent Reading for Beginners (and teacher's edition)  
 Watkins, Emma  
 J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia  
 1948, 1954, 1960, 1967 (See Chall, Learning to Read)  
 Reading with Phonics (Described by Flesch as a single book in 1955)  
 Hay, Julie and Charles E. Wingo  
 Hay-Wingo-Hletko Lippincott Phonics Wkbks. A, B, C, and Teacher's Ed.  
 J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia  
 1963 (N. B. Smith p. 326, 339 to 342, 437; reviewed by Blumenfeld in The New Illiterates, p. 307-308; see Chall, Learning to Read)  
 Basic Reading (Revised by Scribner's in 1987. See Scribner's entries.)  
 McCracken, Glenn and Charles C. Walcutt  
 J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia

Before or in 1847, George F. Cooledge & Bro., New York, became the publisher of Noah Webster's speller, claiming sales of a million copies a year by 1848. The "Sequel" by Noah Webster's son, William G. Webster's Sequel, was also published by Cooledge and by Morton & Griswold, of Louisville, Kentucky, as well as by J. B. Lippincott of Philadelphia. The Cooledge company had also become the publisher of the famous Pierpont readers. Yet by 1854, Lippincott had become a publisher and possibly the principal publisher of the Pierpont series, and Appleton had become the publisher of Webster's speller about that time. Presumably, therefore, the Cooledge company had sold its rights to these famous books and went out of business some time after 1851, for which date an entry appears on page 92 of Early American Textbooks still listing a Cooledge company book, The National Speaker, by Henry B. Maglathlin.

Burleigh's 1851 The Childs Little Thinker, A Practical Spelling Book, was a poor book, even though it was reported that he taught for 25 years. It began with a Code I approach and added analytic phonics on vowel sounds later. Burleigh had also written what was apparently an upper-level reader, The American Manual, largely patriotic and civic material and including a copy of the Constitution, on which Lippincott had published the 15th edition by 1854. Lippincott also published other Burleigh materials shown above. Yet The Thinker Series of School Readers, with four books, by Joseph Bartlett Burleigh, LL. D., was published by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger of Philadelphia. The Claxton company had also been agents for the Cincinnati publishers of the McGuffey Readers and Ray's arithmetics, and of other materials, but the only traces I have found of Claxton are in the American Catalogues and in Early American textbooks.

Lippincott was publishing at least by 1857 Grigg & Elliot's series that Grigg & Elliot had called their "New" series. Lippincott used the title, Grigg and Elliot Common School Readers. A Harvard copy that

had been published by Grigg & Elliot of Philadelphia stated, "This little volume is intended to be used as a First Reading Book, after the Spelling Book." Besides that "sound" note of starting with the spelling book, the first story was syllabicated. The Grigg & Elliot material obviously was not strongly "meaning" oriented, even though some selections are really object lessons.

The 1860 Sargent book was a Code 1 book, It was possibly not set up in print until 1865. The Harvard copy was published in 1865 by John L. Shorey, Boston; J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia; and W. I. Pooley & Co., New York, and indicated that it had been set up in print by University Press, Cambridge. Lippincott seemed to act primarily in that earlier period as the Philadelphia publisher for such books on which the primary publisher was located elsewhere, or to act as a later publisher of materials which had originally been published by other companies. One of the most notable was Cooledge, who had been the publisher in the 1840's of the famous Pierpont readers which had come out from the 1820's to 1830's. The 1860 Sargent book is the only material I have found before 1877 which was set up by University Press in Cambridge, the official press for Harvard. Although University Press was a privately owned press and did print non-Harvard materials as well as Harvard materials, its use on the Sargent material could have been associated with someone at Harvard in 1860, or, more probably, in 1865. The Preface of Sargent's book read, "As in the author's previous work for the young, the principle here adopted, that the system of teaching children familiar words in little stories, at the outset, before drilling them in meaningless syllables, is the most effective process of instruction in reading." A table gave "exercises" in vowel sounds, obviously for elocution.)

Willson's materials, first published by Harper in 1860, were pure "meaning," Code One. See the notes on Willson under the Harper entry. His last series published by Lippincott in 1881 is shown in Early American Textbooks. Willson's 1860 Harper materials appear to have been very popular, as might have been Harper's United States Series of 1872, listed on pages 112 and 113 of Early American Textbooks and credited to Willson. However, Willson's 1881 Lippincott material appears not to have been popular. Yet only Willson's 1860 School and Family Series is listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, and Willson's 1872 and 1881 material do not appear. That may be an omission, or it may be an indication that there really was only one Willson reading series, which was retitled in later editions as "United States" and as "Popular." Early American Textbooks shows on page 101 that The Popular Series Fifth Reader was published by American Book in 1895. If that was Willson's text, American Book may have taken over Willson's Popular Series by that date. The only materials of Willson's in print in 1912 were his "Primer" and his "Readers," first and third, by American Book, with no indication of whether they were originally the Harper 1860 or 1872 texts, or the Lippincott 1881 texts. Willson's materials were apparently out of print by 1928. Willson's 1881 Popular Series may be assumed to have been A MEANING APPROACH.

The material by Eben H. Davis, published by Lippincott in 1889-1890, is listed in the 1885-1890 American Catalog as Lippincott's New Series of Readers in four volumes: Beginner's Reading Book, Second Reading Book, 3d and 4th, with Teacher's Edition for the Beginner's Reading Book. It is evident from the page numbers that Part II, published later by University, was largely the Teacher's Edition. Why University Publishing Co. published The Beginner's Reading Book in two sections in 1891 and 1899, one obviously containing the original teacher's edition because of its size, when the original publisher, Lippincott, was itself in business, can only be surmised. The whole Eben H. Davis 1889-1890 series was in print by American Book in 1912 according to the United States Catalog.

Eben H. Davis's material of 1889 used the sentence method with credit to Farnham and was one of the first reading series to do so. It was also one of the first reading series officially to endorse the teaching of "literature," which was being demanded by President Eliot of Harvard about that time. Of course, Henry Cabot Lodge had edited a collection of fairy tales for the Boston schools in 1879, and Jenny H. Stickney, who had been Principal of the Boston school's Training School, had her Classics for Children -

A Primer published by Ginn of Boston in 1885. Stickney's primer had announced it was to be followed by a classic series, which soon was published, and it also used the sentence method, so Davis' material was not the first. Also, Ellen M. Cyr of Cambridge, Massachusetts, had published The Interstate Primer and First Reader which emphasized literature in 1886. All these texts were long before Nila Banton Smith claimed the "literature" approach first became the theme of reading series, and long, long before Smith claimed the Farnham "sentence" approach became popular. The 1889 Harvard copy of The Beginner's Reading Book, published by J. B. Lippincott Co. in Philadelphia, which used the sentence method with credit to Farnham and which endorsed the teaching of literature was Code I, A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1910 and later Lippincott series by Homer Lewis and E. P. Lewis was still on sale in 1928, as was Lippincott's silent reading material of 1925 (listed in the U. S. Catalog as 1926). The "Preface" to Lewis's 1910 A.B.C. Primer read in part, "to teach the child, easily and rapidly, to read is the sole aim... his interests [are] followed... to master the symbols of written speech.... For this reason most ... lessons are based upon Mother Goose rhymes and stanzas of high class poetry... to be read by the teacher and memorized by the children.... [new] words... in each lesson [are] the least that will admit of an idea being fully rounded out in one lesson... given at least three times.... The child will come into possession of the smallest working vocabulary...the commonest and simplest words... to be most easily acquired.... [The vocabulary] has been made largely phonetic... [hope all helps] child to grasp the thought." The material was clearly A MEANING APPROACH POSSIBLY WITH SOMETHING BETTER THAN PHONY PHONICS.

Rudolf Flesch, in his famous 1955 best-seller, Why Johnny Can't Read, Harper & Row, New York, discussed the wonderful results from the 1948 Hay and Wingo phonics program. The Hay and Wingo materials were an oasis in the American publishing desert of "meaning" reading series.

The Walcutt and McCracken phonic materials were among those used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies. They scored high, particularly on spelling and oral reading, which, as discussed in this history, are the only valid indicators of reading achievement. The Walcutt and McCracken materials prepared for Lippincott were listed approvingly as one of "The Phonic Five" on page 9 of Rudolf Flesch's Why Johnny STILL Can't Read, Harper & Row, 1981. The materials had several revisions by that date since their appearance in 1963. In 1963, Lippincott had first put out that very widely used truly phonic series. It was, however, always very weak because it stretched out the introduction of phonic material over an inordinately long period of time, and was geared far too completely to the teaching of phonemes only in whole words. Dr. Walcutt, its co-author, was adamantly opposed to sounding-and-blending synthetic phonics and only endorsed analytic phonics from whole words. By contrast, the Open Court program, despite an unusual phonic sequence, covered all phonemes by about Christmas of first grade and had fewer failures.

The Lippincott series became watered down in subsequent revisions over the years, and the very old Lippincott company eventually went out of business, being absorbed by Scribner's before 1987, and the McCracken-Walcutt phonic series was taken over by Scribner's. The Lippincott materials, while inadequate, had been truly phonic materials, but they were totally rewritten by Scribner in 1987 and 1989. These new Scribner materials have a massive and ludicrous emphasis on "meaning" in the first grade, although arranged to follow (in a highly inadequate and highly unsatisfactory fashion) the original Walcutt-McCracken Lippincott sequence for introducing letter sounds. In the Scribner edition, the introduction of phonemes, which had already been far too slow in the Lippincott materials, was not finished for average students until well into second grade. Yet competent phonic programs cover all the sounds in about the first half-year of first grade. The inadequacy of the Scribner revision has been discussed in this history. In my opinion, the 1987 and 1989 Scribner programs based on the former Lippincott materials do not qualify as true phonics programs and should be totally avoided.



I heard a discouraged salesman who had handled the Lippincott materials say about 1985, “The phonics battle has already been fought and lost.”

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1849 (Harvard copy)

First Nursery Reading Book, Intended to Teach the Alphabet by Means of English Words, Whose Analysis Shall Give the True Sounds That Were Originally, and Even Now Are Generally, Attached to the Characters in All Languages.

Elizabeth Peabody.

Published by E. Peabody, Boston, and G. P. Putnam, New York.

1872 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)

Facts and Fancies for School-day Reading. New ed.'72. 75c

Sedgwick, Mrs. C. M.

Putnam.

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Crayon Reader, \$1.25

Irving, W.

Putnam

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)

Pretty Primer for Good Children, 10c, 15c

J. E. Potter (Publisher)

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Spellers)

Spelling Made Easy, 10c, 15c

J. E. Potter (Publisher)

1879 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue)

Reading Book of English Classics for Young Pupils.

Leffingwell, C. W.. \$1.50.

Putnam.

1892 (In 1912 United States Catalog by Silver)

The New Script Primer

Faber, Caroline A.

Potter & Putnam, New York

1897 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue)

Wake-Robin Series

Potter & Putnam, New York

1918 (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Fox Readers (Primer, 1st-3rd readers, manual

Fox, Florence C. (See her American Book primer)

G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York

1959 (Listed by Jean Chall in Learning to Read, p. 330)

Individualizing Your Reading Program

Veatch, Jeanette

G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York

Elizabeth Peabody's 1849 book, discussed in Appendix B, rated a Code 4 but if taught by sight as recommended in a note on the bottom of page 12, Code 2. It is a crazy, mixed-up mess attempting to be phonic and attempting to follow Latin pronunciations. Elizabeth Peabody published the Boston edition, but G. P. Putnam published the New York edition. It used A MEANING APPROACH FOR ENGLISH PRINT WITH A LUNATIC VERSION OF LATIN PHONICS.

As noted under Houghton, Mifflin's entries, Putnam temporarily left the publishing business in 1862 until 1866, and Hurd, Houghton of Boston, presumably Houghton, Mifflin's predecessor, temporarily

took over his New York facilities. From the entries shown above, by 1892 Putnam joined with a “Potter,” possibly J. E. Potter whose entries are also shown above. Eventually the company became G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York.

The 1879 Putnam Reading Book of English Classics for Young Pupils was not a beginning book, but an apparent early reaction to the call for classics for children emanating from President Eliot of Harvard and from his associates. Charles Frances Adams was greatly concerned with the changes in Quincy, Massachusetts. Since Adams’ unrelated books on railroads were published by Putnam, it is of interest that Putnam also put out this book of “classics” for young children in 1879, at the time that the Quincy and Boston educational changes were receiving so much publicity. Did Putnam receive the suggestion to publish such a book from Adams and his associates, who at that very time were busy promoting literature in Quincy and Boston for young pupils? (Also see the Estes entries concerning a possible tie between Adams and the publishing of children’s literature.)

The New Script Primer of 1892 has been discussed in this history. It was still in print by Silver in 1912 according to the United States Catalog. It was Code I material, A MEANING APPROACH.

The Wake-Robin Series was listed in the American Catalogue for 1895-1900 as two volumes, volume 1 for 30 cents and volume 2 for 36 cents. It did not appear as published by Potter & Putnam in the 1912 United States Catalog, but very probably was the same as the material shown as published by “Silver,” listed under “Readers, Biographical,” “Wake-Robin Series of Biography,” in three books, with book 1 for 36 cents, book 2 for 42 cents, and book 3 for 54 cents. Wake-Robin Book I was listed as one of the approved books at second grade for New York City schools in Taylor’s 1912 book on teaching reading. Taylor’s book is listed in Appendix D. The Wake-Robin Series was obviously, therefore, not a reading series since Book I was placed at the second grade level by the New York City schools.

Florence C. Fox, who wrote the 1918 Fox Readers for Putnam, had obviously prospered from the time she had written her 1906 Indian Primer for American Book. In 1916, she wrote “Elementary Education, 1916” published by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education. The title on the material showed she was “Specialist in Educational Systems, Bureau of Education.” The publication was a reprint of Chapter VI from the “Report of the Commissioner of Education for the year ended June 20, 1916.” It can be described as material cloned from that produced by the reigning “experts,” the names appearing in it being Dewey, Flexner, Judd, Courtis, Gray, Thorndike, Frank McMurry, the General Education Board, and so on, ad nauseum. On page 103, Fox said:

“In the teaching of beginning reading, the tendency for the last two years has seemed to be back toward the mechanical preparation on a phonic basis. While an occasional method has appeared that was based upon the technique of reading rather than on the “thought-getting” process, the general trend has been for a combination of the thought and phonic method. Recently, several of the book companies have issued systems of teaching reading which are wholly mechanical for the first few weeks of school, merging gradually into the content reading after the phonic drills have been given.”

Fox’s slightly garbled testimony was that some series which made ritual bows to meaning but taught real phonics had reached the market in the last few years before 1916. Yet only a very few omitted the bow to meaning at the very beginning of reading instruction. She obviously disapproved and her 1918 material probably made no such “error.” Fox had preceded her comment on reading with this statement:

“The problem of reading is one of the most important in primary education at the present time. Elimination of waste is undoubtedly needed in this subject. Reports received by the Bureau of Education indicate the urgent need for investigation of the many types of methods of teaching

reading. The need of experiment stations where the subject can be scientifically studied is sadly felt; to carry on a satisfactory investigation otherwise is well-nigh impossible.”

Fox was promoting in 1916 the kind of “experiment” centers we now have at government expense, which labor mightily and rarely bring forth even mice.

In September, 1922, four years later, Florence C. Fox wrote the four-page Teachers’ Leaflet No. 10, *Tendencies in Primary Education*, published by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Washington. It was “au courant” on trends, but made the startling statement that one out of four first graders was failing. If true, (with emphasis on the “if,”) that was a sharp increase since 1909 when Leonard Porter Ayres had published his reliable statistics showing far fewer failures. Ayres’ study, *Laggards in Our Schools*, published in 1909 by the Russell Sage Foundation, New York, contained a graph concerning the promotions in all grades, not just the first, of 14,762 children in 28 cities. It demonstrated that most children at the upper grades were in the right grades for their ages or only a year behind or ahead. Very, very few were more than two years behind. Yet, if one out of four children were failing at first grade by 1922, many more must have been two years or more behind by the time they reached the upper grades. However, by 1922, “meaning” approaches and silent reading were crowding out “sound” in many first-grade classrooms all over the country because of “expert” influence, and increased first-grade reading failures were inevitable. Nevertheless, supplementary phonics charts were in use in the primary grades all over the country until 1930, their use at least in first grade being confirmed by Arthur Irving Gates himself, in his March, 1925, *Columbia Teachers College Record* article, “Problems in Beginning Reading.” Therefore, many of the failures that resulted from teaching silent reading to beginners were being remediated by use of these supplementary phonics charts, until Gates’ “intrinsic phonics” method displaced the supplementary phonics charts after 1930.

Fox said on page 8 of her 1922 leaflet:

“Silent reading. - Perhaps the most notable innovation in methods of teaching is the universal emphasis which is being placed on silent reading. Every effort is being made to encourage the child to read silently and to form a habit which will serve him better than any other in his later life, the ability to interpret the printed page rapidly and intelligently and to enjoy the process.”

Yet NOTHING is more lethal for beginning readers than “silent reading”!

It can be presumed from Fox’s background that any material she wrote, such as her 1918 series for Putnam, probably used A MEANING EMPHASIS WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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1849-1852 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers, page 358)  
School Readers: School Primer 12c, 1st 20c, 2nd 35c, 3rd 50c, 4th 75c,  
and Rhetorical \$1.

Parker, Richard Green

Barnes

1851 (Early American Textbooks, page 112)

The North-Carolina Reader

Wiley, Calvin Henderson

Lippincott, Grambo & Co., Philadelphia

1855 (From 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)

North Carolina Readers, 3 vols.

Hubbard, Frank McKinney - Bk. 1-40c, 2-65c; Calvin Henderson Wiley - Bk. 3-\$1.

Barnes

1857-1866 (1876 American Catalogue under Readers; Harvard copy of 1858 Primer and 1860 First Reader; Many copies listed in Early American Textbooks)  
The National Series [a Code 1 “meaning” approach] (National School Primer 25c, National First Reader 38c, Second 63c, Third \$1, Fourth \$1.50, Fifth \$1.88.)  
Parker, Richard Green and James Madison Watson  
A. S. Barnes & Burr, New York  
1859 (Page 90, Early American Textbooks)  
The North-Carolina Reader, No. 2  
Hubbard, Frank McKinney  
A. S. Barnes & Burr, New York; E. J. Hale & Son, Fayetteville, N. C.; W. L. Pomeroy, N. C.  
1864 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)  
Easy Lessons: Key to National School Tablets, 25c.  
Scofield, S. R.  
Barnes.  
1867 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Common School Reading, \$1.25 Barnes; \$1.50 Bancroft.  
Swett, John (Also Bancroft 1883 readers with J. Royce and C. H. Allen)  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago and New Orleans.  
A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco.  
1872?-1875 (Harvard copy of 1875 The Independent Primary Reader; Library of Congress copy of 1872 Independent Child’s Speller; this and other Barnes series were cited in their advertisements in back of other texts. Listed in 1876 American Catalog as 7 vol. series)  
The Independent Series [a partial phonics approach]  
Watson, J. Madison  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)  
Independent First Reader, in Phonetic Type - 25c  
Leigh, Edwin  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)  
National School Primer, 25c  
Parker, R. G. and J. Watson  
National Primer in Phonetic Type by Edwin Leigh, 25c  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)  
Copy-Book Primer: Elements of Reading and Writing Combined. 30c  
Love, J. D.  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)  
High School Literature: Sel. of Readings. 3d ed. \$1.75.  
Monmonier, J. F., and J. N. McJilton  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans  
1882-1884 (In 1928 United States Catalog sold by American Book Company. Also see New Barnes Readers, a different series sold by Laidlaw)  
Barnes’s New National Readers, 1st-5th [Code 1 “meaning” approach]  
Barnes, Charles J. and John Marshall Hawkes  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago, and New Orleans  
1886 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue under Primers)  
North Carolina Primer (Per doz., 45c)  
Alfr. Williams  
1886 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue under Readers, p. 173)

North Carolina Readers, Nos. 1-3

Wiley and Hubbard (No initials given. Apparent revision of 1855 above)

A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago and New Orleans

1916 (Reviewed by W. S. Gray in *Elementary School Journal.*, 1917-18, p. 38)

The New Barnes Primer and Manual, The Kearny Plan

Robbins, May - Primary Supt., Kearny, N. J; Herman Dressel, Supt. of Schools, Kearny, N. J.; Ellis U. Graff, Supt. of Schools, Indianapolis, Indiana.

“A. S. Barnes” was the publisher in 1916, per W. S. Gray. It was presumably a division of American Book if Gray was correct. See Laidlaw, below, as 1924 publisher.

1924 (Per A. I. Gates, *Teachers College Record*, Problems in Beginning Reading, March, 1925, and Writer’s Copy of Book Six)

New Barnes Readers

Dressel, Herman; May Robbins, Ellis U. Graff

Laidlaw Brothers, Chicago - New York (See entry under Laidlaw as well)

“Barnes” is listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as having published Parker’s reading series which dated from 1849, so possibly Barnes had been in business at least from that date. How long Barnes had been in business, whether from that date or possibly from before that date, is unknown but an object lesson text is available with their imprint from 1862. In 1890, Barnes merged with Appleton, Ivison, Blakeman and Van Antwerp, Bragg to form American Book Company.

Richard Green Parker, former Principal of the Franklin Grammar School, Boston, and the author of the 1849-1852 School Readers, had written *Progressive Exercises in English Composition* in 1832, a composition book which was in wide use over a long period of time. In 1857-1866, Parker and James Madison Watson wrote the National Series, a Code 1 “meaning” approach, which was widely used for a long period of time, as discussed in this history. *Early American Textbooks* lists many volumes from the National Series. It used A MEANING APPROACH.

James Madison Watson wrote the Independent Series which came out from 1872 (?) to 1875, and which used some real phonics. It was A MEANING APPROACH WITH PARTIAL TRUE PHONICS.

The Leypoldt 1876 American Catalogue listed the “1855” materials, the North Carolina Readers, as published by Barnes, with Hubbard having written books 1 and 2, and Wiley having written book 3. The American Catalogue only listed new materials after its original 1876 edition, so its 1885-1890 edition showing the North Carolina Primer and Readers for 1886 indicated they were revised in that year. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

*Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900*, shows New National Readers published by American Book and written by Charles J. Barnes and J. Marshall Hawkes as a series separate from Barnes New National Readers of A. S. Barnes & Company. Yet, according to Nietz, page 102, both are the series written by Barnes and Hawkes. This is supported by the fact that the New National Fourth and Fifth Readers of 1884 which *Early American Textbooks* listed as having been published by American Book Company in that year (an impossibility, since American Book Company was formed in 1890) are listed in the contemporary American Catalogue of 1885-1890 as having been published in 1884 by A. S. Barnes. Barnes’s New National Readers have been discussed earlier in this history. Barnes’s New National Readers were still in print when both the 1912 and 1928 American Catalogs were published and were for sale by American Book Company. The 1882-1884 Barnes’s New National Readers sold by American Book in 1928 should not be confused with the unrelated 1916-1924 New Barnes Readers, “The Kearny Plan,” sold by Laidlaw at least from 1924, also in print in 1928. The 1882-1884 Barnes’s New National Readers used a Code 1 MEANING APPROACH.

Three sources of information are available on The New Barnes Readers - The Kearny Plan, 1916-1924, by Herman Dressel, Superintendent of Schools, Kearny, N. J.; May Robbins, Primary Superintendent, Kearny, N. J.; and Ellis U. Graff, Superintendent of Schools, Indianapolis. One source is my own copy of Book Six from a used book store which shows a copyright date only of 1924. The second source is a reference in Arthur I. Gates' March, 1925, article in Teachers College Record, "Problems in Beginning Reading Suggested by an Analysis of Twenty-One Courses." The third is a review of the 1916 New Barnes Primer by William Scott Gray in the 1917-1918 Elementary School Journal, page 38. In a footnote, Gray cited the publisher as A. S. Barnes, but A. S. Barnes was absorbed by American Book Company in 1890. Therefore, Barnes in 1916 almost certainly would have been an American Book Company subsidiary. However, Gray's listing of Barnes may have been in error. Gray wrote:

"The New Barnes Primer assumes that reading is a thought-getting process. The first two lessons attempt to develop a basic vocabulary by means of exercises involving a large amount of repetition. Beyond the first ten pages, the lessons are based on interesting, familiar stories such as the "Three Bears," the "Three Little Pigs," etc. The distinctive feature of The New Barnes Primer is that silent reading is emphasized from the beginning in order to train pupils to secure the meaning of what is read. The manual provides suggestions for training in word analysis during drill periods."

Gray did not name the authors. However, Gates did in his 1925 summary of 21 programs:

"Barnes Readers (New Series). Primer and Manual by May Robbins, Herman Dressel and Ellis U. Graff, 1916. Laidlaw Brothers, N. Y."

Gates commented in the body of his article, with statistical tables to support his comment, that all the 21 series he listed gave heavy supplementary phonic drill.

My copy of Book Six of The New Barnes Readers - The Kearny Plan, shows it was copyrighted by Laidlaw Brothers, Chicago and New York, in 1924, and it lists the same three authors as shown by Gates for 1916, giving their affiliations and the fact that The New Barnes Readers were subtitled, "The Kearny Plan."

Sorting all of this out suggests the whole series probably came out about 1916, possibly published by an American Book subsidiary, but it then was acquired by Laidlaw, some time before 1924. Presumably there would not have been an eight-year hiatus (1916-1924) from the arrival of the primer in 1916, confirmed by Gray in 1916 and Gates in 1925, to the arrival of book six in 1924, which my copyrighted copy might otherwise seem to suggest. From combining Gates' and Gray's comments on the 1916 manual, it can be assumed the material was A MEANING APPROACH WITH HEAVY SUPPLEMENTARY PHONIC DRILL.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1850 and 1860**

1850 (Harvard copy)  
Illustrated Primer  
(On title page of Harvard copy; cover shows only Primer)  
D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
1875 (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)

Illustrated Primer (40 cents)  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
 1877 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers)  
 Illustrated Primer (New edition) (40c, 25c)  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
 1877 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers)  
 Baby's Own Primer  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
 1878 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue)  
 Easy Reading (25c)  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
 1879 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers)  
 Linen Primer (Linen primers were apparently popular. See Scribner.)  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
 1880 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue)  
 Stories for Language Lessons: Reading Pastime (sic) for Little Beginners (50c)  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
 1880 or Before (Listed on p. 27, Sept., 1880, The Primary Teacher)  
 Periodicals: Wide Awake, \$2 a year; The Nursery apparently \$2 a year)  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Boston  
 1880, 1883 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue; Advt. in Jan., 1880,  
 The Primary Teacher, p. 222, and article, p. 27, Sept. 1880)  
 Little Folks Reader (4c a month, 75c a year, \$1 bound copy)  
 D. Lothrop & Co., Publishers, Boston  
 1886 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 The Interstate Primer and First Reader (Sold by Lothrop in 1928)  
 Cyr, Ellen M.  
 Copyright 1886 by the Interstate Publishing Company  
 Lothrop Publishing Company (publisher), Boston  
 1891 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
 Helps in Teaching Reading (75 cents)  
 Hussey, M. S.  
 Lothrop Publishing Company, Boston  
 1893 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Interstate Third Reader  
 Lovejoy, M. L. (40 cents)  
 Lothrop  
 1904 (1900-1905 Am. Cat. by Lothrop; 1912-1928 U.S. Cat. by Little)  
 Wide Awake Primer  
 Murray, Clara - Pseudonym for Eva Austin Blaisdell (McDonald) for whom  
 see other entries under Little, Globe School Book and Macmillan  
 and N. B. Smith, p. 218 and 434)  
 Lothrop  
 (Pub. by Little, Brown & Company, Boston, by 1912 and 1928. 1928 U. S. Cat. also shows Junior Primer  
 pub. by Little. Wide Awake First (1906), Second (1908), Third (by 1912), Fourth (by 1928) also  
 published by Little. Cum. Bk. Index 1928-1932 shows New Wide Awake Junior Primer, New Wide  
 Awake Primer and New Wide Awake Readers, 1st-4th, 1929, by "C. Murray," published by Little.)  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Primary Script Reader  
 Oliver, F. E.  
 Lothrop

1912 or Before, Probably About 1893 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Brown Interstate Second Reader  
Brown, K. L.  
Lothrop

1912 or Before, Probably About 1890 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Tweed's Graded Supplementary Readers  
Lothrop

Note the heavy publishing of "primers" by Lothrop of Boston in the Boston/Quincy change-agent time-frame from 1877 through 1880. No other companies even approached Lothrop's record of primer production, according to the American Catalogues for those years. Lothrop also became the first publisher for Cyr's heavily "meaning"-approach materials, and also were the publishers of the apparent change-agent Interstate materials. Furthermore, some time before 1900, Lothrop apparently absorbed the Boston publisher, Lee & Shepard, who had promoted "sound" approach materials in the 1860's and 1870's. See entries for Lee & Shepard books, some of which Lothrop published after 1900. Lee & Shepard disappeared from the records I have seen after 1897, but Lothrop still had material in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published. A 1975 copy of the sixth edition of How to Increase Reading Ability by Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay listed publishers in Appendix C, and showed Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., Inc., at 105 Madison Avenue, New York, New York. At what time the name change was made from Lothrop Publishing Company is unknown.

Harvard's copy of Lothrop's 1850 Illustrated Primer contained an alphabet followed with pictures with phrases under them, then pictures with paragraphs apparently excerpted from other books. Disconnected and disorganized, its purpose is puzzling. The pictures are EXCELLENT. Presumably the later editions were more elaborate.

A great deal of information about the state of things in 1880 can be gleaned from a January, 1880, full-page advertisement for Lothrop's The Little Folks' Reader. The Primary Teacher carried this advertisement on page 222, and it read:

"To Teachers, Superintendents, and School Boards. The Little Folks' Reader Is prepared to meet the rapidly-growing demand from the Public Schools of America for Fresh Reading Every Month, and of a character more fully adapted to the real wants than any at present supplied. It is believed that this Serial Reader, with its bright, suggestive, simple Stories and Poems, the Object-lessons, its large, clear type, and its beautiful pictures, will be Thoroughly Helpful to the Little Beginners, Assisting them to "Read at Sight," Thoroughly Helpful and Suggestive to Teachers, Thoroughly Delightful to both Scholars and Teachers. The "building idea" of the Reader is that the child's EYE readily becomes acquainted with any word, however long, with which his EAR is already familiar, the associations aroused assisting to fasten the eye UPON THE FORM OF THE WORD, in an intelligent and reflective manner; also awakening curiosity and interest in the child's mind. Thus the exercise of reading becomes normal and spontaneous instead of mechanical.

"The New-England Journal of Education says: 'If anything in this world will stimulate boys and girls to learn to read, and at the same time teach them to use their eyes, and think of what they behold around them, this charming LITTLE FOLKS' READER will do it.'

"The LITTLE FOLKS' READER has the hearty sanction of Dr. Samuel Eliot, Superintendent of Schools in Boston, where it has just been adopted in the primary departments.



“The Educational Weekly says: ‘D. Lothrop & Co., Boston, the children’s publishers, have at last given us “the very thing” in the LITTLE FOLKS READER. Its type and illustrations are clear and artistic.’

“The Vt. Phoenix says: ‘Messrs. D. Lothrop & Co., Boston, have begun a real missionary work in the cause of primary education.’

“The Cambridge Jeffersonian says: ‘No better primary reader ever came from the press.’

“The Moravian says: ‘The LITTLE FOLKS’ READER is “a new departure,” and looks very much like a “royal road to learning,” or a near approach to it.’

“The Teachers’ Advocate says: ‘A move in the right direction has been made by D. Lothrop & Co., of Boston, in the way of furnishing fresh reading for the primary pupils of our schools. Our men want fresh news every day, and find it in the daily paper. Our ladies have their weekly and monthly magazines, and there is no reason why our children should not have a new reader once a month, especially when one can be had for four cents. We are not paid for advertising the LITTLE FOLKS’ READER, but we feel that the enterprise is worthy of free and full notice, and we hope the project may meet with that success which it deserves.’

“The publishers know the only proof is in seeing and testing, hence they will gladly send specimen of the first number with terms of supply, to EVERY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN AMERICA, and to EVERY PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER who will send address to D. Lothrop & Co., Publishers....”

The last gushing 1880 endorsement for this obviously Code 1, sight-word, “meaning” material published in Boston for rank beginners in reading came from a publication called “The Teachers Advocate.” How could that magazine have assumed such a false title? Only two years before, virtually every primary school in the city of Boston (and that means virtually every primary school teacher in the city of Boston) had voluntarily adopted Leigh phonics for beginners, because of its great success. Yet this “advocate” was endorsing a pure sight-word approach, obviously in opposition to the wishes of the vast majority of Boston primary teachers.

The gushing advertisements recall those concerning the 1826 Franklin Primer. Concerning that enormously harmful earlier “meaning” material, meant to replace the “sound” approach Webster-type spellers, the change-agents at that time had obviously banded together to promote it, as those advertisements which have been quoted earlier establish. As has been discussed elsewhere in this history, the Franklin Primer of 1826 and the higher books in that series had even received an endorsement in a Paris journal! These 1880 probably-orchestrated endorsements were more sedate, but notice the use of the buzz-word, “new departure.” Charles Francis Adams, Jr., used that expression in the title of his article praising the change-agent work he and his brother had accomplished in Quincy, when Colonel Parker was hired. Notice the reference to Superintendent Eliot in Boston. Superintendent Philbrick, who had brought Leigh phonics to Boston, was fired in March, 1878, and replaced by Superintendent Eliot. Only a few months later, the new primary course of study implicitly outlawed Leigh phonics (“sound”) and installed the sentence “meaning” method for beginners, even though Leigh phonics had been voluntarily adopted by that time by almost every primary school in Boston.

Notice the blunt admission by one of the endorsers of this Lothrop monthly material, “The Vt. Phoenix,” that the material was change-agent stuff. That endorsement read, “Messrs. D. Lothrop & Co., Boston, have begun a real missionary work in the cause of primary education.” Leigh phonics (“sound”) had been quietly outlawed in Boston by January, 1880, but now Lothrop, with its “missionary work,” was

reaching out to the entire United States to promote the pure Code 1, sight-word, “meaning” approach, with its offer to:

“...gladly send specimen of the first number with terms of supply, to EVERY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN AMERICA, and to EVERY PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER who will send address to D. Lothrop.”

The small but “missionary” Lothrop company must have had access to bankers who were willing to provide any necessary loans, or they would not have been able to make such an offer. Even in the smaller America of that time, that could have been a very expensive operation. It is obvious from the description in the 1880 advertisement that the widely promoted Little Folks’ Reader used for beginners a pure Code 1 MEANING APPROACH.

Lothrop was still selling the Interstate readers in 1912, according to the 1912 United States Catalog of books in print in that year. The Interstate Primer and First Reader was still in print by Lothrop in the 1928 United States Catalog, but the other books were not listed.

With their publishing Cyr’s work, who was an author of “meaning” materials, and with their Boston location, Lothrop appears to have been on the side of the “experts” in the Boston move to “meaning” in beginning reading instruction after 1878. The Interstate/Lothrop materials, on which Cyr wrote the beginning level book, may be presumed to use A MEANING APPROACH.

The books by “Clara Murray,” who also wrote under her real names, Eva Austin Blaisdell (McDonald), are discussed under Little, Brown & Company, Macmillan Company and Globe School Book Company entries. Her books used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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CONCERNING THE HARPER COMPANY, SEE LATER ENTRIES FOR HARPER & ROW)

Circa 1850 English Edition

Reading Without Tears, Or A Pleasant Mode Of Learning To Read

Mortimer, Mrs. Favel Lee (Bevan)

Varty and Owen, London, England (Probable Publisher)

1860 (In 1928 U. S. Cat., p. 2360, by Longman; Harvard 1860 copy.)

Reading Without Tears

“By the Author of Peep of Day” (Mrs. Favel Lee [Bevan] Mortimer)

Harper & Brothers, New York

1860 (1876 Am. Cat.; Harvard has Primer, First, and prob. others)

Harper’s School and Family Readers (Primer, First-Fifth and Spellers)

Willson, Marcius

Harper & Brothers, New York

1863 (Harvard copy)

Little Pet Primer, The Hobart Hall Reading Without Tears

By The Rector

Alexander Fleming, New York

1872 (In Early American Textbooks)

Harper’s United States Series (Probably Primer, Plus First-Fifth)

Willson, Marcius

Harper & Brothers, New York

1880 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 27)

First Lessons in Natural History and Language

Tweed, Benjamin Franklin and L. W. Anderson

(Anderson was co-author on the 1887 new edition of Holmes Readers published by University Publishing Company. Other material by Tweed is listed here under Lee & Shepard)

Harper & Brothers, New York

1881 (P. 112-113 of Early American Textbooks; P. 101 shows the 5th reader was published in 1895 by American Book Company)

The Popular Series (First-Fifth, possibly a primer)

Willson, Marcius

J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia (No connection to Harper)

1888-1889 (In 1928 United States Catalog by American Book)

Harper's Educational Series

General editor: James Baldwin (See American Book for 1890 6th Reader)

Harper's First Reader

Bright, O. T., Editor, First Reader, Supt. of Schools, Englewood, Ill. Harper & Brothers, New York  
1955

Why Johnny Can't Read, and What You Can Do About It

Flesch, Rudolf

Harper and Row, New York

1981

Why Johnny STILL Can't Read, The Scandal of Our Schools

Flesch, Rudolf

Harper and Row, New York

Reading Without Tears was a sight-word primer from England, using phony phonics. It was somewhat weaker at its beginning than Mrs. Favel Lee Bevan Mortimer's 1830's phony-phonics Reading Disentangled charts which were sold apparently only in England, and which were on the 1848 list of materials approved for government subsidies in England. I obtained copies of those charts from the British Library. The 1830's charts employed the two-step phony phonics method (learning new words from comparison to a previously learned word) and heavy use of context reading of sight word selections almost from the beginning. Reading Without Tears was reprinted in America by Harper by 1860, and a copy of that edition is in the Harvard libraries. The title was also used in a book published by Alexander Fleming in New York in 1863, Little Pet Primer, Hobart Hall Reading Without Tears, "By the Rector," a copy of which is also in the Harvard libraries. That different book was a truly phonic text, which Mrs. Mortimer's was not, and was in no way related to either Mrs. Mortimer's text or the Harper publishers. Mrs. Mortimer also wrote religious texts for children such as Peep of Day which were popular in England. Her book, Reading Without Tears, was still in print in America by Longman in 1912, and also in 1928 according to the United States Catalog (at the beginning of page 2360). It rated a Code 3 at its beginning, but improved to a Code 5 later. It used A MEANING APPROACH WITH TWO-STEP PHONY PHONICS.

Early American Textbooks shows on page 189 that Marcius Willson wrote History of the United States, published in 1847 by Mark H. Newman & Co., who were the important publishers of Sanders' readers at that time. The Newman company was one of the predecessors of the Ivison company, which in turn was one of the predecessors of the very important American Book Company formed in 1890. Early American Textbooks commented about his 1847 history book, "Willson's classic has a detailed table of contents, colored maps, and a complex time chart..." Apparently Willson made his mark as a popular historian, before writing his 1860 Harper reading series, very possibly his first reading series.

Willson's materials used a pure "meaning," Code One, approach. In his 1860 Primer, he recommended that teachers read whole sentences first for children to imitate, rather than isolated words, and deplored the spelling of words before reading either whole words or connected text.

Willson's last series published by Lippincott is shown in Early American Textbooks with editions of 1881, 1882 and 1883, and an apparent reprint in 1895 of the fifth reader by American Book Company, who may have taken over the series. Willson's Harper materials appear to have been very popular, but not his Lippincott series. Only the 1860 material appears in the 1876 American Catalogue, and the 1881 material is not listed in the 1876-1885 American Catalogue, which may or may not have been an omission. It is possible the three series credited to him, of 1860, 1872, and 1881, were actually the same material being given new names in later editions. The only materials of his in print in 1912 were his "Primer" and his "Readers," first and third, by American Book, with no indication of which series they matched. His materials were apparently out of print by 1928. The "Harper's" readers, first to sixth, being sold by American Book Company in 1928, almost certainly were the Bright-Baldwin 1888 Harper series which had been very popular. Willson's materials used A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1888-1889 Harper series as a whole was edited by James Baldwin and was being published by American Book by 1890. It was still in print as "Harper's Readers" in 1928 published by American Book. Baldwin later prepared the Baldwin Readers and the 1901 McGuffey Revision for American Book Company, which are listed later. He also prepared in 1911 for American Book an eight-book series with I. C. Bender, according to the 1912 United States Catalog. The Harper's 1888 series was widely used. The beginning material edited by O. T. Bright used a Code 3 approach. The Harper 1888 series used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS

At some point after 1930, Row, Peterson of Chicago may have merged with Harper & Brothers to form Harper and Row. See the entries elsewhere for Row, Peterson followed by Harper and Row.

Harper and Row, presumably the successor to Harper, were the publishers of Rudolf Flesch's 1955 best-seller, *Why Johnny Can't Read*, and his 1981 sequel, *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read*. These books are essential reading for anyone who wishes to understand America's reading problem, and are still in print. Flesch's 1955 book was, incredibly, the first to draw wide public attention in America to the terrible reading disabilities that resulted from the 1930 change in beginning reading methods. Flesch's 1955 book resulted in hysterical denials and counter-charges appearing in the contemporary literature from America's plague of "reading experts." Yet his 1955 book (and its 1981 sequel) have been virtually ignored in their subsequent heavy (literally) tomes on what they call "reading instruction." The experts have obviously learned that unthink really works.

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1853 (Harvard copy - Code 7)

The New American Primer and Juvenile Preceptor

Ruter, Martin, D. D.,

Published for the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church by Carlton and Phillips, New York

1876 or Before (1876 American Catalogue)

First Lessons in Spelling and Reading, Per doz. \$1.80.

Methodist Book Concern

Nashville, Tennessee? (Shown there by Vail in McGuffey history, p. 53)

1876 or Before (1876 Amer. Cat.-"Readers" Sect.; 1928 U. S. Cat.)

Spelling and Reading Book, Per dozen, \$1.80.

Methodist Book Concern

Nashville, Tennessee? (Shown there by Vail in McGuffey history, p. 53)

1912 or Before (In 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs)

Southern Methodist Primer

Pub. House Methodist Episcopal Church Society (In 1912 U. S. Cat.)

Cokesbury Press (In 1928 U. S. Cat.)

The Code 7 1853 primer shown above by Reverend Ruter was very like the old analytic phonics spelling books, beginning with syllabary and blends. It had much gentle, true religious content and was in sharp contrast in its higher religious tone and higher instructional code to the 1853 Code 1 Union Primer of the American Sunday School Union which had been prepared by a nameless committee.

Whether the “Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church” of 1853 was the same group as “Methodist Book Concern” from 1876 and “Methodist Book” from 1912 is unknown. However, because the three groups may be the same organization with a changing name, all three entries are shown here.

No information is available on the Methodist books in print by 1876, listed above, from the 1876 American Catalogue, nor on those shown above from the 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs.

However, A History of the McGuffey Readers by Henry H. Vail, he referred to the Methodist Book Concern, possibly the same as that listed above. He wrote on pages 52 and 53:

“From the location of Cincinnati on the Ohio River, then affording the cheapest means of distributing goods to all parts of the South, Mr. Smith had obtained, before 1860, a very considerable part of the schoolbook trade in the Southern states of the Mississippi Valley. The opening of the Civil War swept this trade away and left on the books of the firm in Cincinnati many accounts not then collectible. The continuance of the war and the constant fluctuation in the price of materials, due to the use of paper money, joined to advancing age and ill health, all combined to lead Mr. Smith to withdraw from business.

“A new firm, Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle, was organized April 20, 1863.... These active partners had long been in this business....

“The Confederate States, at the opening of the War, had within their limits no publisher of schoolbooks which had extensive sales. Nearly all of the schoolbooks used in the South were printed in the North. But there were printing offices and binderies in the South. The children continued to go to school, and the demand for schoolbooks soon became urgent. To meet this demand, a few new schoolbooks were made and copyrighted under the laws of the Confederacy; but others were reprints of Northern books such as were in general use. The Methodist Book Concern of Nashville, Tenn., reprinted the McGuffey Readers and supplied the region south and west of Nashville until the Federal line swept past that city. This action on the part of the Methodist Book Concern had the effect of preserving the market for these readers, so that as soon as any part of the South was strongly occupied by the Federal forces, orders came to the Cincinnati publishers for fresh supplies of the McGuffey Readers. This unexpected preservation of trade was of great benefit to the firm of Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle.”

Presumably the Methodist Book Concern reading materials listed above had no connection with the McGuffey materials which Methodist Book Concern printed during the Civil War. However, Vail’s entry suggests that the Methodist Book Concern may have been principally located in Nashville, Tennessee.

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1855-1858

Progressive Readers (From Nietz, p. 93-94, 103)

Osgood, Lucius.

1870-1873 Revision (In 1876 Amer. Cat.; In Early Amer. Textbooks)

Osgood’s American Series of Readers

A. H. English & Co., Pittsburgh

1881 or Before (From copy of Sheldon’s Modern School First Reader)

Osgood's Modern Series (name uncertain)

Osgood, Lucius

Sheldon & Company, (8 Murray Street), N. Y. and Chicago (N. Y. Address from March, 1880, Appendix to 1876 Amer. Cat. - Authors and Titles)

John A. Nietz said the Osgood readers were first published from 1855 to 1858, and mentioned them on pages 93-94 and 103 of his book, *Old Textbooks*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1961. Nietz said:

“These constituted the most popular series of textbooks ever published in Pittsburgh.”

One of Osgood's series or a revision of his material was sold in 1881 by Sheldon, advertised on Harvard's copy of the Sheldon 1881 first reader. The Osgood Progressive series was unrelated to the once very widely used *The Progressive Series* by Salem Town and Nelson M. Holbrook which was being published by 1855. The Town and Holbrook series was apparently out of print when the 1876 American Catalogue was published. The Osgood Series was revised in 1870-1872 as *Osgood's American Series of Readers, Primer to Sixth* and was listed as such in the American Catalogue for 1876, and may be the material being sold by Sheldon in 1881.

Osgood's material was not in print in 1912 according to the 1912 United States Catalog. However, because of its huge popularity and the possible confusion of the Osgood Progressive material with the widely used 1855 Town and Holbrook Progressive series (which was apparently out of print when the 1876 American Catalogue was published), Osgood's material is included here. From Nietz's description of the 1855 series and reproduction of a primer page, the 1855 Osgood series, and probably the 1870 series and Sheldon material, used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1856 (In *Early American Textbooks*, page 111)

Webb's Normal Reader No. 2

Webb, John Russell

Sheldon, Lamport & Blakeman, New York

1857 (1876 Amer. Cat.; Harvard copy of 1863)

The Word Method Primer,

Webb, W. H.

Sheldon, Blakeman & Company (Copyrighted by them in 1857)

(Sheldon & Company, 335 Broadway, Cor. Worth St., N. Y., 1863 pub.)

1881 (Harvard copy)

Sheldon's Modern School First Reader

Sheldon & Co., (8 Murray St.) N. Y. and Chicago (Street address from March, 1880, Appendix to 1876 American Cat. - Authors and Titles)

1881-1885 (In *Early American Textbooks*)

Sheldon's Modern School Readers (First-Fifth)

Sheldon & Co., (8 Murray St.) N. Y. and Chicago (Street address from March, 1880, Appendix to 1876 American Catalogue - Authors and Titles)

1883 (Harvard copy)

The Modern Spelling-Book

Hunt, J. N. and H. I. Gourley

Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., New York

1883 (Harvard copy)

The Modern Spelling-Book

Hunt, J. N. and H. I. Gourley

Sheldon & Company, New York, Boston and Chicago

1886 (In *Early American Textbooks*)

Sheldon's Supplementary Reading (At least to Third Book)

Sheldon & Co., New York and Chicago

1892 (1890-5 Am. Cat. as new series; 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Bk.)

New Franklin Series (See also Taintor Bros., N.Y. and Brewer and Tileston, Boston for earlier Hillard and Campbell series)

Campbell, Loomis Joseph

Sheldon & Co., New York and Chicago

1898 (In 1928 United States Catalog published by American Book, E. B. Huey pp. 345, 443)

Choice Literature (Books 1 - 7)

(Reader for Beginners by "Williams" by Am. Bk. in 1912 U. S. Cat.)

Williams, Sherman, Superintendent of Schools, Glenn Falls, N. Y.,

Sheldon & Co., New York - Philadelphia - Chicago - Boston

1899 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

The Progressive Course in Reading

Aldrich, George I. and Alexander Forbes

Butler, Sheldon & Co., New York - Philadelphia - Chicago

1912 (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Choice Literature, New Ed., 7 Bks.

Williams, Sherman, Compiler

American Book Company

Harvard's copy of The Word Method Primer of 1857 published in 1863 gave no author's name but internal notes show it was written by a woman and was meant to accompany J. R. Webb's series. Her initials, W. H., were later given in the 1876 American Catalogue. The 108-page primer had a controlled vocabulary of 468 words.

See the entries elsewhere on J. R. Webb's books. Nila Banton Smith dated John's First Book or The Child's First Reader by J. R. Webb to 1846, and said J. R. Webb completed his series of Normal Readers by 1855. See the discussion on the Webb readers in Appendix B, under the 1851 United States Spelling Book, Fourth Edition, by Josiah Miles [from Watertown, New York], which was published in 1854 by Lamport, Blakeman and Law, New York. That publisher also put out Webb's Normal Primer, Primary Lessons, "A Series of Cards to be used with Primer and No. 1, Normal Reader," and also published Webb's Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5. The back cover of Miles' speller read re Webb's:

"These readers are used in the principal cities and villages throughout the United States and are rapidly coming into use in the smaller towns of the country... the system of teaching... is the... WORD METHOD...."

Hon. S. S. Randall, Deputy State Superintendent of New York Common Schools, said about the Webb readers:

"They are the best practical readers that have come under my notice; they are all and everything they should be."

Josiah Miles, the author of the United States Spelling Book, was from Watertown, New York, and Webb "invented" his word method in a country school near there. See Webb entries under Ivison in this appendix and in the body of this history. What the relationship was of W. H. Webb to J. R. Webb is unknown, but there obviously had to be some kind of close connection.

Like J. R. Webb's materials, W. H. Webb's text used A MEANING APPROACH.

According to the 1912 United States Catalog, a five-book series called E. A. Sheldon's Modern School Readers, 1st-5th, was on sale by American Book Company in 1912. Yet E. A. Sheldon's 1876 six-book series had been published by Scribner's, and had included a primer, which the reprint did not. The probability is that the material being reprinted by American Book by 1912 was actually the Sheldon company 1881-1885 Modern School Readers, and not E. A. Sheldon's 1876 readers, particularly since E. A. Sheldon's materials did not carry "modern" in their titles. Harvard library has a copy of Sheldon & Co.'s Modern School First Reader, Sheldon & Company, New York and Chicago, copyrighted in 1881 and published in 1882. It rates a Code 3, A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The 1898 "Choice Literature" series of Sherman Williams originally published by Sheldon was issued by American Book Company, in books 1 - 7 some time before 1912, along with A Reader for Beginners by "Williams," as shown in the 1912 United States Catalog, with no notation that it was a new edition. Yet "Choice Literature, New Ed., 7 Bks." by S. Williams, "Comp.," was listed in the 1928 United States Catalog without A Reader for Beginners, and showing a publishing date of 1912 by American Book. Harvard library has a copy of Choice Literature Book One for Primary Grades, Compiled and Arranged by Sherman Williams, Superintendent of Schools, Glenn Falls, N. Y., published by Sheldon and Company who copyrighted it in 1898. At the top of the title page appears:

"A series intended to create and foster a taste for good reading."

On page 4 in the Preface, this appears:

"This series can be used to excellent advantage in teaching children how to read, but it should be borne in mind that the primary purpose of the series is to teach what to read, to create and foster a taste for good literature...."

Under "To the Reader," this appears:

"This book is made in the belief that many of the old rhymes and tales, such as are herein contained, 'Children's Classics,' if I may so term them, are, or should be, the birthright of every child. They are all very old; many of them so old that their origin is wholly lost. This is notably true of 'Cinderella.' Miss Marion Cox... gives three hundred and forty-five variations of the story, and traces it to the literature of nearly every country.... No doubt many of these old stories were originally nature myths..."

E. B. Huey wrote concerning the Sherman Williams material, on pages 345 and 346 of Huey's book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*:

"The rhymes, jingles and classic child poems and stories presented in such books as Williams' 'Choice Literature,' or the 'Heart of Oak' introductory reader, will be listened to with wonder and rapt attention when told or read aloud by the teacher, and will bear repeating many times until many of them will be known throughout by all the children. There need be no hurry to have them read for themselves, as the teacher's story-telling and reading to them will long continue to be the more effective medium for teaching the literature, just as it was in the old Greek days. However, if the children are supplied with the books, they will delight to follow along with the teacher in the readings, especially if abundant illustrations help them to keep the place. Sometimes the teacher's copy is a chart which all can see, following the pointer or pictures as the reading progresses, thus becoming familiar with the printed sentences, phrases, and words. Once children know a poem or a story, it is surprising how quickly they can locate its parts on the printed page, and read it. Accordingly, in the books by Miss Taylor, Miss Arnold, and other



successful primer writers, teachers are urged to make much of memorizing poems, especially, as an excellent means of learning to read....”

Nothing in the table of contents of Sherman Williams’ Book 1 indicates any attempt at teaching reading, so Sherman Williams’ 1898 material, like Charles Eliot Norton’s 1895 (or 1893) Heart of Oak material, obviously endorsed the so-called “natural” method by exposure to literature. A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1899 Aldrich-Forbes Progressive Course five-book series was being published by American Book at the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published. It should not be confused with the Progressive Road to Reading by Burchill, Ettinger and Shimer, published by Silver Burdett in 1909. The first and second book Aldrich-Forbes books are listed in Early American Textbooks, and Harvard has a copy of the First Book, published in 1899 by American Book Company.

Considering that early 1899 publishing date, it is possible the Butler company and the Sheldon publishers who had merged by 1899 were absorbed by American Book about that time, particularly since both Sheldon and Butler seem to disappear from the records after 1899 and American Book appears as the publishers of their earlier books.

The beginning of the 1899 Aldrich-Forbes First Book used the standard approach of the time: sight words in sentences with many pictures, and directions to introduce phonetic lessons later. Too few photocopied pages are available to judge, but the probability is that the book used the standard inadequate phonics, which in actual practice would have been phony phonics. Yet the growth in extensive “supplementary” phonics drill at the blackboard by first-grade teachers was increasing in 1899, so first-grade teachers began to make up for the inadequacies of such primers. Heavy “spelling” was taught by second grade after the late 1880’s, apparently often phonetically, so “spelling” lessons also cushioned the effect from such beginning reading books as this. The complete First Book most probably used A MEANING APPROACH WITH INADEQUATE OR PHONY PHONICS.

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1857 (In Early American Textbooks, page 35)

Vocal Culture and Elocution. 480 pages.

Kidd, Robert (See his 1870 text below)

Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati; Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfiner, Philadelphia; Clark & Maynard, New York. (As shown below, name should be Clark, Austin & Smith in 1857)

1868 (In 1876 Amer. Cat.; in Early Amer. T.; in F. Buisson’s 1876 Philadelphia Exposition Report in France)

Knell, A. and J. H. Jones

The Phonic Reader, No. 1, 112 pages. 27c.

Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, Ohio; Claxton, Remsen & Haffelinger, Philadelphia; Clark & Maynard, New York

1870 (Harvard Copy)

The Institute Reader and Normal Class Book

“For the Use of Teachers’ Institutes and Normal Schools,  
and for Self-Training in the Art of Reading.”

William H. Cole

Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati; Clark & Maynard, New York

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Historical Reader. \$1.80

Anderson, J. J.

Clark and Maynard

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 United States Reader. \$1.50  
 Anderson, J. J.  
 Clark and Maynard  
 1878 (From Primary Teacher, Dec., 1878, p. 125 - advertisement)  
 Primary Normal Speller, First Lessons in the Art of Writing Words  
 (taught script)  
 Beecher, A. G.  
 Clark & Maynard, 5 Barclay Street, New York  
 1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 Merrill's Advanced First Reader  
 Maynard, Merrill & Co., New York  
 1888 (Harvard copy. In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Collard's Beginner's Readers, Part I and Part II  
 Collard, T. T., Principal, Training School, Newark, New Jersey  
 Maynard, Merrill & Co., New York  
 1893 (In 1890-1895 American Cat.; In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Collard's Beginner's Readers. Part III  
 Collard, T. T.  
 Maynard, Merrill & Co., New York  
 1899 (1928 U. S. Cat., N.B. Smith p. 142-143-430, E. B. Huey p. 442; Harvard copy of 1899 Graded  
 Literature Reader First Book;  
 Probably Graded Literature Readers listed here are the same as Maynard's Graded Readers listed next)  
 Graded Literature Readers (8 books in print in 1928)  
 Judson, Harry Pratt and Ida C. Bender  
 Maynard, Merrill & Co., New York  
 1907 or before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog - Probably the same as the series listed above)  
 Maynard's Graded Readers (8 books in print in 1912)  
 Charles E. Merrill Co., New York  
 1907 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Bender Primer  
 Bender, Ida C.  
 Charles E. Merrill Co., New York  
 1908 or Before (Per E. B. Huey on page 443 of his 1908 book)  
 Classic Fables  
 By "Turpin"  
 Maynard, Merrill & Co. (Huey's use of this name suggests an earlier publication date than 1908)  
 1910 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Culture Readers, Books 1 and 2  
 Warner, E. E. (See also American Book, Noble, Hinds and Bardeen)  
 Charles E. Merrill Co., New York  
 1910 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Mother Goose Primer  
 Wiley, B.  
 Charles E. Merrill Co., New York  
 1915 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog. See N. B. Smith p. 142)  
 Merrill Readers  
 Dyer, Franklin B. and Mary J. Brady  
 Charles E. Merrill Co., New York  
 1925 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 The Study Readers (3rd - 6th years)

Walker, Alberta; Ethel Summy; and Mary R. Parkman

Charles E. Merrill Company, New York

1965, 1966 (N. B. Smith, p. 386 to 392, 438; reviewed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates* on p. 308-309; see Chall, *Learning to Read*)

The Merrill Linguistic Readers

A Basic Reading Series Developed Upon Linguistic Principles

(per Chall, preliminary, exper. editions 1963, 1964, Ann Arbor, Mich.)

(7 books, each with a practice book and teacher's manual)

Fries, Chas. C.; Agnes C. Fries, Rosemary G. Wilson; Mildred K. Rudolph; Lorene B. Hull; Miriam M. Fuller

Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., A Division of Bell Howell Company Columbus, Ohio

(The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, published in 1993 by the U. S. Department of Education, listed the publisher of the 1986 edition by Rudolph, Wilson, Young, Waynant and Otto as SRA School Group, Chicago. Science Research Associates at the same address also published the revised Distar program, under the name of Reading Mastery, in 1993.)

1973 edition (date of first edition unknown)

Merrill Phonic Skilltexts (Books A-F, six workbooks)

Wolfe, Josephine B., et al.

Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., Columbus, Ohio

No connection appears between Maynard, Merrill & Co. of New York in 1887 and Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co. of New York in that period. Nor is there any apparent connection to D. D. Merrill of St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1878, or to The Bobbs-Merrill Co. of Indianapolis, in business by 1909 or before. At some time apparently after 1899, Maynard, Merrill & Co. of New York became Charles E. Merrill Company of New York. At some time after 1925 but before 1965, it became Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., A Division of Bell Howell Company, Columbus, Ohio.

The name, "Merrill," as listed above and as in Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., occurs in at least five publishing company names, but most of the occurrences are probably unrelated though the possibility that they are related cannot be ruled out. Charles E. Merrill Company of New York were the clear successors to the company of Maynard, Merrill & Co., New York. Maynard, Merrill & Co. were the successors some time after 1881 but by 1887 of the company, Clark & Maynard, of New York, and were still in business under the name of Maynard, Merrill & Co. in 1898. Clark & Maynard had been the successor to Clark, Austin, Maynard & Co., which had been the successor to Clark, Austin & Smith, according to Vail's account, given below.

Clark, Austin & Smith, and then Clark, Austin, Maynard & Co. after 1861, had been the New York publishers for the McGuffey books until 1862. Their apparent successor (by at least 1868), Clark & Maynard are on record, as shown above, as the New York publishers of at least two books put out by the Cincinnati publishers of the McGuffey series, the first in 1868 and the last in 1870. However, there is no indication that Clark & Maynard of New York published any of the McGuffey readers, though they may well have acted as the New York agents until about 1870

As early as 1849, Clark, Austin and Smith, had put out the New York edition of McGuffey's Newly Revised Eclectic Primer copyrighted and published by Winthrop B. Smith, of Cincinnati. Vail's account, given below, said they and their successor continued as the New York publishers of the McGuffey readers until 1862, when he said the association terminated. However, in 1868, Clark & Maynard of New York, the apparent successor company, published *The Phonic Reader, No. 1*, which was also published by Wilson, Hinkle & Co., Cincinnati, and Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger of Philadelphia. Then, in 1870, Clark & Maynard put out a New York edition of Wilson, Hinkle & Co.'s *The Institute Reader and Normal Class Book for the Use of Teachers' Institutes*. The title page on Harvard's copy clearly shows

the 1870 publishers as Wilson, Hinkle & Co. of Cincinnati and Clark & Maynard of New York. Therefore, despite Vail's comment, some degree of association between a successor New York firm and the Cincinnati firm continued until at least 1870. That association apparently ceased shortly after 1870 when *The Institute Reader...* was published.

Henry H. Vail discussed the McGuffey publishers' New York agency to some degree in *A History of the McGuffey Readers* (1911) but he left unanswered the question of when the association between the Cincinnati and the New York publishers actually ceased. Vail wrote on pages 51 and 52:

“While books could be manufactured in the West even in the early years cheaper than they could be delivered in the West from the better organized establishments of the older cities of the East, it was not possible to deliver books in New York from Cincinnati so cheaply as the books could be made in the East. The cost of transportation constituted a very considerable element in the price of school books. Mr. Smith therefore made an arrangement with Clark, Austin & Smith, of New York, to become the Eastern publishers of the McGuffey Readers and other books, and a duplicate set of plates was sent to New York. From these plates, editions of the readers were manufactured, largely at Claremont, N. H., bearing on the title page the imprint of Clark, Austin & Smith, New York.

“The Smith of the firm was Cornelius Smith, a brother of Winthrop B. Smith. Cornelius Smith withdrew from this firm before 1861. In that year the war broke out, and this New York firm, which as booksellers and stationers had a large trade in the South, lost not only their custom in that section, but were unable to collect large amounts due them for goods. Clark, Austin, Maynard & Co. failed and Mr. W. B. Smith bought, in 1862, all their assets for the sum of \$6,000, placed Mr. W. B. Thalheimer in charge of the business and resumed control of the duplicate plates of the McGuffey Readers.

“...The continuance of the war and the constant fluctuations in the price of materials, due to the use of paper money, joined to advancing age and ill health, all combined to lead Mr. Smith to withdraw from business.

“A new firm, Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle, [Ed.: of Cincinnati] was organized April 20, 1863.... These active partners had long been in this business...”

Sargent, Wilson & Hinkle was not a “new” firm in any real sense. Vail's comment, “These active partners had long been in this business,” and his remarks elsewhere in his history demonstrated that it was essentially only a reorganization. Presumably, something like that must have happened with the New York firm because it apparently continued in business as Clark & Maynard.

Obviously, Vail's account left unanswered the name of the New York office after 1862, which may or may not have been Clark, Austin, Maynard & Co., and the facts concerning when the New York affiliation of the Cincinnati publisher with Clark, Austin, Maynard & Co. of New York and its successor, Clark & Maynard of New York, actually ceased. As shown above, as late as 1870, Clark & Maynard in New York were publishing a book of the McGuffey publishers in Cincinnati.

Concerning Clark & Maynard's later books which showed no affiliation with the Cincinnati publisher, Clark & Maynard had been the publishers at least since 1878 of what seem to have been popular grammars by Alonzo Reed and Brainard Kellogg, as well as literature and business texts. (My mother, aunt and uncle used a copy of the Reed and Kellogg grammar in a little country school outside Carthage, New York, in the 1890's, which is why I have a very dog-eared and very scribbled-on copy today.) Two of the Clark & Maynard literature texts are shown above.

Also as shown above, Clark & Maynard advertised a speller in 1878 which taught the writing of script. obviously in response to the Quincy emphasis for written spelling, instead of oral spelling. Their advertisement in the December, 1878, *Primary Teacher* on page 125 said in part:

“Even the youngest pupils are taught to form the script letters and enabled to write legibly. Having thus been initiated into the art of writing, the pupils are then taught spelling by a system of various exercises requiring them to write words and sentences and read them in their script or written forms. The pupils also learn the forms of words and not simply the mere names of the letters.... It does not necessarily supersede the ordinary spelling book but rather fills a place that has never been occupied by any book....”

The 1887 reader shown above is listed in the 1885-1890 American Catalogue at a price of 20 cents. Presumably there were other texts in the 1887 Merrill series, but no further information is available.

On Collard's 1888 readers, Harvard has a copy of Part II, published in 1890 by Maynard, Merrill & Co., New York. These readers were not in print in 1912, according to the 1912 United States Catalog. They used A MEANING APPROACH.

E. B. Huey listed on page 443 of his bibliography, but made no other reference to, the *Classic Fables* by “Turpin.” That book had been published at some date earlier than the date of his book, 1908, and he wrote that it had been published by Maynard, Merrill & Co.,. Possibly this “Turpin” was E. H. L. Turpin whose *Rose Primer* was published in 1905 according to the 1928 U. S. Catalog. In 1928, the *Rose Primer* was published by American Book.

The 1899, 1915 and 1925 Merrill series are discussed by Nila Banton Smith on pages 142, 143, 213, 430 and 433 of her book, *American Reading Instruction*. Harvard has a copy of the 1899 material. Gates listed the 1915 material in his 1925 article on widely used primers, and Nila Banton Smith described it as using the sentence method. On the authors of the 1899 material, Harry Pratt Judson was Dean of the Faculty of Art, Literature and Science at the University of Chicago, and Ida C. Bender was Supervisor of Primary Grades in the Public Schools of Buffalo, New York. The method used in the Harvard copy of the 1899 Graded Literature Reader First Book was high-frequency sight-words and Code 3 phony phonics, building new words from parts of memorized sight words. The material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

On page 142 of her “history,” Nila Banton Smith made a wrong statement concerning the period in which the sentence method was in use. It actually had been in use from after 1870 until about 1918, but she moved the period of its introduction to the late 1890's, and of its wide use up to 1909. This presumably was part of her patterned burying of the Boston anti-phonics campaign in the 1870's, discussed previously in this history. Nila Banton Smith wrote:

“It was not, however, until the years between 1909 and 1918 that the method enjoyed the height of its popularity, as applied in such well-known series as Baker and Carpenter's *Language Readers* (The Macmillan Company), Burchill-Ettinger-Shimer's *The Progressive Road to Reading* (Silver, Burdett and Company), Free and Treadwell's *Reading-Literature* (Row, Peterson and Company), Bryce and Spaulding's *The Aldine Readers* (Newson and Company), Coe and Christie's *Story Hour Readers* (American Book Company [Ed.: Christie had the married name of A. J. Dillon by the time Smith wrote.], Dyer and Brady's *The Merrill Readers* (Charles E. Merrill Company), Hervey and Hix's *The Horace Mann Readers* (Longmans, Green and Company), Baker and Thorndike's *Everyday Classics* (The Macmillan Company), and the *Elson Readers* (Scott Foresman and Company).”

However, from Smith's comments, it can be assumed that the Dyer and Brady material published by Merrill used the sentence MEANING METHOD, PROBABLY WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Fries Linguistic Readers were among those used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies. On pages 353 and 354 of her book, Dr. Chall wrote:

“More than half [the code emphasis programs] teach sounding and blending. The others are divided into those which use spelling (saying the letters)- e.g., the Bloomfield System, the Fries Linguistic Readers, BRS [SRA Basic Reading Series], and the Moore program - and those which use visual analysis and substitution: The Royal Road Readers, the American ITA program, and Breaking the Sound Barrier.”

Dr. Chall stated on page 332 of her book that the authors of the Fries series answered her questionnaire, concerning its major emphasis, that it was “Definitely not a decoding program.” Yet, to the degree that the material was arranged on language patterning, it could presumably have been used to teach phonics. Yet, like so many other linguistic approaches, the emphasis was on A MEANING APPROACH.

On pages 428 and 429 of the book, How to Increase Reading Ability, published by David McKay Company, Inc., in a sixth edition in New York in 1975, Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay listed the Merrill Phonics Skilltexts, and said they were meant to develop phonic, structural, and contextual skills. The reference to developing structural and contextual skills in a so-called “phonics” workbook indicates that the method being taught was not synthetic, sounding-and-blending phonics, but two-step, whole word “substitution” phonics. However, all the so-called “phonic” workbooks that were in use when I was teaching primary grades in government schools, from 1963 to 1985, never used synthetic sounding-and-blending phonics, but only the two-step, whole-word approach.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1860 and 1870**

1865 (Harvard copy)  
Large Letters for Little Ones  
(Other children's books listed on the back cover)  
Hurd, Houghton  
401 Broadway, Corner Walker Street  
New York, New York

By 1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Riverside Juveniles (House That Jack Built, etc.)  
Hurd and Houghton  
Boston, Massachusetts (?)

By March, 1880  
Houghton, Osgood & Co.  
Boston, Massachusetts

(This changed company name appeared on the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue - Authors and Titles)

1883 (In 1876-1885 American Cat., advertised in The American Teacher in 1883)  
Riverside Literature Series (ten volumes in 1883)

(Works by Longfellow, Etc.)  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1890 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Riverside Manual for Teachers; Suggestions Leading to Primary Reading  
Hall, I. Freeman, Superintendent of Schools, North Adams, Mass.  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1891 (Harvard Copy)  
The Riverside Primer and Reader  
The Riverside Press, Cambridge  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston, New York, Chicago  
1898 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue)  
Hiawatha Primer, Riverside Literature Series  
Holbrook, Florence  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston, New York, Chicago  
1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Beginner's Primer; Beginner's Reader  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1911-1913 (In 1928 United States Catalog, Harvard Copy of Primer)  
The Riverside Readers (Primer, 1st-8th, Manual)  
Van Sickle, James H.; Wilhelmina Seegmiller; Frances Jenkins  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston, New York, Chicago  
1913 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
(Copyright 1913 Florence Akin, 1941 Florence Akin Banks)  
Word Mastery, A Course in Phonics for the First Three Grades  
(In 1908 First Book in Phonics by Akin, F. (Florence?) was published by  
M. & G. Atkinson, possibly formerly of Atkinson, Mentzer and Grover)  
Akin, Florence,  
Formerly a Teacher in Primary Grades, Portland, Oregon  
The Riverside Press, Houghton Mifflin Company, Cambridge, Mass.  
1917 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Dutch Twins Primer  
Perkins, L.  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1922-1923 (1928 U. S. Cat.; N.B. Smith, p. 170, 175, 185, 186, 431)  
Boys' and Girls' Readers  
(Also First Grade Manual, A Help-Book for Teachers, Harvard copy)  
Bolenius, Emma Miller  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1925-1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Silent Reading (Books 1-5)  
Stone, C. R.  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog Under Primers)  
Child's First Book  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1930 (In Cum. Book Index 1928-1932 under Readers and Primers)  
The Bolenius Readers (Revised, 3rd-6th)  
Tom and Betty (and workbook) (primer)  
Bolenius, Emma Miller; May McSkimmon; Florence E. Bamberger  
Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston  
1939 (Not listed by Nila Banton Smith)

The Child Development Readers

Reading for Fun

Hahn, Julia Letheld, Div. Sup., Washington, D. C.

Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston

1950 (Revised 1957, 1963, 1966, 1976 and later, N. B. Smith p. 326, 349, 436; reviewed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates*; see Chall in *Teaching to Read*)

Reading for Meaning

McKee, Paul; Lucile Harrison, William K. Durr and Others

Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston

1973 (Information from Teacher's Guide)

Interaction Literacy Kit

Moffett, James, Senior Editor

Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston

1991 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, 1993)

The Literature Experience

21 Authors including Wm. K. Durr but not Paul McKee or Lucile Harrison

Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston

According to a comment made to me in the summer of 1986 by a librarian at the Houghton Library of Harvard, Henry O. Houghton, a printer, began his publishing work when he took over the well-known operations of Ticknor and Fields of Boston. (Appendix B shows only two reading or spelling textbook publications by that company, *Columbian Spelling Book* in 1849 which was cited by Nietz as "Ticknor's," and what was an apparent reprint of English sight-word material in 1852, *The Indestructible Lesson Book*. In 1852, the company name had been Ticknor, Reed and Fields.)

The following appears on page 311 of *A History of Book Publishing in the United States, Volume I*, by John Tebbel, published by R. R. Bowker of New York in 1972, concerning the period from 1862 to 1866. :

"...unable to carry on his publishing business in his new [government] job, Putnam made arrangements with the Boston firm of Hurd, Houghton, to print and sell his books on commission and the Putnam publishing office became the Hurd & Houghton store at 411 Broadway between 1862 and 1866. While this arrangement lasted, Putnam was out of the publishing business for practical purposes...."

Harvard has a copy of Hurd, Houghton's *Large Letters for Little Ones* published in New York, New York in 1865. It contained capital letters with illustrations and sentences, and was probably intended only to teach the alphabet. The back cover listed children's books:

"Comical Rhymes of Ancient Times, dug up into Jokes for Small Folks... Price 25 cents.

Rummical Rhymes, with Pictures to match.... Price 25 cents.

Large Letters for the Little Ones. Elegantly printed in oil-colors on tinted paper.

Cover in colors. Price 35 cts., The Same. Plain. Price 20 cents.

"New Juvenile Books.

Sandford and Merton. By Thomas Day. Revised by Cecil Hartley... \$1.50.

Swiss Family Robinson. Edited and revised by Cecil Hartley... \$.50.

Evenings at Home By Mrs. Barbauld and Dr. Aikin, corrected and revised by Cecil Hartley... \$1.50.

Tales from Shakspeare, for the Young. By Charles and Mary Lamb... \$1.50.



John Gay; or, Work for Boys. By Jacob Abbott, author of the Rollo Books. A Series of Juvenile Books in four volumes... Price of each 75 cents.”

Yet nothing is listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as in print in 1876 for Hurd, Houghton under Primers or Readers, including this ABC book. However, elsewhere in the 1876 American Catalogue appears a listing for the Riverside Juveniles published by Hurd, Houghton, containing material such as The House That Jack Built. The use of “Riverside” in the 1876 listing suggests the firm published it in Boston, on the Charles River, since their apparent successor, Houghton, Mifflin of Boston, used “Riverside” in association with literature in the titles of many of their materials for many years. For instance, in 1883, Houghton, Mifflin published a Riverside Literature Series with works by Longfellow and others. That Hurd, Houghton were publishing literature for juveniles as early as 1876 or before 1876 suggests an early move toward “literature wholes” for children’s use, which was urged for many years by President Eliot of Harvard. “Houghton” may have had some kind of a tie to Harvard, since he apparently endowed the very attractive research library there which carries his name, the Houghton Library.

The 1891 Riverside Primer and Reader and its Manual of 1890 have been discussed in this history at length. The material used a Code 1 “meaning” approach. The author of the manual was I. F. Hall, who should not be confused with G. Stanley Hall. According to the September, 1882, issue of The Primary Teacher, I. F. Hall was at that time Superintendent of Schools in Dedham, Massachusetts. On page 31 of that September, 1882, issue, The Primary Teacher quoted I. F. Hall’s comments on spelling, which demonstrated his approach was “meaning,” and not “sound”:

“Hold your pupils responsible for correct spelling in every written exercise.... make and keep lists of words misspelled. Let the practice be mainly on such words.

“Pupils learn to spell by practice, not by studying columns of words.... All words in lowest primary grade should be copied; none written from memory....”

The Riverside Primer and Reader was still in print in 1912, according to the United States Catalog, but not the Manual. Neither were in print in 1928. The 1890 and 1891 Riverside materials were in the same “literature” tradition as the earlier Riverside materials and used A MEANING APPROACH.

The Hiawatha Primer published in 1898, based on Longfellow’s poem, which the 1895-1900 American Catalog listed as part of the Riverside Literature Series, was written by Florence Holbrook. She had revised at least one textbook level of Richard Edwards’ Analytical Series (and probably the whole series), which revision was published in 1897 by Scott, Foresman instead of its former publishers, Geo. Sherwood and Company of Chicago. Edwards’ series had been the apparent replacement for the famous Webb sight-word materials. The Webb materials and the Sherwood Company have been discussed at length in this history. See the Scott, Foresman entry for other data on Florence Holbrook. The Hiawatha Primer was still in print in 1912 and 1928, according to the United States Catalogs of those dates. Although I have not seen it, it was ALMOST CERTAINLY A MEANING APPROACH.

The Primer of the 1911 revision of The Riverside Readers was written by James H. Van Sickle, Superintendent of Schools, Springfield, Massachusetts, and Wilhelmina Seegmiller, Director of Art, Indianapolis Public Schools, formerly Principal of the Wealthy Avenue School, Grand Rapids, assisted by Frances Jenkins, Supervisor of Elementary Grades, Decatur, Illinois. It was Code 3 material, A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Mrs. Kathryn Diehl of Cincinnati, Ohio, who has done so much work for so many years for a reform in reading instruction, and who wrote her own phonic materials which are reviewed in this appendix, sent me her copy of Florence Akin’s 1913 Word Mastery, A Course in Phonics for the First Three Grades.,

That copy had obviously been published some time after its second copyright date of 1941. It is straight “Code 10” phonics, and so, presumably was the 1908 material, First Book in Phonics probably written by the same “F. Akin” but published by M. and G. Atkinson, not Riverside Press. The 1913-1941 material, however, is a child’s textbook listed under “Readers” in the 1928 United States Catalog, while the 1908 material was listed under “Reading” (guides) instead of “Readers,” (children’s textbooks) in the 1912 United States Catalog. Since the original Word Mastery was published by Riverside Press in 1913, the same year that they published a new Riverside reading series, it seems possible that Word Mastery was obtained from Florence Akin for use as a supplement to Riverside’s new 1913 series. Akin by that time already had a presumably successful 1908 phonics book in print and so would have been a possible candidate for consideration.

The preface of the 1913-1941 material begins:

“This little book is intended to be put into the hands of children at the beginning of their first year in school. It may be used in conjunction with any series of readers.

“Teachers generally recognize the value of a good foundation in phonics as an important aid in learning to read. Unfortunately many teachers are not sufficiently familiar with the principles underlying phonic analysis and the building of words to feel sure that they can make their phonic drills as economical and as effective as they should be.... it must of necessity be presented to the pupils from the blackboard, or from large printed cards and charts. It has seemed to the author that it would be a great advantage to both teacher and pupil to have before the pupil in a book a carefully worked out and thoroughly tested series of exercises in phonics, which have been found to make pupils self-reliant in word mastery.

“The author has evolved this system of teaching phonics in her own schoolroom, and has found that it ensures rapid progress in learning to read....”

Akin’s “Suggestions to Teachers,” pages 112 to 117, followed by “List of Phonograms Studied” is an excellent guide to teaching Code 10 phonics. While some of her “Phonograms” are actual word parts instead of isolated phonemes, her guide suggests teaching them solely by “sound” and not by “meaning,” so the material does rate Code 10. She originated this material in the early twentieth century, when supplementary phonics became the norm in American first grades, and she apparently had it on the market by 1908. Yet she obviously still expected her material to be solely “supplementary,” as she referred to two ten-minute daily drills in phonics, to be done apart from the “reading” lesson. That Akin’s excellent supplementary phonics material was still being published by Houghton Mifflin as late as 1941, and very probably even later, is very surprising, considering the blanketing effect in America of the Dick and Jane readers. The Dick and Jane so-called “intrinsic” phonics of 1930 was intended to do away with such supplementary phonics drill as Akin’s, which had been around since shortly after 1900. However, apart from its listing in the United States Catalogs of 1912 and 1928, I never saw any reference to Florence Akin’s material in the literature until Mrs. Diehl sent the book to me from her collection of reading materials. It does not seem probable that the Akin material had any wide use after 1928, at which time it was listed in the United States Catalog as in print. Akin’s 1913 material is STRAIGHT CODE 10 PHONICS.

Harvard’s copy of the 1923 First Grade Manual by Emma Miller Bolenius demonstrates the approach Bolenius would have followed in her 1922 readers: the meaning approach with what may or may not have been phony phonics, but not enough photocopies are available to judge. The manual by Bolenius was full of praise for materials by the “experts,” Thorndike, et al. Nila Banton Smith made the following comment (page 175) on the readers by Bolenius: “Miss Bolenius’s The Boys’ and Girls’ Readers and Lewis and Rowland’s The Silent Readers were the first textbooks to employ the silent reading techniques. These

were followed by several other series, notably *The Progressive Road to Silent Reading* by Ettinger, Shimer and others; *The Silent Reading Hour* by Buswell and Wheeler; Lippincott's *Silent Reading for Beginners* by Watkins; and *The Learn to Study Readers* by Horn and Shields.... William Dodge Lewis and Albert Lindsey Rowland were the first authors to produce a complete set of readers devoted to silent reading, under the title *The Silent Readers* (The John C. Winston Company)." I have lost the source, but believe I saw somewhere that Bolenius came from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, which was the location of J. McKeen Cattell's very active Science Press. Her name, Emma Miller, certainly sounds like a Lancaster old-timer's name. Cattell's daughter, Psyche, eventually opened a nursery and kindergarten school in Lancaster, in the 1930's or later. Bolenius may have received the "inspiration" for her 1922 series, which was the first to use silent reading, from some such Cattell-Thorndike connection in Lancaster. In Laura Zirbes' 1925 account on reading in the second grade of the Lincoln School which was associated with Columbia Teachers' College, reference was made to the use of Bolenius' materials, possibly as early as 1921, so there may have been an earlier Bolenius series. Zirbes' report is discussed in Appendix D. The Bolenius 1922 material was A MEANING APPROACH WITH WHAT MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN PHONY PHONICS.

The 1930 Bolenius material, on which ample photocopies are available to make a judgment, was clearly A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

A large gap in the publication of new reading series occurred from 1932 through 1940, very probably at least in part because of the Great Depression in those years, although the 1930 Gray series and the 1930-1931 Gates series obviously suffered from no lack of sales in those years. Nila Banton Smith's 1940 series was only the third major new series published from 1932 through 1940 on which I have been able to find a record. The second series published in the 1932-1940 time-frame, at least so far as I have been able to determine, was Houghton-Mifflin's 1939 *The Child Development Readers, Reading for Fun*, by Julia Letheld Hahn, Division Supervising Principal, Washington, D. C. Nila Banton Smith did not mention the Hahn material in her "history." The first series published after the Gates 1930-1931 series and the Gray 1930 series was apparently O'Donnell's of 1936. Yet Mabel O'Donnell's reading series published by Row, Peterson and Company was dated by Smith with five other series, including her own, to the 1940-1950 decade. Nevertheless, a source cited in Samuel L. Blumenfeld's *The New Illiterates* (1973) gave the beginning date of the O'Donnell series as 1936:

"Hillel Black, in his book, *The American Schoolbook*, tells us that Alice and Jerry have earned Miss O'Donnell \$2,700,000 in royalties since 1936."

*Reading for Fun*, one of Julia Letheld Hahn's 1939 *The Child Development Readers* published by Houghton, Mifflin, now in the U. S. Department of Education Library, carried these comments on page 152, concerning the Word List which started on that page:

"The total number of words used in the Primer is 239.... Omitting 16 proper names and 4 interjections the total vocabulary is 219 words. Of these 182 are in the first 500 of the Gates and 97% in the first 1000 of the Gates list.... 90% are in the first 1000 of the Thorndike list. 97% are in the Horn-Packer list. The 45 starred words are the complete vocabulary of 'Who Knows,' the little primer."

A more rigidly-controlled-vocabulary, "meaning" approach, would be hard to imagine. It is from post-1930 materials like these, injected into our government schools by mindless and gullible government school administrators, that our great nation, the United States of America, has been turned into a sea of functional illiteracy. (Of course, it is not supposed to be "good manners" to display any irritation over the absolutely incredible stupidity of government school administrators, even though they are presently

falling all over each other in their haste to adopt the latest poison package for beginning readers, “whole language.”)

Most of the badly disabled readers resulting from such material as Hahn’s, but who are nevertheless good word-guessers from the meaning of context, have been wrongly counted among the literate. The reality and extent of our functional illiteracy (which is actually true illiteracy) has been neatly masked from the general public for the last sixty years because of the almost unknown fact that only about 3,000 high-frequency words (out of the approximately 500,000 total words in English, not counting proper names) compose about 98 per cent of most written matter (and only 1,000 words compose about 90 per cent). Guessing from the large context that is composed of these memorized high-frequency sight words makes it possible for disabled readers with a memorized sight-word bank as small as 1,000 or so words to guess many words which they are not really reading. The fact that disabled readers are only silently guessing (sometimes correctly but often incorrectly) most words above the 1,000, 2,000 or 3,000 word-frequency level has been nicely hidden because few people understand anything about word-frequencies, particularly when used in tandem with context-guessing.

The 1939 Hahn material obviously used A MEANING APPROACH PROBABLY WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The fourth edition of Reading for Meaning by Paul McKee, et al, was among those programs used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies. That was an earlier version of the Houghton, Mifflin series in use in 1981 (and at least as late as 1986), which was listed as one of “The Dismal Dozen,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. I can confirm his conclusion that it was not a truly phonic series because of the years I was forced to use that series in the primary grades, since it was required by my school system. For instance, one of the exercises in the first-grade materials directed children to distinguish the word “everything” from “evening” by the context in which the word was used, instead of by the differences in the sounds of all the letters. The teachers’ guides gave massive drill on the use of context for word identification, and said that only as many letter sounds should be used as were necessary to confirm word identification. My written and verbal requests to the school administration for a change to a truly phonic series were quite literally never answered.

The series’ many near-worthless and time-consuming first-grade “tests” were official documents that had to be filed in the school building’s office. Also, their numerous sub-scores and total scores had to be painstakingly entered on each child’s official record filed in the school building’s office, which used up more teacher out-of-the-classroom time that would have been far better spent in preparing lesson materials. Similar but fewer tests were given at second grade and above. The probability, of course, is that no one ever really examined those test results afterwards which had used up such enormous amounts of valuable teacher and pupil time. Even if someone in the future made the effort to examine the recorded scores, which is extremely unlikely, the scores could have no real utility, but they looked very “professional,” “important,” and “official.”

Yet the existence of those official records made the use of the workbooks on which the test “exercises” were based mandatory. The primary “skill” actually being tested was the little child’s familiarity with the steps necessary to follow the elaborate directions in the many tests, all of which mental manipulations had to be practiced previously in the time-consuming workbooks or the child could never have passed the tests, even if he knew how to read. The children were not mentally mature enough really to understand the elaborate (and pointless) procedures, so they found the workbooks and the tests difficult. Yet what most of the wheel-spinning procedures were really testing was not the ability to read but the kind of mental ability that develops naturally with maturity, completely independently from reading.

Such basal reader “teaching” is exactly comparable to the kind of “teaching” in John Wood’s Edinburgh Sessional School in 1829, about which the anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster complained, saying the comprehension “skills” being taught in Wood’s school developed naturally in children with increased maturity. Like the so-called “instruction” in Wood’s 1829 Edinburgh school, most of the exercises in the 1980’s Houghton, Mifflin workbooks concerned comprehension “skills” which are really only facets of mental maturity. Those workbooks and tests used up massive amounts of teacher and pupil time in first-grade, which should instead have been spent in teaching pupils to read fluently. The Houghton, Mifflin materials before 1986 used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Interaction Literacy Kit, which was a supplemental kit to Moffett’s Interaction materials for the primary grades, is unsatisfactory and is discussed below. However, before discussing the supplemental Literacy Kit, it should be stated that Moffett’s other Interaction materials were excellent. The Interaction program consisted of an extraordinary and brilliant collection of books and tapes of books and songs (many with folk backgrounds), with card games and remarkably stimulating independent work cards, all interrelating loosely with the books and songs. All were meant to be used in an individualized classroom, the materials to be selected for use by the children themselves, based on their own preferences. The materials were not meant to be used in whole-class lessons. The program’s primary intent was to foster language abilities and literature appreciation, and to give practice in reading to develop fluency. However, the materials would have been almost useless for primary-grade children taught by the sight-word method, as such children would have been incapable of reading the work cards or the words on the game cards. (I taught my first-graders to read, and only then gave them the materials.) Similar kits were available for the upper grades, but I did not review them. The materials would be ideal for home instruction (if a few of the children’s folk songs were removed, which are historically valid but not desirable for little children because of coarseness).

It is to be greatly regretted that Moffett’s primary Interaction kit is no longer available from the publishers, as it is so remarkably effective in motivating primary grade children to read and to enjoy writing activities, once they have been taught how to read. Children also enjoy the card games such as “Silly Syntax,” which teaches parts of speech by the use of color on the cards and the making of syntactically correct but “silly” sentences. It is to be hoped that the publisher will some day publish this remarkable material in a form which can be sold to local libraries for parents to check-out for home use. The undesirable Hooked on Phonics program is currently being sold to libraries, so there is certainly no reason that excellent materials such as the general Interaction kit should not also be available in libraries.

Moffett did not dismiss the need to learn sound-symbol correspondences of letters and letter-clusters. However, Moffett thought many children can teach themselves to read from exposure to print. It is indisputably true that in some very few cases that can happen, In *The Complete Handbook of Children’s Reading Disorders*, Dr. Hilde L. Mosse even told of some aphasic children, incapable of understanding speech or of generating meaningful speech themselves, who nevertheless mysteriously taught themselves to read print aloud with about sixty per cent accuracy. Obviously, that class of aphasics falls into the category of idiot savants. Yet learning to read without any direct instruction is clearly not something that can be done by most normal children.

Many adults, with fuzzy memories of childhood, have confidently assured me that they learned to read spontaneously, before they began school. Their fuzzy memories form quite a contrast to the fact that I have had only one first grader who reportedly learned to read spontaneously, without any specific instruction, before beginning school. Even with that first-grader, I suspect the parents very under-estimated the amount of unconscious instruction that they may have given in sound-symbol correspondence to that very bright boy. Such a brilliant child does not need much instruction to catch on to the sound-symbol correspondences in print, but he probably needed some instruction, however unconsciously it was given. Certainly, the vast majority of children do not learn to read solely by

following a parent's finger as he holds it under the lines of a story as it is read. It is highly doubtful, anyway, that most parents trace most of the print in stories with their fingers while they are reading, and that is about the only way a child can see the sound-symbol correspondences for himself as the story is being read.

From the discussion in the Literacy Kit Teacher's Guide which I bought, Moffett's Literacy Kit which uses tapes, books and games, is very faulty. (I have not seen the actual Literacy Kit, but only the Teacher's Guide.) The part of the program that most specifically concerns phonics is the section, Sound Out Films. According to the Teacher's Guide to Sound Out Films which was inserted in the Literacy Kit Teacher's Guide, long before all letters of the alphabet have been covered, the digraphs th, sh, and ch are introduced. Yet those digraphs stand for missing letters in our alphabet and in no way have the sounds of the separate letters, "t," "s," "c" or "h." At the same time, consonant blends like sp and st are introduced which do have the sounds of the separate letters composing them. The result of such an approach, long before the whole alphabet has been taught, would be to confuse children on the function of letters. Furthermore, the material does not teach sounding and blending phonics. In many other ways, the sequence in the "Sound Out Films" is unsatisfactory. "Sound Out Films" are an example of seemingly excellent phonic materials whose excellence evaporates upon closer study. Yet the entire Literacy Kit is also unsatisfactory. The spelling work-cards in particular are very weak, and could not be read by almost any child who needed much help in spelling. Any child who could read the elaborate text probably would not need help, and even if he did need help, the approach is mixed-up and vague.

In his chapter, "Why and How" in the Teacher's Guide to the Literacy Kit, Moffett agreed with the "experts" conclusion that not every child needs phonics. Yet, in his discussion of whole-word and sentence approaches, used in the so-called "language experience" and parent-reading-to-child "lap" methods, he concluded that such children work out for themselves the specific sound-symbol correspondences in print. That certainly is not "whole word" "meaning" philosophy but "sound" philosophy.

A major flaw in the Literacy Kit material is Moffett's conclusion that a child can work his way through it independently, only by following "needs." Properly organized, the teaching of beginning reading is a very simple and uncomplicated process and can easily be taught to first-grades in whole-class instruction. It is pointless to bury such simple material under a lot of hay as in the "language experience" method. Yet Moffett's conclusion is that such whole-class teaching is undesirable. He said on page 25, "Any predetermined learning schedule is going to be wrong for most learners." However, when first-graders are taught real synthetic phonics in whole-class instruction, the vast majority can read independently (and use Moffett's activity cards and games independently) by Easter of first grade, and many of them can do so by mid-winter. (That is true anywhere that real phonics in whole-class instruction is taught. For instance, I was told by a teacher in Luxembourg in 1977 that, before they used the modified whole-word method there, children read independently by Easter!)

Yet, by following Moffett's advice, it is certain that most first-graders would not be reading independently by Easter, and many would be incapable of reading at all, which means they could not read his activity cards or use his games at all in first grade. All of his materials went out of print most probably because teachers followed his advice on non-directive "teaching," and because sight-word taught children in the first, second and third grades, unlike phonically taught children, would have been incapable of reading the words on his cards and games.

Moffett's Literacy Kit appears to include some whole-word materials and some materials which use A WEAK PHONIC APPROACH.

The Literature Experience, published in 1991, was reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993, compiled by the Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the first grade samples from The Literature Experience of Houghton, Mifflin, 1/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” and 4/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score had been 5/6, but for “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score had been only 1/6. Furthermore, not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” Obviously, the series is not teaching synthetic phonics to beginning readers. Considering the original publication date and the title of the series, it is probably “whole-language” oriented.

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1866 (In Early American Textbooks)

First Reading Book

Sheldon, E. A.

Charles Scribner, New York; Nicholson & Bro., Richmond, Indiana

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)

Everlasting Victoria Primer, 50c.

Scribner, W. & A.

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Mavor’s Alphabet, Spelling and Reading Book

Mavor’s Illustrated Linen Primer

Mavor’s Illustrated Primer

(Presumably based on Rev. Mavor’s early 19th cent. English materials)

Scribner, W. & A.

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Warne’s Large Type Linen Alphabet, Spelling and Reading

Warne’s Large Type Linen Primer

Warne’s Large Type Primer

(Possibly based on materials by an English company or author named Warne)

Scribner, W. & A.

1876 (In 1876 Am. Cat.; Teacher’s Guide in Library of Congress)

E. A. Sheldon’s Readers. New edition.

Sheldon, E. A.

Scribner, Armstrong, and Co., New York

By March, 1880

Charles Scribner’s Sons (Also Scribner & Co.)

743 and 745 Broadway, New York

(Entries under each of the above company names, at the same address, appear separately in the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue - Authors and Titles which lists additional books published between 1876 and 1880. Scribner & Co. has about half a page of entries, but Charles Scribner’s Sons has over five pages, so the change in company name probably appeared shortly after 1876.)

1898 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

Eugene Field Book - Verses, Stories and Letters for School Reading;

Eugene Field Reader (no date)

Field, Eugene

Scribner

1901 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)

Literary Primer

Burt M(ary). E(lizabeth). and M. Howells

Scribner

1906 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)

Robin Readers: First Reader  
 Varney, M. T.  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Chicago, Boston  
 1909 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Howe Readers (Primer, 1st, 5th)  
 Howe, W. D. and others  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Chicago, Boston  
 1914 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog; U. S. Department of Education - First Reader)  
 The Natural Method Readers (Primer, 1st-6th and Manual)  
 (A. I. Gates dated the manual 1914-1919 in his 1925 article)  
 McManus, Hannah T. and John Henry Haaren  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Chicago, Boston  
 1914 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Robert Louis Stevenson Reader  
 Bryce, Catherine T. (See Newson and Laurel pubs. for her other books)  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Chicago, Boston  
 1916 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Nursery Tales Primer  
 McManus, Hannah T. and John Henry Haaren  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Chicago, Boston  
 1926-1927 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Good Reading (Primer, 1st-4th)  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Chicago, Boston  
 1930  
 Real Life Readers (See Nila Banton Smith's book, pages 213, 434)  
 Hill, Patty S. and Cora M. Martin  
 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, Chicago, Boston  
 1987-1989  
 Scribner Reading Series  
 Cassidy, Jack; Doris Roettger; Karen K. Wixson  
 Scribner Laidlaw, New York (Later handled by Macmillan)

E. A. Sheldon's readers were shown as a "New ed." in the 1876 American Catalogue. The date of the original edition is unknown. The earliest copy shown in Early American Textbooks is dated 1866 and is listed above. The 1876 "New ed." series had six volumes, "Primer, adapted to phonic mode of Teaching, 20c, First reader, adapted To phonic mode of Teaching, 25c, Second reader, 50c," and third through fifth. The material was Code 3 phony phonics, which establishes that what was labeled "phonic" in 1876 was likely not to be so.

In the 1912 United States Catalog, a five-book series without a primer is listed as in print by American Book, "Sheldon, E. A. Modern School Readers," first through fifth. However, it is highly probable that they were only the 1881 Modern School Readers published by Sheldon & Co. in 1881 (which also did not have a primer) and not the E. A. Sheldon series published by Scribner in 1875 (which did have a primer and which did not use the title, "Modern School..."). The real E. A. Sheldon material published by Scribner was probably out of print at that time. As shown elsewhere, the Butler and Sheldon publishers appeared to merge about 1898, and then almost immediately appeared to merge again with American Book Company, as their readers came out under American Book's name after that date. Also, the names of Butler and Sheldon disappeared from the catalogs. Therefore, the origins and details on the respective publications of the Butler and Sheldon companies probably became obscured, along with the fact that the E. A. Sheldon readers had been published by Scribner, and not the Sheldon company. E. A. Sheldon's 1875 Scribner material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.



The 1901 Literary Primer listed in the 1912 United States Catalog by Mary Elizabeth Burt and M. Howells and published by Scribner was almost certainly a meaning text, and probably a Code 1 meaning text, to judge from the following remarks. In his 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, E. B. Huey lists in his bibliography Mary E. Burt's *Poems That Every Child Should Know*, published by Doubleday, Page, & Co., New York and said on page 347 that it contained:

“...an admirable selection of these classics. The children will often like to read their favorite pieces aloud, largely from memory at first, but using more and more cues from the printed page. These readings aloud should always be from what is already quite familiar.”

Huey said further on pages 373-374:

“The child's reading... in the main should be done independently of formal ‘Readers.’... Wider reading is needed, and the reading of literary wholes. Miss Mary E. Burt, in the *Dial* for March 16, 1893, tells of her experiment in teaching reading without ‘Readers,’ using ‘real books’ from the library instead. She decided that the reading-book was ‘of no earthly use,’ that it ‘made children timid toward real books,’ that ‘the child should never be compelled to buy a reading-book. He should buy only what is desirable to keep through life in a library.’ She gives the children the *Odyssey*, Irving's works, Shakespeare, Hawthorne, and later even Plato's *Phaedo*, Dante, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Plutarch, Tennyson, etc. She would have ‘thirty copies or enough to go round’ of each of these and similar books, for a class, and likes the original books rather than even the best of adaptations. The plan was indorsed (sic) by John Burroughs and wife, who followed the experiments; and certainly much is to be said in favor of introducing the children directly to the library.”

No comments seem necessary on Burt's Code 1 “whole language” method, since, unlike Marva Collins with her extraordinarily successful Code 10 phonic method in Collins' Chicago school for Black children, Burt did nothing whatever about teaching children HOW to read before handing them classics to learn. Burt's students “learned” the material, obviously, only by orally memorizing stanzas and paragraphs. Yet that is the way pre-literate societies handed down oral epics to their next generation. Such ballyhooed fakery as Burt's masquerading as “teaching reading” is a tragedy. Burt obviously used A MEANING APPROACH.

In Appendix D, a pamphlet by Laura Zirbes is discussed which was published in 1925. In it, she listed some reading series in use by 1922 in the second grade of the Lincoln School attached to Columbia Teachers College. Included in the list was “Howe 2” which presumably was one of the 1909 Howe Readers. The Howe Readers were still in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published, and so presumably were fairly popular.

John Henry Haaren, co-author of the 1914 Natural Method Readers, was Associate Superintendent of Schools in New York City. The other author, Hannah T. McManus, was a principal in New York City public schools. The Preface of *A First Reader* of the 1914 material reads in part:

“This book, the second of the Natural Method Readers, is designed to proceed along the lines laid down in the primer, and gradually to enable the pupil to gain the ability to read for himself. The Mother Goose rhymes, which were so freely used in the primer, are made the connecting link with the higher work, the simple folk myths and the other stories.... The number of new words in a lesson is small. The phonic drills that have been developed from the words in the primer prepare the pupils to attack with confidence the words of the first reader.”

Florence C. Fox's 1916 comments, quoted under her Putnam book entry, reported that from about 1914 to 1916 a pronounced increased emphasis on phonics was appearing in "meaning" or "content" series. This series was apparently one of them, and can probably be classed as using A MEANING APPROACH WITH HEAVY PHONIC EMPHASIS.

Concerning the 1930 material, Patty S. Hill was active at Columbia Teachers College over many years. The probability is that anything she wrote, particularly in 1930, would use a MEANING EMPHASIS.

The 1987-1989 Scribner Reading Series was a revision of the Walcutt/ McCracken truly phonic series published by Lippincott, which originated in 1963 and had several revisions before being taken over by Scribner. Although the 1987-1989 series has a phonic sequence, it uses in practice a very heavy "meaning" emphasis in first grade. The teacher's guide for the pupils' book commonly recommends that first-graders read the new material silently before reading it orally, which is a classic "meaning" and not "sound" approach. In my opinion, the material provides almost totally inadequate phonic instruction, and some material parallels the two-step phony phonic approach. Furthermore, it contains a heavy load of pure sight words. Its principal author, Jack Cassidy, is a past president and board member of the International Reading Association. Because of its content, I believe that the Scribner Reading Series should be rated a MEANING SERIES WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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#### THE TAINTOR SEQUENCE OF COMPANIES

From 1866:

Background on the New York Taintor company is given in A History of Book Publishing in the United States, Volume I, by John Tebbel, R. R. Bowker, New York, 1972, page 462:

"An oddity in New York State publishing, although one not to be disdained, was the single effort of Joseph Lord Taintor. Born in Colchester, Connecticut, on September 21, 1835, he was too frail for the farm life he was born into, and could not even finish Yale with the class of 1858 because his health failed. The implication is that he had tuberculosis, which probably accounts for his retreat to the Adirondack village of Bloomingdale, where he published a New York State Map and Gazetteer in 1858. [Ed.: See note below on another publisher of such a map.] Reentering Yale in 1860, still not recovered, he managed to graduate with honors. He wanted to study law, but again his health barred him and he retreated once more to the mountains, where he published the noted Washington Map of the United States, in a partnership with his uncle and brother as S. Taintor & Co. This map sold several hundred thousand copies in 1860 and 1861, but the Civil War, with its ominous doubt raised about what the map was going to be by the time the conflict ended, cut off its future sale.

Tebbel reported that Taintor did business in his own name starting in 1863, after he had bought out his partners. In that same year, he tried again to study law but gave it up, but he also married in 1863. In 1866, he and Charles, his younger brother, went into partnership and they resumed the publishing of the Washington Map, under the name of J. L. Taintor & Co. In February, 1867, they got rid of the plates, as well as the copyright, and moved to New York, where they began to publish books. Taintor died on September 1, 1881, at the age of forty-five, a year after he had left the firm, which had been publishing guidebooks and schoolbooks. During that time, the firm had been run with the help of other brothers and relatives.

Concerning Taintor's first map, The School Bulletin, Syracuse, N. Y., in May, 1876, on its first page, referred to "Hon. John H. French, LL. D., late State Superintendent in Vermont and well known

throughout this State [New York] as an Institute instructor, and as author of the N. Y. State Gazetteer and Map..." Immediately below the 1876 reference to French was reproduced French's copy of an advertisement for a Teachers' Institute in 1843, reportedly the second ever held of that type. French presumably would have retained a copy of that advertisement because of his connections with such institutes in the past as an institute instructor. Possibly there was some connection between French, whose popular New York State map and gazetteer was published before 1876, and Taintor, whose popular New York State map and gazetteer was published in 1858, particularly since it is very possible that Taintor may still have been publishing the New York State map and gazetteer as late as 1867 when his brother and he sold their early firm.

Taintor showed ties to New Haven and Yale (as did William Torrey Harris and other notables). Taintor's health presumably barred him from finishing Yale in 1858, but not from founding a printing establishment, researching maps, and publishing a map and gazetteer that very same year.

It was J. L. Taintor's younger brother, Charles Taintor, who made the very interesting comments on various publisher's market shares in 1884, which are quoted elsewhere in this history.

Taintor's reading textbooks were largely re-issues or co-issues of widely used materials published by other companies, such as the Webb, the Franklin, and the Osgood reading series. Therefore, these series appear again elsewhere in this listing under other publishers' names. The New York office of Mason Brothers, below, was Taintor's probable predecessor in 1866, which the Taintor company probably bought out when they moved to New York City, reportedly in 1867. The Mason and Hamlin Company of Boston presumably continued in business. The Taintor company appears to have disappeared from the records about 1890, with the advent of American Book Company, but Taintor was not listed as one of the merging companies and undoubtedly was far smaller than any of those four merging companies. Conceivably, Taintor may have been bought out about that time by some other company, which was very possibly Sheldon.

1866 (Harvard copy)

Analytical First Reader

Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb (See entries elsewhere on Webb)

Mason Brothers, New York; Mason & Hamlin, Boston; Geo. and C. W. Sherwood, Chicago.

1866-1871 (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Analytical Readers (1st-6th, intermed., 1st and 2nd in Leigh print.

(1st Leigh carried a copyright date of 1871, possibly so did 2nd.)

Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb

Publishers: Sherwood, Taintor

1866 (Harvard copy published 1868 or later)

Analytical Second Reader

Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb

Taintor & Co., 678 Broadway; Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago.

1867 (Harvard's copy of 1868 or later)

The Analytical Speller

Edwards, Richard (Illinois State Normal University), and Mortimer A. Warren, Principal of Avery Normal Institute, Charleston, S. C.

Copyrighted by Geo. and C. W. Sherwood, Chicago

Published by Taintor & Co., 678 Broadway, New York and Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago

1867 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 82)

Analytical Series. Fourth Reader

Edwards, Richard.

Taintor & Co., New York; Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago

1871 (Harvard copy marked 1871 and another marked 1870)  
Analytical First Reader, Leigh's Pronouncing Edition  
(Carried a copyright date for the Leigh version of 1871)  
Edwards, Richard and J. Russell Webb  
Chicago: Geo. & C. W. Sherwood; Taintor & Co., New York (on cover).  
Taintor & Co., 678 Broadway, New York; Geo. & C. W. Sherwood, Chicago (on title page. Large print was used in each case for the name given first. Carried Leigh's 1871 copyright, so it was transcribed to Leigh print in 1871, despite library's 1870 notation shown on one copy listed above.)

Reprints of Brewer & Tileston's Franklin Series By Taintor:

1863-1864 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
The New Hillard Series (And 1st Prim. Reader, Hillard's First Series)  
(Primer and Second Reader available in Leigh Type according to 1876 Amer. Catalogue)  
Hillard, George Stillman and Loomis Joseph Campbell  
Brewer and Tileston, Boston (and other publishers including Taintor)  
1871-1873 (In 1876 Amer. Cat. and 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Book)  
The Franklin Series  
(Primer and Second Reader in Leigh Type were listed only in 1876 American Catalogue)  
Hillard, George Stillman and Loomis Joseph Campbell  
Brewer and Tileston, Boston (and other publishers including Taintor)  
1886 (In 1885-90 Amer. Cat.; In 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Book; See also Early American Textbooks)  
New Franklin Series  
Campbell, Loomis Joseph  
Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co., N. Y. and William Ware & Co., Boston  
1892 (1890-5 Am. Cat. as new series; 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Bk.)  
New Franklin Series  
Campbell, Loomis Joseph  
Sheldon & Co., New York and Chicago

The Hunt and Gourley materials listed below may be reprints. Note the 1883 date for a spelling text. As noted elsewhere, the American Catalogue had listed no spellers published in 1883.

1882 (In Early American Textbooks)  
The Modern Grammar-School Reader  
Gourley, H. I. and J. N. Hunt  
Taintor Bros., New York, Boston, Pittsburgh and Omaha  
1883 (Harvard copy)  
The Modern Spelling-Book  
Hunt, J. N. and H. I. Gourley  
Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., New York  
1883 (Harvard copy)  
The Modern Spelling-Book  
Hunt, J. N. and H. I. Gourley  
Sheldon & Company, New York, Boston and Chicago

1883 or Before.

The reading and spelling texts shown below were advertised on the back cover of the Harvard copy of Taintor's edition of The Modern Spelling-Book by J. N. Hunt and H. I. Gourley. Harvard also has another copy apparently published by Sheldon & Company in 1883, as noted above, which probably indicates that Taintor and Sheldon were co-publishers of that text, and probably of the texts below. However, it is possible Sheldon bought out Taintor and continued to use the plates carrying original copyright dates. It is

curious that Taintor did not list on this book cover the Franklin readers which they were still publishing in 1883. Nor did they list the Edwards-Webb materials, although the rights to them may have passed solely to the Sherwood company of Chicago by 1883. Texts Taintor published in some other subjects than reading were listed also on this book cover but are not given below.

Osgood's American Readers  
Osgood's American Spellers  
Osgood's Progressive Readers.  
Osgood's Progressive Speller.  
(By Lucius Osgood - See earlier publisher listed elsewhere)  
Modern (First, Second, Third, Grammar School) Readers  
(By J. N. Hunt and H. I. Gourley)  
Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., 18 & 20 Astor Place, New York

1887 (In 1885-90 American Catalogue)  
Modern Intermediate Reader

Gourley, H. J. (sic) and J. N. Hunt  
Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., New York

1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
The Continental Readers, 1st, 2nd, 3rd  
Campbell, William A. and Elizabeth A. Allen  
Thomas Kelly, New York; Taintor

1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
The Continental Readers, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Campbell, William A. and Elizabeth A. Allen  
Thomas Kelly. New York; Taintor

Few of the materials published by Taintor (whose company name varied over the years) were published by them alone. The Continental Readers were published by "Kelly" and Taintor, according to the 1885-1890 American Catalogue. The "Kelly" was Thomas Kelly, New York, according to page 79 of Early American Textbooks, and is listed elsewhere in this appendix under the date of 1888.

The name, "Merrill," as in Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., occurs in at least five publishing company names, but most of the occurrences are probably unrelated though the possibility that they are related cannot be ruled out. Charles E. Merrill Company of New York were the clear successors to the 1887 company of Maynard, Merrill & Co., New York. Maynard, Merrill & Co. were the successors some time after 1882 but by 1887 of the company, Clark & Maynard, of New York.

No connection appears, however, between Maynard, Merrill & Co. of New York in 1887 and Taintor Bros., Merrill & Co. of New York. Nor is there any apparent connection to D. D. Merrill of St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1878, or to The Bobbs-Merrill Co. of Indianapolis, in business by 1909 or before.

All of the various reading series known to be published, re-published or co-published by Taintor appear to have used the MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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1866 (Harvard copy)  
The Franklin Alphabet and Primer  
Davis, Porter & Co., Philadelphia  
1867 (Harvard copies)  
(Toy book series from page 1 on the first book to page 36 on the last book:)  
1. The Little One's Alphabet (pages 1-6)  
2. The Easy Primer in Little Words (pages 7-12)

3. Missing  
 4. The Easy Lesson Book (pages 20-30)  
 5. My Little Primer (pages 31-36).  
 Davis, Porter & Coates, Philadelphia  
 1878 (In 1876-85 American Catalogue)  
 Normal Readers  
 Raub, Albert Newton (See Christopher Sower Co. re other Raub books.)  
 Porter & Coates  
 By March, 1880  
 Porter & Coates, Corner of Ninth and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia  
 (This name and address appeared on the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue -  
 Authors and Titles)  
 1886 Revision (In 1885-90 Amer. Cat.; Circa 1895 by The Werner Company, Chicago; In 1912 U. S.  
 Cat. by Amer. Book.)  
 New Normal Readers (five-book series)  
 Raub, Albert Newton (See Christopher Sower Co. re other Raub books.)  
 Porter & Coates

As mentioned in the body of this history, in Volume II of A History of Book Publishing in the United States, published by R. R. Bowker of New York in 1975, John Tebbel referred to Porter & Coates as a New York company in 1884. Yet the references shown above confirm that it was a Philadelphia company from before and at least as late as 1880, and probably later.

It is conceivable that Porter and Coates of Philadelphia were the ultimate successors to R. Porter of Wilmington, Delaware, who published the Philadelphia Primer or Child's First Book in 1824, a Code 7 book of which the American Antiquarian Society has a copy. Porter and Coates possibly went out of business sometime before the mid-1890's, at which time The Werner Company appeared as the publishers of the Raub readers. By 1912, American Book were the publishers of the Raub readers.

The Franklin Alphabet and Primer of 1866 was a Code 3 type of toy book. It is obvious on the later 1867 material that Davis, Porter & Coates had separated a 36-page toy book into five parts, beginning each with a cover and title, and with the alphabet in capital and small letters. One of the five-book series is missing, so it apparently was not in the Harvard library unless I overlooked it. The material is Code 3, two-step whole word phonics.

See Christopher Sower Company of Philadelphia for a discussion of Raub's textbooks. For Raub's Normal Readers, which presumably used "normal" words to teach the alphabet, but possibly not letter sounds, THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1866 (Early American Textbooks)  
 The Southern Pictorial Primer or First Reader  
 Holmes, George F.  
 Richardson & Company, New York  
 1866 (Early American Textbooks)  
 The Southern University Series:  
 The Southern Pictorial (2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th) Readers, the last 1869  
 Holmes, George F.  
 Richardson & Company, New York  
 1866 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Elementary Spelling Book  
 Holmes, George F.

University Publishing Company, New York  
 1867 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Pictorial Primer  
 Holmes, George F.  
 University Publishing Company, New York  
 1870-1872 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 Holmes Readers (First to Sixth)  
 Holmes, George F.  
 University Publishing Company, New York  
 1886-1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue; Harvard copy of first reader)  
 Holmes Readers, New Edition (First to Fourth)  
 Holmes, George F. and L. W. Anderson  
 University Publishing Company, New York  
 1896 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue)  
 Golden Rod Books  
 (Graded to Supplement First to Fourth Readers)  
 University Publishing Company, New York  
 Between 1900 to 1905 (1900-05 American Catalogue; 1912- 1928 U. S. Catalogs by American Book  
 Company)  
 Pathways in Nature and Literature, First and Second Readers, and Teacher's Edition  
 Christy, S. R. and E. R. Shaw  
 University Publishing Company, New York  
 Between 1900-1905, Probably 1900 (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)  
 First Reader, New Edition  
 Holmes, George F. and L. W. Anderson  
 University Publishing Company, New York

\*\*\*\*\*The following entries suggest that a different "University Publishing Company" surfaced in 1910, located, at least originally, in Nebraska, because of the following 1910 reference on a text about teaching reading from the 1912 United States Catalogue. The "Univ. Pub." entries following the 1910 entry appear to be related, because of the re-occurrence of "Searson." Newson and Co., New York, who published the famous Aldine readers in 1907, may be the successors to the original University Publishing Company, to which the 1910 and later "Univ. Pub.," possibly University Publishing Company or University Publishers, appears to have no connection. These assumptions could only be confirmed by checking surviving textbooks and records. \*\*\*\*\*

1910 (In 1912 United States Catalogue under Reading)  
 Studies in Reading. 80 cents.  
 Searson, J. W. and Martin, G. E.  
 Univ. Pub., Nebraska  
 1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
 Thought Test Readers: Primer (not listed under "Readers")  
 Prout, F. J. and Others  
 Univ. Pub.  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Studies in Reading (two primers, 1st-8th, Teacher's Manual)  
 Searson, J. W. and Others  
 Univ. Pub.

The Christy books shown above appeared in the American Catalogue for 1900-1905, and in the United States Catalogs for 1912 and 1928. The United States Catalogs showed E. R. Shaw as co-author,

and listed a teacher's edition as well as the first and second readers. Except for Christy's materials published by American Book, most of the above materials were apparently out of print by 1912 as the only other ones listed were G. F. Holmes' First through Fifth Readers published by American Book Company, and Anderson's name was not listed as a co-author. Harvard library has a copy of The Holmes First Reader by G. F. Holmes and L. W. Anderson with the notation that it was adopted by the State in Raleigh (presumably North Carolina), and, as shown below, the Holmes materials must have been popular in the South. The Harvard text was copyrighted in 1886, 1891, and 1900 by University Publishing, which also suggests it is the "New Edition" listed above. It stated, "The lessons are based on the word method, but are equally well adapted to the sentence method." The claim was also made that the book could be used with the phonic method, but it would have to be phony phonics.

The information first given in the list of editions above came from the American Catalogues, which were contemporary sources and therefore highly reliable (though clearly incomplete). According to Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, the Department of Education Library has a copy of The Southern Pictorial Primer, or First Reader by George F. Holmes, published by Richardson & Company in New York in 1866, a year before the University edition, and without "University" in its title. Also shown in Early American Textbooks is the Southern University Series, The Southern Pictorial Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Readers, all 1866 except the last which was 1869, and all published by Richardson & Company, New York. Early American Textbooks also has an entry for University Series - Holmes First Reader, New York and Baltimore, University Publishing Co., 1870, as well as second to sixth readers. The second and third readers have editions of 1870 and 1871, the fourth and fifth an edition of 1870, and Holmes Sixth Reader by University Publishing has an edition of 1872. For the New Edition, Early American Textbooks lists G. F. Holmes' and L. W. Anderson's Holmes Third Reader, New Edition, New York: University Publishing Company, 1887.

It appears that the Holmes "University" series had a standard edition and a Southern edition, and the Southern "University" edition was published by Richardson & Co. and moved into the Southern states by 1866, only a year after the Civil War ended, before the standard edition was put out by University Publishing Company. However, the publication dates listed in Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, are sometimes clearly wrong, and it would be necessary to see actual copies of textbooks in order to confirm that the Southern University series by Holmes preceded the standard University series by Holmes. The Holmes readers are Code 2 materials, A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Lady of the Lake, by Sir Walter Scott, was part of the Standard Literature Series, "For Supplementary Reading and School Libraries," published by Newson Company. The series included 70 titles, from primary level to high school, and apparently paralleled the Riverside series of Houghton, Mifflin, and other literature series produced at the end of the nineteenth century. Houghton, Mifflin's earliest literature series had apparently been in the 1870's, while the company was still Hurd, Houghton. The various Riverside literary materials were, indeed, excellent and praiseworthy additions to school rooms.

The copy of Lady of the Lake published by Newson Company (no date given) had an introduction by Edward Everett Hale, Jr. It had been copyrighted in 1896 by University Publishing Company. University Publishing Company had obviously concerned itself with "literature" at the time they prepared the 1896 edition of Lady of the Lake, and Newson Company published in 1907 the Aldine series, in which they chose the name "Aldine," obviously for its literary allusions, since it was the name of a famous Italian Renaissance press. (It had been used previously by Houghton, Mifflin's apparent predecessor, Hurd, Houghton.) Newson probably either bought the 1896 copyright for the Lady of the Lake edition from University Publishing Company or was an affiliate of or successor to University Publishing Company. University had concerned itself with publishing literature series, and Newson continued the "literature" emphasis in its Aldine readers and its other materials.



Yet the idea of publishing school libraries which was so praiseworthy after 1870 had an unfortunate (and startling!) earlier history, some thirty years previously. In the late 1830's, a school library series came out with gravely objectionable content, published by, of all people, the publishers of Horace Mann's Common School Journal. In 1839, the publishers of The School Library, Juvenile Series of Reading Books, were Marsh, Capen, Lyon and Webb, and by 1843, Fowle and Capen. The uproar over the content arose some years after the "libraries" began to be published, apparently in series. (Fowle's text books have already been discussed in this history.)

Harvard has filed under Educ 2199.01 by a pamphlet, School Library Books and Recommendations, No. 2, dated April 15, 1843. It was an answer to the defense the publishers had already given to the original objections. The defense (apparently written by Fowle) had included the comment that "lynx-eyed" Horace Mann had already removed what was defective. In answer to that defense, the pamphlet quoted pages of objectionable material that still remained, which it indicated were not even all the objectionable material. The pages of long excerpts contained highly irreverent remarks, liberal sprinklings of socially unacceptable words, graphically offensive content, and the implicit endorsement of a "life style" diametrically opposed to that of 1843 Boston. They are startling even today, and would certainly not be published in the Reader's Digest today, or in the New York Post, except as reports on public scandals.

The literary source of part of this material was the eighteenth century journal, the Spectator, and certain articles in that famous journal undoubtedly were excellent. Yet the "reading comprehension" of the publishers of the school libraries must have been remarkably defective to have reproduced the grossly offensive selections that they did, and the offensive material from other sources besides the Spectator. Either that, or they simply printed material wholesale without even reading it! What is even more remarkable is that these defective school libraries had been endorsed, apparently unread, by people like Wm. A. Alcott, Jared Sparks, Geo. B. Emerson and others. However, the April 15, 1843, pamphlet referred to the fact that at least one of the original endorsers of the libraries had removed his endorsement.

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1867

Ginn Brothers, Founded by Edwin Ginn and His Brother Fred

1876

Ginn, Heath & Co., the new name

1877 (Listed in 1876-1885 American Catalogue.)

Classical English Reader

H. N. Hudson, \$1.25.

Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston.

1882 (Listed among other reading books in Primary Teacher issues)

March's ABC Book

March, Francis A. (1825-1911)

Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston

1885 (In 1885-90 Amer. Catalogue; Early Amer. Textbooks, page 74)

Primer and First Reader

Turner, Elizabeth A.

Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston (later by Ginn and Company)

1885 (Harvard copy; In 1885-90 American Catalogue under Primers)

Stickney Classics for Children, A Primer

Stickney, Jennie H. (Mrs. Lansing. See her entries below.)

Ginn and Company, Boston

1886 (Advertised in back of Harvard's copy of Horace S. Tarbell's Lessons in Language, Book I, copyrighted in 1890 and published in 1897, a very poor grammar by Ginn. Formal grammar had been

opposed by the Agassiz/Quincy clique from about 1870. See also pages 107-108 of Early American Textbooks, and entries under Lansing and Stickney, below.)

Stickney's Readers (First through Fourth)

Stickney, Jennie H. (Mrs. Lansing)

Ginn and Company, Boston

1888-1889 (1885-1890 American Catalogue)

Stickney, J. H. Readers. '88-'89. 4 v.

First Reader 24c, Second Reader 32c, Third Reader 40c, Fourth Reader 50c

Ginn

(This may be the Stickney series above, or a revision. It may have also been called the "Classic" series, and, if so, the fifth reader, below, by Fulton and Trueblood would be a part. Listed in the 1890-1895 American Catalogue is "Stickney, J. H. New 5th reader. ['92.] 60c. Ginn." It may refer to Fulton and Trueblood's Classic reader as an addition to Stickney's series, which may well have been called Classic, judging from the 1885 entry. If Ginn had another series called "Classic," apart from Stickney's (Mrs. Lansing's), the only record is of the fifth reader of 1892, below.)

1889 (Personal copy)

Word by Word (Note: a speller)

Stickney, Jennie H. (Mrs. Lansing)

Ginn and Company, Boston

1891-1894 (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Cyr Readers, (The Children's Primer, to Fifth)

Cyr, Ellen M. (Mrs. R. P. Smith. Also see Cyr's Interstate books.)

Ginn and Company, Boston

1892 (In Early American Textbooks, P. 83. Also 1893, 1897.)

Classic Series. Fifth Reader. 356 p. (Part of Stickney's series?)

Fulton, R. I. and T. C. Trueblood, Eds.

Ginn and Co., Boston

1896? (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Easy Primer (See entry under Boston School Supply, possibly the same.)

Barnes, W. and M. A. Lane

Ginn and Co., Boston

1897 or Before (Reviewed on p. 325, School Journal, Oct. 2, 1897)

The Child-Life Reading and Educating Chart (50 pages)

Burt, Mary E.

Ginn and Co., Boston

1897 (Harvard copy)

Study and Story Nature Readers [Ed.: Not for teaching reading]

Earth and Sky, Number I, A First Grade Nature Reader and Text-Book

(No. 2 and No. 3 listed in 1900-1905 American Catalogue)

Stickney, Jennie H. (Mrs. Lansing)

1897 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

The Finch Primer (300 words vocabulary, 90 pages)

Finch, Adelaide Victoria

Ginn and Co., The Athenaeum Press, Boston and London

1900 to 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

Child's Word-Garden (also teacher's guide) (1907)

Classics Primer

Readers - 1st - 5th

Alternate Fourth Reader (1900)

(Listed as in use in New York first grades, in Taylor's 1912 book, Appendix D, was "Lansing's Rhymes and Stories." It is possibly one of these books but the title does not appear in the 1912 U. S. Catalog.)

Lansing, J. H. (Mrs. Jennie H. Stickney Lansing. See texts above. Most of these are probably the same Stickney series or revisions published under Stickney's married name of Lansing.)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1902 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
 Step by Step  
 Peabody, S. C.  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1903 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 The Jones Readers by Grades - (1st-8th)  
 Jones, Lewis Henry (1844-1917, President, Michigan State Normal, Formerly Superintendent. of Schools in Indianapolis and Cleveland)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1904 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Blodgett Readers (Primer, Books 1-7)  
 Blodgett, Frances Eggleston (1856- ) and A. B. Blodgett  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1905-1908 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Wade Language Readers (Primer, 1st - 5th)  
 (Also, Wade Graded Readers, Primer, 1st-3rd, unknown date after 1912)  
 Wade, J. H. and E. Sylvester  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1906 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Natural Readers  
 Ball, L. A. - Also wrote Natural Reading (For Teachers), 1906  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1906 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 "Second Reader" (Presumably part of a series)  
 Richmond, C. and H. E. Richmond  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1906-1910 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Hill Readers (Books 1-5)  
 Hill, D. H. and others  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1906 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Sunshine Primer  
 Noyes, M. L. and K. L. Guild  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1908 (Listed by E. B. Huey, page 442, as published by Ginn)  
 The Thought Reader, Book I  
 Summers, Maud  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 (Shown in 1912 U. S. Cat. as published by Beattys, and in 1928 U. S. Cat. by Noble & Noble, Per Huey, p. 324, 342, 343, a "meaning" method.)  
 1908 (Copy at Harvard)  
 The Graded School Speller, Book 1  
 Spaulding, Frank E. and William D. Miller  
 (See Newson on Aldine series by Spaulding and Bryce; Bryce wrote a speller later for Newson)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1909 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers; Harvard copy)  
 The McCloskey Primer  
 McCloskey, Margaret Orvis

Ginn and Co., Boston  
 By 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Graded Art Readers, Book 1 and 2  
 Cyr, Ellen M. (Mrs. R. P. Smith)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 By 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Folklore Stories and Proverbs  
 Wiltse, S. E., Editor  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1912 (Incredibly, Beacon was only listed in Early Amer. Textbooks on p. 69, as 1875! The 1912 or 1921-1922 edition was not listed in the 1928 U. S. Catalog. See the 1921-1922 edition below.)  
 Beacon Readers  
 Fassett, James H.  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1916 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Literary Readers (no date)  
 Advanced Literary Reader (2 vols., 1916)  
 Young, E. and Walter Taylor Field  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1917-1918 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Browne Readers (Books 1st-4th)  
 Browne, R. W.  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1921-1922 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Field Readers (Primer, 1st-6th and manual)  
 Field, Walter Taylor and Nell R. Farmer  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1921-1922 (See N. B. Smith p. 134, 138-41, 430)  
 Beacon Readers (Revised)  
 Fassett, James H. and Charles H. Norton  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Readers and Primers)  
 The Learn to Study Readers (In N. B. Smith's book, pages 170, 431)  
 Horn, Ernest (1882-?, an "expert" on spelling and shorthand at U. of Iowa.) and Grace Shields (1875-? wrote 1915 reading man. for Cedar Rapids, Iowa)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1925 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Happy Children Readers (two books)  
 Pennell, Mary E. and Alice M. Cusack  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1925 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
 Field-Martin Primer and Teacher's Edition  
 Field, Walter Taylor and K. Martin (Also see 1916 and 1921 for Field)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
 Land of Play  
 Ketchum, I. A. and A. L. Rice  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Readers)  
 Beacon Gate to Reading

Sullivan, M. E. and P. M. Cox  
 (The Brownie Primer, 1906, Century, was written by P. Cox. The same?)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 New American Readers (Books 1st-5th)

Baugh, L.  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Readers)  
 Corona Readers "See main entry"

Egan, M. F and Others  
 (Possibly Ginn and Co., Boston)  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Fables and Rhymes for Beginners

Thompson, J. G. and T. E. Thompson (See Morse and Silver, Burdett)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
 Expression Primer

Talbert, L. E. (See Talbert's entry under Doubleday)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1929 (See N. B. Smith p. 167, 213, 218, 228-9, 234-5, 238, 432)  
 The Children's Own Readers (Preprimers, primer, 6 readers)

Pennell, Mary E. and Alice M. Cusack (See 1925 entry)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1929 (In Cumulative Book Index 1928-1932)  
 Our Story Readers (Books 1-3)

Kirk, W. H. and others  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1929?-1930 (Cum. Book Index 1928-1932; N. B. Smith p. 208, 433)  
 New Path to Reading (Primer and two or three more books)

Cordts, Anna D. (Particularly bad two-step phony phonics)  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1948-1953, Revised Before and in 1963 (N. B. Smith p. 277, 284-6, 289-90, 295, 322, 326, 435; see  
 Chall, Learning to Read)  
 The Ginn Basic Readers  
 Russell, David H. and Others  
 Ginn and Co., Boston  
 1964, 1966 (Per Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates, p. 291-292; see Chall, Learning to Read; Used in  
 USOE 1st Gr. Studies, reported in Reading Research Quarterly, Summer, 1967)  
 The Ginn Basic Readers, 100 Edition  
 Russell, David H. and Odille Ousley  
 Ginn and Co., A Xerox Education Company, Lexington, Massachusetts  
 1969 (Also later editions)  
 Reading 360  
 Clymer, Theodore; Virginia L. Brown; Billie Parr; Bernice M. Christenson; Consultants: Roger W. Shuy  
 (Linguistics), E. Paul Torrance (Creativity)  
 Ginn and Company, A Xerox Education Company, Lexington, Mass.  
 1972 (Reviewed by Blumenfeld on p. 312-313)  
 SWRL Beginning Reading Program  
 Southwest Regional Laboratory for Research and Development (Inglewood, California), Program  
 Director: Dr. Howard Sullivan, assisted by Dr. Fred Niedermeyer, Leslie Bronstein, Carol Lebeaune, Dr.  
 Suzanne Baker.

Published for them by Ginn and Company, A Xerox Education Company, Lexington, Mass. (See my comments below.)

1991 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

World of Reading

Pearson, P. David, Dale D. Johnson, Theodore Clymer, Roselmina Indrisano, Richard L. Venezky, James F. Baumann, Elfrieda Hiebert, Marian Toth, Carl Grant, Jeanne Paratore

Silver Burdett & Ginn

(As of November 30, 1994, Silver Burdett & Ginn, apparently now one company, are reported to be a subsidiary of Simon and Schuster, which had been a subsidiary of Paramount but is now a subsidiary of Viacom)

Edwin Ginn and his brother, Fred, founded the company of Ginn Brothers in 1867. In 1876, the company became Ginn and Heath, and in 1885, Ginn and Company. "Heath" apparently left and founded his own company, because the company, D. C. Heath, dated at least from 1887.

The 1867 co-founder of the company, Edwin Ginn, had apparent activist inclinations by 1910. Dr. Dennis L. Cuddy showed the following on pages 5 and 6 of his 1993 annotated chronology, "President Clinton Will Continue the New World Order," published by The Southwest Radio Church of the Air, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma:

"1910. The World Peace Foundation (formerly the International School of Peace) is founded by educational publisher Edwin Ginn. One of the first books published by the foundation is The First Book of World Law (1911) with chapters on 'The World Judiciary,' 'The World Executive,' and even one on 'The Universal Postal Union.'"

The titles suggest Edwin Ginn might logically have found it impossible to swear under oath to uphold and defend the United States Constitution, if he had ever been elected to a United States office, which positions require that oath.

The general history of Ginn and Company is given in a 1935 brochure now in the Harvard library, entitled, Textbooks Then and Now. It was based on material prepared for the 1933 Chicago World's Fair and the illustrations are presumably from the Ginn exhibit there. The brochure stated that Edwin Ginn and his brother, Fred, founded the company of Ginn Brothers in 1867. In 1876, the company became Ginn and Heath, and in 1885, Ginn and Company. (Not stated is the fact that the "Heath" in that company name very probably founded his own company, since D. C. Heath was publishing material at least by 1887.) The brochure said:

"Thumbing through the early catalogs of Ginn and Company, one comes upon many outstanding publications in the history of textbook making...."

Listed were many Ginn textbooks on Latin, geometry, history, etc., apparently largely upper grade materials, but NOTHING on Ginn readers, of which there have been so very many. As the previous listing of Ginn texts demonstrates, from 1885 to 1930, Ginn had published at least 18 different reading series, plus individual primers.

A photograph of books that had apparently been laid out in exhibit at the 1933 World's Fair was entitled, "Three of the famous McGuffey Eclectic Readers, in front, and some modern readers." In the back were Ginn's most recent readers: the 1929 "meaning"-approach Pennell and Cusack Primer, Book Two and Book Three, and the three Cordts' phony-phonics 1930 texts. The choice of books for that picture carried two implications. (1) Those were the only sets of its reading materials that Ginn was promoting in 1933. (2) Ginn chose to ignore ALL its vast production of old readers from 1885 onwards,

listed in all of its catalogs, which were almost certainly still in existence, and chose instead to compare its modern series to another publisher's old series: American Book's McGuffey series.

That was a very strange thing to do, particularly since George A. Plimpton, "a member of the firm" in 1933, and its president in 1935 (and probably earlier), had an "extensive collection" of "old textbooks" which were used in the Chicago exhibit, and certainly should have known of the fallacy of the McGuffey Myth! As early as 1900, in the bibliography to his 1900 history of reading, R. R. Reeder cited on page 92 "Plimpton, George A., New York City. Collection of New England Primers, and Early School Readers." On page 36, in a footnote, Reeder referred to "Mr. George A. Plimpton's Collection, New York City." That Plimpton, who was very likely the father of the president of the Ginn company, published short materials on surviving texts which he thought might possibly have been used in childhood by Chaucer and Shakespeare, one of which Plimpton titled Education of Chaucer, and the other Education of Shakespeare. In my opinion, his interpretations of those surviving materials served to obscure, not to illuminate, actual practices. The 1933 exhibit of the Ginn Company certainly also obscured the history of beginning reading in America. George Plimpton, presumably the son of the George Plimpton that Reeder mentioned, was with the Ginn company at that time.

The source of the title, "Beacon" for Fassett's famous series may have been the location of the firm between 1902 and 1916, on Beacon Street in Boston. I was told by Mrs. Kathryn Diehl of Lima, Ohio, who is well-known for her extensive work on the reading problem over many years, that after the Beacon series was no longer sold in America about 1930, it still could be obtained in Canada and England until about World War II, and that after it was no longer available in Canada, it could for a time be obtained in England. If the report she received was true, those facts might be explained by the organization plan outlined in the brochure. In 1935, the company was a partnership of eighteen partners. The statement was made on page 15,:

"The affairs of each office are in the hands of one or more of the members of the firm. This form of organization has made it possible for Ginn and Company to keep in touch with educational developments everywhere, and to meet in their books the requirements of many different localities."

A statement was made on page 18 of the 1935 brochure that demonstrates vocabulary control was in place for textbooks in all subjects by 1935. That was startlingly rapid, indeed, since strict vocabulary control had only begun to re-surface for beginning reading books in the early 1920's. Furthermore, vocabulary control had never existed anywhere in history before the 1920's in other subjects than reading instruction except probably for books written for deaf-mutes. Of course, American children after 1930 were being taught to read by the deaf-mute method of strictly controlled vocabulary, comparing of whole-word parts (phony phonics), and context guessing, so they could only read textbooks in other subjects if they also had vocabulary control. The 1935 brochure read:

"A book... must fit the grade for which it is intended. Scientific checking of vocabulary is widely used. Not only do Ginn and Company employ the usual word lists for this purpose but to almost all elementary-school books they apply a special graded list of some 15,000 words to determine the degree of difficulty of the vocabulary."

The harmful effect of this rigid and MOST unnatural vocabulary control, which stunted the mental development of American students after 1930, does not need to be pointed out again.

No information is available on materials published from 1867 to 1876 by Ginn Brothers. Concerning the materials listed first above which were published by Ginn, Heath & Co., the 1877 Classical English

Reader was a possible response to the campaign by President Eliot of Harvard for “real” literature in children’s readers.

March’s book is listed in book lists for primary teachers in two 1882 issues of *Primary Teacher*. Apparently March’s text concerned methods or included methods. March was a philologist involved in spelling reform, who had been a student of Noah Webster, and who had been a professor at Lafayette College where he had been J. M. Cattell’s favorite teacher, according to Sokal’s excellent book on Cattell. March’s ABC Book was not listed in the American Catalogues or the United States Catalog, and no copy has turned up. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

Elizabeth Turner’s book is listed in *Early American Textbooks*, page 74, as published in 1885 by Ginn, Heath & Co. It was later published by Ginn, as it was advertised in the back of Tarbell’s *Lessons in Language, Book I*, copyrighted in 1890 and published in 1897 by Ginn & Co., Boston. Tarbell’s grammar book was very poor. Tarbell’s 1897 grammar also advertised Turner’s *Stories for Young Children*, and *Short Stories (Supplementary for Primary)*, all published by Ginn. The 1912 United States Catalog showed the last two were still in print, the latter for third grade and the former for second and third. Turner’s *Primer* and *First Reader* were also still in print, all published by Ginn. *Short Stories* is listed on page 23 of *Early American Textbooks*. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

The “Classic Series” is probably the extension of Stickney’s 1885 *Classics for Children, a Primer*. On page 83, *Early American Textbooks* lists 1892, 1893 and 1897 copies of the Classic Series Fifth Reader by R. I. Fulton and T. C. Trueblood. Presumably there were first through fourth readers in that “Classic Series” before 1892 when a fifth reader is known to have appeared. If the “Classics” title used on that 1895 Fifth Reader was also used on Stickney’s first through fourth readers which are recorded as having been published between 1888 and 1890, then Stickney’s was the first “classic” series ever printed in America, instead of the two series in the late 1890’s which Nila Banton Smith claimed were the first. (In any event, no matter who wrote the first through fourth books, that “Classic Series” published by Ginn of Boston was certainly in existence by 1892, about six or seven years before the two non-Boston “classic” series that Smith cited as the first of that kind.)

Stickney had firm ties to the Boston schools and the 1870’s change-agent period there, as discussed elsewhere. Nila Banton Smith seemed to have gone to great lengths to bury the Boston schools 1870’s story, and the Stickney materials may have been closely associated with it. Also noteworthy concerning the burying of the Boston schools 1870’s story, as discussed elsewhere, were Smith’s garbling of the Franklin reading series history and her omission of the Leigh-print history in the Boston schools.

As discussed in this history, the “classics” emphasis seems to have originated in Boston/Cambridge in the 1870’s, and Jennie H. Stickney was obviously right in the middle of things, promoting “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading. Yet Stickney’s name had appeared as the principal signer, and presumably author, of a joint letter written about 1868 endorsing Leigh print for beginners. The letter was on the back cover of Leigh’s Pronouncing Edition of Hillard’s *Primer*, copyrighted in 1866, but in an edition of 1872. From the following, it appears probable that the letter being quoted on the back cover had been written about 1867. In Boston Superintendent John D. Philbrick’s report of March, 1870, he had said the following (on pages 145 and following of the Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Boston, 1870, published in 1871):

“Several years ago, an order was passed by the Board, authorizing the district committees to introduce into the schools of their respective districts, Leigh’s phonic system of teaching the first steps of reading, making use of the phonic charts and Hillard’s first and second readers, printed in the pronouncing type..... The experiment has been, I believe, generally successful. In some cases, the results attained have been very remarkable.”



The permission to use Leigh type, if so desired, had been given to Boston primary schools about 1866, three years and a half before Philbrick's comment. Therefore, the following letter quoted on the back cover of Hillard's Primer, on which letter Stickney was the principal signer, may be dated to about 1867:

“THE TRIAL IN BOSTON

“The teachers, after a year's trial by order of the school board, report: - ‘As compared with our corresponding classes in former years in common print, the classes we have taught the past year in DR. LEIGH's print, learned the letters and sounds with as great facility as the others did the alphabet; read twice as many pages, pronounced much more correctly and distinctly; analyzed words, or spelled by sound, admirably; could study their lessons, finding out new and hard words themselves, without the aid of any one to tell them; made the transition to spelling by letter, and reading in common print, without difficulty; read fluently, calling words at sight, instead of spelling out so many words; read naturally and with expression; we could secure more interest and wide-awake attention from the whole school. (signed) Jenny H. Stickney, Principal of the Training School; A. J. Baker, Ass't Teacher of same, J. P. Titcomb, Rutland St., M. Mitchell, East St.; E. J. Cosgrave, Charter St.’ ... MR. MASON, Master of the Eliot School, speaks of its ‘marked success’ in Miss Cosgrave's School: - ‘The little ones have made great proficiency. Their enunciation and pronunciation is very perfect. They read with the greatest facility, and in all the elementary work seem to be much in advance of pupils who have commenced in the old way.’“

In the 1871 volume of the Annual Report of the Boston schools, printed in 1872, the Report of the School Committee, from page 7 and following, read:

“Now the method of leading pupils into a knowledge of the formation of words should be made easy, attractive and short. It is no longer a matter of doubt that a method exists that relieves teachers from perplexities and pupils from tears. A teacher who has had the advantage of observing this method at the Training School, and has learned the art of oral instruction and of using the blackboard for illustrations, who has the vital qualities that engage the attention of children, and the sweet, firm temper that retains hold upon them, will be able, with Leigh's phonic exercises, to conduct a whole class over the irregular field without a stumble - ‘forty reading as one.’....

“We beg leave to say that six years of careful experiment in several schools in this city have shown the best results from this system.... the fact leaves no room for dispute. Within six months ordinary pupils under this system get nearly through the second reader, - a point which pupils by the old method are always eighteen months, and often two years in reaching. This is a constant, unvarying result... The way is not only shortened, but the lessons are made attractive... Words are never parroted either in reading or spelling; no word is used that is not understood... There are many other points in the mode of teaching pursued at the Training School to which attention should be called....”

Stickney's letter about 1867 on the back of Leigh's Pronouncing Edition of Hillard's Primer, along with the 1870 and 1871 comments from the Boston Annual School Reports, make it absolutely certain that Stickney had used Leigh print for several years at the Boston Training School of which she was the principal in 1867, and probably in 1871. Stickney knew for a fact, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that children taught by “sound” learned to read quickly and accurately, while children taught by “meaning” stumbled and fell behind.

Therefore, Jennie H. Stickney had been intimately acquainted for years with the marvelous results of teaching beginning reading by “sound” (as the Leigh print did) in her position as Principal of the Boston Training School. Yet, in 1885, she joined William Bentley Fowle, in his action some forty years before, in doing a complete about-face on the teaching of beginning reading, since by 1885 Stickney endorsed “meaning” to teach beginning reading. That put her on the side of the powerful change-agents who had fired her former superintendent, Philbrick, in 1878, and it undoubtedly also made her own career far more secure. (Sarah Fuller, head of the Boston city school for the deaf which had been founded by Philbrick, obviously made a similar switch, as referred to elsewhere in this history. Fuller’s job had remained secure after the founder of the school, Philbrick, had been fired. Only Fuller’s name as principal, not Philbrick’s name as founder of that first day-school for the deaf, is ever mentioned in connection with it.) As shown in Appendix B, Fowle had contradicted his 1824 statements by his 1842 statements, to agree with the first wave of change-agents who had surfaced in earnest about 1826. Stickney also switched her views stated before 1872 to different ones sometime before 1885. The change-agents had surfaced again in earnest before 1875. In 1875, the Adams brothers and others installed Colonel Parker at Quincy. In 1878, unknown persons with influence on the Boston School Committee dumped Superintendent Philbrick and his Leigh phonics.

Stickney had realistically faced the way the wind was blowing in Boston sometime before 1885. That was the year she personally copyrighted under her own name the appalling 1885 *Classics for Children, A Primer*, which was published by Ginn & Co. Harvard’s 1885 copy shows the following after its title: “Embracing the sentence and phonic methods for teaching sight reading.” It is an absolutely terrible book, with phony phonics and long lists of words by association. (Two-step phony phonics is the comparing of parts of whole sight words to each other, and it is actually a deaf-mute method used to distinguish differences visually between soundless sight-words). Nevertheless, Stickney’s book included class oral drill for “elocution.”

On page ii, Stickney cited her rationale. Except for its endorsement of “classics,” which were the special enthusiasm of President Eliot of Harvard, Stickney’s methods sounded like E. L. Thorndike (or, I suspect, like the ideas of Thorndike’s teacher, William James, because I am convinced that is where Thorndike got his own ideas about teaching reading):

“Among the considerations which have led a practical teacher to the development of a somewhat novel plan are these: -

“1. After reducing a number of books to their vocabularies, it has been found that the ready recognition of about five hundred words will put a child upon his feet, as it were, in pleasant natural reading, appropriate to his age, with only such aid in new words as may be made needful by new subject-matter....

2. A second consideration is the fact that, in spite of all effort to prevent it, children learn by rote the pages of their primers long before they can distinguish all the words contained in them.... it is proved in hundreds of homes that without effort children learn to read by the use of the simple books previously learned by heart.... we have made such selections... as embody the greatest number of simple words, with the fewest of those less commonly used.... [Ed.: She obviously endorsed the rote memorization of sight words with the help of context.]

3. A third consideration is drawn from the law of analogy... word correspondence [Ed.: Here she endorsed two-step phony phonics, which is what she meant by “analogy”]...

4. One other item.. is, that children who are suffered to run wild with the time honored nursery classics until six or seven years old, will themselves.. make impromptu stories and rhymes.... [Ed.: Her purpose: language growth, which, at least, was a good point.]

“Hoping that fellow-teachers will find pleasure in its use, we commend our work to their friendly judgment.”

This fellow-primary-teacher’s judgment is not only unfriendly but appalled. From the content of Stickney’s book written by 1885, it sounds very much as if she had filled somebody’s work-order to prepare “classic” material for children to teach beginning reading by “meaning” instead of “sound,” by the memorization of sight-words in meaningful contexts. After all, young Henry Cabot Lodge appeared to have been filling a work order when he wrote his 1879 collection of old tales prepared specifically for the Boston schools. However, it would have taken far less time to prepare Lodge’s short collection of fairy tales which were copied mainly from Harvard’s chapbook collection and which could have been put together in a hurry than it would have taken Stickney to prepare her phony phonics reader.

This “classic series” material appeared in the reverse order of earlier series. On almost all earlier series, the fourth and fifth readers were published first, and the primary readers last, almost as an afterthought. This series started with the classic “primer” in 1885, and then worked up to produce Book 5 (if that is, indeed, part of a Stickney’s “Classic” series), only some seven years later, at least by 1892. The real emphasis of this “classics” material was obviously not on “classics” but on “meaning” for beginning readers, instead of “sound.”

Yet by 1889 Stickney admitted the damage the “meaning” method had done, in her book, *Word by Word, An Illustrated Primary Spelling Book*. It was written for the second year of primary school and taught real phonics along with a lot of sight-reading. Real phonics had come back to American schools by 1889 through such spellers at second grade and above. Nevertheless, the title page of *Word by Word* referred to Stickney as “Author of Stickney’s Readers, Etc..” so she was still endorsing “meaning” for beginning readers. Stickney said in the preface to her 1889 speller:

“The action of the mind in learning to read and spell has been of late years a favorite study of educators. Theories have been advanced and experiments made which, though disastrous in certain lines, have been on the whole of great value.

“Reading has undoubtedly gained both fluency and expression; loss falling, if anywhere, on the strength of impression - a fault not wholly chargeable to the school. But in many quarters a generation of bad spellers are testifying to failure somewhere, and the most zealous advocates of incidental spelling recognize the need of specializing the work at that stage in a child’s life when forms and images are most readily fixed.

“The perception of words required for reading is only such as secures against the mistaking of one word for another. Oral and written spelling call for much greater accuracy of impression. One may know a house from a barn or a shop, yet be unable to picture the details of construction in either. As reading does not require, it has no call to provide, the mental habit and training implied in word-reproduction; yet this latter need is as great as the former, and the teaching of spelling has from henceforth as sure a tenure as that of reading and arithmetic.

“Since the agitation of the subject came through educators from whom have been derived some of the best fruits of educational progress, it will be useful to look closely into the grounds upon which the work of the spelling-book was first banished and is now being restored to the schools....”

Stickney clearly recognized a sharp deterioration in spelling ability by 1889, and clearly recognized that it was the direct result of the “expert” influence with which she, herself, had cooperated.

It appears evident from the records that J. H. Stickney, Jennie H. Stickney and Mrs. J. H. Lansing are the same person. Stickney apparently used her married name of Lansing on her work in later years. Many of Stickney’s materials were in print in 1912 under the name, Lansing, according to the United States Catalog. For beginning reading, she used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Cyr’s readers published by Ginn have been discussed at length in this history. They were obviously outgrowths of her work with the Interstate group with ties to Lothrop, listed elsewhere. According to Early American Textbooks (page 81) “Literary selections in all Cyr’s readers were prominent.” Cyr’s “Preface” to her Interstate Primer was dated July, 1886, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her emphasis on literature and sight words, together with her origin at Cambridge certainly suggest that, like Stickney, she had ties to movers-and-shakers such as William James at Harvard in Cambridge. The Cyr Readers of 1891-1894 published by Ginn were apparently best-sellers all over America, and rate a Code 1 at the beginning level. A MEANING APPROACH.

The Easy Primer was not in print in 1912, but M. A. Lane’s Oriole Stories for Beginners of 1900 was in print by Ginn. However, Ginn’s Easy Primer by Barnes and Lane was in print in 1928, so it had been resurrected with the late 1920’s “push” to reduce vocabulary in primers. The 1896? date given for it above is only a guess, since Lane had material in print in 1900, and since Boston School Supply published a primer with the same title in 1896 which is possibly the same. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

See the comments on Mary Elizabeth Burt’s background, in connection with her Literary Primer written with M. Howells and published by Scribner in 1901. As those comments given in the Scribner section demonstrate, she was obviously well known after about 1893. Mary Elizabeth Burt’s The Child-Life Reading and Educating Chart of 50 pages published by Ginn was reviewed on page 325 of the School Journal on October 2, 1897. The review stated in part:

“By means of easy conversations with the teacher reinforced by blackboard work, the child is unconsciously put in possession of words. He recognizes print before he knows that print is what he is trying to master, and the use of script is acquired almost unconsciously, his mind being employed with the thoughts to be expressed, rather than in the mode of expression. The lessons are arranged phonetically to a great extent, and are so graded that the vocabulary averages about a word a day for the school year. Much attention is paid to word building and reviews in which old words are repeated in new sentences. In order to familiarize the child with the best literature, a number of classic poems and stories are supplied.... The chart contains about one hundred and fifty illustrations - thirty of which are copies of great works of art. While preparing this work, Miss Burt made three visits to Europe, visiting art galleries and the schools. She has spent five years’ work on this chart, assisted by her publishers, who have spared nothing which could forward her work.... The chart contains fifty pages....”

Burt’s material probably rated a Code 3. It had a “literature” emphasis, and used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Finch Primer, a copy of which is in the Harvard library, was in print in 1912, according to the United States Catalog, but not in 1928. It is listed in Early American Textbooks, page 69. On page 124 of Nila Banton Smith’s “history,” she said The Finch Primer was listed on Utah’s 1897 course for the second half of first grade, as well as the Werner primer. For the first half, the Utah course showed

Stepping Stones to Literature, No. 1, by Arnold and Gilbert, listed here under Silver Burdett. The Finch Primer did not teach the alphabet in the beginning but began on page 1 with a picture of a maple leaf and two sentences in script, "This is a leaf. This is a maple leaf." It preceded the sentences with these words in script: leaf, This, maple, a, is. The Finch Primer used a MEANING APPROACH.

The Jones First Reader of 1903 is a sight-word book, with sentences alternately in print and script, with a lovely use of color, and with a sight-word list at the end. Giving sentences alternately in script and in print was a lingering influence from Quincy, the original source of the clouds of chalk dust from script sentences written on the blackboard. At the very most, Jones' text could not rate higher than Code 3 phony phonics. Its preface said it had an ethical aim, and said:

"Nature study has been given a prominent place... for use through each or all of the modern methods of teaching beginners to read. The sentence method, the word method, and the phonic method - if such simple processes of teaching may properly be dignified by the term method - may be used to advantage, separately or in happy combination. The modern teacher knows well how to use good reading matter so as to develop the power to read well and... the love for good literature."

By thus shuffling off all responsibility for results to the shoulders of the poor teachers using his materials, Jones had absolved himself of all blame for his appallingly inept beginning text and for the appalling results it could be anticipated to deliver. The Jones material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Harvard library has a copy of The McClosky Primer of 1909, its Preface signed by McClosky at Newark, New Jersey. It is one of the "literary" primers with literary notes in the back, and appears to be straight, Code 1, "meaning" material. Its 1909 Preface is a survival of the 1890's "expert" approach. It is indistinguishable in its philosophy from that expressed by most 1994 administrators who endorse "whole language" and who unfortunately hold the controlling reins in our abysmal government schools:

"...In mechanical structure the cumulative tale is so admirably adapted to the needs of beginners in reading as to suggest that it might have been invented for the express purpose of saving children from the stultifying effects of a struggle for mere reading symbols. The simple, logical steps of the story save all strain upon the memory. The vocabulary of the shorter tales is extremely limited: the rhyme of 'The Kid' contains only twenty-nine (29) words.... The repetition is abundant.... The reports mentioned agree further in the statement that the exclusive use, in the earliest years, of imagination-nourishing material, presented by a method which, in practice as well as in theory, emphasizes thought and feeling rather than symbols, results in a high degree of educational economy. Not only are the pupils able to deal rapidly and effectively with the formal difficulties of reading, but they become familiar with a better type of form,- a more literary vocabulary, a natural sentence structure, and a simple literary unity.

"A knowledge of this higher type of reading symbols, combined with keen interest and mental grasp, enables the first-year pupils to pass directly and easily from this series to the best English versions of Grimm and Anderson and late in the first year or early in the second, to such material as The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland, Pinocchio, and Just So Stories. At this time no mechanical difficulties prevent the enjoyment of good poetry and narrative portions of the English Bible.

"But the literary acquisition, the economy of time and effort, and the quickened intelligence resulting from a rational use of this material are, however important, secondary to more fundamental and far-reaching advantages. These are: the child's first conscious study of his

mother tongue is stimulated by a sense of need and inspired by a vision of future joy... impossible to associate with artificial exercises designed merely to give a reading vocabulary....”

Paper never refuses ink. McClosky wrote the above criminal untruths (criminal because of the suffering she caused to little children) in 1909. That was just about a year before Myrtle Sholty scientifically demonstrated at the University of Chicago how very badly three little girls in its practice school were reading half-way through second grade, after those girls had been exposed there to the “meaning” method plus phony phonics. Sholty’s statistics prove that “meaning”-trained second-graders could not possibly have handled the uncontrolled vocabulary of “Alice” or the English Bible, as McClosky falsely claimed her “meaning”-trained readers would have been able to do at the end of first grade or the beginning the second. Sholty’s report is referred to elsewhere in this history. The McClosky material used A MEANING APPROACH.

The Beacon Readers of James Hiram Fassett (1869 -?), first published in 1912, have been discussed at length in this history. The 1921 version written with C. H. Norton was listed by Gates in his 1925 article. However, the Fassett 1912 or 1921 Beacon readers were not listed under “Readers,” “Reading,” or “Primers” in the 1928 U. S. Catalog. Yet Beacon could presumably still have been a best-selling series in 1928 and therefore should not have been out of print. The only listings in the 1928 U. S. Catalog for Beacon, published by Ginn, under “Readers,” “Reading,” or “Primers” was the 1926 material shown above, Beacon Gate to Reading by M. E. Sullivan and P. M. Cox. That 1926 material had been listed under “Readers,” the section for textbooks, and not under “Reading,” the section for teacher’s books, but it gave no grade level for this apparent child’s book and showed only “60c.” Under Fassett’s own name in the general alphabetical listings of the 1928 U. S. Catalog (of which the entries, Primers, Readers, and Reading had been three of the alphabetical listings) appeared an entry for Fassett’s and Norton’s manual and its price, but nothing for his readers, so far as I could see. This note also appeared there under Fassett’s name but implied a different series: “See Egan, M. F. author under Beacon, A Method of Reading - A Primer, First, Fifth Reader and New Beacon Guide to Reading by Sullivan and Cox.” Another entry appeared solely for M. F. Egan under “Readers,” for his Corona readers.

It is possible the Corona readers were the replacement for the Beacon readers (there is a “light” relationship in names: Beacon, Corona), but they may have had no connection to the Beacon readers. All that the entry under Fassett might have indicated was that, as an author of readers, Egan had worked on some kind of guide on the 1921 version. Whether the Sullivan and Cox Beacon Guide to Reading, listed under Fassett’s name, was simply a misprint for the Sullivan and Cox Beacon Gate to Reading shown under “Readers” is unknown. The entries are thoroughly confusing.

Therefore, and incredibly, the famous and successful phonic Beacon series of 1912 and 1922 by Fassett was not actually listed in the 1928 U. S. Catalog and so apparently had been taken off the American market by Ginn some time before 1928, while Ginn continued to publish in 1928 a host of old Ginn sight-word materials. Beacon continued to be published for another ten years or so in England and Canada, presumably because of the organizational set-up of the Ginn company, in which divisions were independent to some degree, but after about 1940 (perhaps about 1945 or so in Canada), the Beacon materials could not be obtained in England or Canada, either. Ginn’s rejection of the highly successful and presumably very profitable Beacon phonic materials in America before 1928, and in England and Canada by about 1940 or so, is therefore a matter of record. The discarding by Ginn of their undoubtedly very profitable Beacon phonic materials strongly suggests that very successful influence had been exerted from somewhere before 1928 to discontinue the famous Beacon phonic series, as part of a drive to remove the teaching of phonic “sound” in beginning reading. By the mid-1930’s, that drive to drop phonic “sound” in beginning reading and to replace it with the deaf-mute, context-guessing, sight-word “meaning” method was astonishingly successful in the United States.

However, although Fasset's Beacon readers are praised as phonic materials, they appear, when examined, to be very inferior phonic materials, but they were at least dominantly phonic. They have been discussed in the body of this history, and use A MEANING APPROACH WITH SIGHT WORDS BUT ALSO WITH VERY HEAVY AND VERY REAL PHONICS MODELED ON NOAH WEBSTER'S CODE 10 SPELLING BOOK.

In 1963, the Wayne, New Jersey, school in which I taught had Cordts' material available for supplementary use. It used "whole word" two-step phony phonics and, in my opinion, was virtually worthless: A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The authors of the series Ginn was apparently promoting in the early thirties were Mary E. Pennell, formerly Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Kansas City, Missouri, and Alice M. Cusack, Director of Kindergarten and Primary Grades, Kansas City, Missouri. Photocopies of portions of Book One of the 1929 Pennell and Cusack material show it to be an apparent sight-word follow-up on sight-word pre-primers and primer. From that and the quotation from the authors on pages 234-235 of Nila Banton Smith's book, the material is shown to use A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Ginn Basic Readers in various editions from 1948 to 1963 by David H. Russell and others are discussed at length by Jean Chall in *Learning to Read, The Great Debate*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1967 (second and third editions 1983 and 1996, Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace). She said on page 200-201, "...the two series most widely used in the late 1950's and early 1960's - Scott, Foresman's 1956 edition of *The New Basic Reading Program* and Ginn's 1961 edition of the *Ginn Basic Readers*... probably accounted for around 80 percent of total reading-series sales during the period." My own experience tends to confirm the dominance of those two series. When I began teaching third grade in 1963, and for about seven or eight years afterwards, the Ginn and Scott, Foresman series were to my knowledge the only two series used in my school building in Wayne, New Jersey. The Ginn Basic Readers, like the Scott, Foresman, used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

It seems likely that one of the most dominant arithmetic series in this general period from 1938 until the 1960's, matching the wide use of Ginn's reading series, was Ginn's material on which Guy T. Buswell of the University of Chicago was the principal author. Concerning Buswell's background, see the comments on the Ayres spelling scale in the body of this history.

The Ginn 100 series of 1964 was used in the U.S.O.E. first-grade studies in 1967, reported in the *Reading Research Quarterly* for the summer of 1967.

The Ginn 1969 Reading 360 series has been widely used. I used a later edition when teaching second and third grade reading in a private Catholic school from January to June in 1986 and considered it highly unsatisfactory. At the second, third and fourth grade levels, a vast amount of time was wasted on "reading workbooks," which children are expected to do largely alone, "silently." Except for practice in using phony phonics, children derive next to nothing from such basal reader workbooks except a pronounced dislike for reading. The Ginn basal reader series in use in 1981 was listed as one of "The Dismal Dozen," by Rudolf Fleisch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. The material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The 1972 SWRL "phonic" program which was funded by United States Government agencies is the classic two-step phony phonics approach that has been used ever since it first surfaced in eighteenth-century France. SWRL was published by Ginn but obviously was not its own material. It is another example of the government mountain's laboring at great taxpayer expense to bring forth a very small mouse. Yet a first grade teacher, without "Dr." before her name, Sue Dickson, wrote an extraordinarily successful entire first-grade, truly-phonic program, with practice readers, and non-boring

“workbooks” which teach real phonics, to be done WITH the teacher, and NOT silently and alone. Mrs. Dickson’s program is entitled Sing, Spell, Read and Write, and was first published at just about the same time as the SWRL program. Mrs. Dickson wrote the program without assistance of any sort, except that she asked some fellow teachers to write a small number of the 17 very short, attractive, practice readers, and asked a talented woman artist to illustrate all of them. Mrs. Dickson also hired an orchestra to play supporting background music for her delightful recorded song drills and games, which used words and music she herself composed. (Music was her college “minor.”) Her program has been ignored by all the counter-productive government research centers which have been spread across the country at great taxpayer expense. Mrs. Dickson presently markets her program herself. I had both the SWRL materials (bought with tax money by the school system) and her materials (which I bought with my own money) available for supplemental use in my classroom. The quality contrast between the two was pathetically striking. SWRL used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The following book which I have not seen would undoubtedly be helpful concerning the history of the Ginn Company. It was listed in the bibliography to *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, published in 1985 by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C.:

Seventy Years of Textbook Publishing: A History of Ginn & Co., by Thomas B. Lawler, Boston: Ginn & Co, 1938.

The 1991 series, *World of Reading*, on which Pearson, Clymer, Venezky and others were the authors, was reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993*, compiled by the Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the first grade samples from the *World of Reading* of Silver Burdett & Ginn, none had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” but 6/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score had been 6/6, but for “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score had been zero. Not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” Obviously, the 1991 *World of Reading* series is not teaching synthetic phonics to beginning readers. Considering the publication date and the title of the series, it is probably “whole-language” oriented.

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1867 (Harvard copy)  
My First Alphabet  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
1871 (From 1876 American Catalogue, under Primers)  
Child’s First Lesson Book, \$1.25  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
1876 or Before (From 1876 American Catalogue)  
Illustrated Primers. Four Volumes: The Alphabet, Little Words, Spelling Made Easy, Easy Lessons in Reading. 25 c each.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
1876 or Before (From 1876 American Catalogue)  
Little Helps for Our Little Ones; or, Reading a Pleasure, Not a Task. (One syllable). 50 c.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
1876 or Before (From 1876 American Catalogue)  
New Colored Illustrated Primer, Comp. Alphabet and Easy Words, and Easy Spelling and Reading. 50 c.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)  
Routledge’s Illustrated Reading Book. \$1.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York.



1878 (From 1876-1885 American Catalogue)  
Large Picture Primer. 75 c, 50c.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
By March, 1880

George Routledge & Sons  
416 Broome Street, New York (and London)  
(This company name and address appeared on the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue - Authors and Titles in which Routledge listed three pages of books on all topics published in 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1879. That list has not been searched for new titles on reading instruction.)

1883 (From 1876-1885 American Catalogue)  
Little Birdie's Picture Primer. 25 c.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
1883 (From 1876-1885 American Catalogue)  
Little Prattler's Picture Primer. 25 c.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York  
1887 (From 1885-1890 American Catalogue under Readers)  
Home Lessons: Graduated Series of Readings. \$1.  
Pierson, H. W.  
George Routledge & Sons, London and New York.

According to Alec Ellis on page 65 of A History of Children's Reading and Literature, Pergamon Press, London (after 1965), Chapter 8, "The Golden Years of Children's Literature, Part I, 1860-1890:"

"The publishers who dominated the scene for most of the period under discussion were Macmillan and Routledge.... Routledge had commenced business in 1834 but did not achieve success with children's books until he became associated with Edward Lear in 1861. From the 1860's and throughout the 19th century the firm specialized in outstanding picture books by Crane, Caldecott, and Greenaway. During the middle period, however, its success was founded on the piracy of American books...."

Yet the 1867 Harvard copy listed shows British content, not American. It was not meant for teaching reading but only for teaching the alphabet. It shows a picture and word for each large and small letter. The company advertised on this 1868 copy its "3 Penny Toy Books" - My First Alphabet, The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe, Little Bo Peep, Mother Goose, The Five (sic) Little Pigs, The Babes in the Woods, The House that Jack Built, Little Red Riding Hood, and one other.

No information is available on the 1887 H. W. Pierson material which was probably from England, but it is unusual by 1887 since it suggests home instruction, possibly in beginning reading. Nor is information available on the other texts listed above, taken from the American Catalogues. Routledge apparently abandoned its American publishing of primers and readers after about 1890, since no further entries for beginning reading books have been found. Nevertheless, some of those 1867-1887 books may have lingered in use in homes and schools after 1900, and may conceivably still have been for sale. The probability is that all used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1868 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Readers, Six Volumes  
Newell, M. A. & Creery, W. R.  
P. Kelly & Co.

1869 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Grammar School Spelling Book  
Creery, W. R.

P. Kelly & Co.  
1871 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Illustrated Primary Spelling Book, New Edition  
Creery, W. R.  
P. Kelly & Co.  
1883 (In Early American Textbooks)  
The Fifth Reader, 372 p. (Presumably also all six volumes of 1868)  
Newell, M. Alexander (no mention of Creery)  
John B. Piet & Co, Baltimore  
1885 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Grammar School Speller  
Newell, M. A. and Creery, W. R.  
Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati  
1885 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Primary Speller  
Newell, M. A. and Creery, W. R.  
Van Antwerp, Bragg & Co., Cincinnati

The entry for John B. Piet & Co.'s publication of Newell's reader is from page 98 of Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900. All other entries are from the American Catalogues, and the speller entries from the American Catalogues are added for further information. No other references have turned up anywhere concerning readers or spellers by Newell and Creery, which is surprising since they remained in print for close to twenty years, from 1868 until 1885. They were out of print by the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

This particular listing establishes that Van Antwerp, Bragg & Company were acquiring and publishing old titles in 1885. This was the practice of American Book Company, its successor, from its arrival in 1890. Vail said:

“The American Book Company became, on May 15, 1890, the owners, by purchase, of all the copyrights and plates formerly owned by Van Antwerp, Bragg, & Co.”

Vail, when he referred to the several publishers of the Worcester readers in his history, made a non-derogatory reference to book trusts which swallowed up other publishers:

“These several publishers were probably gobbled up by some imaginary Book Trust sixty years ago.”

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1867 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Common School Reading, \$1.25 Barnes; \$1.50 Bancroft.  
Swett, John  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago and New Orleans.  
A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco.  
1872 (In Early American Textbooks)  
The New Japan Pictorial Primer, 43 pages  
Griffis, William Elliot  
A. L. Bancroft and Co., San Francisco  
1873 (In Early American Textbooks)  
The First Reader of the New Japan Series. 60 pages.  
Griffis, William Elliot  
San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co.; Yokohama: Stone & Chipman,

1873 (In Early American Textbooks)  
Pacific Coast Series (Original Edition - First to Fifth Readers)  
The Pacific Coast First Reader. 56 p.  
The Pacific Coast Second Reader, 120 p.  
The Pacific Coast Third Reader, 216 p.  
Patterson, Annie Wilson, ed. of First, Second, Third.  
The Pacific Coast Fifth Reader, 312 p.  
S. L. Simpson, ed. of Fifth. (Fourth unknown.)  
A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco

1874-75 (In 1876 American Catalogue and Early American Textbooks)  
Pacific Coast Series. (Revised Edition)  
The Pacific Coast First Reader. Rev. ed., 60 p. (1874)  
The Pacific Coast Second Reader. Rev. ed., 120 p. (1874)  
The Pacific Coast Third Reader. Rev. ed., 216 p. (1874)  
The Pacific Coast Fourth Reader. Rev. ed., 240 p. (1874)  
The Pacific Coast Fifth Reader. Rev. ed., 312 P. (1874)  
The Instructive Reader. 321 P. (1875)  
A. L. Bancroft Co., San Francisco  
A. S. Barnes & Co., New York, Chicago and New Orleans.

1883 (In Early American Textbooks)  
Bancroft's Series (First to Fifth Reader)  
Allen, Chas. H., John Swett and Josiah Royce  
A. L. Bancroft & Co., San Francisco

1883 (In Early American Textbooks)  
Standard Educational Series (2nd-5th)  
Allen, Chas. H., John Swett and Josiah Royce  
Standard School Book Company, St. Louis, Missouri

1883, 1889 (In Early American Textbooks, page 75, 80)  
Indiana State Series (1st-5th)  
Clark, S. H. and H. S. Fiske, Editors  
Indiana School Book Co., Indianapolis, Indiana

1894 (In Early American Textbooks, page 75)  
Indiana State Series, First Reader, Revision  
Klingensmith, Annie (See entries under Educational and American Book)  
Indiana School Book Co., Indianapolis, Indiana

1894 (In Early American Textbooks and 1912 United States Catalog)  
Nelson's First Science Reader (Grades 1 and 2)  
Nelson's Second Science Reader (Grades 2 and 3)  
Nelson-Virden, L. Mae  
A. Flanagan, Chicago and New York (Probable Successor to Indiana School Book Co.)

1895 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
First Reader for the Little Ones  
Krackowizer, A. M.  
A. Flanagan Co., Chicago and New York (Probable successor to Indiana School Book Co.)

Between 1900 and 1905 (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)  
Indiana State Series:  
Reading Manual to Accompany First Four Books  
Klingensmith, Annie (See entries under Educational and American Book)  
A. Flanagan Co., Chicago and New York (Probable successor to Indiana School Book Co.)

1903 (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)  
Blackboard Reading Lessons

Klingensmith, Annie (See entries on Educational and American Book)  
 A. Flanagan Co., Chicago and New York (Probable successor to Indiana School Book Co.  
 1905 (In 1928 United State Catalog under Primers)  
 Art and Life Primer  
 Jacobs, N. C.  
 A. Flanagan Co., Chicago and New York (Probable successor to Indiana School Book Co.  
 1905 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Brownie Primer  
 Banta, N. M. and A. B. Benson (See Brownie Primer under Century, 1906)  
 A. Flanagan Co., Chicago and New York (Probable successor to Indiana School Book Co.  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 First Steps in Reading  
 A. Flanagan Co., Chicago and New York (Probable successor to Indiana School Book Co.  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Cotton-Tail Primer,  
 Cotton-Tail First Reader  
 Smith, L. R. (See also Smith's Whiteman publisher)  
 A. Flanagan Co., Chicago and New York (Probable successor to Indiana School Book Co.

The history of the older Bancroft readers and their relationship to the newer Indiana State Series and St. Louis series has already been discussed in this history. Information on the Bancroft materials and on the related materials appears in *Early American Textbooks* on pages 75, 80, 99, 107, and 108. None of these three series (the Bancroft, the Indiana, or the St. Louis) were in print in 1912. *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, showed on page 99 the 1874 revised edition of the Pacific Coast Series, *First to Fifth Readers*, which established that there had been an earlier Bancroft edition before 1874. It also showed an 1875 volume, *The Instructive Reader*. The "New ed. 6 v. '75" is listed in the 1876 *American Catalogue*, including that sixth volume, "Instructive Reader."

The most important Bancroft edition of 1883, however, did not appear at all in the *American Catalogue*. According to *Early American Textbooks*, page 75, the 1883 Bancroft series was simultaneously printed in 1883 as the Standard Educational Series by the Standard School Book Company of St. Louis, and as the Indiana State Series published by the Indiana School Book Company of Indianapolis. *Early American Textbooks*, page 80, shows that the Indiana series had been edited in 1883 by S. H. Clark and H. S. Fiske. It was reprinted again, apparently unrevised, in 1889, according to page 75 of *Early American Textbooks*.

The *Indiana School Journal* in 1890 has an advertisement for the Indiana School Book Co. of Indianapolis:

"To the School Officers of Indiana:

"The Several Complete Series of Readers, Geographies, and Arithmetics published by this company were adopted on July 10, 1889, by the State Board of Education for exclusive use in the common schools of Indiana for the next five years."

Therefore, an apparently unrevised edition of the Indiana State Series printed in 1889, a version of the Bancroft series of 1883 that had been "edited" by Clark and Fiske, apparently also in 1883, was being mandated for use in all Indiana schools in 1889. The 1883 Bancroft reading series had also been promoted, apparently unsuccessfully, in St. Louis in 1883. *Early American Textbooks* on page 75 shows copies of the Standard Educational Series, a version of the 1883 Bancroft series, published by Standard

School Book Co., St. Louis, Missouri, in 1883. However, it apparently was not successful in displacing the use of Leigh phonetic print there.

The Indiana School Journal had articles on teaching beginning reading by Howard Sandison, Professor of Methods in the State Normal School, which made it clear that the “official” reading textbooks, the Indiana Series, were a “meaning” series, and possibly even Code 1. In January, 1890, Sandison outlined on page 12 the approach to be taken before using a first book, which by law apparently had to be the Indiana State Series. Sandison’s comments presumably would have been in agreement with the thinking of other users of the Bancroft material in California and Missouri:

“In primary reading, the first phase is that which results in the mastery of a group of some forty or fifty words as letters, standing for meaning. This work is oral, and occupies perhaps, two or three months in time. In it, the sole purpose is to directly associate a printed word as a whole, with its meaning. In this work, the attention of the children is not called in any way to the letters or sounds. If the children learn anything in regard to these, such knowledge is incidental. The one aim of the work, is to impress the children with the idea that words stand for meaning; and to give them a basis for determining the meaning of new words in connected sentences, through the meaning of these familiar words that are also found in such sentences.

“Words signify, however, more than meaning. They signify sounds. Therefore, printed words must be taught as standing for sound. but this work is not to be taken in connection with the preceding phase, because it unduly and unnecessarily complicates the work in that phase, and also prevents the child from acquiring the idea that the main function of words is to express meaning...”

Sandison then endorsed at that point the use of a vague kind of phonics from whole words, and said:

“These two phases of work having been well done, the child is prepared to enter upon the definite use of a First Reader, and the study of simple thought in connected sentences.

“The nature of work with connected sentences is the question now to be considered. Take for example, Lesson XV, on page 23 of the First Reader of the Indiana Series:

“‘Come, mamma, do come!’ says Dickie Rat. ‘See this little box. May I go in to play? It is a nice box to play in.’

“‘Oh no, Dickie! it is a trap. We will not use it.’“

Sandison made it clear that systematic synthetic phonics was not recommended before starting a child on the Indiana Series first book, and that by lesson 15 in that book, the children would be forced to read the irregularly spelled words just quoted as wholes by “meaning” and “context” instead of by “sound.” His quotations from the apparently unrevised first book of the Indiana State Series of 1889 make it clear it used a “meaning” approach, and, therefore, that the 1883 Bancroft and St. Louis Standard Educational Series also used a “meaning” approach. To what extent the series would have later employed “phony phonics” is unknown, but Sandison’s later comments suggest that any “phonics” taught would have been sparse, indeed, perhaps not rating even Code 3.

Sandison made his ideas on what constituted “phonics” very clear in a later 1890 article, appearing on page 143 of the 1890 volume of the Indiana School Journal. Sandison was describing a lesson given five months into the first-grade year (the end of January in today’s schedule), at which point most phonically trained first-graders can independently read aloud, very slowly but with fair success, almost anything in

print. Sandison's "lesson" lasted ten minutes and concerned reading the simple word, "red," for its meaning and sound. He made the incredible statement that for his first graders, after five months of so-called "reading instruction," "The next step was to awaken the idea that the oral word consists of separate sounds."

Sandison's "phonics" was manifestly whole word, phony phonics. Therefore, the record suggests that the 1883 Bancroft Series, the 1883 Standard Educational Series of St. Louis, Missouri, and the 1883 and 1889 Indiana State series all used A MEANING APPROACH WITH MINIMAL PHONY PHONICS.

The 1895 Krackowizer text published by "Flanagan" was still in print in 1912, according to the United States Catalog. Whether "Flanagan" had taken over the Indiana School Book Company's textbook publishing by that date is unknown, but, as shown above, they had apparently done so at least for the reading series by 1905. Early American Textbooks lists "Second Science Reader" by L. Mae Nelson-Virden, published by A. Flanagan of Chicago and New York in 1894, who was most probably the publisher handling the Indiana texts. Flanagan was still publishing the Nelson-Virden Science Readers when the 1912 United States Catalog was prepared. On the 1895 Krackowizer text, the APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

The American Catalogue, 1900-1905, showed Annie Klingensmith wrote a reading manual to accompany the first four books of the Indiana State Series of readers, published by Flanagan, but by that time at least the first reader of the series had been revised by Annie Klingensmith. According to Early American Textbooks (page 75), Annie Klingensmith revised the first reader of this series in 1894. She also wrote primers for Educational and American Book, listed under their headings. Presumably any Klingensmith material would have used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Flanagan was obviously a secondary publisher of books with the Brownie title, the original publisher being Century. On page 16 of Americana in Children's Books, a Library of Congress 1974 pamphlet, the following appears:

"Cox, Palmer. The Brownies through the Union. New York. Century Co.  
[1895] 144 p. illus. 26 cm. PZ8.3C839 Bth JuvColl Rare Bk

"The prankish Brownies explore famous sites and historic landmarks in the series of rhyming stories (1887-1913) first published in St. Nicholas and the Ladies Home Journal."

Those magazine stories are the apparent source for the Brownies material. See the later entries under Century Co., New York.

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1868 (In Early American Textbooks)

The Little Reading-Book, in Words of One Syllable. 32 p.

T. Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh, and New York.

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)

Nelson's Picture Primer. 25c

Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Primers)

Advanced Reader. \$1.25.

Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Royal Readers (8 vols. # 1 and Sequel, 2 and Sequel, # 3, 4, 5, 6.)

Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)

Senior Reader, \$1.25

Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York  
 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Spellers)  
 Beeton's Pictorial Speller  
 Pub. by American News and Nelson (Possibly the British publisher.)  
 1883 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 World at Home Readers, 5 volumes.  
 Thomas Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York  
 1884 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
 Prince Readers for Boys, No. 1  
 Queen Readers for Girls, No. 1  
 Royal Star Readers for Mixed Schools, No. 1  
 T. Nelson and Sons, London, Edinburgh and New York

According to Alec Ellis on page 65 of *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, Pergamon Press, London (after 1965), Chapter 8, "The Golden Years of Children's Literature, Part I, 1860-1890:

"The commercial success of Nelson was achieved through the publication of books for children, among whose authors were R. M. Ballantyne and Charlotte Tucker (A.L.O.E.). In the 1870's the house of Thomas Nelson was the largest publisher of juvenile literature."

This company appeared in the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue - Authors and Titles, listing about two pages of books published between 1876 and 1880. Nelson had also been selling its schoolbooks, including readers, in America in 1876, as shown by the 1876 American Catalogue.

The Nelson books listed above were obvious attempts by the company that, at that time, was probably the leading British textbook publisher, to capture part of the American schoolbook market. That attempt appears to have been resoundingly unsuccessful. In the 1890's, however, the British publisher, Macmillan, did appear to have some success in the American market, but Macmillan also became firmly established as an American publisher, which Nelson did not. Nelson's Royal Readers published in two different editions in the 1870's are described in the British section of this history and used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS. The Royal Readers, apparently vastly used in Great Britain, had other editions in later years.

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Before 1870 (See 1842 entry for earlier edition. In 1876 Am. Cat.)  
 The Christian Brothers Readers (First through Third)  
 D. & J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal, and also O'Shea and Strong)  
 Before 1871 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 The Metropolitan Series (Old series - First and Second Readers  
 D. & J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal  
 1871 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
 The Metropolitan Series (New series - New First through New Sixth)  
 D. & J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal  
 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)  
 Young Ladies Reader. \$1.25.  
 Sadlier, Mrs. M. A.  
 D. & J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal  
 1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)  
 Introduction to the English Reader, 31c.  
 Murray, Lindley  
 D. & J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal  
 1885 (Harvard Copy)

The Metropolitan Spelling Book  
Designed to Accompany the Metropolitan Readers  
By a Member of the Order of the Holy Cross  
D. & J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal

It is apparent that the Metropolitan series first appeared some time before 1871 because by 1871 D. & J. Sadlier & Company were publishing a revised series. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, showed on page 95 "The Metropolitan First Reader. Rev. ed. New York and Montreal: D. & J. Sadlier & Co., 1871. 120 p." It also showed an 1873 edition of 120 pages and an 1874 edition of 88 pages. It showed The Metropolitan Second Reader in 1871 of 216 pages and a shortened edition of 137 pages in 1873. It listed The Metropolitan Third Reader of 336 pages in 1871 and a shortened edition of 240 pages in 1873, as well as "A Third Reader" of 240 pages in 1871. It also showed The Metropolitan Fourth Reader of 450 pages of 1871. It is possible that the shortened versions were actually the original, unrevised series.

D. & J. Sadlier published the Metropolitan speller in 1885, of which the Harvard library has a copy. The Metropolitan speller dated back to at least the 1870's since the 1876 American Catalogue showed the Metropolitan speller in two volumes published by "Sadlier" (no initials), one a speller and the other a definer and spelling book. The Harvard 1885 title was "A New Graded Series. The Metropolitan Spelling Book. Carefully arranged. Designed to accompany the Metropolitan Readers. By a member of the Order of the Holy Cross. New York, D. and J. Sadlier and Company." The Metropolitan speller began with a fairly complete syllabarium, followed by two letter words and then three letter words. With its emphasis on the syllabarium, it was "sound" oriented.

The Metropolitan Readers were apparently out of print by 1912 as they were not listed in the 1912 United States Catalog.

On the back cover of the 1885 copy appeared other information. It showed that D. and J. Sadlier had an office on Barclay Street in New York and at 275 Notre Dame Street, Montreal, and that The Metropolitan Series included The Metropolitan First Reader, Illustrated, and second through fifth readers, (not sixth as listed in the 1876 American Catalogue as published by "Sadlier") as well as the spelling book and a speller and definer. The book cover also advertised the Golden Primer or Child's First book. St. Peter's Catholic Church on Barclay Street in New York is very old, and the region was reportedly a location for many years for Catholic bookstores, and, apparently, for publishers of Catholic books.

It then referred to, "The cheapest school books ever issued for use in Catholic schools," by which it apparently meant the Christian Brothers first through fourth readers listed immediately afterwards. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 listed on page 78 "Brothers of the Christian Schools... The Second Book of Reading Lessons. Philadelphia: Eugene Cummiskey, 1842." This was the apparent forerunner of the Christian Brothers series Sadlier was advertising.

The 1876 American Catalogue listed "Sadlier" (no initials) as a publisher of Christian Brothers Readers (First, Second, Third Readers) but showed they were also published by the O'Shea and Strong companies. Strong also published a Fourth Reader. By 1884, The Christian Brothers New Series - Primer, was published by De La Salle Institute, and the publisher John P. Murphy was shown as holding the copyright. The Harvard libraries have a copy of that 1884 book. The Christian Brothers readers, both old and new series, were apparently out of print by the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published.

D. & J. Sadlier do not appear under "Readers" in any American Catalogue after 1876, nor do they appear in the 1912 United States Catalog. However, because of the similarity in name to William H. Sadlier, whose books were published also from the 1870's, their listing is also included here. What the emphasis of the Metropolitan readers were is unknown, but Harvard's 1885 copy of the Metropolitan



Illustrated Speller, Designed to Accompany the Metropolitan Series of Readers, by a Member of the Order of the Holy Cross, D. and J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal is Code 6 material, A WEAK PHONIC APPROACH.

On the back of that speller, Sadlier advertised the earlier Christian Brothers Readers, “the cheapest school books ever issued for use in Catholic schools.” That series preceded Murphy’s revision, listed elsewhere. The APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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Before 1870 (See 1842 entry for earlier edition. In 1876 Amer. Cat.)  
Christian Brothers Readers  
P. O’Shea, New York, as well as Sadlier and Strong  
1871 (In 1876 American Catalogue and 1912 United States Catalog)  
Illustrated Progressive Series  
P. O’Shea, New York  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue under Readers)  
Young Ladies’ Progressive Reader; for  
Higher Classes in Cath. Schools, \$1.25.  
P. O’Shea, New York  
1882 or before (In Early Amer. Textbks., p. 84, and 1912 U.S. Cat.)  
Graded Catholic Education Series  
P. O’Shea, New York

According to the 1876 American Catalogue, the Christian Brothers first, second and third readers were published by Sadlier, O’Shea and Strong, with Strong publishing a fourth reader. Harvard has a copy of Christian Brothers New Series, Primer, 1884, published by De La Salle Institute, New York, and copyrighted by John P. Murphy. The 1876 American Catalogue also listed Christian Brothers Speller in two volumes published by O’Shea. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 listed on page 80 the Christian Brothers Illustrated Series. The First Reader. New York: P. O’Shea, 1870, 98 pages. It also listed under readers “Part I” of 36 pages and “Part II” of 106 pages, both by O’Shea in New York in 1870, but these are presumably the two parts of the Christian Brothers speller which O’Shea published. The Christian Brothers readers were not listed in the 1912 United States Catalog so were presumably out of print before then. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 lists on page 78 “Brothers of the Christian Schools... The Second Book of Reading Lessons. Philadelphia: Eugene Cumiskey, 1842.” This was the apparent forerunner of the Christian Brothers series.

O’Shea also published the Illustrated Progressive Series. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, showed on page 90 the Illustrated Progressive Series. The Second Progressive Reader. New York: P. O’Shea, 1871, 144 pages, and The Third Progressive Reader, also 1871, 240 pages. Shown on page 83 of Early American Textbooks was their First Progressive Reader, 1871, 106 p., Fourth of 1871. 312 p., and another Fourth of 1872, also 312 p., and a Fifth of 1875, 452 p. Shown in the 1876 American Catalogue was the Progressive Series of Readers in 8 volumes published by O’Shea, beginning with the Primer and the the Primary Spelling and Reading Book, followed by the First through the Sixth Readers.

Besides the Christian Brothers material and the Illustrated Progressive Series, O’Shea also published the Graded Catholic Education Series of 1882 or before and a revised New Graded Catholic Education Series of 1884. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 lists on page 54 a copy of The Graded Catholic Educational Series. Fourth Reader. New York: P. O’Shea, 1882, 247 pages. The American Catalogue for 1885-1890 showed that O’Shea published the New Graded Catholic Education Series: 1st-5th Reader in 1884.

In the 1912 United States Catalog, O'Shea was shown as still publishing the Graded Catholic Educational Series of Readers in six books and the Progressive Readers in eight books. However, neither was listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. On the O'Shea materials, THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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## **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1870 and 1880**

1874 (Also 1887) (Early American Textbooks, page 113)  
Third Reader, 224 pages  
Catholic School Book Co., New York  
1874 (Harvard copy, copyrighted also in 1887, published in 1893)  
The Young Catholic's Series Primer  
Copyrighted by Lawrence Kehoe  
Catholic School Book Company, New York.  
1897-1900 (or to 1905) (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Columbus Series of Readers  
Vlymen, William T.  
Catholic School Book Company  
Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss, New York

Not enough information appears to identify this 1874 (and 1887) text. It is unlikely that it is one published by The Catholic Publication Society Company of New York, entered later under 1876, because 1876 was the date of that company's series.

Harvard has an 1893 edition, copyrighted in 1874 and 1887 by Lawrence Kehoe, of The Young Catholic's Series. Primer. New York. The Catholic School Book Co. It is Code I material, A MEANING APPROACH.

According to the 1895-1900 American Catalogue, first through third books of the 1897 series were in print in 1898 and 1899 by Catholic School Book Company and Schwartz. According to the 1900-1905 American Catalogue, fourth and fifth reading books were published by Schwartz but dates were not given. In the 1912 United States Catalog, the five-reader series was listed as published by Schwartz, and in the 1928 United States Catalog as published by Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss.

Harvard's copy of the Columbus Series, First Reading Book, showed it was copyrighted in 1897 by Catholic School Book Co. and published by Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss of 42 Barclay Street, New York. It was, unfortunately, written by "William T. Vlymen, Ph. D." instead of some old nun who would have known a great deal more about teaching beginning reading to little children than Vlymen did. Sister Monica Folzer has not been the only nun who put together fine beginning reading materials, as I have been pleased to learn over the years. However, Vlymen most probably picked up his confusions while getting his Ph. D. and while keeping a sanitized distance between himself and any little beginning readers. Vlymen said on page 2:

"The first fifty-nine lessons contain but two new words each. The remaining lessons bring in but three new words each.... All the words in the First Book are intended to be learned as sight words. At the same time, if Teachers so prefer, phonics can be introduced at any stage, and the new words can be taught as phonetic words... Never allow a child to begin to read aloud until he has read the sentence silently and has grasped its meaning as a whole...."

The word selection was totally unphonetic and totally unsuitable for teaching phonics, despite Vlymen's "permission" to do so if the teacher wished. Furthermore, there was very, very, little religion in Vlymen's primer written for Catholic schools in 1897, which was a curious omission, indeed. Vlymen's unfortunate material used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1874 (In 1912 United States Catalog by Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss)

Young Catholic's Illustrated School Books  
Spalding, Right Rev. J. L., Bishop of Peoria  
The Catholic Publication Society Company, 9 Barclay Street, New York

The American Catalog for 1876 to 1885 showed "Spalding, J. L. Illustrated school-books: Readers. [1876]. Cath. Publ.," and listed "Young Catholic's illus. primer," and first through sixth readers, plus "Young Ladies Illustrated Reader." Harvard has a copy of the Young Catholic's Illustrated Speller, copyrighted in 1874 by Lawrence Kehoe and published in New York in 1884 by The Catholic Publication Society Company of 9 Barclay Street, New York. Since Kehoe held the copyrights on this Catholic Publication Society Company material and on material published by the Catholic School Book Company, and since Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss published material by both companies, the companies were presumably related. The American Catalog for 1885-1890 shows that the Young Catholic Normal Reader by "Spalding, J. L." was published in 1885 by "Cath. Pub." Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 lists several copies of the series on page 113. The Young Catholic's Illustrated Second Reader was published in New York by The Catholic Publication Society Company in 1890, the Fourth Reader in 1876, and the Fifth Reader in 1887. The 1912 United States Catalog lists "Spalding, J. L., ed. Young Catholic's illustrated readers. 9 bks. 8c-45c. Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss." The series was not listed in the 1928 United States Catalog.

The Young Catholic's Illustrated Speller, copyrighted in 1874 and published in 1884 by The Catholic Publication Society Co., Lawrence Kehoe, Manager, 9 Barclay Street, New York had no syllabary, but taught long and short vowel sounds, and was possibly Code 7. A WEAK PHONIC APPROACH.

Advertised on the back cover of the speller was The Catholic Publication Society Co.'s Series of Illustrated School Books, Edited by Right Rev. J. L. Spalding, D. D., Bishop of Peoria. Readers: The Young Catholic's Illustrated Primer, The Young Catholic's First Reader (and second through sixth, plus a "Normal" and Illustrated Young Ladies' Reader).

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1874 (In 1876 American Catalogue and 1912 United States Catalog)  
The Catholic National Readers (1st-25c, 2nd-40c, 3rd-75c, 4th-\$1)  
Gilmour, Right Reverend Richard, Bishop of Cleveland  
Benziger Brothers - New York, Cincinnati and St. Louis  
1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
First Book of Spelling and Reading Lessons. 18c  
Second Reader; for Catholic Schools. 33c  
Benziger Brothers - New York, Cincinnati and St. Louis  
1876-1898 (In Early American Textbooks)  
Australian Catholic Readers  
Benziger Brothers - New York, Cincinnati and St. Louis  
1887-1889 (Per American Catalogue, 1885-1890)  
The Catholic National Series: New Primer, 1889,  
New First Reader, 1889; New Fourth Reader, 1887  
In 1912 U. S. Cat., Catholic National Series went from Primer to 6th.  
Benziger Brothers - New York, Cincinnati and St. Louis  
1900-1905 (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue; 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
New Century Readers (Same title as Rand and Morse series)  
Benziger Brothers - New York, Cincinnati and St. Louis  
Before 1928 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
American Cardinal Readers for Catholic Parochial Schools  
Benziger Brothers - New York, Cincinnati and St. Louis  
1971 (Reviewed in Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates, p. 309-310)

## The Linguistic Readers

Richardson, Jack E., Jr.; Henry Lee Smith, Jr.; Bernard J. Weiss; Eugene P. Williams  
Benziger, Inc. New York (possibly unrelated to Benziger Brothers)

The prices in the 1876 American Catalogue for Benziger's series by Bishop Gilmour, and for their other two readers shown above, establish that Benziger had two reading series available in 1876. Probably the "Australian" materials shown above came later since they were not listed in the 1876 American Catalogue, and Bishop Gilmour's 1874 series was probably newer than the first and second readers shown in the 1876 American Catalogue.

The Harvard library has a copy of The First Reader of The Catholic National Series, copyrighted in 1874 by Benziger Brothers. I lack sufficient photocopies to make a proper analysis of its approach. It might be sight-words with inadequate phonics, or, in practice, with heavy emphasis on real phonics. In appearance at its beginning, from the few pages I photocopied, it looks like a Code 1 "meaning" text. In its preface addressed "To Teachers," it said:

"In some lessons, the new words introduced are far less numerous than in others, and repetitions are often made.... The very numerous spelling lessons in connection with the exercises on vowel sounds and word-building and the introduction of simple paronymous words are claimed as a peculiar advantage of this book: they will from the start be of great help in overcoming two main difficulties of our language - namely: orthography and the correct pronunciation of vowel sounds. The first eight lessons should be spelt before being read.... The spelling lessons should always be treated as most essential, and the children should never be allowed to read, until they are thoroughly able to spell all the words which precede the reading lesson. Too much attention can hardly be given to the word-building. It affords the teacher an excellent opportunity to use the blackboard. The children seeing how new and longer words are built up from smaller ones (see at, etc, Lesson XXII) naturally grow interested in the process; the importance of every part of a word will be apparent to them, and consequently the different elements will be more readily remembered."

The use of the blackboard to drill on vowels and word building might or might not in practice have resulted in heavy supplementary phonics, but more of the text would have to be seen to determine which was the case.

The 1876 American Catalogue listed the "Catholic National Readers" by R. Gilmour published in four volumes by Benziger, and the 1876-1884 volume of the American Catalogue showed that the Fifth Reader of the "Catholic National Ser." was published in 1877. R. Gilmour's New Primer was published in 1889 by Benziger, according to the 1885-1890 American Catalogue. and a New First Reader in 1889 and a New Fourth Reader in 1887. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, lists copies of the Catholic National Series: a First Reader in 1874, a Second, and Third Reader in 1875, and a Fourth and a Fifth in 1876, as well as a Fifth in 1877. It also shows The New Second Reader published in 1890. However, the dates in this reference are sometimes patently wrong, as with its listing of The New Fourth Reader in 1866 and 1875.

The Catholic National Series appeared in the 1912 United States Catalog. By then, Benziger published it in two script editions, "slant" or "vertical script" and had added a sixth reader. The series was out of print by 1928. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

According to Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, Benziger published between 1876 and 1898 a series called Australian Catholic Readers, also published by "St. Mary's, Sydney." Listed were The First Reader, 1898, the Second, 1898, the Third, 1891, the Fourth, 1876, the Fifth, 1876, and the Sixth, 1877.

None of these appear in the American Catalogs covering those years, and conceivably Benziger only acted as an agent for imports. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

According to the 1900-1905 American Catalogue, Benziger Brothers published the New Century First through Fourth Readers sometime in that period (no actual date being given). In the 1912 United States Catalog, the material was shown as the New Century Catholic Readers, first through fifth, published by Benziger. The material was not listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

However, the 1928 United States Catalog showed that Benziger was publishing a new series by that date, the American Cardinal Readers for Catholic Parochial Schools. Its Primer was listed under the "Primer" section in the 1928 United States Catalog. Under "Readers," appeared, "American Cardinal Readers. See main entry," which implies that the Cardinal Readers were very widely sold. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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Before 1876 (See 1842 entry for earlier edition. In 1876 Am. Cat.)

The Christian Brothers Readers (First through Fourth)

Strong (Also published by O'Shea and Sadlier)

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue Under Primers)

Lessons for Young Learners, two volumes.

Cannon, C. J.

Strong

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue Under Readers)

Universal Reader, Compiled for [Catholic] Schools, 50 cents.

Strong.

1876 or Before (In 1876 American Catalogue Under Spellers)

T. Carpenter's Speller, 25 cents

Strong.

Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 listed on page 78 "Brothers of the Christian Schools... The Second Book of Reading Lessons. Philadelphia: Eugene Cumiskey, 1842." This was the apparent forerunner of the Christian Brothers series.

The 1876 American Catalogue listed "Strong" (no initials) as a publisher of Christian Brothers Readers (First, Second, Third, Fourth Readers) but showed the first three were also published by the O'Shea and Sadlier companies. By 1884, The Christian Brothers New Series - Primer, was published by De La Salle Institute, but the publisher John P. Murphy was shown as holding the copyright. The Harvard libraries have a copy of that 1884 book. The Christian Brothers readers were apparently out of print by the time the 1912 United States Catalog was published. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

Since The Christian Brothers New Series was in print after 1880, but by a different publisher, Strong is included in this Appendix C, since he was one of the publishers of the earlier series, even though no record appears on him after 1876. No further information is available on Strong. For the other materials he published, the APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1875 (Listed in 1876 American Catalogue)

Macmillan's Reading Books - 7 vol.: Primer, 10c. - Bk. 1, 15c. 2, 20c. 3, 25c. 4 40c. 5 50c. 6: Introd. to Eng. Literature. \$1.

Macmillan (Probably in London, England, and not New York]

1878 Listed in New York Public Library Catalog

Macmillan's Reading Books, Book VI (Presumably the 1875 edition above)

Macmillan (London?)  
 1885 (In Early American Textbooks)  
 Macmillan's Reading Books, Book VI (Presumably the 1875 edition above)  
 Macmillan & Co., London  
 1894 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue for 10c, 10c, and 20c)  
 Soames Phonetic Method for Learning to Read,  
 Albany Phonetic Readers Nos. 1, 2, 3.  
 Soames, Laura  
 Macmillan (London?) and Swan Sonnenschein & Co. in London in 1893.  
 1894 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
 Macmillan's New Literary Readers, Book 4  
 Macmillan (London?)  
 1899 (In Early American Textbooks, page 80)  
 Letters from Queer and Other Folk, Book I and Book II  
 Cleveland, Helen M. (See entries under Leach, Shewell and Sanborn)  
 The Macmillan Co., New York and London  
 1899 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue and 1912 United States Catalog)  
 First Phonic Reader  
 Black, N. F.  
 The Macmillan Co., New York  
 1899-1901 (In 1900-1905 American Cat.; In 1912, 1928 United States Catalogs)  
 Child Life Readers, 1 to 5, Prim.  
 Blaisdell, Eva Austin (later E. A. B. McDonald and also had pseud. Clara Murray) and M. F. Blaisdell  
 (Blackburne)  
 (Also see E. A. B. M.'s Globe, Lothrop and Little, Brown books)  
 The Macmillan Co., New York  
 1900-1905 (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)  
 Primitive Man. (Primer)  
 Hoernes, M.  
 The Macmillan Co., New York  
 1905 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Sloan Primary Readers - 1st, 2nd  
 (Probably phonic approach, like 1916 or 1917 revision listed below)  
 Sloan, Katherine E.  
 The Macmillan Co., New York  
 1906-1907 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog and N. B. Smith p. 142)  
 Baker, Franklin T., and Others (One was "Carpenter," per N. B. Smith)  
 Language Readers, First-Sixth Year, and Primer (1909)  
 The Macmillan Co., New York  
 1911 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 American School Readers - Primer, 1st-4th  
 Oswell, K. F. and Gilbert, C. B.  
 The Macmillan Co., New York  
 By 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog under Readers, Nature)  
 Nature Study in Elementary Schools. 1st and 2nd, Teachers' Manual  
 Wilson, L. L.  
 The Macmillan Co., New York  
 1916 or 1917 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 New Sloan Readers (Phonic, per W. S. Gray's review in Elementary School Journal, 1917-1918, page 39)  
 Sloan, Katherine E.  
 The Macmillan Co., New York

1922-1923 (In 1928 United States Catalog and N. B. Smith p. 142)  
 Everyday Classics (Possibly a revision of the 1906 Baker series)  
 Thorndike, Ashley H. (brother of E. L. Thorndike), Prof. of English, Columbia; Fannie Wyche Dunn, Asst. Prof. of Education, Columbia Teachers College; Franklin T. Baker, Prof. of English, Columbia Teachers College  
 Teachers Manual, 1923, by Fannie Wyche Dunn  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 The Marquette Readers  
 Sisters of Mercy, St. Xavier College, Chicago  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1924 (Under Primers in 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Language Garden  
 Howard, I. M., and Others  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1926 (Under Primers in 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Easy Book: First Lesson in Reading  
 Ayer, J. Y.  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1926 (Under Primers and Readers in 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Open Door First Reader  
 Neal, E. A. and O. P. Sorm  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1930 and later, Last publishing date unknown (In Cum. Book Index 1928-1932, and see N. B. Smith's book)  
 The Work-Play Books ("Peter and Peggy," Primer through Grade 3)  
 Gates, Arthur Irving and Miriam Blanton Huber  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1960 (See Chall, Learning to Read)  
 Breaking the Sound Barrier  
 Sister Mary Caroline, I. H. M.  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1965, 1966 (In N. S. Smith, p. 382-3-4, Blumenfeld p. 304-305; in Chall's Learning to Read; Rudolf Flesch's 1981 Why Johnny STILL Can't Read)  
 The Bank Street Basal Reading Program ("Multi-cultural")  
 Bank Street (N.Y.C.) College of Education,  
 Irma Simonton Black, Senior Editor, and Others  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1965, 1970 (N. B. Smith p. 326, 334-5-6-7. 437; reviewed by Blumenfeld in The New Illiterates on pages 302-303; see Chall, Learning to Read; Rudolf Flesch's 1981 Why Johnny STILL Can't Read)  
 The Macmillan Reading Program  
 Harris, Albert J.; Mae Knight Clark and Others  
 The Macmillan Company, New York  
 1988-1991 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, 1993)  
 Connections (Grades K to 3 listed)  
 Arnold, Virginia A., Carl B. Smith, James Flood, Diane Lapp  
 Macmillan, School Division, New York (By 1994 part of McGraw-Hill)

According to Alec Ellis on page 65 of A History of Children's Reading and Literature, Pergamon Press, London (after 1965), Chapter 8, "The Golden Years of Children's Literature, Part I, 1860-1890":



“The publishers who dominated the scene for most of the period under discussion were Macmillan and Routledge. The former had been in financial difficulties in the 1850’s but the situation changed quickly with the success of Kingsley’s *Westward Ho!* and Hughes’ *Tom Brown’s School Days*. Writers of the calibre of Lewis Carroll, Mrs. Molesworth, Charlotte M. Yonge, and in the 1890’s, Rudyard Kipling, all helped to ensure the supremacy of the house of Macmillan.”

Macmillan published a great number of supplementary reading books, listed in the 1900-1905 American Catalogue, apparently reprints of English editions. The English schools had series of “readers” in many subjects, which were used to teach reading above the primer level. They are omitted here because they are not pertinent to beginning reading, and, in any event, do not appear to have been too successful in America because few seem to be listed in the 1912 United States Catalog. However, *Early American Textbooks* lists the same English origin Book VI as that in the New York Public Library catalog. It is shown in the 1876 American Catalogue as book 6 *Introduction to English Literature*, published in 1875. All of this suggests the use of Book VI as a supplementary reader in America during the 1880’s, the period of enthusiasm for supplementary reading and “real literature” instead of “scraps.”

The following note was at the beginning of an 1893 second reader by Laura Soames which was published in 1893 by Swan Sonnenschein & Co. of London. Macmillan was shown in the 1895 American Catalogue as publishing Soames’ books in 1894:

“To the Teacher. This little book is Holborn’s *Practical Infant Reader No. 2* transcribed phonetically, and [I thank]... the Educational Supply Association for allowing me to use it.... Brighton, May, 1893, Laura Soames. *Teacher’s Manual in Preparation, the Child’s Key Shortly, Albany Phonetic Readers NO. 1, 2, 3,...*”

The next page showed the “English Phonetic Alphabet” with phonetic respellings. The material was very poor.

However, Laura Soames was clearly the author of the Albany Phonetic Readers and was listed as such in the contemporary American Catalogue: *L. Soames’ Phonetic Method for Learning to Read*, Nos. 1, 2, 3, published in 1894 by Macmillan. Macmillan was conceivably putting out American editions of Swan Sonnenschein’s London material. However, the No. 2 reader published in 1893 by Sonnenschein which is now in the Department of Education Library in Washington is definitely by Soames. Therefore, it is puzzling to find that reader not listed in *Early American Textbooks* which was based on the Department of Education Library, and instead to find a title listed on page 77 which must be in error: *Barnes Phonetic Method, Albany Phonetic Reader No. 3*, published by Swan, Sonnenschein in 1893. There apparently is no such thing as “Barnes Phonetic Method,” since the Albany Phonetic Readers were by Laura Soames. They were a very unsatisfactory attempt to introduce “sound” in beginning reading.

Macmillan’s later strictly American reading series seem to have been very successful.

Harvard’s copy of *Child Life, A First Reader*, published by Macmillan in New York in 1899 shows that Etta Austin Blaisdell was then Supervisor of Schools, Brockton, Massachusetts. No title was given for Mary Frances Blaisdell. The Blaisdell approach is indicated in the Preface:

“A child will learn to read well by reading well, and he will read best that which interests him most.... ‘Child Life’... represents the child, his life, and his environment. He is seen in his relation to the home, to the school, and to Nature. Each lesson is based on a child’s interests; for this reason the words used are those already familiar to him in conversation. In the first twenty

lessons the average number of new words is but four. As most primary teachers make extensive use of the blackboard, the new words in the first fifty lessons appear both in script and in print. Phonetic drills, providing practice in enunciation, occur in careful gradation. The long and short vowel sounds and the sounds of the consonants and of some of the most common diphthongs are introduced. Material for seat-work is furnished by the script sentences, by the phonetic drills, and by the outline drawings.”

Therefore, the preface clearly indicates the “phonetic drills” were for enunciation, not decoding. The text used the sentence approach and can be classified as A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Concerning the 1894 entry for “New Literary Readers,” “new” implies a former series as well as the new one. Macmillan’s “Literary Readers” may therefore have been published before other literary readers such as Houghton, Mifflin’s Riverside, and Interstate’s and Ginn’s. The 1906 Language Readers by Franklin T. Baker and others were probably also “literature” readers and were probably based on A MEANING APPROACH.

Franklin T. Baker was also an author on a 1922-1923 series by Macmillan. Harvard library has a copy of the 1922 Thorndike-Dunn-Baker Everyday Classics Primer, printed in 1925. It was a Texas-adopted copy, printed in the year of the textbook adoption scandal involving Suzzallo’s American Book Company speller. That affair, which was reported in a December, 1925, issue of the New York Times, has been reviewed previously in this history. Franklin T. Baker, who was an author on the 1906 series already mentioned, was in 1922 (and perhaps in 1906) Professor of English in Teachers College Columbia. Concerning the other authors, Fannie Wyche Dunn was Assistant Professor of Education in Teachers College, Columbia, and Ashley H. Thorndike was Professor of English in Columbia University and the brother of the Teachers College, Columbia, psychologist, E. L. Thorndike. This 1922 primer compared its word use to E. L. Thorndike’s recently published list of the 10,000 commonest words, listing those of its words in the hundred most common, in the second hundred, in the third hundred, in the fourth hundred, in the fifth hundred, in the next five hundred, etc.. The great bulk of its words were in the first five hundred of E. L. Thorndike’s list, and only 163 words in this primer were marked for “mastery.” The primer’s word usage was outlined in Harvard’s copy of The Teachers’ Manual to The Everyday Classics Primer, which was written in 1923 by Fannie Wyche Dunn of Columbia Teachers College. In Arthur Irving Gates’ 1925 Teachers College Record article, “Problems in Beginning Reading,” he said the vocabulary in the Everyday Classics primer had been compared to E. L. Thorndike’s word list, and the primer gave a rough correlation between the two.

The Everyday Classics series taught the reading of alphabetic print like Chinese characters, as meaning-bearing symbols. Apparently no reference to sound was to be made in the initial stages of reading, and precious little was to be made at any later stage. Fannie Wyche Dunn, Assistant Professor of Education in Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, made the following very revealing comments on page 4 of the Everyday Classics Primer Teachers’ Manual of 1923.

“...a widely read adult has a reading vocabulary of thirty thousand or more [words]. Teaching to read appears indeed an appalling task in the face of these facts. It is, however, less serious than at first appears. For though the total number of words is indeed large, only a small proportion of them are so often repeated that they need be attacked during the early years of learning to read. A child who knows only a few thousand, provided they are the commonest words, is prepared to read with considerable fluency and ease, with only occasional help from teacher or dictionary. Just as we have for several years had a list of the thousand most commonly written words as a guide to our emphasis in teaching spelling, we now have a list of the ten thousand most commonly printed words to aid in our emphasis in the teaching of reading.”

Dunn's thousand-word list was Ayres' 1915 list which was still famous in 1923, but which was later buried. The ten-thousand-word list of the most common words to which Dunn referred was E. L. Thorndike's *The Teacher's Word Book*, published in 1921. The list was later extended to the 20,000 most common (at an unknown date), and then in 1944 it was extended to the 30,000 most common. That 1944 edition was published under the title of *The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words*, and it was prepared with Irving Lorge as co-author. Dunn continued:

“This [Ed.: 1921] list moreover shows the first hundred words in reading importance, the second hundred, the first five hundred, the first thousand, and so on. The teacher is in a position to select for thorough teaching those words which are of such common use that the child is sure to need them again and again no matter what book he takes up; and also is in a position to neglect, or give only passing emphasis to, those which will not again be met perhaps for many months or even for years.,,,

“All authorities are now agreed that children should read matter of real interest, such matter as necessitates a considerable range of possible vocabulary. But we no longer believe that they should be required to master every word as they meet it. Some words are but passing acquaintances, to be introduced when met, greeted, and passed by with little chance of future recognition. Others are useful servants for a brief space of time, to be readily recognized and called when needed, but after a little period of such service, to be seen no more, and perhaps to pass altogether out of memory. Still others are lifetime familiars, met every day. An example of the first class is the word *crown*, in the familiar rhyme of ‘*Jack and Jill*.’ It is needed to read that rhyme, and therefore must be introduced when met, but it is not likely to be needed again by a primary pupil for a year or two, if so soon. It would be a waste of time, therefore, to try to impress it so that the child will recognize it when he meets it again. In the second class, is such a word as *Goldenhair* in the story of ‘*The Three Bears*.’ After this story it will not be needed at all. But it recurs so often in this story that it should be taught well enough when it is first met to be recognized in each succeeding occurrence in this story. It may then be dropped altogether. The third class is of course the most important. Yet often the words that belong to it are not vivid and easily remembered. They are such words as *is*, *it*, *up*, *down*, *me*, and numerous common nouns and verbs, with a few adjectives. These are the words that need thorough teaching, so that they may become early the permanent possessions of the little readers.

“4. Phonics. - The value of phonics in primary reading has not yet been determined.”

It is to the eternal disgrace of American superintendents of schools in the 1920's that they did not laugh out of existence such Alice-in-Wonderland statements as this. Instead, incredibly, superintendents of schools gullibly swallowed such wild propaganda when it came bearing an “expert” label from Columbia Teachers College or the University of Chicago. Dunn of Columbia Teachers College continued with her wrongheaded conclusions:

“There is evidence, however, that some means of making the child an independent reader, with the ability to attack new words for himself, is an important part of the teaching of reading. The important thing to keep in mind is that phonics is a means and not an end in itself and that it should be treated accordingly....”

The “phonics” that such “experts” as Dunn proposed to make “independent” readers was the deaf-mute-method visual comparison of new words to previously memorized words, so as to see like parts, in order to fix the visual image of the new word in memory. The meaning of the new word was to be guessed from the context of already known sight words in which the “new” word had been carefully

embedded, to assure that the “guess” of its meaning would be an accurate one. That jig-saw puzzle approach, mentally fitting together parts of previously memorized sight-words, in order to match the parts of the new word so as to fix it in memory, certainly is not one-step synthetic phonics. It is, instead, the two-step phony phonics of the basal readers.

What is particularly disturbing is Dunn’s open recognition in 1923 of the importance of the 1915 Ayres spelling scale. The Ayres scale had shown the decreasing frequency of words - from the most common to the least common - of the first thousand (which thousand commonest words Ayres had identified through statistical studies), and had stated flatly that those 1,000 words occupy over 90% of most texts. Dunn clearly established that Thorndike’s ORIGINAL word book had also clearly identified the commonest words: the first hundred, then the next hundred, then the five hundred most common, and so on, and that it was common knowledge, at that time, that only a relatively few very high frequency words composed the bulk of most selections. That is why it was common knowledge with the “experts” that, with only a few thousand of the highest frequency sight-words, a child could get by in much of elementary school!

Yet, omitted from the 1944 Thorndike revision (and probably from the one preceding it) was most of that information on word frequency. Omitted were the lists of the first hundred and the next hundred (although the first five hundred were shown). More harmfully, the actual statistics on each word up to 2,021 frequency, which could reveal such things as the commonest first hundred and next hundred, and more importantly, the fact that very few words account for most of any text (300 words for 75%, 1,000 words for over 90%, and 2,000 words for perhaps 97%). Furthermore, the existence of the 1915 Ayres scale, which did clearly report such information on the 1,000 commonest words, fell (or, more realistically, was pushed) into education history’s black hole by the early 1930’s. Therefore, it was no longer possible to learn such facts as that only 1,000 of the highest frequency words occupy over ninety percent of most texts (and some 300 occupy about 75 per cent), as Ayres had made abundantly clear.

Thorndike must have deliberately hidden those facts in 1944, even though it appears certain from Dunn’s remarks that at least the lists of the first and second hundred most common words, omitted in Thorndike’s 1944 work, had been in Thorndike’s 1921 work. That raises the question, why did Thorndike remove those highest-frequency word lists from his later editions? Unlike Ayres who reported individual frequencies on every one of the thousand commonest words, why did Thorndike omit any statistics on individual word-frequencies for words below the 2,021 commonest, when he did give such statistics on words above the 2,021 commonest? Was it because the high-frequency effect (the fact that only a relatively few of those highest frequency words occupy most of any printed page) was the rationale behind the writing of the deaf-mute-method readers in the first place. and to report such statistics would make that fact clear to careful readers of his book?

Students who know only a thousand or two thousand printed words out of the half million or so in English seem to be able to read fluently. That is provided that the nine percent of unknown words (if they already know one thousand sight words) or about three percent of unknown words (if they already know two thousand sight words) in a printed selection are words they can guess from the context because they already know such words as spoken words. The fact that they are really disabled readers is nicely hidden, until they meet college-level texts where they cannot guess the unknown words any more because they are not in their spoken vocabularies.

Thorndike’s ex-graduate-students, with whom he had worked closely, A. I. Gates and W. S. Gray, introduced those deaf-mute-method readers nationwide in 1930, the Scott, Foresman and the 1930 Macmillan series. Those series, with their impoverished vocabulary, took over American schools by the mid 1930’s. They resulted in veritable phalanxes of functional illiterates and in an enormous impoverishment of vocabulary in American children, therefore lowering their functioning intelligence.

Nila Banton Smith in her “history” said the Everyday Classics Primer used the sentence method. The 1922 Thorndike-Dunn-Baker Everyday Classics Primer did use a sentence/story approach with two-step phony phonics: A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

A copy of the Primer of The Marquette Readers of 1924 is in the Department of Education library. It states, “Thanks are due... to (Macmillan publishers, A. Thorndike, Baker, Dunn) for permission to reprint the following selections from the Everyday Classics Primer, copyright, 1922...” The selections were “Three Bears, Something You Can Make, Chicken Little, Read and Do (2), Three Pigs, Little Red Hen.” Page 91 showed that “Read and Do” concerned silent reading actions. The book began with the “Three Bears.” As the very first story with many whole sight words and no phonics, it would obviously have to be read solely for meaning and not sound. The book had a strictly controlled vocabulary, with a word list showing the pages on which words were introduced. Words were marked according to E. L. Thorndike’s list: 500 most common 1a, second most common 1b, third most common 2a, etc. Words above 5,000 frequency were not marked, but there were only nine of them. Of the words in the Primer, 65% were from the 500 most common, 82% from the 1,000 most common, and 92% from the 2,000 most common. The Marquette Primer used A MEANING APPROACH.

Macmillan was also the publisher of Arthur I. Gates’ deaf-mute-method primer in 1930, published the same year as W. S. Gray’s Scott, Foresman “Dick and Jane” deaf-mute method primer. (Both Gates and Gray, of course, had been E. L. Thorndike’s graduate students about fifteen years earlier. Gray had worked very closely with Thorndike in 1913 and 1914 when taking his master’s degree on oral reading tests at Columbia Teachers College, and Gates continued to work with Thorndike through the 1920’s, long after Gates received his doctorate at Columbia Teachers College in 1917.) Nila Banton Smith wrote on page 236 of her “history”:

“Gates and Huber in their First Grade Manual say: ‘Extensive phonic drill is not recommended for the first half year. The reason for this is that several studies have shown that extensive drill in teaching particular phonograms by conventional methods at this time does relatively little good.’ There were a few educators who would postpone the work on phonics for a year or a year and a half. The phonetic elements to be taught were often selected on the basis of lists resulting from scientific investigations conducted for the purpose of determining the number and frequency of phonetic elements occurring in words the children are supposed to meet in their reading.”

Gates’ and Gray’s deaf-mute-method readers used what Gates termed “intrinsic phonics.” That meant comparing in memory whole, meaning-bearing words to see like visual parts to a presently seen but unknown printed word, and then using the meaning of the context to figure out the meaning of that unknown word. Deaf children then memorized the appearance of that new word along with its meaning, but without sound, by associating its parts with those previously memorized whole words. Yet hearing children, because they already knew the sounds of those previously memorized words, might (or might not) use them to figure out the sound of the unknown new word. The nature of that deaf-mute approach is confirmed by Arthur I. Gates’ comments in the First Grade Manual to his 1930-1932 Macmillan reading series (from pages 26 to 42):

“...to see similarities and differences among words, to identify common phonetic elements in words, to translate these letters or letter combinations into sounds, and to blend these separate sounds into a whole-word sound... (as) a matter of fact... are important abilities. What the Work-Play course provides is a new and better method of securing these abilities. It goes further than that. It develops phonetic skills so that they work when and where needed, namely, in the actual process of reading for the thought. It cultivates them furthermore, so that they will function

simultaneously with the habits of utilizing context clues. In this system, the 'mechanical' and 'thought getting' training are not separated but combined. By a new type of organization, the mechanical skills are developed naturally during the normal activity of reading for the thought....

"It is found that a passage followed by printed comprehension exercises is an excellent means of cultivating this type of comprehension. The word-perception training is then worked into the comprehension exercises without injuring them in any way for their primary purpose. It is a case of killing two birds with one stone. The following will illustrate the principle:

"In a Work Book one page may contain a picture and printed episode about a bear....

"Draw a line under the right words.

The bear was very old.  
The bear was very cold.  
The bear was very bold.

"...Note that it will be utterly impossible for the pupil to solve the exercise, except by chance, unless he has in mind the content of the passage and, at the same time, is able to distinguish the words which express the thought from other word-forms that contain similar elements. He is obliged, however unconsciously, to note the differences between old, cold and bold. The similarity of the words forces him to see their parts. He learns to observe the identical portions and the different portions.

"Working in this way, the pupil gradually becomes familiar with reappearing common elements, such as initial consonants and old, at, in, ing, ed, and other group phonograms. Gradually he develops an insight into word-form structure. Since he sees the word parts as he pronounces them, the form and sound become associated and phonetic skill results.

"It is important to note that such reading activities tend gradually to develop word-perception skills and phonetic abilities during the actual process of reading for the thought. The pupil is unaware of being 'taught' or even of 'studying' phonetics or word-form analysis. His mind is given to getting and demonstrating his understanding of the thought. The word mastery skills are a natural and necessary result of normal reading.

#### "4. SOME ADVANTAGES OF THE INTRINSIC METHOD.

"REASONS WHY THE NEW PROCEDURE WORKS WELL. The reasons why this newer procedure works so well are fairly obvious. In the first place, there is no dependence upon the transfer of training of these skills from the non-reading situation to a reading situation.... ...the newer exercises require the child, as suggested above, to use context clues and word-form clues at one and the same time. This, of course, is what the normal reading situation demands....

"CONTEXT CLUES AND WORD FORM CLUES USED SIMULTANEOUSLY. ...These exercises introduce a relatively large number of different phonograms and require the discrimination of many words which are similar in letter arrangement, sound units, general configuration and otherwise. The following are illustrations (Ed.: using capitals here instead of original italics): 1. Words containing a familiar suffix or prefix, as - comING, eatING, wantED, plantED, BEfore, BEcause. 2. Words of one syllable containing similar phonograms, as - THese, THey, cAN, rAN, fIGHT, IIGHT. 3. Words containing similar component words, as - postMAN, policeMAN, someTHING, everyTHING. 4. Words similar in general appearance but different in

obscure details, such as - came, come - these, there - was, saw.... As stated above, little or no phonetic work beyond that provided in doing these exercises in a natural way is necessary....

“...A phonetic drill period is a poor time in which to introduce new words to children. These should be first introduced in a rich, meaningful context.... It is important not only that phonetic work be conducted with words which children have already read, but also that it be based upon those phonograms which appear with most frequency in the words which the children have met and will soon meet in their reading. Other things being equal, the more words a phonogram will help unlock, the more it deserves to be brought to the pupil’s attention.... The phonograms suggested for consideration in this course are carefully chosen to give the learner the most useful tools. The choices have been made not only to secure the most common phonograms, but to secure the desired variety of types, to give fair representation to initial, medial, and final phonograms, and otherwise to insure a well-rounded growth of ability to meet new words with ease....

“PRIMARY PURPOSE OF WORK WITH PHONETICS. The whole management of phonetics will be improved by remembering that the primary objective is not to drill a small number of phonograms into pupils’ heads, but to develop a general eye-ear sensitivity and a few general ways of reacting to printed words. Three general abilities are desirable: 1. The ability to identify or see the phonetic elements in a printed word. 2. The ability to sense the sounds that these phonetic elements commonly represent. 3. The ability to combine or blend the sounds of several phonograms into a single word sound.... Thus, pupils should learn to see bring as a definite total composed of br and ing and not merely as a vague total nor as a series of separate letters - b r i n g....

“Ear training by means of activities with Mother Goose rhymes and other rhymes leads to an awareness of recurring sounds. This work provides a natural introduction to phonetic work. This is continued during the first half-year, during which time the pupils become gradually more and more familiar with the appearance and sounds of various phonograms. The pages in the Dictionary may also be used to call attention to initial phonograms.

“During the first half year the child will have practice in the use of the following initial letter phonograms - listed here in the order of frequency of occurrence in the Primer: w b h m f s l p c r d g t n y.

“During the second half year he will have practice in the use of all the initial consonants except q x and z.

“During the first year, various Work Book exercises are calling constant attention informally, to common phonetic elements in words. In the later units of the first half year work, definite provision is made for supplementary work with the following phonograms - chosen because of their frequency of occurrence.

“The suffix phonograms . . s, ed (as in walked), ing.

“The phonograms . . an, th (as in then), ay.

“During the second half year, many phonograms are naturally introduced in the work book exercises....”

Gates’ “phonics” was all two-step Code 3 phony phonics based on memorized whole words: the comparing of parts of already memorized sight words to the parts of unknown words. Concerning Gates’

denial that children could use “phonics” in the first half year, most of my first graders had no trouble in beginning to use real phonics, not his ersatz variety, starting almost on the first day of first grade. (A small minority of children did need some preliminary auditory and visual training to distinguish between different sounds and different shapes, but that is given at the beginning of first grade anyway to all well-taught first-graders as a preliminary step, commonly in a game or play form.) The Gates 1930 material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS. (PURE PHONY PHONICS IS THE DEAF-MUTE METHOD OF SILENTLY AND VISUALLY COMPARING MEANING-BEARING WHOLE WORDS TO EACH OTHER TO SEE THEIR RESEMBLANCES AND DIFFERENCES, IN ORDER TO FIX THE MEANING-BEARING WHOLE WORDS IN VISUAL MEMORY).

Scott, Foresman was publishing the Cathedral Readers by J. A. O’Brien in 1923, a year before Macmillan published the “meaning” approach Marquette Readers. The Cathedral Readers of Scott, Foresman for Catholic schools were rewritten later, and presumably so were the Marquette Readers for Catholic schools of Macmillan. If they were revised after 1930, the methods in the Catholic school editions of Scott, Foresman and Macmillan could therefore match the methods in their public school editions.

The public school editions were the Arthur I. Gates deaf-mute method primer and the William Scott Gray “Dick and Jane” deaf-mute method primer which plunged our great nation into functional illiteracy. Gates and Gray had been Thorndike’s students and worked closely with him, and Ashley Thorndike was E. L. Thorndike’s brother and was a co-author of a “meaning”-approach reading series. Yet the accepted history has been that the psychologist E. L. Thorndike, the close friend and former student of the psychologists William James and James McKeen Cattell, had absolutely NO interest in the teaching of beginning reading! To me, that sounds like disinformation.

Dr. Chall said the publisher’s response to her questionnaire concerning Sister Mary Caroline’s *Breaking the Sound Barrier* was that its major emphasis was “Phonics.” However, on pages 353 and 354, Chall said:

“More than half [the code emphasis programs] teach sounding and blending. The others are divided into those which use spelling (saying the letters)- e.g., the Bloomfield System, the Fries Linguistic Readers, BRS [SRA Basic Reading Series], and the Moore program - and those which use visual analysis and substitution: The Royal Road Readers, the American ITA program, and *Breaking the Sound Barrier*.”

Therefore, it is obvious that *Breaking the Sound Barrier* does not use true synthetic phonics but only two-step, whole-word, substitution phonics, which is defined in this text as phony phonics.

The Macmillan series in 1981, and its Bank Street Readers, were listed as two of “The Dismal Dozen,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. Both use A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Grades K to 3 of the 1988-1991 series, *Connections*, published by Macmillan, School Division, New York, were listed and reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, 1993. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the Macmillan “*Connections*” samples at first grade, 1/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” and 5/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score had been 6/6, but for “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score was zero. Furthermore, not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” Obviously, the *Connections* series is not teaching



synthetic phonics to beginning readers, but only whole-word (and probably two-step) analytic phonics. Considering the original publication date, the series is probably “whole-language” oriented.

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By 1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Children’s Friend’s Reader \$1. (Presumably a Quaker text)  
Wilmsen, F. P.  
Sower

By 1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Normal Primary Speller  
Raub, Albert Newton  
Sower

By 1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue)  
Normal Speller, Rev. Ed.  
Raub, Albert Newton (See Porter & Coates; Werner; American Book)  
Sower

1878 (In 1876-85 American Catalogue)  
Normal Readers  
Raub, Albert Newton  
Porter and Coates, Philadelphia  
By March, 1880  
Sower, Potts & Co.

530 Market Street, Philadelphia  
(This name and address for the Sower company appeared on the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue - Authors and Titles. Presumably, all the “Sower” entries in the American Catalogue to 1880 would have read in full, “Sower, Potts & Co.” The name had changed on the 1894 entry, below, to “Christopher Sower Co.”)

1886 Revision (In 1885-90 Amer. Cat.; Circa 1895 The Werner Co.,; In 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Book.)

New Normal Readers (five-book series)  
Raub, Albert Newton  
Porter and Coates, Philadelphia

1894 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
Word-builder: For Primary Grades  
Beitzel, A. J.  
Christopher Sower Co., Philadelphia

1894 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
Word-builder: Advanced Spelling Book  
Beitzel, A. J.  
Christopher Sower Co., Philadelphia

1899 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Standard Readers (1st-5th)  
Brumbaugh, Martin Grove (Primer written with W. D. Hall)  
Christopher Sower Co., Philadelphia

1912 or Before (In 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs)  
Method Readers (Books 1-4 and Teacher’s Edition)  
Peters, M. S. and Martin Grove Brumbaugh  
Christopher Sower Co., Philadelphia

The Sower company published Raub’s spellers but not his readers, neither the original Normal Readers of 1878 nor their revision. The New Normal Readers, published by Porter & Coates of Philadelphia in 1878, were for sale by American Book Company in 1912, according to the United States

Catalog of 1912, listed under “Readers - Normal,” but were not for sale in 1928 according to the United States Catalog of 1928.

The Children’s Friend’s Reader of F. P. Wilmsen which Sower of Philadelphia had published before or by 1876 was most likely not a beginning reading text, but in some way associated with the Quakers (the Friends) of Philadelphia. The Sower company had obviously been printing spellers, but not reading series, for many years before 1899. That is the apparent reason they published the Raub spellers but not the Raub readers. Yet in 1899 appeared what was possibly the first Sower reading series, the Brumbaugh readers. The Brumbaugh readers are listed on page 78 of *Early American Textbooks: The Standard First Reader, The Standard Second Reader, The Standard Fourth Reader, and The Standard Fifth Reader*, all published in 1899. The six readers by Sower, first through fifth, are listed in the *American Catalogue for 1900-1905*, so they were apparently new in 1899. The sixth book was apparently the primer, written by W. D. Hall and M. G. Brumbaugh. It was listed along with books first through fifth in the 1912 United States Catalog. On page 82 of *Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading* by Joseph S. Taylor, The Macmillan Company, New York: 1912, Taylor said:

“Many, like Sarah Louise Arnold and Superintendent Brumbaugh, consider [diacritical marks] a necessary evil, to be tolerated only when their presence is indispensable. Others, like Ward, have built up very elaborate systems of marks, which constitute essential features of their methods.”

Taylor’s grouping “Superintendent Brumbaugh” with the well-known Sarah Louise Arnold and Superintendent Ward of Brooklyn indicates that Brumbaugh also must have been a well-known man and probably the superintendent of a large city school system in 1912, possibly Philadelphia since the Sower company was in Philadelphia. The Method readers, Books 1 through 4, by Peters and Brumbaugh, and the primer were all still in print by Sower when the 1928 United States Catalog was published. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

Some of Raub’s grammar, reading and arithmetic books are listed in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900* of the U. S. Department of Education (1985), but the dates of some of the entries appear to be in error. An edition of *The New Normal Fourth Reader* by American Book Company is shown with “no date” which would probably have been after 1900. The *Fifth Reader* is shown as published by The Werner Company, Chicago and New York, in 1878, when the publisher according to the contemporary *American Catalogue* was Porter & Coates. That 1878 listing for The Werner Company is obviously wrong. The *Fifth Reader* is therefore probably part of the new, and not the old, series and should probably have been listed as the *New Normal Fifth Reader* published by The Werner Company in the 1890’s.

Raub’s arithmetic text is shown in *Early American Textbooks* as published by The Werner Co. in Chicago and New York in 1857, which appears to be an impossibility since the Werner Company was most probably not in business at that date. Raub’s arithmetic text is shown as published by Porter & Coates in Philadelphia in 1877, which is probably correct. *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900* also shows arithmetic texts published by The Werner Co. in 1894 and 1895, which listings appear to be correct, since The Werner Co. has only turned up in other literature in the 1890’s, and I have seen no earlier reference to it other than the apparently incorrect dates given in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*.

The Werner Co. also published *The Werner Primer* by F. Lillian Taylor in 1895, a sight-word book mentioned by E. B. Huey, along with her *First Reader*, on Huey’s pages 323 and following, and pages 344 and 443. Raub’s *Normal Readers* probably used a selection of “normal” words to teach letters. Whether the Raub readers effectively taught letter sounds as well is unknown, and so THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

It is very likely that the Christopher Sower Co. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, publishing the Standard Readers by Brumbaugh and the spellers by Raub, was founded by someone in Pennsylvania who was a descendant of the original Christopher Saur, who began printing in Germantown, Pennsylvania in 1738. The original Christopher Saur's son, also named Christopher Saur, was a printer after his father's death. However, the second Christopher Saur had his press and concern confiscated during the Revolution because of his lack of support for the war. The second Christopher Saur had sons who were also printers. That the family continued to produce printers is suggested by pages 103-104 and 203 of Early American Textbooks which lists a Sanders' reader published in Philadelphia in 1853 by Sower & Barnes, and Edward Brick's arithmetics published in Philadelphia in 1863 by Sower, Barnes & Potts, in 1873 by Sower, Potts & Co., and in 1888 by Christopher Sower Co. These four company names were obviously revised names for the same concern. The Sower in each of these four company names was possibly a descendent of the original Saur, which is certainly suggested by the adoption by 1888 of the name, Christopher Sower Co. It is interesting that the company was still printing the Standard Readers of 1899 in 1928 under the name, "Christopher Sower," in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 190 years after the original Saur began printing in Germantown, Pennsylvania!

In Volume VII of Publications of The Pennsylvania German Society, Breinigsville, Pennsylvania, 1973, appeared a superb book-length text, The ABC Books of the Pennsylvania Germans by Walter Klinefelter. Klinefelter said Christopher Saur began his printing in Germantown in 1738.

"One of Saur's earliest publications was the first German A B C book printed in America... no copy is known to have survived..."

John Clyde Oswald in his Printing in the Americas stated that in 1738 Christopher Sower (Saur) in Pennsylvania published An ABC and Spelling Book to be Used by All Religions Without Reasonable Objection. Oswald also stated that Christopher Sower (Saur) was born in Lauterburg, Germany, in 1694, came to America in 1724 and worked successively as a tailor, farmer, and maker of stoves. Sower then entered the printing business by printing material for the Dunkers (Baptists) on a printing press they had imported. The 1738 text was his first book. The "Dock" ABC mentioned by Klinefelter was in German. Yet the first book mentioned by Oswald must have been a different and earlier text in English, because Oswald stated:

"The first production of the press under Sower's direction, issued in 1738, was entitled, 'An ABC and Spelling Book to be Used by All Religions without Exception.' That same year he published an almanac in German..."

Oswald certainly implied the first 1738 ABC was in English, so it is unlikely that it was written by the German, Dock. As mentioned, German-American texts not included in this bibliography as the Klinefelter history covers them so very well.

However, Klinefelter presumed the German ABC written shortly after 1738 was written by the schoolmaster, Christopher Dock, who taught Saur's son and who in 1750 wrote Schul-Ordnung at Saur's request. In that 1750 book, Dock told of teaching children first the alphabet, then the Abs (the syllabary), and finally words. Dock had this advice for parents when a child conquered the alphabet and was ready to move to the syllabary, which advice also confirmed the teaching sequence at that time (alphabet, syllabary, words):

"When he attains this standing his father owes him a penny and his mother must fry him two eggs for his achievement, and the same reward is due him for each promotion: that is, when he enters the word class, etc."

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1876 (In 1876 American Catalogue and 1912 United States Catalog.)  
(In 1992-93 classified phone directory of New Jersey Bell,  
Wm. H. Sadlier, Inc., is listed at 11 Park Place, New York.)

Sadlier's Excelsior Series (1st 25c, 2nd 50c, 3rd 75c, 4th \$1.)

By a Catholic Teacher

William H. Sadlier, New York

1877 (In Early American Textbooks)

Sadlier's Excelsior Fifth Reader, 336 pages

William H. Sadlier, New York

1878 (In Early American Textbooks)

Sadlier's Excelsior Sixth Reader, 474 pages

William H. Sadlier, New York

1886 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue and 1912 United States Cat.)

Excelsior Primer

Sadlier, William H.

William H. Sadlier, New York

This company was apparently separate from the D. & J. Sadlier company listed earlier.

Harvard has Sadlier's Excelsior First Reader which was copyrighted in 1876 and published in 1887 by William H. Sadlier of New York. In the section, "To Instructors," was the statement that the book contained excerpts from Watson's Independent Readers. The 1876 American Catalogue stated that Sadlier's Excelsior Readers were written by a Catholic teacher and were published by "W. H. Sadlier" in four volumes in 1876. The American Catalogue for 1885-1890 showed that "W. H. Sadlier" also published a Primer in 1886. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, listed some copies of the Excelsior series in the Department of Education library in Washington: 1876 copies of the second, third, and fourth readers, an 1877 copy of the fifth reader, and an 1878 copy of the sixth reader. The 1912 United States Catalog showed that the Excelsior readers from first to sixth were on sale by "W. H. Sadlier" in that year, as was the Excelsior Primer. However, they were out of print by the time the 1928 United States Catalog was published. As might be expected from the fact that it used some of Watson's Independent material, Sadlier's Excelsior First Reader is possibly Code 6 material, A WEAK PHONIC APPROACH.

No further information is available on possible reading series by this publisher, who is still in business, judging from the 1992-1993 classified directory of New Jersey Bell.

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1877 (Early American Textbooks)

Kellogg's Readers, First Reader (Phonetic - 111 pages)

T. D. Kellogg, New York

1878 (Early American Textbooks)

Kellogg's Readers, First Reader (Phonic, Rev. ed., 123 pages)

T. D. Kellogg, New York

1887 (Early American Textbooks)

Kellogg's Readers, First Reader (194 pages)

T. D. Kellogg, New York

1905 or Before (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)

Child World Readers

Kellogg

All of the above information on "Kellogg's Readers" came from entries on page 90 of Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900. No entries appear in either the American or United States Catalogs,

and no other copies have surfaced. The dates suggest the readers were a too-late entry into the field of phonic readers (1877) at almost the precise time that the change-agents started their blitz to replace the growing attention to phonics with the “meaning” method. Kellogg’s readers must have lingered, however, for about ten years, judging from the publication dates. They presumably had a reader or readers above the level of the First Reader. The T. D. Kellogg company of New York, whoever they were, should not be confused with E. L. Kellogg of New York who published the School Journal which publicized Parker’s methods, as well as publishing the famous book about Parker’s lectures, Talks on Teaching, in 1883. Concerning Kellogg’s Readers, THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN BUT PROBABLY TRULY PHONIC.

The Child World Readers listed in the 1900-1905 American Catalogue as having been published between 1900 and 1905 by “Kellogg” presumably have no connection with the 1917 Child’s World series published by B. F. Johnson. Nor, presumably, is there any connection between the Kellogg “Child World” material and The Child’s World Readers listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as having been written by C. A. Smith and published by “Clark” in 1910. Nor, presumably, is there any connection with the 1908 Child World Primer listed in the 1912 United States Catalogue under Primers, written by A. E. Bentley and G. R. Johnston, published by “Barnes,” presumably a division of American Book Company. No information is available on the Kellogg material with the Child World title. Whether it was published by the T. D. Kellogg company or some other Kellogg is also unknown.

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1877 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue; Harvard copy)  
Anglo-American Primer  
E. B. Burnz (Eliza Boerdman Burnz)  
1892 Revision (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Step by Step Primer  
Burnz & Co. Fonetic Publishers, New York

The 1892 primer was in print in the 1912 United States Catalog. A copy of the 1877 primer is available at Harvard. It has an attempted phonetic spelling and is ghastly. A PHONIC APPROACH

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1878 (In Early American Textbooks, page 86)  
The Minnesota Text-Book Series, The First Reader, Second, and Third  
(Reprints of Appleton’s Series, According to Early American Textbooks)  
D. D. Merrill, St. Paul, Minnesota  
1886 (In Early American Textbooks, page 107)  
(Merrill’s?) Advanced Second Reader, Third Reader, Fourth Reader  
Sprague, Sarah E.; Louis H. Marvel (Also see Sprague under Educational and Rand, and Marvel on Colonel Parker’s Supplementary Readers.)  
D. D. Merrill, St. Paul, Minnesota  
1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Merrill’s Advanced First Reader  
D. D. Merrill, St. Paul, Minnesota

According to Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, published by the U. S. Department of Education in 1985 (page 86), Appleton’s series was adopted as The Minnesota Text Book Series published by D. D. Merrill in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Department of Education listing showed a second and third reader published there in 1878, and a first reader published in 1887, so the series was apparently in use in Minnesota for at least nine years. The Appleton series, and therefore the Minnesota series, used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Presumably the Merrill readers were a complete new series. The Third, Fourth and Advanced Second show in Early American Textbooks on page 107, credited to Sprague and Marvel as authors, but without the name, "Merrill." However, "Merrill's Advanced First Reader" of 1887 appeared in the 1885-1890 American Catalogue, so the name of the Sprague and Marvel 1886-1887 series was apparently "Merrill's Readers." and not the Minnesota Text-Book Series, as was the case with Merrill's 1876 material. Marvel had written with Colonel Parker the appallingly bad, controlled vocabulary, supplementary readers which were published in 1880. Sprague wrote the Sprague Classic Readers of unknown date (note the "classic,) published by Educational and listed in the 1912 United States Catalog. Sprague also wrote material in 1898 for Rand, discussed later, which endorsed the "meaning" approach, but with the use of supplementary phonics. However, considering the fact that Marvel was a co-author on Sprague's 1886-1887 Merrill texts, that material was almost certainly A MEANING APPROACH.

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1879 (Copyrighted, published 1880) (Harvard copy)  
Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book  
Findlay, Phillip  
Printed by University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge  
Estes & Lauriat (Publisher)  
Boston, Massachusetts

1879 (American Catalogue, July, 1876 to June 30, 1884)  
New Departure in the Common Schools of Quincy, and Other Papers on Educational Topics  
Adams, Charles F., Jr.  
Estes & Lauriat  
Boston, Massachusetts

1879 (American Catalogue, July, 1876 to June 30, 1884)  
The Public Library and the Common Schools:  
Papers on Educational Topics  
Adams, Charles F., Jr.  
Estes & Lauriat  
Boston, Massachusetts  
By March, 1880  
Estes & Lauriat, 301 Washington Street, Boston

(This name and address appeared on the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue - Authors and Titles, in which the company listed three-quarters of a page of titles published since 1876.)

Although Charles F. Adams' widely circulated 1879 books on education were published by Estes, his books on American railroads were published by Putnam, not Estes. Estes & Lauriat of Boston who published Adams' books on education may have had some tie to the activists. In 1879, Estes & Lauriat copyrighted *Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book*, which might have found its way into primary grades even though it was not meant as a reader. In that year of 1879, the Boston primary grades were looking for just such "meaningful" material, like Henry Cabot Lodge's *Six Popular Tales, "Authorized for Use in the Boston Public Schools,"* which was compiled largely from Harvard's chapbook collection. (Lodge's book showed no publisher, but only a Boston printer, but it used similar large, oddly shaped sheets to those used in *Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book*, suggesting the two books had a similar source or market.)

A possible connection to the activists is suggested by the fact that Estes & Lauriat's *Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book* was printed by University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge, who had printed the *Franklin Primer*. Estes & Lauriat were also the American publishers of the English children's magazine, *Chatterbox*. Adams' use of a Boston publisher, who also published children's materials, for his few writings on education, instead of his other publisher, Putnam, is intriguing.

Henry Cabot Lodge's 1879 book compiled from Harvard's chapbook collection was moved into the Boston schools the year after Philbrick had been fired and the Leigh phonetic print had been subtly outlawed. Lodge's "literature" book, which showed a different printer but no publisher, has been discussed in this history. It is highly likely that Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book published by Estes was also meant to be a "meaning" supplementary reader for the Boston primary grades in 1879, the year after Philbrick had been fired. The peculiar sizes of the Findlay and Lodge books were presumably meant to interest the children. If used for reading instruction, Findlay's book above, like Lodge's was a pure Code 1 MEANING APPROACH.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1880 and 1890**

1880 (Harvard copy marked by library as an 1884 edition)  
Supplementary Reading - First Book - Primary Schools  
Parker, Francis W., Supervisor of Schools, Boston, and Louis H. Marvel, Superintendent of Schools, Gloucester, Massachusetts.  
(Press of Berwick & Smith, Boston)  
Published by Leach, Shewell, and Sanborn, Boston and New York.

1888 (Harvard copy)  
First Term's Work in Reading  
Cleveland, Helen M., State Normal, Wisconsin  
Leach, Shewell and Sanborn, Boston and New York

1890 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 80)  
Second Primary Reader, 92 pages  
Cleveland, Helen M.  
Leach, Shewell and Sanborn, Boston and New York

1894 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
Beginners' Readers, Nos. 1-4, 10c  
Cleveland, Helen M.  
Leach, Shewell and Sanborn, Boston and New York

1898 (In Early American Textbooks, page 178)  
Vivid Scenes in American History, Book I  
Cleveland, Helen M.  
Benjamin H. Sanborn & Co., Boston

1899 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 80)  
Letters from Queer and Other Folk, Book I and Book II  
Cleveland, Helen M.  
The Macmillan Co., New York and London

The Harvard copy of Parker and Marvel's Supplementary Reading, First Book, Primary Schools, was marked by the Harvard library as an 1884 edition, and it showed 1880 and 1881 copyright dates by the authors. The appalling Code 1 material is also listed in Appendix B and is discussed in the body of this history. Marvel was also co-author with Sarah E. Sprague of the D. D. Merrill Readers in St. Paul (also listed in this appendix), according to page 107 of Early American Textbooks. "Rev. Ed. ['82]" of Supplementary Reading for Primary Schools - First Book, and Second Book, were listed in the 1876-1884 American Catalogue as published by "R. S. Davis, (B.)", about which company no information is available, but the original edition was not listed in the 1876-1884 American Catalogue. Since the revised

edition came out in 1882, and the Harvard copy of the original edition carried the library's note that it was printed in 1884, apparently there were two versions in print by 1882, published by different publishers.

The 1912 United States Catalog shows Cleveland's Beginners' Readers, "3 nos." at ten cents each, or in one, for 25 cents, published by Sanborn. From the 1898 history book entry above, the complete company name before that date had changed to Benjamin H. Sanborn & Co. Harvard has a copy of Cleveland's 1888 First Term's Work in Reading. It recommended a rigidly controlled sight vocabulary and rates initially Code I. Helen M. Cleveland obviously had some importance in her day, from before 1888 until after 1899, since Macmillan also published her material in 1899. However, her name and materials have fallen into total oblivion. A MEANING APPROACH.

As can be seen from entries in Appendix B, the name "Sanborn" appeared in some of the following sequential companies who published the Town and Holbrook, and for a time the Tower, materials. However, whether the "Sanborn" who disappeared from the following company titles some time before 1860 was related to the Sanborn in Leach, Shewell and Sanborn of 1880 is unknown.

- 1848 - Sanborn and Carter, Portland, Maine
- 1856 - Sanborn, Carter, Bazin & Company, Boston.
- 1857 - Sanborn, Bazin & Ellsworth, Boston.
- By 1860 or earlier - Bazin & Ellsworth, Boston.

Some time after 1862, Bazin & Ellsworth of Boston became simply Oliver Ellsworth of Boston. The company was apparently out of business by the time the 1876 American Catalogue was published. In any event, that company's association with a "Sanborn" was apparently terminated before 1860.

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1880 (In 1876-1885 American Catalogue under Primers  
Benjamin Franklin Primer. 10c.  
N. Y. News.

1880 (Library of Congress card catalog in October, 1981, under "Primers, 1870-1950")  
The Benjamin Franklin Primer, 24 pages  
Boston School Supply Co., Boston, Mass.

1886-1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Natural History Readers  
Wood, John George

Boston School Supply Co., Boston  
1891 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
Boston School Series, The Information Readers, Nos. 1-4  
Boston School Supply Co., Boston

1896 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue)  
Easy Primer  
(See Ginn entry with the same name. If the same book, it was in print by Ginn in the 1928 United States Catalog.)  
Boston School Supply Co., Boston

In October, 1981, the Library of Congress card catalog in the section, "Primers, 1870-1940," described The Benjamin Franklin Primer as 24 pages and "A satire on the primers and first readers in common use." Why the American Catalogue, which was a contemporary catalog, listed the original publisher in 1880 as N. Y. News, while the Library of Congress showed the 1880 publisher as Boston School Supply Co., is not known, but the Library of Congress catalog card did refer to another edition. Some time ago, I saw a copy of this book, and it was obviously not a child's book but a parody on children's primers. That fact suggests school supply companies like the Boston concern and New York



News, and the general public as well, had been exposed to considerable and not very welcome publicity on primers by 1880. It was the period in which Parker was active in Quincy, and the period in which Hillard and Campbell's 1873 Franklin series was in wide use in its non-Leigh-print edition. The use of the word, "Franklin," certainly suggests that the parody in the 1880 primer was quite pointed, particularly since the book was published by Boston and New York concerns which supplied materials to schools, which companies would have been well aware of the way the wind was blowing on school supplies.

There would have been no point to printing such a parody for adults unless the subject of primers was well known to adults at the time. The existence of this primer, therefore, tends to corroborate the strength of the public relations blitz on the "meaning" method in teaching beginning reading which was emanating principally from Quincy and Boston in Massachusetts before 1880 and which was spreading all over the United States. Note that the parody was printed in New York!

The 1876-1884 American Catalogue also lists under "Primers" the following:

That Comic Primer, F. Bellew. 50c. Carleton.

The date of 1877 and the title suggest that the Bellew primer published by Carleton may also be a parody.

The Natural History series had first through sixth readers, according to the American Catalogues. A copy of the First Natural History Reader is listed in Early American Textbooks on page 113. The readers were not listed in the 1912 American Catalog. The influence of Agassiz followers in preparing these readers appears probable. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN BUT ALMOST CERTAINLY A MEANING APPROACH.

The Information Readers had different authors for each level. H. W. Clifford was the author of the 1891 No. 2, Everyday Occupations, according to the 1890-1895 American Catalogue. Information Reader No. 3, published in 1892, was by William G. Parker, and its title was Man and Materials, according to Early American Textbooks. Early American Textbooks also showed No. 4, written by Robert Lewis. The materials were not in print in 1912. The Easy Primer is possibly that listed later by W. Barnes and M. A. Lane, published by Ginn and in print in 1928. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN BUT ALMOST CERTAINLY A MEANING APPROACH.

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By March, 1880

Little, Brown & Co.

Boston, Massachusetts

(The company name and address appear in the March, 1880, Appendix to the 1876 American Catalogue, in which Little, Brown & Co. listed general books published by them between 1876 and 1880. However, no readers published by them have been found before the entries shown below, although some books on that 1880 list may have been children's readers.)

1904 (1900-1905 Am. Cat. by Lothrop; 1912-1928 U.S. Cat. by Little)

Wide Awake Primer

Murray, Clara - Pseudonym for Eva Austin Blaisdell (McDonald) for whom see other entries under Lothrop, Globe School Book and Macmillan and N. B. Smith, p. 218 and 434)

Lothrop Publishing Company, Boston

(Pub. by Little, Brown & Company, Boston, by 1912 and 1928. 1928

U. S. Cat. also shows Junior Primer pub. by Little. Wide Awake First (1906), Second (1908), Third (by 1912), Fourth (by 1928) also published by Little. Cum. Bk. Index 1928-1932 shows New Wide Awake Junior Primer, New Wide Awake Primer and New Wide Awake Readers, 1st-4th, 1929, by C. Murray, published by Little, listed again below.)

1918 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Rhymes and Tales for Children (Under Readers for \$1, 1928 U. S. Cat.)  
 McDonald, Eva Austin Blaisdell  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

1926-1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Atlantic Readers  
 Condon, R. J.  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Toy Town (In print for \$1 under Readers in 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 McDonald, Eva Austin Blaisdell  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Home and Country Readers (Books 1 - 4)  
 Laselle, M. A.  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Rhyme and Story Primer, and First Reader  
 McDonald E. A. Blaisdell and M. F. Blaisdell Blackburne  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

1928 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Wide Awake Junior Primer (by 1928), Primer (1904), 1st (1906), 2nd (1908), 3rd (by 1912), 4th (by 1928)  
 Murray, Clara - Pseudonym for Eva Austin Blaisdell McDonald  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

1929 (In Cum. Book Index 1928-1932; N. B. Smith. p. 218 and 434; U. S. Dept. of Ed. Primer)  
 New Wide Awake Readers (Junior Primer, Primer, 1st - 4th)  
 Murray, Clara - Pseudonym for Eva Austin Blaisdell McDonald  
 (See her Globe, Lothrop and Macmillan materials)  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

1929 (In Cum. Book Index 1928-1932)  
 Rhyme and Story Second Reader (Possibly a reprint of old material?)  
 McDonald, E. A. Blaisdell  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

1930 (In Cum. Book Index 1928-1932)  
 Kelpies Run Away (\$1, School Edition 70c.)  
 McDonald, E. A. Blaisdell  
 Little, Brown & Company, Boston

According to page 27 of *Americana in Children's Books*, a 1974 Library of Congress pamphlet, the name, "Wide Awake," was the title of a child's magazine published by D. Lothrop in Boston from 1875 to 1893. Volumes 1 through 13 were called the "Wide Awake Pleasure Book," and the others usually called "Wide Awake; an Illustrated Magazine for Young People." The name was obviously adopted by Lothrop Publishing Company for its reading series written by "Clara Murray," a pseudonym for Eva Austin Blaisdell (McDonald). The series was published by Little, Brown & Company, Boston, after 1912. The New Wide Awake Junior Primer, New Wide Awake Primer and New Wide Awake Readers, 1st-4th appeared in 1929, also by C. Murray and published by Little.

"Clara Murray's" preface to her 1929 New Wide-Awake Primer is disturbing. The material would ruin children's reading ability but claims a syrumpy concern for their welfare:

"This is a book for the little ones who are just beginning the struggle with word-forms, and who need, therefore, to have the paths to learning made as smooth and straight as possible. Their

little feet must trudge slowly but steadily on; they must find flowers by the wayside to attract their interest and keep them from fatigue; but there must be no steep hills to climb, no long hours of travel; and the hand that helps over the stones must be a guide and not a support.

“The helping hand is the teacher’s; it is she who leads and guides; but the book is the path, and it is the writer who paves the way....”

The vocabulary was limited to 346 sight words taught in meaningful sentences. Her first work was apparently the 1899 joint-authored material published under her own name, Eva Austin Blaisdell (later McDonald) and that of Mary Frances Blaisdell (later Blackburne) for Macmillan. It was followed by the 1904 Lothrop Wide-Awake Primer under her pseudonym, Clara Murray. which was published by Little by 1912, and also her material published by Globe, which see. Since both she and her probable sister had written controlled vocabulary sight-word materials in 1899-1901, she was a fine “resource” to be employed again in the 1920’s when the “experts” were busy once again reducing vocabulary and phonics in readers. A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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The Hunt and Gourley material listed below, after being published by “The Author” was published by the Taintor company and the Sheldon company, as shown also under their listings, and finally by American Book Company some time before 1912.

1881 (In Early American Textbooks)

The Modern First Reader (See Sheldon & Co. for completely different series with similar title, Modern School Readers)

Gourley, H. I. and J. N. Hunt

Published by The Author, Pittsburgh

1882 (In Early American Textbooks)

The Modern Third Reader

Gourley, H. I. and J. N. Hunt

Published by The Author, Pittsburgh

1882 (In Early American Textbooks)

The Modern Grammar-School Reader

Gourley, H. I. and J. N. Hunt

Taintor Bros., New York, Boston, Pittsburgh and Omaha

1883 (Harvard copy)

The Modern Spelling-Book

Hunt, J. N. and H. I. Gourley

Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., New York

1883 (Harvard copy)

The Modern Spelling-Book

Hunt, J. N. and H. I. Gourley

Sheldon & Company, New York, Boston and Chicago

1887 (In 1885-90 American Catalogue)

Modern Intermediate Reader

Gourley, H. J. (sic) and J. N. Hunt

Taintor Brothers, Merrill & Co., New York

This reading series was published by American Book in 1912, according to the United States Catalog, but were not listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. The APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1883 (In Early American Textbooks, under Spellers)

Story’s Blending and Spelling Book, 307 pages

Story, Charles Augustus  
United States Phonetic Co.

This was obviously a too-late entry in the move towards phonics that had been growing through the 1860's and early 1870's, until derailed about 1878 by the "experts" highly ballyhooed Quincy and Boston "meaning" programs. No information on this material is available beyond the bare entry in Early American Textbooks.

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1883 (In Early American Textbooks)  
Reading Speller. A New Method of Teaching Spelling,  
First Book, Second Book.  
Campbell, William A., Principal of High School, Hoboken, New Jersey  
Text Book Company, New York

1885 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 79)  
The Continental First Reader  
Campbell (listed as Loomis J. but must be William A.)  
Daniel Van Winkle, New York

1888 (In 1885-1890 American Cat.)  
The Continental Readers, 1st, 2nd, 3rd  
Campbell, William A. and Elizabeth A. Allen  
Kelly, Taintor

1889 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 79)  
The Continental Fourth Reader  
Campbell, William A. and Elizabeth A. Allen  
Thomas Kelly, New York

1890 (Harvard copy)  
The Continental First Reader  
Campbell, William A.  
Mutual Book Co., New York

Early American Textbooks lists the Reading Speller. First Book. published by Text Book Co. in 1883 and Daniel Van Winkle in 1886, and the Second Book in 1883 by Text Book Co. As shown above, in 1888 and 1889 Campbell's readers were published by Kelly and by Taintor, and in 1890 by Mutual Book Co. Campbell's readers were not in print in 1912, nor, possibly, his spellers. See the entry in this appendix under the date of 1888 on the publisher, Thomas Kelly, and the entry under the date of 1866 on Taintor. Campbell's readers are discussed in this history. They were not in print in 1912 according to the 1912 United States Catalog. A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS

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1884? (In 1883-1884 American Teacher)  
Alphabetic Reading Charts

An article appeared in The American Teacher on page 233 of the 1883-1884 volume (April, 1884), "How to Teach Spelling," by Z. Richards (possibly the same name as one of the men who were listed as active in the NEA at that time). The article was based on the Alphabetic Reading Charts. With an immediate phonic analysis of sight words, it sounds as if the charts were Code 10 analytic/synthetic material, which Richards said "ought to be in every primary school." They may be the same as "Phonic Reading Charts" referred to in "Books for Primary Teachers," on page 223 of the February, 1882, issue of that publication. AN APPARENT PHONIC APPROACH.

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1884 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
New English Readers, Nos. 1-3

Estabrook & Payne  
Publisher: Nourse

This listing appeared in the American Catalogue for 1885-1890. No other information is available on these materials. Lindley Murray's once highly-popular materials from the early 1800's until the 1830's had been called the English Readers. This series was possibly an attempted replacement. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1884 (Harvard copy of Primer)

The Christian Brothers New Series

Copyright: John P. Murphy; De la Salle Institute, New York, Publisher

(See above for earlier 1842 edition and editions of O'Shea, Strong, and D. & J. Sadlier)

1885 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

The Peabody Series. Illustrated Reading Books

John P. Murphy, Baltimore, Publisher

1886 (In 1928 United States Catalog; Harvard copy of Primer and Infant Reader)

Murphy's Illustrated Catholic Readers

John P. Murphy, Baltimore, Publisher

Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 lists on page 78 "Brothers of the Christian Schools... The Second Book of Reading Lessons. Philadelphia: Eugene Cumiskey, 1842." This was the apparent forerunner of the Christian Brothers series. In 1870 or before, the Christian Brothers Readers had been published by the Sadlier, O'Shea and Strong companies, as mentioned elsewhere. (I have no information on the Strong company, but only on D. and J. Sadlier and O'Shea.) None of these three companies' names appeared on the 1884 revision. In 1884, The Christian Brothers New Series, Primer, was published by De La Salle Institute, New York, and copyrighted by John P. Murphy. Harvard has a copy which shows that it taught vowels, but in whole words. Words were not arranged by sound analogy. The 1884 text rates perhaps a Code 5, leaning more heavily towards "sound" for decoding than "meaning." The Christian Brothers New Series Primer was A WHOLE WORD APPROACH WITH INADEQUATE PHONICS.

Yet a different primer copyrighted by John P. Murphy only two years later in 1886 went totally back to meaning, rating only a Code 1, as shown by a copy in the Harvard library. It is titled Murphy's Series, Illustrated Catholic Readers, Primer, John Murphy & Co., Baltimore. It had the same general approach as the McGuffey Primer of 1849. Lesson 1 was the alphabet, and lesson 2 was the script alphabet. Lesson 3 dealt with two letter words with open and closed syllables mixed, which means with long and short vowels mixed, and some were phonically irregular. The words included "am up or to if go of," etc. Next came two letter sentences, such as "I am by it." The text progressed from two-letter words to three letter-words, and so on. The approach was pure sight-word "meaning," totally devoid of "sound." The Infant Reader which followed it was also Code 1. This series was shown in the American Catalog of 1885-1890 as "Murphy's Illustrated Catholic Readers," and included the Illustrated Catholic Primer and the Illustrated Catholic Readers, 1st through 6th, all published in 1886. They also appeared in Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, on page 97, as Murphy's Series, Illustrated Catholic Readers, Baltimore: John Murphy & Co., 1886. Listed are the Primer, The Infant Reader, First Reader and Second through Sixth Readers, all published in 1886. In the 1912 United States Catalog, the series appeared as Murphy's Catholic Readers, 8 books, the primer, the infant reader, and the 1st reader to the 6th reader. The 1928 United States Catalog showed "Murphy J. Catholic Readers. Primer, infant reader, first, sixth. Murphy." Whether they were ever revised is unknown, but this Code 1 series was apparently continuously in print from 1886 to 1928. Based on the 1886 material which I saw, this was, unless changed afterwards, A MEANING APPROACH.

Besides the revised Christian Brothers Readers and the Illustrated Catholic Readers, Murphy published the Peabody Series - Illustrated Reading Books. The last two series remained in print to 1912. The Illustrated Catholic Readers were still in print in 1928. The Peabody series was a year older than the Illustrated Catholic Readers, having appeared in 1885, the other having appeared in 1886. Murphy's sudden appearance on the scene in 1884 is unusual. It suggests he may have been affiliated with an existing publisher.

The American Catalog for 1885-1890 listed the Peabody Series: Illustrated Reading Books, an eight-volume series published in 1885 by Murphy, beginning with the Primer and Infant Reader, and with a First Reader through a Sixth Reader. Copies are listed in *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, on page 101: The Peabody Series. Illustrated Reading Books, 1885, Second Reader and Fourth Reader, John Murphy & Co., Baltimore and New York. The 1912 United States Catalog showed that the Peabody Series of Readers, "Primary" and 1st through 6th were in print in that year by J. Murphy. The Peabody series was apparently out of print by 1928, since it was not listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. THE APPROACH OF THE PEABODY SERIES IS UNKNOWN.

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1885 (From E. B. Huey's book)  
The Citizen Reader  
Arnold-Forster, H. O.  
London

This appears in E. B. Huey's bibliography, *Primers and Readers*, page 442 of his 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. Yet nothing appears in the text of his book, according to his index, on this material, nor have I found it listed elsewhere. This is one of the many curious 1880's English references which turn up after the turn of the nineteenth century in the works of people associated in some way with James McKeen Cattell, who was in England in the 1880's.

As indicated elsewhere, Huey appears to have been Cattell's protege.

Something else that suggests Cattell's input on Huey's book is the listing of a German reference in his bibliography on page 442, *Primers and Readers*, although it does not appear in Huey's index or elsewhere in Huey's 1908 book so far as I could see: *Deutsches Lesebuch für Höhere Anstalten*, Vols. I-V. Cattell spent some years with the psychologist, Wundt, in Germany during the 1880's, and, of course, Cattell continued his famous "reading" experiments under Wundt in Germany.

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1885 (In 1885-90 American Cat. In 1912 U. S. Cat. pub. by Simmons)  
ABC Reader  
Buckelaw, Sarah Frances and Lewis, M. W. (Frances W.?) - 20 cents  
Pub.: A. Lovell

1905 and Later (In 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs)  
Buckwalter Readers (Easy Primer, 1st-4th in 1912, 1st-5th in 1928)  
Buckwalter, G.  
Simmons (publisher in 1912 United States Catalog)  
Simmons-Peckham (publisher in 1928 United States Catalog)

The ABC Reader was listed in the 1885-1890 American Catalogue as published by A. Lovell, and in the 1912 United States Catalog as published by Simmons. No further information is available on it. However, concerning available background on its authors, Sarah Frances Buckelaw and M. W. Lewis, *Early American Textbooks* lists Sarah Frances Buckelaw (p. 1), as the author of *Dictation Lessons in Drawing for Primary Grades*, Ivison, Blakeman, Taylor and Co., 1876, reprinted in 1878 and 1879. Drawing lessons were prominent in schools from the 1870's and New York State tests for teachers

eventually included drawing requirements. (See issues of the School Bulletin published by Charles William Bardeen in Syracuse, and Bardeen's book listed on page 1 of Early American Textbooks, entitled The Questions and Answers in Drawing Given at the Uniform Examinations of the State of New York, 1896.) Frances W. Lewis is possibly M. W. Lewis (if the initial "M" is a misprint) shown on page 47 of Early American Textbooks as the author of 500 Choice Selections, Eastern Educational Bureau, Boston, 1889. On the ABC Reader, the APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

No information is available on the Buckwalter readers shown in the 1912 United States Catalog, except that they were still in print in 1928, which suggests that they must have been very successful somewhere. Their APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1885 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Diacritical Speller; Exercises in Spelling and Pronunciation, 50 cents  
Bales, C. R.  
C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York  
1903 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Bailey Book  
Bailey, M.  
C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York  
1905 or Before (In 1905 American Catalogue, page 876)  
Primer  
Warner (E. E.?)  
C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York  
1905 or Before (In 1905 American Catalogue and 1912 U. S. Catalog))  
Graded Readers, Primer and 1st-3rd  
Black, B. N. (Wrote a 1907 series for Educational)  
C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York

The Diacritical Speller appeared in the 1885-1890 American Catalogue and is listed here as a possible indication of a turning-point concerning spelling, after the miserable effects from the Quincy influence became evident. The Diacritical Speller obviously represented a move toward "sound" in spelling. C. W. Bardeen, who published the superb periodical, The School Bulletin, appeared to have no interest or any real knowledge concerning the opposition between "sound" and "meaning" in teaching beginning reading. That is surprising, since Bardeen was generally very knowledgeable. However, Bardeen did not concern himself with the beginning stages in schooling. APPARENTLY A PHONIC APPROACH.

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1885 and later (In Amer. Cat. 1885-1890; In 1928 U. S. Cat. on page 2358, toward middle of 3rd column, apparent afterthought to "Readers")  
Concordia Primer Illustrated  
1st Reader (to 4th by 1912 U.S. Cat.; "Old Series" in 1928 U. S. Cat.)  
Concordia  
1912 or before (In 1912 U. S. Cat.; in 1928 U. S. Cat., p. 2357)  
Standard American Series (1st-4th, and 5th by date of 1928 U. S. Cat.)  
Concordia

This is a Catholic school series. An article written in 1910 for The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913, stated:

"In 1883, four sisters of St. Joseph arrived at Newton, Kansas, from Rochester, New York, and opened their first mission. After remaining there a year, they located at Concordia, Kansas, in the fall of 1884, and established the first motherhouse in the West in what was then the diocese of

Leavenworth. The congregation now numbers 240 in charge of three academies, two hospitals, and 26 schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Dioceses of Marquette, Rockford, Kansas City, Omaha, Lincoln and Concordia. The sisters have about 4000 children under their care.”

Whether this is the source or not of the Concordia Catholic readers is not known but appears possible. No other information is available on the background of these readers.

No copies are available and the series is known only from the American and United States Catalogs. In the 1912 United States Catalog, Pictorial Primer, or First Reader for Parochial Schools was on sale by Concordia for 25 cents, and the Primer for 20 cents, presumably the 1885 material. Also on sale was the Primer and First Reader in One Book for 35 cents. According to the 1912 United States Catalog, by that date Concordia were also selling first to fourth “Readers,” apparently one series, and an additional one with first to fourth readers, the Standard American Series. In the 1928 United States Catalog, immediately before “Reader’s Guide” on page 2358, was shown “Readers; 1st 4th; old series.... Concordia.” Also shown in 1928 on page 2290 was “Primer Concordia 30 cents” and on page 2357 “Standard American readers, first fifth, Concordia.” APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1886 (Harvard copy)

California State Series of School Textbooks, First Reader  
Printed at State Printing Office  
Sacramento, California

Harvard has the above copy. The series was not listed in the 1912 United States Catalog. Early American Textbooks lists on page 78 the Second Reader, 1886, and First Reader, 1886. On page 97, it shows Murphy, Anna C., New Fourth Reader, California State Board of Education, 1895. Also, it shows California School Books, Revised Series, New Third Reader (174 pages), 1895, George, Mary W. and Anna C. Murphy, State Printing Office, Sacramento, California. Harvard’s 1886 copy of the First Reader rates a Code 3, and uses phony phonics and sight words. A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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1886 (In 1912 United States Catalog published by Lothrop)

The Interstate Primer and First Reader  
Cyr, Ellen M. (Mrs. R. P. Smith) (See her 1891-94 Ginn books)  
Copyrighted by Interstate Publishing Company  
Published by Lothrop Publishing Company, Boston

1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)

Interstate Primer Words, Per Box, 50c  
Interstate Publishing Company, Boston and Chicago

1887 (Harvard copy)

Primary Monthly, An Illustrated Magazine for  
Supplementary Reading in Primary Schools (Sept., Number 11)  
Brown, Kate L., Editor  
The Interstate Publishing Company, 30 Franklin St., Boston and Chicago

1887 (In Early Amer. Txtbks., p. 74; In 1885-90 Amer. Cat. as 1888)

The Interstate Primer Supplement  
Winchell, Samuel Robertson  
The Interstate Publishing Co., Chicago and Boston

1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)

Primary Drawing and Reading Cards - 13 cents  
The Interstate Publishing Co., Boston and Chicago



1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue, page 173; listed under “Reading,” not “Readers,” in 1912 and 1928 U. S. Catalog, published by Flanagan, the probable successors to Indiana School Book Co. Early American Textbooks lists “Second Science Reader” by L. Mae Nelson-Virden, published by A. Flanagan of Chicago in 1896, so it was possibly the same publisher.)

First Steps in Reading. In 4 Pts.

Pease, M. A.

Interstate, “Winchell.” (See 1887 Winchell above possibly in Chicago.)

1889 (In 1912 United States Catalog published by Lothrop)

Interstate Second Reader

Brown, Kate L.

Interstate Publishing Company

1893 (In 1890-95 American Cat.; In 1912 United States Catalog)

Interstate Third Reader

Lovejoy, M. I.

Lothrop Publishing Company, Boston

The Primary Monthly, An Illustrated Magazine for Supplementary Reading in Primary Schools, with offices both in Boston and Chicago, most probably had some tie to Colonel Francis W. Parker, who had gone to Chicago from the Boston schools about 1883, after leaving Quincy.

Parker, of course, was famous for promoting “supplementary reading” for primary schools. Parker’s foe, former Boston Superintendent of Schools John Dudley Philbrick, labeled most such reading as “rubbish” in his report on American schools, Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education, No. 1 - 1885, City School Systems in the United States, Government Printing Office, Washington. Parker’s own supplementary material written with L. H. Marvel, Supplementary Reading for Primary Schools, First Book and Second Book had revised editions in print in 1882, according to Leypoldt’s 1876-1884 American Catalogue. Harvard has an 1884 copy of the first edition of the First Book which came out in 1880, and it is a terrible thing consisting of very high frequency words and is almost senseless. It was certainly “rubbish.” Parker had been a supervisor in Boston after leaving as Superintendent in Quincy, and before moving to Chicago. The Harvard library copy of the Primary Monthly issue, No. 11, September, 1887, not only advertised Colonel Parker’s “Pictures for Language Lessons, For Kindergartens and Primary Schools, 24 cards, each 8 1/2 x 10 inches, with suggestions for use... Price 30 cents.” It also advertised:

“Lessons on Color in Primary Schools, By Lucretia Crocker, one of the Supervisors of the Boston Public Schools. This plan for Color-Lessons was prepared for the use of teachers in the Boston Primary Schools, and adopted by the Boston School Committee, and ordered used in all the Primary Schools of the city. Price, 30 cts.”

Such “experts” as Parker and Crocker were still able to make what was probably a considerable amount of money by being certified “experts.”

It is the nature of Primary Monthly which most clearly showed its tie to Parker’s movement. It was published specifically “For Supplementary Reading in Primary Schools.” It was described as at the “First and Second Reader grade... 100 or more copies, 2 cents per copy.” Yet two cents extra for each child each month was a considerable added expense in those low-inflation days to ask the Boston taxpayers to pay, particularly since ten issues came out in a year. The Interstate Monthlies also published a Monthly Reader for “Intermediate” grades and another for “Grammar School,” but the grammar school copies cost almost four times as much: \$7.50 for a hundred. Yet the poor little children would have been unable to read those relatively expensive monthlies if they had been taught to “read” by Parker’s “meaning” method.

Cyr's readers published in 1891 to 1894 by Ginn have been discussed at length in this history. They were obviously outgrowths of her 1886 work with the Interstate group which obviously had ties to Lothrop. According to Early American Textbooks (page 81) "Literary selections in all Cyr's readers were prominent." Cyr's "Preface" to her Interstate Primer was dated July, 1886, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her emphasis on literature and sight words, together with her origin at Cambridge certainly suggest that she had ties to movers-and-shakers at Harvard. Her Ginn series was apparently a best-seller, and rates a Code I at the beginning. Probably her Interstate material also used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1887 (In Early American Textbooks)

A Primer

Knudsen, C. W.

Golden Bros., South Norwalk, Conn.

This 72-page primer is listed in Early American Textbooks on page 70. It is not listed in the 1912 American Catalog. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue under Primers)

Illustrated Picture Primer

Aunt Susie (pseud.)

Belford, C. & Co.

Listed in the American Catalogue for 1885-1890. No further information is available. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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Also see prior entries under Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston. D. C. Heath was probably the "Heath" in that company name.

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1887 (Harvard 1893 copy. In 1928 United States Catalog)

Stepping Stones to Reading, A Primer

Badlam, Anna B. (In 1887 at Rice Training School, Boston, as Principal; by 1893 Principal at Lewiston, Maine, Practice School)

D. C. Heath, Boston

1887 (In 1912 United States Catalog under Readers - Nature)

Nature Readers

Wright, Mrs. Julia McNair

D. C. Heath

1887 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue under Readers)

Suggestive Lessons in Language and Reading for Primary Schools

Badlam, Anna B. (The Primary Teacher, Boston, published Badlam's articles with similar titles. This is apparently a collection.)

D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, N. Y., Chicago, London

1888 (Still in print in 1928 United States Catalog)

An Illustrated Primer

(Written for deaf-mute children; but suggested for all children. Praised by E. B. Huey in his 1908 Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading)

Fuller, Sarah, of Horace Mann School for the Deaf, Boston

D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, N. Y., Chicago, London

1891-1893 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

Temperance Readers, No. 1

Wright, Mrs. Julia McNair

National Temp.

1894-1895 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Heart of Oak Books  
Norton, Charles Eliot, Editor  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston  
1898 (Copyright by Bass, published by Heath in 1899, Harvard copy)  
Lessons for Beginners in Reading  
Bass, Florence  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston  
1901 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog; E. B. Huey, pages 342-343 and 442)  
Primer of Work and Play  
Alger, Edith G.  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston  
1902-1910 (In 1928 U. S. Cat. with added bk. 5, N. B. Smith p. 134)  
Gordon Readers (1st-4th and teacher's manual)  
Gordon, Emma K.  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
1903-1904 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
Heath Readers by Grades (1st-8th)  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
1903-1904 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Heath Readers (Primer, 1st-6th - a different arrangement from above)  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
1904 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog with Beginners' Reader)  
First Reader  
Bass, Florence  
(See her 1898 Lessons for Beginners in Reading, possibly the same as Beginners' Reader listed in 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
1908 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
Rhyme and Story Primer  
McMahon, H. A. and Others  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
1909 (In 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs)  
Finger Play Reader, 2 parts and Teacher's Edition.  
Davis, J. W. and F. Julien  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
1912 or Before (In 1912 and 1928 U. S. Catalogs)  
Haliburton Readers (See his Johnson Publishing Company materials)  
Haliburton, M. W.  
D. C. Heath & Co, Boston, New York, Chicago  
1917 (In 1928 U. S. Cat., Copy of 1918 Manual in Libr. of Congress)  
The Kendall Series of Readers  
Kendall, Calvin N., LL. D., Commissioner of Education, New Jersey; Caroline L. Townsend, Ph. B., Department of Education, State Normal School, San Diego, California; Marion Paine Stevens, B. S. (Teachers College), Ethical Culture School, New York City.  
(Per A. I. Gates' 1925 article on beginning readers, the primer was by Kendall and Townsend and the manual by Stevens. The manual had phony phonics, but a great deal of it.)  
D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
1917-1918 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog, N. B. Smith p. 134)  
Gordon Readers, New Series (Primer, 1st-5th, teacher's manual)  
Gordon, Emma K. and M. Stockard

D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
 1927 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 American Primer for Catholic Schools  
 American First Reader for Catholic Schools  
 Higgins, J. and Others  
 D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
 1927 (In 1928 Catalog - Books 1st-4th)  
 Horton-Carey Readers (See p. 213, 435 in Nila Banton Smith's book)  
 Horton, Edith and Annie Carey  
 D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, New York, Chicago  
 1927 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog - 10 volumes)  
 Moore-Wilson Readers (See p. 213, 434 in Nila Banton Smith's book)  
 Moore, Maude and Harry B. Wilson  
 D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
 1927 (In the 1928 United States Catalog)  
 American First Reader for Catholic Schools  
 Higgins, J. and Others  
 D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Child's First Book  
 D. C. Heath & Co., Boston, New York, Chicago  
 1942, Revised 1955  
 Reading for Interest (Primer to Fourth Reader)  
 Witty, Paul A.  
 D. C. Heath and Company, Boston  
 1991 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
 Heath Reading  
 Alvermann, Donna, Connie A. Bridge, Barbara A. Schmidt, Lynden W. Searfoss, Peter Winograd, Scott  
 G. Paris, Bertram Bruce, Maureen Priestly-Romero, Richard P. Santeusanto, Norma Goonen, Sharon  
 Kossack  
 D. C. Heath, Lexington, Massachusetts

Also see earlier entries for Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston, before it became two separate companies

Anna B. Badlam wrote articles for the Primary Teacher about 1882 endorsing the teaching of what sounded like real phonics. Badlam's 1887 book very possibly used A PHONIC APPROACH TO JUDGE FROM ANNA B. BADLAM'S ARTICLES.

Julia McNair Wright wrote Nature Readers, Nos. 1-3, for Heath, in 1887-1889. Harvard has a copy of Nature Reader No. 1, Sea Side and Way Side, copyrighted in 1887 and published in 1891. It is natural history material and meant it to be used as the primary beginning material to teach reading. The title page quoted a verse by Longfellow addressed to Agassiz, which suggests where Mrs. Wright's inspiration was probably coming from. Whether the Temperance Readers were also meant as materials to teach beginning reading is not known. Mrs. Wright's Nature Readers and her Temperance series, 1st through 4th readers, was still in print in 1912 according to the United States Catalog. Her Nature Readers used A MEANING APPROACH.

Sarah Fuller's An Illustrated Primer is discussed in this history. E. B. Huey discussed it approvingly in his 1908 book, The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading, on page 319 and following, and page 442, and said it was copyrighted in 1898 and published by D. C. Heath Company, Boston. Yet, an 1888 edition is listed on page 69 of Early American Textbooks. Based on Fuller's teaching of deaf-mutes in Boston,

the book was recommended also for hearing children. It was still in print in 1928, according to the 1928 United States Catalog. A MEANING APPROACH WITH SOMETHING LIKE PHONY PHONICS.

The Heart of Oak books by Charles Eliot Norton have been discussed at length in this history. Although omitted totally from Nila Banton Smith's "history" written in 1932 at Columbia Teachers College, New York, they were discussed approvingly by Reeder in his 1900 history also written at Columbia Teachers College. The Heart of Oak texts were also discussed by E. B. Huey on page 254 of his 1908 book. He said:

"Most of the present-day series of readers are based on literature as the subject-matter, and the 'Heart of Oak' series, a six-book series edited by Charles Eliot Norton perhaps marks the extreme of this tendency to 'read for literature's sake,' as contrasted with the other extreme represented in the Willson books."

The Marcius Willson series of 1860 had been informational. Huey gave the Heart of Oak series an 1894 original publication date on page 442 of his bibliography, which may well be correct. By 1905, the series included Book One to Book Seven. They were still in print in 1928 and were a literature/natural-method series. A MEANING APPROACH.

Florence Bass signed her 1898 Introduction, adding Indianapolis, Ind. It recommended the classic sentence approach in script, including little boxes of word cards for each child, and then recommended what sounded as if it might be a true synthetic phonic approach. Not enough photocopies are available to determine whether it was or was not. The 1898 Florence Bass material used A MEANING APPROACH INITIALLY POSSIBLY FOLLOWED WITH TRUE SYNTHETIC PHONICS.

Edith G. Alger's 1901 book, *Primer of Work and Play*, was listed by Edmund Burke Huey on pages 342-343 and 442 of *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. Huey said on pages 342 and 343:

"Miss Maud Summers, in her suggestive beginners' book, 'The Thought Reader,' Book I, emphasizes the importance of children's doing much of this early blackboard reading silently, and urges that when there is reproduction aloud, it should not necessarily be in the exact words that are upon the board. Thus the children in the very beginning of reading come to think of it as the getting or giving of thought from what is written, rather than as the naming of certain written words.... Miss Summers would have the children sometimes read by acting the thought of what is written, as in reading such sentences as 'Hop, skip and jump'.... 'The Primer of Work and Play,' by Edith G. Alger, also suggests much of this reading by actions."

It is obvious that Edith G. Alger's dominant approach was "meaning," not "sound," so her materials can be labeled as using A MEANING APPROACH.

The Gordon Series of 1902-1910 was a phonics series which made the obligatory bows to meaning by the use of some sight words. Presumably the 1917-18 material was similar. A PHONIC APPROACH

The Library of Congress has a copy of *Teaching How to Read, A Manual for Teachers*, 1918, by Marion Paine Stevens, B. S. (Teachers College), Ethical Culture School, New York City, "To Accompany The Kendall Primer, The Kendall First Reader, The Kendall Second Reader." Those were written by Calvin N. Kendall and Caroline I. Townsend. The manual used phony phonics approaches, but a great emphasis and time were spent on them. The Kendall series, therefore, was A MEANING SERIES WITH A VERY HEAVY USE OF PHONY PHONICS.

The 1942 and 1955 materials by Paul A. Witty almost certainly used a “meaning” approach with two-step, whole-word “phonics.”

The 1991 program, Heath Reading, was reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the Heath Reading samples at first grade, none had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” but 4/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score had also been 4/6, but for “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score was zero. Not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” The “implicit” phonics approach must obviously be based on the analysis of whole, meaning-bearing words. The program obviously does not have a true phonic “sound” emphasis.

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1887 (In 1912 U. S. Cat. pub. by Amer. Bk.; but only speller, also by Amer. Bk., in 1928 U. S. Catalog)

Pollard’s Synthetic Method of Reading and Spelling, A Complete Manual

Pollard’s Synthetic 1st, 2nd, 3rd Readers

Pollard’s Intermediate Reader (1899),

Pollard’s Advanced Reader

Pollard’s Advanced Spellers

Busy Work for Little Fingers (1887)

Pollard, Rebecca Smith (1831-1917)

Western Publishing House, Chicago (First privately published)

Pollard’s letters of recommendation from pleased parents concerning the success of her method with first graders (based on true synthetic phonics, or “sound”), which are cited in the body of this history, date from 1885, so her method was invented by the school year of 1884-1885 or before. However, it was apparently not published publicly until 1887.

This series included A Complete Manual, Pollard’s Synthetic First Reader, Second Reader, Third Reader, Intermediate Reader, and Advanced Reader, and “Pollard’s Advanced Spellers,” the last published as one volume at least by 1897. If the dates in Early American Textbooks are correct (and they sometimes are not), Western Publishing House was still publishing Pollard’s material in 1897. It was possibly still the publisher in 1899 when the Intermediate Reader came out. That date of publication was given in the 1912 United States Catalog. The Pollard materials were in print in 1912 according to the United States Catalog, but by then were being published by American Book Company. All of Pollard’s materials were out of print by the time the 1928 United States Catalog was published, except her “Synthetic Spellers,” presumably “Pollard’s Advanced Spellers,” a 232-page one-volume book listed on page 120 of Early American Textbooks, published by Western Publishing House, Chicago, in 1897.

Pollard’s remarkable success with true synthetic phonics (“sound”) and the appalling reaction towards it of the “experts” has been discussed at length in this history. As a sample of the reaction by “experts,” as mentioned elsewhere, Colonel Parker referred to Pollard’s “Synthetic” method as the method “full of sin.” Pollard’s 1887 series could have protected America from the plague of functional illiteracy from which it suffers. The fate of the Pollard series is a classic example of the harm that results from following “experts” instead of relying on the ordinary common sense of ordinary people. Only too often, the remark the late Bishop Fulton J. Sheen made about “intellectuals” applies to “experts,” as well. Bishop Sheen, a prolific author and philosopher himself, defined “intellectuals” as those people who have been educated beyond their intelligence. Pollard’s materials used A SYNTHETIC PHONICS APPROACH.

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Before 1888 (From note in 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Kelly’s Universal Readers, 1st-5th,

Brann, Rev. Henry A., Rector, St. Elizabeth's Church  
Thomas Kelly, New York, Publisher  
1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue, Harvard copy of primer.)  
Kelly's Universal Readers, New ed., 1st-5th, Primer  
Brann, Rev. Henry A., Rector, St. Elizabeth's Church  
Thomas Kelly, New York, Publisher  
1888 (In 1885-1890 American Cat.)  
The Continental Readers, 1st, 2nd, 3rd  
Campbell, William A. and Elizabeth A. Allen  
Kelly, Taintor  
1889 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 79)  
The Continental Fourth Reader  
Campbell, William A. and Elizabeth A. Allen  
Thomas Kelly, New York  
1890 (Harvard copy)  
The Continental First Reader  
Campbell, William A.  
Mutual Book Co., New York

Harvard library has an 1888 copy of the Universal Primer. Kelly's series by Rev. Brann does not appear in Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900. The 1885-1890 American Catalogue listed "Kelly's Universal Primer ['88]" and "Kelly's Universal Reader. 1st-5th. New ed. ['88]." Since a new edition appeared in 1888, the original series must have been published before that date. The 1888 edition probably was out of print in 1912 since it was not listed in the 1912 United States Catalog. A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Early American Textbooks lists the Reading Speller. First Book, by Wm. A. Campbell, published by Text Book Co. in 1883 and Daniel Van Winkle in 1886, and the Second Book in 1883 by Text Book Co. As shown above, in 1888 and 1889 Campbell's readers were published by Kelly and Taintor, and in 1890 by Mutual Book Co. See the earlier entry on the Wm. A. Campbell readers, on which Thomas Kelly was one of the publishers by 1888. It is possible the Mutual Book Company which published a Campbell text in 1890 was the successor to Thomas Kelly who published a Campbell text in 1889. Campbell's readers are discussed in this history. They were not in print in 1912 according to the 1912 United States Catalog, and used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS

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1888 or Before (Harvard copy of speller)  
Practical Educational Series  
F. F. Hansell & Bro., New Orleans, Louisiana

Harvard library has an 1888 copy of Practical Educational Series - First Lessons in Spelling, published by F. F. Hansell & Bro., New Orleans. Its title suggests the probability that the Hansell series also included reading books, but I have found no other trace of Hansell materials. The Preface to the Hansell speller refers to a "change of sentiment" on spelling, confirming the return of spelling to importance in American schools by 1888, after the Parker/Quincy influence from about 1875-1883 had died down.

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1888 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Illustrated Scripture Primer, per doz., 75c.  
Richmond, Mrs. E. J.  
Phillips & H.

Listed in the American Catalogue for 1885-1890. No further information is available. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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- 1889-1891 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog under Normal Readers)  
The Normal Course in Reading  
Todd, Emma J. and William Bramwell Powell  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston, and Chicago  
1893 (In 1890-95 Amer. Cat.; In 1912 U. S. Catalog by Silver)  
The New Script Primer  
Faber, Caroline A.  
Potter & Putnam, New York (Original publishers)  
1894 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog, N. B. Smith p. 134 to 138, and 430)  
Rational Method in Reading, The (Primer, 1st-6th and Manual)  
Ward, Edward Gendar  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston, and Chicago  
1897 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue)  
Wake-Robin Series  
Potter & Putnam, New York (Original publishers. See note below, since Silver may have been the later publisher.)  
1897 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog, N. B. Smith p. 142, 143, 430)  
Stepping Stones to Literature (11 volumes, first to eighth grades)  
Arnold, Sarah Louise; Charles B. Gilbert  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston, and Chicago  
1901 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Arnold Primer (See Arnold's material under Iroquois in 1913)  
Arnold, Sarah Louise  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston, and Chicago  
1905 or Before (In 1905 American Catalogue and 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Our First School Book  
Ferris, C. S.  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
1906 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Silver, Burdett Readers (5 vols.)  
Powers, Ella Marie and Thomas Minard Balliet (Wrote Morse 1902 series)  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
1907 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
Little Helper (Books 1 and 2)  
Baum, M.  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
1907-1908 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
American Normal Readers (Books 1, 2, 3)  
Harvey, M. L.  
Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
1909 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog. See N. B. Smith p. 142 and 175))  
Progressive Road to Reading (Bks. 1-4; Reviewed Harvard copy of Bk. 1)  
Burchill, Georgine - N.Y. City Teacher; William L. Ettinger, Assoc. Supt., N.Y. City.; Edgar Dubs  
Shimer, District Supt., N. Y. City  
Silver, Burdett and Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Nature, Myth and Story  
Thompson, J. G. and T. E. Thompson (See Ginn and Morse entries)



Silver, Burdett and Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
 1912 and Later (1st-1912 U.S. Cat.; Prim., 1st, 2nd in 1928 Cat.) Rational Method in Reading -  
 Additional Readers (Primer, 1st, 2nd)  
 Ward, M. A. and Barnum, M. D. (NOT E. G. Ward of 1894 series, above)  
 Silver, Burdett and Co., New York, Boston, and Chicago  
 1913 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 See and Say Phonetic Series (Books 1-3, Manuals 1-3)  
 Arnold, Sarah Louise, Elizabeth C. Bonney and E. F. Southworth  
 Iroquois Publishing Co., Syracuse, New York  
 1917 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Thompson Readers (1st-4th, Teacher's Manual 68c, Word Building 68c)  
 Thompson, J. G. and I. Bigwood (See Morse and Ginn on Thompson)  
 Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
 1917 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Progressive Road to Reading, Enlarged. Ed. (to Bk. 6, Manual 1919) Kleiser, C. and Others  
 (Kleiser-Ettinger-Shimer on Primer, per Gates)  
 Silver, Burdett & Co., New York, Boston and Chicago  
 1922-1923 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Progressive Road to Silent Reading; Fourth-Six Years (3 books)  
 Ettinger, W. L. and Others  
 Silver, Burdett & Co., N. Y., Newark, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco  
 1925-1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog - See N. B. Smith p. 212)  
 The Pathway to Reading (Through 6th)  
 Hosis, James Fleming (Ph. D., Teachers College, Columbia, 1920); Bessie Blackstone Coleman, Willis L.  
 Uhl  
 Silver, Burdett & Co., N. Y., Newark, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco  
 1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
 My First Book  
 Coleman, Bessie B.  
 Silver, Burdett & Co., N. Y., Newark, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco  
 1940-1945 (N. B. Smith, p. 277, 282, 289)  
 Learning to Read Program (From pre-primer through 4th grade)  
 (As an example of the low "literary" quality of such sight-word basal readers, this series had a 4th grade  
 book actually entitled, Distant Doorways. Smith also wrote The First Productive Spelling Book, publisher  
 unknown)  
 Smith, Nila Banton  
 Silver, Burdett Company, New York  
 1991 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
 World of Reading  
 Pearson, P. David, Dale D. Johnson, Theodore Clymer, Roselmina Indrisano, Richard L. Venezky, James  
 F. Baumann, Elfrieda Hiebert, Marian Toth, Carl Grant, Jeanne Paratore  
 Silver Burdett & Ginn  
 (As of November 30, 1994, Silver Burdett & Ginn, apparently one company by 1994, were reported to be  
 a subsidiary of Simon and Schuster, which had reportedly been a subsidiary of Paramount but was  
 reportedly a subsidiary of Viacom by 1994.)

The 1889-1891 Normal Course was apparently a very important series, with eight volumes: primer  
 and 1st through 4th readers, and alternate 2nd, 3d and 4th readers, which obviously were published in  
 response to the "supplementary reading" enthusiasm of the period. Harvard has The New First Reader,  
 The Normal Course In Reading, 1895. The material was listed in the 1912 United States Catalog under  
 "Readers - Normal" and "Primers" but was not listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. Silver Burdett

became the publishers of Ward's very popular phonic materials in the 1890's, which must have overshadowed this series. THE NORMAL MATERIAL WAS A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS

Dr. Adolf Douai wrote The Rational Phonetic Readers, First to Third, between 1872 and 1874, which were published by a New York publisher, E. Steiger. The E. Steiger company advertised their German-American primers and texts on the cover of Douai's 1872 The Rational Phonetic Primer, so Douai's move to phonics may have been inspired by German materials. It was probably also prompted by the American move to phonics in reading in the 1860's and early 1870's, which was so abruptly terminated after 1875, as has been discussed in this history. Both the duplication in names, "Rational," and the fact that both Douai's and Ward's series taught heavy phonics, suggests that Ward of Brooklyn modeled his 1894 series on Douai's 1872-1874 series, copies of which probably still lingered in the New York City area. Ward's highly successful phonic method has been discussed in this history. In March, 1925, the article, "Problems in Beginning Reading," by Arthur Irving Gates, was published in the Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University. It listed 21 widely-used beginning reading series, which Gates had selected randomly out of a longer list of widely used American series. In that 1925 article, Gates said that Ward's primer had been revised in 1919 and Ward's manual in 1920. Only the original Ward materials and not those revisions have been examined in writing this history. It is possible that the Ward phonic materials were watered down in those revisions, just as Fassett's 1912 phonic Beacon material was watered down in its 1921-1922 revision, as has been discussed in this history. Ward's series was still in print by Silver, Burdett in 1928. WARD'S MATERIAL AFTER A BRIEF SIGHT-WORD BEGINNING USED A PHONIC APPROACH.

The Wake-Robin Series was listed in the American Catalogue for 1895-1900 as two volumes, volume 1 for 30 cents and volume 2 for 36 cents. It did not appear as published by Potter & Putnam in the 1912 United States Catalog, but very probably was the same as the material shown as published by "Silver," listed under "Readers, Biographical," "Wake-Robin Series of Biography," in three books, with book 1 for 36 cents, book 2 for 42 cents, and book 3 for 54 cents. Wake-Robin Book I was listed as one of the approved books at second grade for New York City schools in Taylor's 1912 book on teaching reading. Taylor's book is listed in Appendix D. The Wake-Robin Series was obviously, therefore, not a reading series since Book I was placed at the second grade level by the New York City schools.

The 1897 Stepping Stones to Literature was apparently one of the most widely used series. Nila Banton Smith mentioned (page 124) that it was prescribed for the first half of first grade (Class A) in the 1897 Utah course of study for the public schools, along with Werner's and Finch's primers. Smith said Arnold had been supervisor of schools in Boston in 1897, and Gilbert was superintendent of schools in Rochester, New York. Smith said Arnold also wrote Reading: How to Teach It, emphasizing literature appreciation, in 1899. Nila Banton Smith wrongly stated concerning the Stepping Stones to Literature series:

"There can be no doubt that the pioneers in literary readers were... Stepping Stones... and Bender's Graded Literature Readers (...1899)...."

Yet the real pioneers in literary readers were Boston materials from the 1870's onwards, discussed previously. On page 142, Smith also made a wrong statement concerning the period in which the sentence method was in use. It actually had been in use from after 1870 until about 1918, but she moved the period of its use up to 1909, presumably as part of her patterned burying of the Boston anti-phonics campaign in the 1870's, discussed previously in this history. Smith said that Stepping Stones:

"...made moderate use of the method. It was not, however, until the years between 1909 and 1918 that the method enjoyed the height of its popularity, as applied in such well-known series as

Baker and Carpenter's Language Readers (The Macmillan Company), Burchill-Ettinger-Shimer's The Progressive Road to Reading (Silver, Burdett and Company), Free and Treadwell's Reading-Literature (Row, Peterson and Company), Bryce and Spaulding's The Aldine Readers (Newson and Company), Coe and Christie's Story Hour Readers (American Book Company [Ed.: Christie had the married name of A. J. Dillon by the time Smith wrote.], Dyer and Brady's The Merrill Readers (Charles E. Merrill Company), Hervey and Hix's The Horace Mann Readers (Longmans, Green and Company, Baker and Thorndike's Everyday Classics (The Macmillan Company), and the Elson Readers (Scott Foresman and Company)."

Smith's listing is possibly correct concerning those non-phonics series popular in the period 1909-1918. She very possibly got that list from Gates, also at Columbia Teachers College at that time, since, in his 1925 article mentioned above, Gates had listed the Coe and Dillon material as Coe and Christie material.

The most popular phonic series in that period were apparently Ward's, the Beacon Series, and Gordon's, all of which made ritual bows to teaching by "meaning." Pollard's truly phonic materials were dying out in the 1909-1918 period. They were then being published by American Book, which was publishing great numbers of other old reading series, including the best-known 1879 McGuffey phonic series and the 1901 McGuffey sight-word series. However, Pollard's reading material was out of print by 1928, although her spelling book remained in print. The Stepping Stones to Literature series was in print in 1912 and in 1928 according to the United States Catalogs. Harvard's copy of Stepping Stones to Literature - A First Reader, shows it used the sentence method and A MEANING APPROACH.

The Arnold Primer was listed in the American Catalogue as having been published between 1900 and 1905 and was still in print in 1928, according to the United States Catalog. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

Sarah Louise Arnold was also an author on the See and Say Series of 1913, not published by Silver, Burdett. The series was in print in 1928 according to the United States Catalog, which described it as the "See and say phonetic series. 6 bks." Arthur I. Gates included the See and Say Series on his list of widely used series in his 1925 article. Yet Silver, Burdett which had published both Ward's very early and widely used phonics series as well as Arnold's original sight word series, did not publish Arnold's later widely used See and Say Series which was apparently A PHONIC SERIES.

The 1909 Burchill-Ettinger-Shimer Progressive Road to Reading and its 1917 revision by Kleiser, Ettinger and Shimer straddled two periods. Nila Banton Smith listed the first under the literature/sentence approach (p. 142) and the second under the silent reading approach (p. 175), only listing the authors as Ettinger-Shimer. That obscured the fact that two different series were being discussed. According to Gates, the manual for the second series was published in 1919, which placed it in the silent reading period. Upper grade readers were published in 1922-1923 by "W. L. Ettinger and Others" as shown in the 1928 U. S. Catalog. The Introduction of Book I of the 1909 Harvard copy of The Progressive Road to Reading contained the same philosophy as others of the period. It started with "meaning" but gave heavy drill on supplemental phonics. Whether later editions did is unknown. In Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading by Joseph S. Taylor, The Macmillan Company, New York: 1912, Taylor quoted from personal letters to him from Shimer concerning Shimer's viewpoints on reading. The letters seemed to describe the "meaning" approach with two-step phony phonics, but in practice the 1909 Progressive reader on which Shimer collaborated was more heavily phonic. THE APPROACH IN 1909 WAS HEAVY MEANING AT THE BEGINNING FOLLOWED BY HEAVY PHONICS.

James Fleming Hoscic, an author on the 1925-1927 series, Pathway to Reading, was obviously a reading "expert." He took his Ph. D. at Columbia Teachers College in 1920. According to the 1928

United States Catalog under readers, his 1921 book published by Teachers College for \$1.50, *Empirical Studies in School Reading*, was still in print in 1928. Willis L. Uhl, with James Fleming and Bessie Blackstone Coleman a co-author on the 1925-1927 *Pathway to Reading*, is quoted as an “expert” by Nila Banton Smith on pages 167, 191, 195, 201, 212, 432 and 433. Harvard’s copy of the primer shows Blackston’s name first, but only identifies her as a “Specialist in Reading.” The copy shows Uhl as Associate Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin, and Hosis as Associate Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, Formerly Head of Department of English, Chicago Normal College. Uhl wrote “The Use of the Results of Reading Tests as Bases for Planning Remedial Work.” *Elementary School Journal*, XVII (Dec. 1916), p. 273-280; *Scientific Determination of the Content of the Elementary School Course in Reading*, University of Wisconsin: 1921, (in the 1928 United States Catalog), and *The Materials of Reading*, Newark: Silver, Burdett Co., 1924. The Newark location, presumably in Delaware, suggests the International Reading Association of Newark, Delaware, founded in 1956, may have located in Newark because of some such Silver, Burdett connection. It was Silver, Burdett which published Nila Banton Smith’s 1932 (?) doctoral dissertation in 1934, *American Reading Instruction*, and they also published her 1940-1945 reading series. Possibly they published *The First Productive Spelling Book* by her, listed in the Library of Congress catalog under PE 1144.S66 Office, which I was not able to obtain from general circulator but possibly could have found on further inquiry. (Concerning the founding and history of the IRA, see Blumenfeld’s 1973 *The New Illiterates*, pages 119-122). Nila Banton Smith stated elsewhere that none of the reading series published from 1925 to 1930 used a phonics approach. Neither did *The Pathway to Reading Primer* which had a small sight vocabulary and silent-reading exercises. It can be presumed to have used a straight Code 1 MEANING APPROACH.

The 1991 series, *World of Reading*, on which Pearson, Clymer, Venezky and others were the authors, was reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993*, compiled by the Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the first grade samples from the *World of Reading* of Silver Burdett & Ginn, none had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” but 6/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score had been 6/6, but for “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score had been zero. Not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” Obviously, the 1991 *World of Reading* series is not teaching synthetic phonics to beginning readers. Considering the publication date and the title of the series, it is probably “whole-language” oriented.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1890 and 1900**

1890 (In 1885-1890 American Catalogue)  
Reformed Primer and First Reader  
Heilprin, L.  
Babyhood Publishing Company

Listed in the American Catalogue for 1885-1890. No further information is available. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY WAS FORMED IN 1890 FROM THE FOUR FIRMS OF IVISON, BARNES, APPLETON AND VAN ANTWERP, AS DISCUSSED ELSEWHERE. LATER IN

1890, THE NEW AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY BOUGHT OUT THE SCHOOL BOOK LIST OF HARPER.

1890 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
Harper's Sixth Reader  
Baldwin, James (See Harper for the rest of his 1889 Harper series published by American Book Company after 1890, possibly still under Harper's name)  
Harper (American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago)  
1892 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue)  
Supplementary First Reader  
Rebecca. D. Rickoff (Worked on Appleton Series Primer of 1878)  
American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago)  
1892 (In 1890-1895 American Catalogue. First published in 1874 by Ivison per 1876 American Catalogue. Also see Swinton - Ivison entry in 1876-1884 American Catalogue on supplementary series written with W. Swinton.)  
Cathcart's Literary Reader, 2d Ed., Rev., Enl., Rewritten  
Cathcart, G. R.  
American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago  
1894 (In Early American Textbooks, page 83)  
First Lessons in Reading Based on the Phonic-Word Method (80 pages)  
Teacher's Edition (143 pages)  
Fundenberg, Elizabeth H.  
American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago  
1896 (Listed in 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs)  
McGuffey's Chart Primer (Per doz. \$1.20 in 1928, when dated to 1896)  
(No other information is available.)  
American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago)  
1897 (In 1928 United States Catalog, Harvard copy of "First Year")  
School Reading by Grades  
(An 8 book series and a 5 book series, plus apparently the Baldwin 1899 primer below)  
Baldwin, James  
American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago  
1899 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
The Baldwin Primer  
Scripture, M. (May Kirk)  
American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago  
1899 (Harvard copy. In Early American Textbooks, p. 73)  
First Days in School, A Primer  
Coe, Ida and Seth T. Stewart  
American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
1900 (Bibliography, Early American Textbooks)  
American Public Schools: History and Pedagogics [possibly of interest]  
Swett, John (Author on Barnes/Bancroft reader of 1867 and co-author on Bancroft 1883 series, listed elsewhere in this appendix)  
American Book Company, New York  
1900 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
New Education Readers (1st-4th) "A Synthetic and Phonic Word Method"  
Demarest, A. J. and William M. Van Sickle  
American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati and Chicago  
1901 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog) (See earlier entries on McGuffey's)  
New McGuffey Readers (First-Fifth)

Baldwin, James  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati and Chicago  
 Before 1905 (In 1900-1905 Amer. Cat.; in 1912 and 1928 U. S. Cat.)  
 Pathways in Nature and Literature (1st, 2nd readers, teacher's ed.)  
 Christie, S. R. and E. R. Shaw (1905 Am. Cat. lists only Christie)  
 University (the publisher between 1900 and 1905)  
 American Book Co. (publisher by 1912 to after 1928)  
 1905 or Earlier (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)  
 Harmonic Second Reader (Presumably part of a series)  
 Ripley and Tapper  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1905 or Earlier (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue and 1928 U.S.Cat.)  
 Lee Readers (1st-5th)  
 Lee, E. H.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1905 or Earlier (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)  
 Culture Readers, Books 1 and 2, and Manual of Natural Method  
 "Miss Merrill" (Author? or Publisher? per J. S. Taylor who showed that after the title of the series, in his 1912 book, in Appendix D.)  
 Warner, E. E. (Shown as author in 1900-1905 Am. Cat.)  
 "Appleton" Publisher (Presumably division of American Book in 1900)  
 (By 1912 United States Catalog, E. E. Warner's 1910 version of Culture Readers was being published in 2 vols. by C. E. Merrill. Was that "Miss Merrill"? See also Hinds as Warner's publisher and also Noble and Bardeen.)  
 1905 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
 Rose Primer  
 Turpin, E. H. L.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1906 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Classics Old and New - First-Fifth Readers  
 Alderman, E. A.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1906 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Action Primer  
 Baker, Thomas O.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1906 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog as well as 1912)  
 Brooks Readers  
 Brooks, S. D.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1906 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Carroll & Brooks Readers (Only primer listed in 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Carroll, C. F. and Brooks, S. C. (NOT S. D. Brooks as above)  
 "Appleton" in 1906 and 1928 (Presumably a division of American Book)  
 1906 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
 Jingle Primer  
 Brown, C. L. and C. S. Bailey  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1906 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
 Indian Primer  
 Fox, Florence C. (See her G. P. Putnam's Sons entry)

American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1908 or Before (Per E. B. Huey, p. 341, 442. See entry under 1928)  
 Old Time Stories Retold for Children  
 Smythe, E. Louise  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati and Chicago  
 1908 or Before (Per E. B. Huey, p. 278, 339-41, 442.)  
 Four True Stories of Life and Adventure;  
 The Story of Washington  
 Smith, Jessie R.  
 E. H. Harison (sic), Publisher, New York (Included here with American Book because Smith's books are related to E. Louise Smythe's book, above. See discussion below.)  
 1908 (In 1912 United States Catalogue under Primers)  
 Child World Primer  
 Bentley, A. E. and G. R. Johnston  
 "Barnes" (Presumably a Division of American Book)  
 1908 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Primer  
 Hyde, A.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1909 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Standard Catholic Readers First to Fifth.  
 Doyle, M. E.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1911 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Expression Readers (1st-8th)  
 Baldwin, James and Ida C. Bender (See her 1899 Merrill material and his other Harper and American Book materials)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 In 1912 U. S. Catalog and 1928  
 Choice Literature - New Edition (Books 1-7) (First ed. Sheldon & Co., 1898)  
 Williams, Sherman  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 School readers. 2 bks. 1st... 2nd  
 (Possibly the 1897 texts published by Eaton)  
 Taylor, Frances Lillian  
 American Book Company  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Crane Readers (1st-5th) (See the 1893 entry on Crane)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog; Originally published in 1886 by Porter and Coates, Philadelphia, and then The Werner Co., Chicago.)  
 New Normal Readers (five-book series)  
 Raub, Albert Newton (See Sower of Philadelphia concerning Raub)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Universal Primer  
 Klingensmith, Annie (See entries on Bancroft/Indiana, Flanagan, Educ.)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog 1st-3rd, in 1928 Primer-5th)  
 Golden Treasury Readers 1st-5th (Also another "First Reader" in 1928)

Stebbins, C. M. and M. H. Coolidge  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 New Graded American Educational Readers (Nos. 1-5)  
 (Possible revision of The Graded School Readers, Eclectic Educational Series, by Thomas Wadleigh  
 Harvey, 1875, Wilson, Hinkle & Co.)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1913? (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Story Hour Readers  
 Coe, Ida and A. J. Dillon (Gates said Ida Coe and A. J. Christie, Mrs. Dillon's maiden name)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1914 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Pantomime Primer  
 White, E. G.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1916 (Reviewed by W. S. Gray, Elem. Sch. Jnl., p. 38, 1917-1918)  
 New Barnes Primer (By 1924, Laidlaw was pub. See also under Laidlaw.)  
 Dressel, Herman; May Robbins; Ellis U. Graff  
 A. S. Barnes Co. (Apparently division of American Book Company)  
 1918 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Picture Primer  
 Beebe, E. M.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1920 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 The Insular First Reader - New Edition  
 Gibbs, David - Formerly Div. Supt. Schools, Philippine Islands (With Anna H. Carter and Mary E.  
 Polley, Teachers, Phil. Normal School)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, Chicago, Atlanta  
 1923 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
 Easy Steps in Reading (Primer)  
 Coe, Ida and L. Specht (See 1913? entry above)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1927 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
 Child's First Book in Reading  
 McElroy, M. J.  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1927 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Everyday Reading (Books 1-3)  
 Pearson, H. C. and C. W. Hunt  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Primary Reader  
 Smythe, E. L. (Probably E. Louise Smythe. See 1908 entry.)  
 American Book Co., New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1930 (See Nila Banton Smith, p. 213 and 433)  
 Fact and Story Readers  
 Suzzallo, Henry (1875-1933), George Earl Freeland (1886-?),  
 Katherine Louise McLaughlin (1880-?), Ada Maria Skinner (1878-?)  
 American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago  
 1930 (On pages 1719 and 1720 of Cumulative Book Index 1928-1932)  
 Do and Learn Readers (1st-3rd years and manual)



White, Margaret L. and Alice Hanthorn  
American Book Company, New York

1948-1952, (Revised 1963, 1965, N. B. Smith p. 277, 286, 287, 293, 326, 342-44, 359, 363, 365, 435;  
reviewed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates* on pages 300-301)

Betts Basic Readers

Betts, Emmett A. and Carolyn M. Welch

American Book Company, New York

1963 (One of the 27 programs used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. Studies)

We Learn English Series

Bumpass, Fay L.

American Book Company, New York

1971 (See Blumenfeld's review, *The New Illiterates*, p. 310-311-312)

The READ Series (Reading Experience and Development)

Johnson, Marjorie Seddon; Roy A. Kress; John D. McNeil

American Book Company, New York

American Book Company was formed in 1890, as discussed previously, from Ivison; Barnes; Appleton; and Van Antwerp, Bragg. Later in 1890, it bought the schoolbook listings of Harper. Also, as is obvious from this bibliography, American Book Company later bought many reading materials that had originally been published by many other companies.

With the formation of American Book Company in 1890, the early 1880's textbook war, taking place in the Midwest, between the 1878 Appleton phony-phonics sight-word series and the revised truly phonic 1879 McGuffey series came to a permanent end. What is surprising is that Vail in his history of the McGuffey readers made no mention of the fact that the two formerly competing companies had merged, along with two others, in 1890, only saying that Van Antwerp, Bragg had joined American Book.

That is one of many indications that Vail did not tell the whole story, apparently obscuring aspects which for some reason he considered negative. Perhaps, to mention that Van Antwerp, Bragg was only one-quarter of the new firm would have seemed to downgrade Van Antwerp, Bragg's importance. Perhaps Vail retained his hostility to his former arch-competitors, the Appleton group, and to their reading series which had carried on a publishing "war" with the 1879 McGuffey edition in the Midwest in the 1880's. Therefore, Vail may have preferred to ignore Appleton's presence in the new company. After all, Vail had been the editor of the famous 1879 McGuffey series, and apparently the author of its phonic book one. Vail obviously felt towards the 1879 McGuffey series as a father feels to his child. It is very possible that Vail left American Book Company because of some conflict, since his 1911 McGuffey history was published by another company, and that is very surprising.

Fundenberg wrote her material in Pittsburgh in 1894, and it is interesting that her philosophy was like Agassiz'. This material was in print in 1912, according to the United States Catalog but was not in print in 1928. Harvard's copy shows that the material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Harvard library has a copy of James Baldwin's *School Reading By Grades, First Year*, published in 1897. The text used the sight-word, sentence method and later added scanty, inadequate phonics. It used A MEANING APPROACH WITH INADEQUATE PHONICS.

Early American Textbooks wrongly shows Seth T. Stewart as the sole author of *First Days in School, A Primer*, the 1899 book listed above published by American Book Company. He took out the 1899 copyright, as shown by Harvard's copy, but Ida Coe's name appears under Stewart's on the title page of

Harvard's copy and also in the 1928 United States Catalog, which reported the book still in print in that year. The 1928 United States Catalog also reported the 1923 book, *Easy Steps in Reading*, by I. Coe and L. Specht as in print for 56 cents by American Book. Stewart is shown on the 1899 text as Associate Superintendent of Schools, Borough of Manhattan and the Bronx, New York City, "Assisted by Ida Coe, of the Brooklyn Primary Schools." The material is completely in script until page 67 of the 92-page book. Words are listed in the back, totalling 84. The book used the sentence approach from the beginning, and used two-step phony phonics, building new words from the initial consonant and endings of other words. No alphabet was included, letters only being taught in this fashion, except on page 66. On that page, before switching to print instead of script, each of the five vowels were shown above one or two script short-vowel words. In no way, of course, can this be conceived as teaching short vowels. The material is appalling, particularly since it was written only five years after Stewart's fellow New York schools associate, Ward, had written his highly successful phonic series. Note also the text was published by American Book Company in 1899, which company is customarily presumed to have still been promoting its McGuffey 1879 phonic series in 1899. Stewart and Coe's material rates perhaps a Code 2. It was A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

James Baldwin wrote *School Reading by Grades*, the 1897-1899 series discussed above, the 1901 McGuffey edition listed below, the Harper series, and supplementary reading materials not listed here. However, the 1899 Baldwin primer was not written by him, since it was signed, "May Kirk, New Haven, Connecticut." The U. S. Catalogs show her name as M. Scripture. She is probably the Mrs. Scripture whose Code 1 beginning reading method was described by E. B. Huey in his book, and the probable wife of the psychologist, Scripture. As stated above, Baldwin's first book in his 1897-1899 series for American Book, meant originally as the beginning text, used the sentence method. Yet the very first pages of the few photocopied pages available from the beginning of Harvard's copy of *The Baldwin Primer* published later use only phrases: "An apple and an arm. A bat and a ball. A cat and a cow." These appear on the page opposite a page showing the words, "apple, arm, ball, bat, cat, cow" with pictures and upper and lower case printed and script A, B, C. Mrs. Scripture was obviously teaching A, B, and C from pictured sight-words. The "Preface" claims, "In teaching words the synthetical and analytical methods are followed simultaneously." In practice, this was probably phony phonics. The material used A MEANING APPROACH PROBABLY WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The 1900 Demarest-Van Sickle materials plagiarized Pollard's story approach on phonics and then used the phonetic material to teach two-step phony phonics on a heavy base of sight words. Harvard's copy of *A Synthetic and Phonic Word Method, Book One*, shows that it wrongly claimed to be a phonic method when it was in fact A MEANING METHOD WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The 1901 *New McGuffey Readers (First-Fifth)* by James Baldwin published by American Book Co. have been discussed at length under the earlier entries for the McGuffey series. That phony phonics, "meaning" series, meant to replace the truly phonic 1879 McGuffey series but which is virtually unknown today, was credited by Vail with a wide sale in 1911. Baldwin wrote fine children's literature which was the probable cause for the popularity of his materials, but he possibly had little to do with deciding the nature of his beginning readers which taught children to read. Baldwin's 1901 material, like all his materials, taught beginning reading with a blatant PHONY PHONICS MEANING APPROACH.

The *Action Primer* of 1906 by Thomas O. Baker is mentioned in *Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading* by Joseph S. Taylor, The Macmillan Company, New York: 1912. Taylor wrote the following on pages 70 and 71:

"The number of verbs used by a child is relatively much larger than in the case of an adult. The child imitates movements before sounds and expresses many actions by gesture. These considerations exhort us to put the emphasis, in early reading matter, upon doing, action,

movement; hence the popularity of fairy tales, myths, and fables, all of which have the narrative form.”

After this Taylor put a footnote, “See The Action Primer by Thomas O. Baker, American Book Co.” It is probable that Baker wrote a sight-word primer, in which children acted out the words they silently read, an approach recommended for years by “experts.” If so, Baker’s primer used a pure MEANING APPROACH.

The 1908 (or before) materials listed above for Jessie R. Smith and E. Louis Smythe are discussed at length by E. B. Huey in his 1908 book. Huey said on pages 276-278:

“It is a matter of gratification that we now have books that are so attractive and that set before the child high standards of beauty. It is an open question, however, whether the idealization of many of the pictures is not an adult one that is somewhat foreign to the child, and whether the use of the child kind of sketches, motivated as his own illustrative drawings are motivated, would not reach his real needs and interests better than these exquisite adult expressions. It is a question, anyway, how much reading owes to his aesthetic development, when pictures are needed rather to assist with natural child interpretations of what is read. The reading-books compiled by Jessie L. Smith, in which children’s stories are illustrated by children’s own illustrative drawings, suggest a very different ideal which is at least worth considering. A specimen illustration is shown below.”

Huey then reproduced in Fig. 53 the drawing, “George Goes Surveying” by Philip Redmond, age 12, from Smith’s “The Story of Washington,” copyrighted by E. H. Harison, publisher, New York. Huey wrote on pages 339-342:

“Miss Jessie R. Smith, of the Santa Rosa, California, Schools, has published two little volumes of such children’s Readers, ‘practically written by children.’ I quote from Professor Burk’s preface to one of these Readers, ‘The Story of Washington,’ and reproduce part of the first story. An illustration of this story, by one of the older children, has been shown on an earlier page.

“The method of the book’s production has been as follows: she first related to her pupils who were from seven to nine years of age, the story of the hero in the best form her instincts could dictate. Some days later, after the story, its form of presentation, and language have somewhat settled in the children’s minds, she has called for reproductions, both oral and in written form, allowing the pupils also to illustrate their written work in any way they pleased. She has then made these reproductions the material for most careful study as to essential elements of plot, salient points of interest, and especially the words and forms of expression used by the children. By this means the story has been reconstructed. Portions over which the children love to linger are brought out to the fullest extent. Their words and forms of language, within the limit of grammatical usage, are followed scrupulously. Much care has been used to keep the stories within a limited vocabulary. Less than 750 different words are used in the entire series, and these, excepting the necessary geographical names are all of the commonest use among children.”“

The method kept real literature with its rich vocabulary away from the children, and limited the children to the use of their already acquired vocabulary. That was a fine recipe for stunting children’s language growth.

Huey followed this with an insipid excerpt from the Washington book. He also included an excerpt from another story, and it was repulsive, particularly for little children. It was entitled The Apples of Idun,

from *Old Time Stories Retold by Children*, published by American Book, “a Reader compiled somewhat similarly by E. Louise Smith, of the Santa Rosa Schools.” The excerpt read in part:

“Once upon a time three of the gods went on a journey. One was Thorn and one was Loki. Loki was ugly and mean.... At last they got very hungry. Then they came to a field with cattle. Thor killed a big ox and put the pieces into a pot. They made a big fire but the meat would not cook. They made the fire bigger and bigger, but the meat would not cook. Then the gods were very cross...”

After quoting this culturally elevating excerpt on casual slaughtering and butchering, Huey said:

“The children’s reproductions of the stories were at first typewritten or mimeographed, and were read in this form. They are, of course, all the more pleased to read their stories when printed. It is, of course, just as natural to discuss with the children an interesting drawing upon the blackboard, and to write and read with them the statements that they make about the objects drawn. This blackboard sentence method is always enjoyed by the children, and fast increases their vocabulary and their familiarity with phrases and sentences that are in common use. Miss Margaret Wheaton describes and illustrates this method in a very intelligible fashion in the *New York Teachers’ Monographs* for November, 1898. Miss Maud Summers, in her suggestive beginners’ book, ‘*The Thought Reader*,’ Book I, emphasizes the importance of children’s doing much of this early blackboard -reading silently, and urges that when there is reproduction aloud it should not necessarily be in the exact words that are upon the board. Thus the children in the very beginning of reading come to think of it as the getting or giving of thought from what is written, rather than as the naming of certain written words.”

The Smith and Smyth materials obviously used A MEANING APPROACH.

Concerning the 1912 entry for Sherman Williams’ readers, the original publisher was Sheldon, not American Book. Harvard library has a copy of *Choice Literature Book One for Primary Grades*, Compiled and Arranged by Sherman Williams, Superintendent of Schools, Glenn Falls, N. Y., published by Sheldon and Company who copyrighted it in 1898. See the entry under Sheldon for further information, which entry quotes from the Harvard copy of Book 1 of Williams’ 1898 series. Yet the “*Choice Literature*” series of Sherman Williams was published by American Book Company, in books 1 - 7 some time before 1912, along with *A Reader for Beginners* by “Williams,” as shown in the 1912 United States Catalog, but with no notation that it was a new edition. Nevertheless, “*Choice Literature, New Ed., 7 Bks.*” by S. Williams, “Comp.,” was listed in the 1928 United States Catalog without *A Reader for Beginners*, and showing a publishing date of 1912 by American Book. Apparently, therefore, there was a second edition sometime after 1898 but before 1912, which was published by American Book by 1912. Williams’ materials with their “literature” emphasis apparently used A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1928 United States Catalog shows that *Story Hour Readers* were written by “E.” Coe and A. J. Dillon, “See main entry.” Yet, in Arthur I. Gates’ long list of popular primers in a 1925 issue of the *Teachers College Record*, Gates reported that the *Story Hour Readers* were written by Coe and Christie (Dillon’s maiden name). Nila Banton Smith repeated that name, and apparently got it directly from Gates and not from his article, because she listed the names when describing the series as one of the popular sentence method/literature readers published between 1909 and 1918. (Gates had not included that information in his article.) If Smith had researched the original materials by herself to determine their nature, instead of depending on hearsay, she might not have repeated Gates’ use of the author’s maiden name. Nila Banton Smith did not give first names in her paragraph reporting on the nature of these readers, but did so in the index, showing Ida Coe and Alice J. Christie. However, Alice J. Christie Dillon should not be confused with S. R. Christy. S. R. Christy and E. R. Shaw wrote *Pathways in Nature* and

Literature, first and second readers and a teacher's edition, published in 1912 and 1928 by American Book. The Christy/Shaw readers were listed in the 1900-1905 American Catalogue as being published initially by University. The Ida Coe and Alice J. Christie Dillon materials published by American Book Company, discussed by Nila Banton Smith, PROBABLY USED A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1914 publication of a "Pantomime Primer" suggests an earlier re-emphasis on the silent reading of the late 1870's through 1890's than is normally considered, which re-emphasis came after about 1920. PROBABLY A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1916 Barnes material (and the 1883 Barnes material) are discussed under Laidlaw and Barnes, which see.

The Insular First Reader - New Edition of 1920 by David Gibbs, obviously meant for use in the Philippines, used a controlled- vocabulary, sight-word approach. The probability is that heavy supplemental phonics was also used, but I cannot tell that from my few Department of Education photocopies. This was the third book in the series, following the Chart Primer and First Year Book. The "Preface" said, "The Insular First Reader has a vocabulary of about five hundred and seventy new words. In addition to these, all important words in the Chart Primer and First Year Book are repeated in this one."

In comparison to the series that came out in the later 1920's, that was a very heavy vocabulary load for first grade by the "experts'" standards, probably at least 800 words. That fact may account for the materials' not being listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. With its controlled vocabulary, it appears to have used a sight-word approach. PROBABLY A MEANING APPROACH WITH SUPPLEMENTARY PHONICS.

Henry Suzzallo and his Columbia Teachers College background, his association with the American Book Company, and his association with the Carnegie foundation have been discussed elsewhere in this history. Like so many of the "experts," Suzzallo wrote grammar school textbooks (spellers and readers, and perhaps others) from about 1911 until shortly before his death in 1933. The profits from the elementary school textbooks that such "experts" wrote for the government schools over which they had such great influence must have been very comfortably remunerative. Henry Suzzallo's Fact and Story Readers of 1930 were listed in the New York Public Library catalog. Before 1981, I requested the Primer - Book 1, under call number RNP6. Despite repeated requests, I could not get it. A note finally came back, "not on shelves, only Book 4." Suzzallo's primer was only one of many first year books that I could not find in libraries. The 1930 Suzzallo material and the 1930 White material probably used MEANING APPROACHES.

Emmett Betts, the co-author of the Betts Basic Readers of 1948 and later, was a major "expert" of the post-World-War-II period, writing a very large, pro-meaning teacher-training book, Foundations of Reading Instruction, American Book Company, 1946. Many years ago, when I was doing student teaching and was required by my college supervisor to use Betts' terrible book as a "guide," I marveled at the fact that his very thick and heavy "guide" gave almost no attention to the subject of phonics.

Whether Emmett Betts was related to George Herbert Betts who had been a student of Dewey about 1904 is unknown. George Herbert Betts had been active in Iowa from about 1915 into the 1920's and had been a co-author of the 1924 Bobbs-Merrill series with Clara Belle Baker and Edna D. Baker. It appears possible that Emmett Betts and George Herbert Betts were related since both came from Iowa. I requested the 1924 primer by George Herbert Betts at the New York Public Library but, like some others, could not get it.

The Betts Basal Readers of 1948 were one of the 27 programs in the 1967 U.S.O.E. studies, listed in Appendix E. Emmett Betts' material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Cooperative Research Program in First-Grade Reading Instruction. Reading Research Quarterly, Summer, 1967, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, listed in its appendix the We Learn English Series by Fay L. Bumpass as one of the instructional materials which were used.

The American Book Company series in 1981 was listed as one of "The Dismal Dozen," by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of Why Johnny STILL Can't Read, Harper & Row, New York, 1981.

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1891 (In 1890-95 American Catalogue under Phonetic System)  
Sound-English Primer - 25 cents  
Knoflach, A.  
Stechert

No further information is available on this entry.

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1892  
Preparing to Read  
Spears and Augsborg  
New-England Publishing Co., Boston

The New-England Publishing Co., of which Thos. W. Bicknell was the publisher, also published what was apparently a very successful education magazine for many years, The New-England Journal of Education. From 1877 to 1883, the company published The Primary Teacher, A Monthly Magazine, copies of which are at Harvard. After merging with two other publications, The Primary Teacher became The American Teacher in 1883. How long that magazine was published is unknown.

The book by Spears and Augsborg was listed by E. B. Huey in his 1908 book on page 442, and he recommended it on page 319, after the following comments on the Illustrated Primer by Sarah Fuller. Her primer had been written for the Horace Mann School for the Deaf in Boston, but was also meant for hearing children. Huey said Fuller's primer had:

"...a large number of pictures of familiar objects, with the names just below each. These familiarize with words, and other pictures show the meaning of sentences placed below each. The pictures, being easy outline sketches, will suggest drawings that a mother may make to call forth children's own sentences about the drawings, these sentences being then written and read. Spears and Augsborg's 'Preparing to Read' is a primer which is especially rich in very easy outline sketches."

The Spears and Augsborg material undoubtedly used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1893-1897 (In Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900)  
Excelsior Series (1st-5th, probably unrelated to Sadlier's Excelsior)  
George W. Crane & Co.  
Topeka, Kansas  
1903 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Crane Institute Reader  
Crane & Co.  
Topeka, Kansas

The Crane Excelsior series was presumably unrelated to the Catholic series, Sadlier's Excelsior readers, since "Excelsior" readers and primer were still in print in the 1912 United States Catalog, for sale by William H. Sadlier. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

"Crane Readers," first through fifth, are not shown above as they were listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as for sale by American Book Company. Yet they possibly had first been published by Crane & Co. That company must still have been in business in 1912 since it is listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as still selling the Crane Institute Reader shown above.

See the later entry for Wooster's Primer, originally published by Crane & Co. in 1899.

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1893 (In 1912 United States Catalog sold by American Book)  
Noble, M. C. S. and E. P. Moses  
The Williams' Reader for Beginners (43 pages)  
Alfred Williams & Co., Raleigh, North Carolina  
1894 (In 1890-1895 Amer. Cat.-Spellers; E. B. Huey p. 270-271, 357-358, 442; N. B. Smith p. 128-9, 429)  
The Shearer System Combination Speller (Phonetic)  
Shearer, Rev. James W., St. Louis, Missouri (Copyright by him in 1894)  
B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia  
1895 (In Early American Textbooks)  
First Reader  
Moses, Edward Pearson  
Edwards & Broughton, Raleigh, North Carolina  
After 1900 (In 1900-05 Am. Cat.; Moses' Primer in 1912 U. S. Cat.)  
Moses' Readers, No. 1  
B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia  
1897, Revised 1899 (In 1895-1900 Am. Cat.; In 1912 U. S. Cat., In Early American Textbooks; Harvard copy of primer.)  
Johnson's Readers, Primer and First to Fifth:  
Johnson's Primer (1897), Mrs. H. H. Richardson (Harvard copy)  
Johnson's First Reader (1899), Mrs. H. H. Richardson (1912 U.S. Cat.)  
Johnson's Second Reader (1899), Eugene Cunningham Branson (Early American Textbooks, p. 78 and 278)  
Johnson's Third Reader (1899), Eugene Cunningham Branson (Early American Textbooks, p. 78 and 278)  
Johnson's Fourth Reader (1897), Louise Manly (Ear.Am.Txt. p. 92), and in 1899 Eugene Cunningham Branson (Early American Textbooks, p. 78 and 278)  
Johnson's 5th Reader (1897), Blanche Wynne Johnson (Early American Textbooks, p. 90)  
B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia 1906 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
Playmates  
Haliburton, M. W.  
B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia  
1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog under Reading, p. 2083)  
Practical Sight-word Reading Chart and Phonic Exercise (sic)  
Carnefix, F. D.  
B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia  
1912 or Before (In 1912 and 1928 U. S. Catalogs)  
Carnefix Primer  
Carnefix, F. D.  
B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia

1912 or Before (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Phonics in Reading, 40c, Drill Book Separate 18c  
 Haliburton, M. W.  
 B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia  
 1917 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog and N. B. Smith p. 232 and 434)  
 The Child's World Readers (Enlarged Manual in 1921, Per Gates in 1925)  
 Withers, Sarah; Hetty S. Browne; W. K. Tate  
 B. F. Johnson Publishing Co., Richmond, Atlanta, Dallas  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Country Life Readers (1st-3rd)  
 Stewart, C.  
 B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
 Haliburton, M. W and F. T. Norvell (See Haliburton's Heath Readers)  
 Grades Classics - (First-Fifth - also New Edition)  
 B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia  
 1928 (In N. B. Smith's book, p. 213, 218)  
 Story and Study Readers  
 Gecks, Mathilde C.; Charles E. Skinner,; John W. Withers  
 B. F. Johnson Publishing Company, Richmond, Virginia

Little information is available on Moses' Readers. The Williams' Reader for Beginners of 1893, written by Moses with M. C. S. Noble, is listed on page 99 of Early American textbooks, and is listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as published by American Book for 15 cents. The 1895 First Reader written by Moses alone is listed on page 97 of Early American Textbooks. The 1912 United States Catalog lists Moses' Primer as in print by B. F. Johnson in 1912 but does not list Moses' readers. Possibly the 1890's series written by Moses alone was taken over by B. F. Johnson from the first publisher after 1900 but most of the Moses series did not remain in print, while American Book took over the book written jointly by Noble and Moses. Neither the book written jointly by Noble and Moses, or the material written by Moses alone, was in print in 1928, according to the 1928 United States Catalog. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

The obscure Shearer material was listed by Nila Banton Smith on pages 128-129 and 429 of her book, American Reading Instruction. On page 129 she reproduced a page from Shearer's Speller which demonstrated his phonetic markings and which had this comment at the bottom:

“By the phonetic alphabet a child may be taught the art of reading, not fluently, but well, both in phonetic and in ordinary books, in three months.... a task which is rarely accomplished in three years of toil by the old alphabet....”

That statement was undoubtedly true for most children, since Shearer's 1894 St. Louis material was only a variation of Leigh's highly successful 1864 St. Louis material. Therefore, it is extraordinary that Shearer's comment reproduced in Nila Banton Smith's "history" has never been commented on by reading "experts," all of whom presumably should have seen Smith's famous reading "history."

Although Nila Banton Smith listed this obscure 1894 material, she gave almost no mention to Leigh's important phonic print which had appeared thirty years before the Shearer System, in 1864. She only mentioned the use of Leigh print in St. Louis in her 1965 edition apparently because of reference made to it by John Downing of England in connection with his famous and widely used Initial Teaching Alphabet materials. Some distortions in Nila Banton Smith's "history" appear to have been attempts to bury the anti-phonics campaign in Boston in the 1870's, presumably at the urging of others (Cattell? Thorndike?).



That successful 1870's campaign had removed the Leigh phonetic approach from the Boston schools, and therefore effectively from American schools, since Boston set the style for America at that time. (See the humorous chapter on textbook sales in Appendix A, taken from a Bardeen book, which implicitly admits in one of its comments that Boston was a style-setter.) Smith apparently chose to remove any mention of Leigh's name from her original 1934 edition. She omitted any clear discussion on the use of Leigh print even from her 1965 revision, which revision is the "standard" history of reading for our "educators."

Smith's failure to discuss Leigh's phonetic print is made even more unexplainable because both the Leigh print and the Shearer material are discussed at length in E. B. Huey's famous 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. Huey described the Shearer system on pages 270-271 and pages 357-358. However, although Huey's book is famous, it is highly doubtful that many "educators" have ever taken the time really to read it instead of merely to scan it. Smith may well have thought that such useful information on Leigh print in Huey's lengthy book was likely to remain safely buried. Huey showed in his 1908 bibliography on page 442 that J. W. Shearer's *The Combination Speller* was published by "F. B." Johnson, Richmond, Virginia. The 1890-1895 American Catalogue correctly shows B. F. Johnson. The Shearer material was not in print under "readers" in the 1912 United States Catalog, but may have been listed under spellers. It was not in print, even under spellers, in the 1928 United States Catalog. A PHONIC APPROACH

Johnson's Readers, primer and first to fifth, were listed as in print in the 1912 United States Catalog. They were listed in the American Catalogue for 1895-1900 as Johnson's Readers, 1st - 5th, revised in 1899, published by B. F. Johnson. They were also listed in the American Catalogue for 1900-1905 as Johnson's Readers, 1-5, published by B. F. Johnson. Entries in *Early American Textbooks* are on pages 78, 90, 92 and 278 but cover only Johnson's readers from the second to the fifth, with no entries on the primer or the first. On page 78, Johnson's Second, Third and Fourth Readers are listed as written by E. C. Branson in 1899, and on page 92 Johnson's Fourth Reader is shown as written by Louise Manley in 1897. On page 90, Johnson's Fifth Reader is shown as written by Blanche Wynne Johnson in 1897. Harvard has an 1897 copy of Johnson's Primer by Mrs. H. H. Richardson, and according to the 1912 United States Catalog she also wrote the 1899 Johnson's First Reader. The frequent probable revisions indicated by the above entries (1893, 1895, 1897, 1899) suggest these readers were prepared for state adoptions, possibly in North Carolina and Virginia. Such frequent textbook revisions are prompted by "official" adoptions. Today, the appalling practice of state textbook adoptions continues to exist in such states as California and Texas, despite the enormous abuses which can result. Such abuses can concern not solely the distortion and control of our children's curriculum by wrong-headed "movers and shakers," but can also concern the wrongful use of taxpayers' money. Concerning the latter abuse, see the text of this history for a textbook scandal in Texas in 1925.

Concerning the approach in the 1897 Johnson Primer, a copy of which is held by Harvard, the philosophy in the preface is pure Code I, "meaning," but the abbreviated word lists before the lessons are marked with elaborate phonetic markings, which match a phonetic "key" in the back. An enterprising teacher might therefore teach decoding (with difficulty), though the obvious intent of the markings is to teach correct enunciation. Other than this possible adaptation of the materials to teach phonics, the material is Code I, A MEANING APPROACH.

The Child World Readers listed in the 1900-1905 American Catalogue as having been published between 1900 and 1905 by Kellogg presumably have no connection with the 1917 series published by B. F. Johnson. Nor, presumably, is there any connection between the 1917 series and *The Child's World Readers* listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as having been written by C. A. Smith and published by "Clark" in 1910. Nor, presumably, is there any connection with the 1908 Child World Primer listed in the 1912 United States Catalogue under Primers, written by A. E. Bentley and G. R. Johnston, published by "Barnes," presumably a division of American Book Company.

The 1917 Primer of The Child's World series, a copy of which is in the Harvard library, was written by Sarah Withers, Principal, Elementary Grades, and Critic Teacher, Winthrop Normal and Industrial College, Rocky Hill, S. C.; Hetty S. Browne, Extension Worker in Rural School Practice, Winthrop Normal and Industrial College, and W. K. Tate, Professor of Rural Education, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee. These three "experts" produced a pleasant little collection of children's stories and poems, which contained NO instruction whatsoever in learning how to read, except for stating on some poems that they were to be memorized, and except for the presence of the alphabet at the very end of the book - obviously as an afterthought. This book by these three "experts" must have turned out veritable legions of functional illiterates in the South.

The back cover of the book carried the words, "State Edition, Contract Price 28 Cents, Exchange Price - None. The price marked hereon is fixed by the State and any deviation therefrom should be reported to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction." What "state" was meant was not specified. Presumably it was Georgia, Virginia or Texas, where the publishers were located, or South Carolina or Tennessee where the authors were located. The material was Code I, A MEANING APPROACH.

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1893 (In Early American Textbooks)

(Werner publications:)

West Virginia States Series (Primary Reader to Fourth Reader)

The Werner Company, Chicago and New York.

1893 (In Early American Textbooks)

Columbian Fifth Reader. Rev. Ed., 366 p.

The Werner Co., Chicago and New York

1895 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue; Harvard copy.)

The Werner Primer for Beginners in Reading,

Taylor, Frances Lillian

Werner School Book Company, Chicago and New York

Circa 1895? (The New Normal Readers by Raub were listed in the 1885-90 Amer. Cat., by Porter and Coates who also published the 1878 first series; In 1912 U. S. Cat. by Amer. Book.; Early Amer. Textbooks was obviously in error in dating to 1878 the copy listed below which they said was published by Werner.)

Fifth Reader [New Normal Readers]

Raub, Albert Newton (See Sower Co., and Porter and Coates on Raub)

The Werner Company, Chicago and New York

1896 (In Early American Textbooks)

A Primary Reader (136 pages)

Smythe, E. Louise

Werner School Book Co., Chicago and New York

Between 1900 and 1905 (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue)

School Readers - First Reader, Second Reader,

Frances Lillian Taylor,

The Werner Company, Chicago and New York.

See the later entries on D. H. McBride & Co. of Akron, Chicago, and New York, who published The McBride Series, since that company may be related to The Werner Company.

Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, shows under "West Virginia State Series" a Primary Reader published in 1893 by The Werner Company, Chicago and New York, and a revised edition of a Second Reader and a Third Reader published in 1895, with a revised Fourth Reader published in 1894. See the entry under McBride readers which were printed in 1897 by The Werner Company, "Printers and

Binders,” in Akron, Ohio, which may be the same company. According to the American Catalogues, by 1897, the date of the McBride copyright, The Werner Company had published a number of books meant for literary “recitations,” which were very popular at that time.

The Werner School Book Company, presumably the same company, published The Werner Primer for Beginners in Reading by Frances Lillian Taylor in 1895, which was a successful sight-word book praised by E. B. Huey (pages 323 and following, page 344, page 443.) Huey said in 1908 Taylor’s Primer and her First Reader were published by American Book Company, giving a 1900 date for her First Reader. A copy of her Primer is in the Harvard library. According to Nila Banton Smith (page 124) the Werner Primer was part of the Utah curriculum in 1897. The Werner School Book Company also published School Readers by Taylor consisting of a First Reader and a Second Reader, according to the American Catalogue published in 1905 for the years 1900 to 1905. The 1895-1900 American Catalogue showed that Taylor had already published a First Reader in 1897 as part of the Home and School Series for Eaton and Company, and it gave a date for the Werner Primer of 1896. Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, listed two copies of Taylor’s First Reader published in Chicago by Eaton & Co. in 1897 and 1898, and her “Second Reader” published by Eaton in 1898. Whether the Eaton texts by Taylor are the same as the Werner First and Second Readers by Taylor, and the same as the “School readers. 2 bks. 1st... 2nd” by Taylor listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as published by American Book is unknown.

I have lost the source, but believe C. W. Bardeen in one of his early 1890’s issues of The School Bulletin of Syracuse, New York, referred to Taylor in a very uncomplimentary (and uncharacteristic) fashion, although it would not have been on the phonics issue, as surprisingly Bardeen apparently had no understanding of it. However, I may be confusing F. Lillian Taylor’s name with one of the other highly publicized women “experts” of the 90’s who also wrote a primer. F. Lillian Taylor’s material used A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1896 text above by E. Louise Smythe is listed in Early American Textbooks. E. B. Huey discussed reading material by Smythe, and his comments are quoted elsewhere in this history. Smythe used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1894-1896 (In Early American Textbooks, page 91)  
The First (Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh) Reader  
(Probably originated in England)  
Longmans, Green & Co., London, New York and Bombay  
1898 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog and Early American Textbooks, page 91)  
Longmans’ “Ship” Literary Readers, Book I, II, III  
Longmans, Green & Company, New York  
(Design on front cover shows Longman & Co. founded 1726)  
1908 (In 1928 United States Catalog. See N. B. Smith p. 142.)  
The Horace Mann Readers (Primer, First-Fourth in 1912)  
Hervey, Walter L. and Melvin Hix  
Longmans, Green & Company, New York - Chicago  
1912 and 1928 U. S. Catalogs (First published in England about 1850, Republished in America by Harper in 1860)  
Reading Without Tears, or a Pleasant Mode of Learning to Read  
“By the Author of “Peep of Day,” &c., &c. (Mrs. Favel Lee Bevan Mortimer)  
Longmans, Green & Company, New York - Chicago

The very old Longmans company was referred to in the section on Great Britain. It had published the widely used Mavor speller in Great Britain in the early nineteenth century, and was the agent for the government-approved list of textbooks in 1848, which were eligible for textbook grants. According to

Alec Ellis on page 65 of *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, Pergamon Press, London (after 1965), Chapter 8, "The Golden Years of Children's Literature, Part I, 1860-1890:"

"Longman enjoyed an intermittent success with children's books from the publication in 1839 of Catherine Sinclair's *Holiday House*. Farrar's *Eric*; or, *Little by Little* was also popular, and in the 1870's the acquisition of Andrew Lang maintained the status of the firm as a major publisher of books for children."

Andrew Lang's fairy-tale books were enormously popular in America also, until the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method sight-word readers arrived in 1930. Most children who received the misinstruction from the Gates and Gray 1930 and later texts were unable to "decode" Lang's tales, since Lang had most naturally used the uncontrolled vocabulary of normal speech.

The probability is that the 1894-1896 Longman entries shown above were for a series originating in England.

Longmans' "Ship" readers, obviously meant for the American market, date only from 1898. Harvard has a copy of Longmans' "Ship" Literary Readers, Book I, and its title page shows only New York - Longmans, Green, and Co., 1898, Copyright, 1898, by Longmans, Green, and Co. However, it obviously was not meant as a first book and must have been preceded by a primer. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

The Horace Mann Readers were very widely used. One of its authors, Walter L. Hervey, had once been a president of Columbia Teachers College in New York. Yet, when I called Columbia Teachers College library on February 13, 1981, to see if they had the beginning reader which I wished to see, I was told, "We only have the second volume." That was the case, according to the Teachers College Library card catalog on that day. That continued to be the pattern I have often turned up at libraries. The beginning volume in reading series is often missing, even though the upper level books are available. Beginning volumes in this series in various editions were available in the Harvard library, although portions of the back cover of one copy are missing, as discussed elsewhere. According to Nila Banton Smith in *American Reading Instruction*, page 142, the Horace Mann Readers used Farnham's sentence method. On tests run by Superintendent of Schools Harris in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1916, reported in the *Elementary School Journal*, (Volume 17, page 18), the Horace Mann and Aldine readers were significantly outscored by the phonic Beacon method on oral reading, rate and comprehension. The *Elementary School Journal* of the University of Chicago where C. H. Judd and W. S. Gray were located stated, "The conclusions cannot be accepted as final, however." That study supporting phonics has fallen into education history's black hole. Yet Currier and Duguid's New Hampshire study, reported in the *Elementary School Journal* in 1916 without any numerical data whatever, and which purported to show that the sight word approach was better, has been referred to ever since in the literature. The Horace Mann Readers, also discussed elsewhere in this history, used A MEANING APPROACH WITH CODE 3 PHONY PHONICS.

*Reading Without Tears, or a Pleasant Mode of Learning to Read*, By the Author of "Peep of Day," &c., &c. (Mrs. Favel Lee Bevan Mortimer), was published by Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square, New York, in 1860. At that time, copyright laws were not in place between America and Great Britain. Whether Longman's were the original publishers, presumably about 1850, of *Reading Without Tears* is not known, but appears probable since they were publishing it in 1912. The material used a Code 3 approach at the beginning, with rhyming-word lists, which were then used in context. A Code 5 approach was used later. It introduced the syllabary and silent letters on pages 32-33 of the 136-page book, which was too late. Mrs. Mortimer previously wrote *Reading Disentangled*, widely used in England, discussed in the text of this history and in Appendix B, which used two-step phony phonics. *Reading Without Tears* was in print by Longwood according to the 1912 and 1928 United States Catalog,

appearing in 1928 after the entry, Reading - Psychology. An 1865 edition by Harper is listed in Early American Textbooks on page 102. See Little Pet Primer under 1863 which used a variation of this title in its own title. Reading Without Tears is discussed in Appendix B and in this history in the section on Great Britain. It used A MEANING APPROACH WITH CODE 3 PHONY PHONICS, WITH A CODE 5 APPROACH AT THE END.

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1895 (In Early American Textbooks)  
English Visible Speech in Twelve Lessons  
Bell, Alexander Melville  
The Volta Bureau, Washington, D. C.

Alexander Melville Bell's pure phonic material has been discussed in this history. This book is listed on page 77 of Early American Textbooks as 80 pages long. It was not listed under primers or readers in the 1912 United States Catalog and so may have been out of print by 1912. A PHONIC APPROACH

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1896 (Harvard copy; In 1912 United States Cat. by Silver, Burdett)  
Phonetic Reader, The  
Deane, Charles W., Supt. of Schools, Bridgeport, Conn.  
The Morse Co., New York, Boston, Chicago

1897 (Advertised in The Quincy Word List but not in 1912 U.S. Cat.)  
New Century Readers (Same title as Rand's by Perdue, etc. and New Century Catholic Readers by Benziger)

First book: For Childhood Days (About 100 words)  
Second: Fairy Tale & Fable (300 new words. In Early Am. Text. p. 73)  
"Third, fourth and fifth in Preparation" per advertisement above Third Book (Shown in print by date of 1900-1905 American Catalogue)  
Thompson, John Gilbert and Thomas E. Thompson (Also see Ginn and Silver, Burdett)  
The Morse Co., New York, Boston, Chicago

1901 (Harvard copy)  
The Quincy Word List (for spelling)  
Parlin, Frank E.  
The Morse Co., New York, Boston, Chicago)

1902 (In 1900-1905 Am. Cat.; Copy of first book in U. S. Dept. of Ed. library in 1981 but not listed in its Early American Textbooks)  
The Morse Readers (1st-4th) (Not in 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Powers, Ella Marie and Thomas Minard Balliet  
(Wrote 1906 Silver-Burd. readers in 1912 and 1928 U. S. Catalogs. Possibly identical to Morse Readers if bought out by Silver-Burdett) The Morse Co., New York, Boston, Chicago

The Phonetic Reader was in print in 1912 by Silver, but not in 1928. It was praised by Orville T. Bright, Supt. of Schools, Cook County, Chicago, in an advertisement in the back of the Quincy Word List by Frank E. Parlin:

"You have done what nobody else has - placed the subject of phonics in its proper relation to the literature that should enter into a first reader.... The best part of it all is... that (phonics) is subordinate...."

Bright's approval is not surprising since he, himself, had edited Harper's 1888 primer for the Baldwin series which used a "meaning" approach. In his 1894 biennial report as Cook County Superintendent, extracts of which were quoted in an 1894 report on Colonel F. W. Parker's Cook County Normal School

and Practice School, Bright exclaimed about the “achievements” there, and “meaning” was the emphasis in beginning reading in the Practice School.

Another of the advertised comments made it clear that Deane did not use much of a “sound” approach in his so-called Phonetic Reader:

“The Phonetic Reader is the best thing of its kind yet published... used the best there is in all other systems, and in the word and sentence method.”

The table of contents did show a garbled phonic sequence, and the first three pages did concern blending a few short “a” words. From the few pages available to me at the moment from further on in Deane’s book, and from his table of contents, it appears that Deane probably used A MEANING METHOD WITH VERY INADEQUATE BUT TRUE PHONICS.

Thomas Minard Balliet, who with Ella Marie Powers wrote the 1902 Morse Readers, was Superintendent of Schools in Springfield, Massachusetts. The 1902 Morse Readers used a sight-word/sentence approach. The Preface to the First Book said only a few new words were used in each lesson. It said further:

“The classical literature of fairy tale and fable has been introduced in simple form in this book... but not to the exclusion of choice material in prose and poetry.... It is believed that this book may be used with equal success with any method of teaching reading generally approved by the best teachers in primary schools.”

The “best” teachers in 1902 obviously did not use real phonics, because the material used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1896-1899 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue)  
Western Series of Readers, Nos. 1-6  
Wagner, H., Ed.  
Whitaker & R.

Not in print in 1912 United States Catalog. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

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1897-1898 (In 1895-1900 American Catalogue and Early Am. Textbooks)  
Home and School Series (First Reader, Second Reader)  
Taylor, Frances Lillian (First, 1897; Second, 1898 in Early Am. T.)  
(Taylor’s 2-bk. “School Readers,” listed in 1912 U. S. Catalog published by American Book are presumably the same as above.)  
Eaton & Co., Chicago, Ill.

1897-1898 (In 1895-1900 Amer. Cat. and 1912 United States Catalog)  
New Era Series (Second Reader, 160 p., listed in Early American Text.)  
Jones, Lottie E. and Samuel Wylie Black  
Eaton & Co., Chicago

1910 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Eaton Readers (1st - 5th)  
Moore, I.  
Eaton & Co., Chicago

1913 (From a copy in the U. S. Dept. of Education Library)  
Primer  
Smedley, Eva A., Martha C. Olsen and Homer Hitchcock Kingsley

Eaton & Co., Chicago

\*\*\*\*\*Eaton & Co. of Chicago dropped from the records I have after the last 1913 entry, but Hall & McCreary of Chicago emerged. Hall & McCreary had an earlier 1911 entry under Readers by C. G. Adams, Easy Lessons About Common Things, but were nevertheless possibly Eaton's successor, publishing in 1922 and later more material by Smedley and Hall, whose 1913 book had been published by Eaton.

1922 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Complete Primer  
Smedley, Eva A. and Martha C. Olsen  
Hall and McCreary Company, Chicago  
1925-1929 (See N. B. Smith, p. 213, 218, 433; 1925 first reader in 1928 U.S. Cat.)  
The Smedley and Olsen Series  
Smedley, Eva A. and Martha C. Olsen  
Hall and McCreary Company, Chicago  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Economy Primer (in two books)  
Smedley, Eva A. and Martha C. Olsen  
Hall and McCreary Company, Chicago  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
New Primer  
Smedley, Eva A. and Martha C. Olsen  
Hall and McCreary Company, Chicago  
1928 (Writer's own copy)  
The Smedley & Olsen New Second Reader  
The Smedley & Olsen Series  
Hall & McCreary Company, Chicago

The 1897 New Era Series by Jones and Black published by Eaton & Co. was listed in the American Catalogue for 1895-1900 with first through fourth readers, 1897-1898. First through sixth readers were in print by Eaton & Co. in 1912 according to the United States Catalog. Early American Textbooks lists a copy of the Second Reader. APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

No information is available on the Eaton Readers of 1910 by I. Moore.  
APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

Frances Lillian Taylor's Werner Primer, listed under the Werner company, was presumably like material she wrote for Eaton. The Werner Primer was reviewed by E. B. Huey in his 1908 book. That text used silent reading, thought-getting, and no phonics. Taylor's Eaton material also undoubtedly used A MEANING APPROACH.

A copy of Smedley and Olsen's 1913 Primer published by Eaton & Company is in the U. S. Department of Education library. It showed that Smedley was Principal of Noyes Street School, Evanston, and Olsen was a primary teacher there. Kingsley was Superintendent of Schools in Evanston. The writer's copy of the New Second Reader published in 1928 showed that by then Smedley was Teacher of Literature and Dramatics, Evanston, Illinois, and Olsen was Primary Supervisor, Evanston, Illinois. Both had obviously prospered by pushing the "meaning" approach for beginning readers. The Preface to the 1913 Primer read in part:

“...Stories and rhymes make a strong appeal.... That which is intended for silent reading should be so used, the child showing his mastery of the thought by what he does. This includes all of the ‘Seat Work,’ and is suggestive of much more silent reading that should be given from the blackboard. The phonic work leads to independence. The vocabulary is small, and gradually introduced.... not one sentence appears merely for the purpose of drill without a worthy, connected thought content.”

Note the 1913 emphasis on silent reading for beginners.

Both the 1913 and the 1925-1929 Smedley and Olsen material (which presumably included the “New Primer” and “The New Second Reader” listed above) obviously used A MEANING METHOD PROBABLY WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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1897 (In Early American Textbooks, page 78)  
First Reader (96 p.)  
Boyden, Helen W., Revised by Florence Holbrook  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago  
1897 (In Early American Textbooks, p. 82)  
Second Reader. Third Reader.  
Edwards, Richard, Revised by Florence Holbrook  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago  
1909-1911 (By Elson and Keck per 1912 United States Catalog)  
(A surviving book 4 shows a 1909 date, but U. S. Catalog shows 1910-1911. The surviving book also shows Elson and Keck’s names)  
Grammar School Readers, Books 1-4  
Elson, William H.; Christine Keck  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago and New York  
1915 (Date from Manuals at Harvard - N. B. Smith 142, 224, 225 and elsewhere)  
Elson Runkel Readers  
Elson, William H. and Lura K. Runkel  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago and New York  
1923 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Cathedral Readers.  
O’Brien, J. A.  
Scott, Foresman & Company, Chicago and New York  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Child-Library Readers (Primer, 1st-8th - no teacher’s edition listed)  
Elson, W. H. and Others  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago and New York  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Elson Readers (Pre-primer, primer, 1st-8th, teacher’s editions for various levels or combined levels)  
Elson W. H. and Others  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago and New York  
1930-1931, Revised in 1937, “Many” Other Revisions,” “Latest” in 1965 Per N. B. Smith (In Cum. Book Index 1928-1932 - N. B. Smith p. 213, 224-5, 234, 237, 240-1, 287-8, 346-7, 363, 365, 384-5, 436; see Chall’s Learning to Read and Blumenfeld’s The New Illiterates)  
Elson Basic Readers (Pre-primer, primer, books 1-6, teacher’s eds.)  
(Also called The Curriculum Foundation Series, with The New Basic Reading Program its 1956 and 1962 revisions)  
Gray, William S.; Edna B. Liek and very many others over the years  
Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Dallas



1956, 1962 (Reviewed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates*, p. 298; Chall in *Learning to Read* said publisher described it as a “meaning approach” in answer to her questionnaire. 1960-62 edition was one of the programs used in 1967 U.S.O.E. first grade studies)

The New Basic Readers (Curriculum Foundation Series)

Robinson, Helen M.; Marion Monroe; A. Sterl Artley; Charlotte S. Huck; William A. Jenkins; W. Cabell Greet, Linguistic Advisor.

Scott, Foresman and Company, Glenview, Illinois

1971 (Reviewed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates*, p. 296, 298)

Scott, Foresman Reading Systems

Goodman, Kenneth S.; Helen M. Robinson; Marion Monroe, A. Sterl Artley, Charlotte S. Huck; William A. Jenkins; John C. Manning, and others listed by Blumenfeld

Scott, Foresman and Company, Glenview, Illinois

1989 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, 1993)

Scott, Foresman Reading

Allington, Richard L., Camille L. Z. Blachowicz, Ronald L. Cramer, Patricia M. Cunningham, G. Yvonne Perez, Constance Frazier-Robinson, Sam Leaton Sebesta, Richard G. Smith,

Robert J. Tierney

Scott, Foresman, Glenview, Illinois

1992 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, 1993)

Success in Reading and Writing

(Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, 3, Teacher Editions Only, No Pupil Books)

Adams, Anne H., Mary S. Johnson, Judith M. Connors, Helen G. Cappleman

Goodyear Publishing (Scott Foresman)

Glenview, Illinois

The first two entries above were also listed previously under Webb’s and Edward’s readers. In 1894, Scott, Foresman & Co. bought out Webb’s and Edward’s last publisher, Sherwood of Chicago. The young firm of Scott, Foresman was already successfully in business when it acquired the George Sherwood Publishing Company in 1894, according to Volume 2 of *A History of Book Publishing in the United States*, by John Tebbel, published by R. R. Bowker, New York, in 1975.

A 1909 surviving fourth reader of Elson’s series shows William H. Elson (1856-1935) as Superintendent of Schools, Cleveland, and Christine Keck as Principal of Sigsbee School, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Nila Banton Smith’s references on the history of the Elson programs and Gray’s additions to them are particularly murky. Surviving records suggest that Gray made a revision of the Elson-Runkel 1915 materials some time before 1928 (1927?) and then finally made the major “deaf-mute-method” version of 1930. The 1930 materials apparently later adopted the “Curriculum Foundation” title. It would be necessary to locate surviving copies of all of these editions to straighten out the relationships. Certainly Nila Banton Smith’s account is not only confusing but wrong. The Library of Congress showed in its card catalog that it had the Pre-Primers and Primer of the Elson Basic Readers of 1930, but the copies were missing when I checked in 1987. The library did have a 1936 primer.

On page 9 of the Introduction to the 1909 Book Four, reference is made to “Professor Clark, in his book on ‘How to Teach Reading.’” S. H. Clark’s book, *How to Teach Reading in the Public Schools*, had been published by Scott, Foresman in 1908, and so may well have been the model for the Elson readers of 1909 and later. The Introduction on the 1915 Manual for the Elson-Runkel Primer refers to Huey, Dewey, Hall, et al. From their inception, therefore, the Elson materials used a meaning approach, and the manual shows it was A MEANING APPROACH WITH CODE 3 PHONY PHONICS.

According to the 1928 United States Catalog, the 1923 Cathedral series meant for parochial schools consisted of a primer and books one to four, each with a teachers edition. It was probably a Catholic school version of the 1915 Elson-Runkel material. The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932, showed that a fifth and sixth reader and teacher's edition were published in 1928. Also shown in The Cumulative Book Index was "O'Brien, J. A. and others. Cathedral Basic Readers. See main entry." Although no date was given, this was apparently Scott, Foresman's Catholic schools edition of W. S. Gray's 1930 "Dick and Jane" readers, listed in The Cumulative Book Index under Elson Basic Readers. On page 867, the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932 showed J. A. O'Brien as joint author with W. S. Gray of Training of College Teachers, University of Chicago Press, 1930. If this were the same J. A. O'Brien, which appears highly probable, then he was obviously a close associate of William Scott Gray. The Catholic schools were not to be "deprived" of the new deaf-mute-reading method, which was very thoughtful indeed of W. S. Gray and his associates. Before the 1920's, Catholic school readers had been independently written series. After 1920, they were largely adapted clones of "expert" materials. All Gray's materials used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Scott, Foresman material from the 1960's and 1971 has been very effectively reviewed in Samuel L. Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates (1973). It used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Scott, Foresman Company series in 1981 was listed as one of "The Dismal Dozen," by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of Why Johnny STILL Can't Read, Harper & Row, New York, 1981.

The 1989 copyrighted program, Scott Foresman Reading, was reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education. In the six samples of first-grade text analyzed for the study, "Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit" and "Decoding strategy... Implicit" were present in all six. However, none of the six had "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit" or "Decoding Strategy... Explicit" or "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly." Therefore, apparently the material rates a low code, using whole-word, two-step, substitution phonics. That is a "meaning" and not a synthetic-phonics "sound" emphasis.

The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 reviewed Success in Reading and Writing, published by Goodyear Publishing (Scott Foresman). During the "open classroom" promotion period of the 1970's, my memory is that at that time a company called Goodyear Publishing produced materials for teachers. It is very possible that earlier company was later bought out by Scott Foresman. Their 1992 program, Success in Reading and Writing, which consisted only of materials for teachers, was reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study in the section, "Other Instructional Programs." The programs covered in that section did not receive the in-depth analysis given to the programs in the basal reader section. According to the 1993 study, the Goodyear material for teachers' use does not deal at all with explicit phonics or sounding-and-blending, but does cover implicit sound/symbol relationships and implicit decoding strategy. That is, of course, the standard approach of most basal reader programs.

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1897 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Literature Readers - First Reader. Aesop and Mother Goose  
Nash, Louis P.  
Thompson, Brown & Co., Boston, Chicago

Harvard library has a copy of this text. It was listed in the United States Catalog as in print in 1912, but at that time was published by Johnson, Blagden & McTurnan. It was not in print in 1928. On pages 3 and 4, Nash said:

“This primer is planned to lead the pupil toward a knowledge of literature, along lines indicated by Mr. Scudder, Mr. Hall, and others.... There are, on the average, about two new words for each page throughout the book. The words and sentences should be developed on the blackboard.... In preparing for any story, the first step is for the teacher to TELL THE STORY.... If the children have the story in mind, the preparatory sentences, otherwise disconnected, will have a bond of unity... The teacher should have... little games of word-making and sentence building. Words may be grouped by vowel sounds, by initial or final letters, and various devices may be used to study words.... ‘All our best learning is unconscious learning’ is a maxim that comes from the wisdom of ages past, and has been recently enunciated with new emphasis by Colonel F. W. Parker and many a teacher besides....”

The “maxim” not only did not come from “the wisdom of ages past” but was pure nonsense. Dr. Hilde Mosse’s text pointed out, as discussed elsewhere, that we can learn (condition) nothing unless we focus conscious attention on the material to be learned during the act of learning (conditioning). From the photocopies available, the Nash material appears to have used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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1897 (In Early Amer. Textbooks; Harvard copy of First School Year)  
The McBride Series.  
D. H. McBride & Co.  
Akron, Chicago, and New York.

Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900 lists copies of this series: The McBride First School Year, 1897; The McBride First Reader, 1898; The McBride Second Reader published in Chicago by John B. Oink in 1898; and copies of the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Readers published by McBride dated 1898.

The Harvard library copy of The McBride First School Year for Catholic Schools, with a copyright of 1897, shows at the bottom of the page carrying the copyright a seal design with the words, “The Werner Company, Printers and Binders, Akron, Ohio.” By 1897, the date of the copyright, The Werner Company of Chicago and New York, possibly the same company, had published a number of books meant for literary “recitations,” which were very popular at that time. The Werner School Book Company of Chicago and New York, presumably the same company as The Werner Company of Chicago and New York, had also published The Werner Primer for Beginners in Reading by Frances Lillian Taylor in 1895, which was a successful sight-word book praised by E. B. Huey, as well School Readers by Taylor consisting of a First Reader and a Second Reader.

The McBride books may have been The Werner Company’s entry into the Catholic school book publishing field. No other information has turned up on the McBride series, and it was not in print in 1912, so apparently it was not too successful. The preface to The McBride First School Year for Catholic Schools, which was the primer, read:

“The average child on entering school has a vocabulary of several hundred words. These words he is able to use as his ideas call for expression. Reading for him, therefore, should at the beginning have for its object little more than giving him the ability to translate the symbol, viz., the printed or written word, into the word which he knows by sound, and which conveys a tolerably clear idea to him. With few exceptions, the reasons for which will be obvious, no attempt is made in this Primer to do much more than to familiarize the child with the symbol for that of which he already knows the sound. The words used are such as may clearly be looked for in the vocabulary of the average child of five or six. As much blackboard work is preliminary to the reading even of the primer, the attempt has been made to render the transition from script to

print as easy as possible. Hence, every new word is introduced in script form. On the recurrence of the word, the print form alone is used....

“The method employed is the word method; or, more properly, a combination of the word and sentence methods. Phonics are not introduced, as the author believes that their study should be taken up only after a fair stock of words has been cognized as wholes, and the child has enjoyed some practice in translating symbol into sound. He will thus have had a taste of the pleasure of reading.”

The primer itself, as might have been anticipated from its preface, was an instructional disaster, but it was also a perfect specimen of the “correct” approach for the teaching of beginning reading in 1897. Happily, the series appears to have been a marketing as well as instructional disaster and it faded into oblivion. Unhappily, however, The Werner Primer by F. Lillian Taylor was still in print by American Book Company when the 1928 United States Catalog was published, although the rest of her series was out of print. Both Taylor’s Werner Primer and her first and second “School readers” had been in print when the 1912 United States Catalog was published. By 1912, Taylor’s books were being published by American Book Company, so possibly The Werner School Book Company had gone out of business by that date. The McBride materials, possibly associated with The Werner Company materials, used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1898 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

Color Primer

Bradley, M.

M. Bradley (Presumably Milton Bradley & Co.)

No other information is available other than that given in the 1912 United States Catalog: pupils 5 cents, teachers 10 cents. The material was obviously in print for at least fourteen years, so it must have been popular. The APPROACH IS UNKNOWN.

This was obviously a very short little “primer” or it would not have sold for only five cents in 1912. The probability is that this was published by Milton Bradley & Co., and related only to the use of colors and Milton Bradley crayons. However, it may also have taught the names of the colors as sight-words, something which is unfortunately common even today in kindergartens and first grades.

The Primary Teacher, Boston, Massachusetts, carried an advertisement for a catalog of the materials of Milton Bradley & Co., Springfield, Massachusetts, as early as 1879 (and possibly earlier). In 1883, the successor to The Primary Teacher, The American Teacher, also published by the New-England Publishing Co. of Boston (Thomas W. Bicknell, Publisher) also carried an advertisement offering the catalog of Milton Bradley & Co. Milton Bradley & Co. described themselves as “manufacturers of Kindergarten material, primary school aids, and elementary apparatus.” The Milton Bradley company is still very much in business today and is an important supplier. It seems very likely that this company might have published the 1898 “Color Primer” over a period of at least fourteen years until at least 1912 because the title has an obvious tie to the use of crayons by primary grade school children.

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1898

Reformed Reading Primer, Book 1

Reading at Sight Series (15 cents)

Pitman

I have lost my source for this card, so have no further information. It was not in the 1912 United States Catalog, but it may have been entered under some section such as spelling reform in the 1895-1900

American Catalogue. It may have had some connection with Pitman phonetic print of the 1840's and later. Possibly it was a later version of Pitman phonetic print, and it may have been English in origin. THE APPROACH IS UNKNOWN BUT IT MAY HAVE USED PITMAN PHONETIC PRINT.

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- 1898 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Lights to Literature Series (The Holton Primer and Books 1-8)  
Holton, M. Adelaide, Supervisor of Primary Schools, Minneapolis  
Rand, McNally & Company, Chicago and New York  
1898 (In 1900-1905 American Catalogue; Harvard copy)  
Rand-McNally Primer and First Reader, and Second Reader  
Sprague, Sarah E. (See D. D. Merrill and Educational entries)  
Rand, McNally and Co., Chicago and New York  
1899 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
The New Century Readers (Same title as Morse and Benziger series)  
Rand-McNally Educational Series.  
One series of books 1-5, and a second series, by grades 1-8  
LaVictoire, Florence E.; H. S. Tibbits, Hannah Avis Perdue  
Rand, McNally & Company, Chicago and New York  
1899 (Early American Textbooks)  
The New Century Third Reader, 138 pages (See above entry)  
Tibbits, H. S.  
Rand, McNally & Co., Chicago and New York  
1902 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog; I saw a copy held by a woman's family for many years.)  
The Sunbonnet Babies Primer  
Grover, Eulalie Osgood (See her Atkinson-Mentzer listings)  
Rand, McNally & Company, Chicago, New York, London  
1903 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Tree-dwellers (Supplementary Reader)  
Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
Rand, McNally & Company, Chicago, New York, London  
1904 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Early Cave-men (Supplementary Reader)  
Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
Rand, McNally & Company, Chicago, New York, London  
1904 (Not in 1928 U. S. Cat, but in Cum. Bk. 1928-1932)  
The Outdoor Primer  
Grover, Eulalie Osgood  
Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London.  
1905 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
Overall Boys  
Grover, Eulalie Osgood  
Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London  
1906 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Later Cave-men (Supplementary Reader)  
Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
Rand, McNally & Company, Chicago, New York, London  
1916 (In Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932 and Reviewed by  
W. S. Gray in Elementary School Journal, 1917-1918, page 382)  
Bobby and Betty at Home, A Primer  
Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London

1926 (In Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932)  
 Bobby and Betty in the Country  
 Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
 Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London  
 1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 My Sound Book for Individual Work in Beginning Reading  
 Youngquist, L. and C. W. Washburne  
 Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London  
 1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 My Reading Book; A Teacher's Manual  
 Youngquist, L. and C. W. Washburne  
 Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London  
 1926-1927 (In the 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Misericordia Readers. Primer, First.  
 Sisters of Mercy.  
 Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London  
 1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Bobby and Betty at Play  
 Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
 Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London  
 1930 (In Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932)  
 Bobby and Betty on the Farm  
 Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
 Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London  
 1932 or Before (In Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932)  
 Bobby and Betty with the Workers  
 Dopp, Katherine Elizabeth  
 Rand, McNally Company - Chicago, New York, London

Sarah E. Sprague is listed in the 1900-1905 American Catalogue as having written "Rand McNally primer and first reader," and her Rand-McNally Second Reader is listed on page 107 of Early American Textbooks, just before her listings with Louis H. Marvel for readers for D. D. Merrill in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1886 and 1887. Louis H. Marvel wrote, with Colonel Parker, the appallingly bad controlled-vocabulary supplementary readers discussed in this history.

Sarah E. Sprague is listed in the 1912 United States Catalog as the author of a series by Educational, shown below, the Sprague Classic Readers.

Harvard library has a copy of the Rand-McNally Primer and First Reader by Sarah E. Sprague, Ph. D., copyrighted by Rand, McNally & Co. in 1898. Although it begins with a "meaning" approach, the author said on page 3:

"It is assumed that each lesson in the book will be preceded by a blackboard exercise for the development of new sounds, words and phrases.... In addition, the teacher should in each instance, give the necessary drill upon the sounds of letters, and also lead the pupil to combine the phrases into sentences.... As a further aid to fluency and natural expression, have the child read each sentence and paragraph silently before attempting to read it orally. Do not read the stories of his book for him. That destroys all the novelty and he has nothing to anticipate. Remove the difficulties by preparatory work and let him have the pleasure that a new story always gives...."

Therefore, it would appear that by 1898 Sprague possibly endorsed the growing trend to real supplementary phonics to be used in tandem with “meaningful” texts. From the few photocopies available of the Harvard copy of the 1898 material, Sprague’s Rand-McNally Primer and First Reader appears to be A MEANING APPROACH WHICH RECOMMENDS SUPPLEMENTARY BUT POSSIBLY REAL PHONICS.

The New Century readers and the Lights to Literature series were still in print when the 1912 United States Catalog was published. They were out of print in 1928. Although the Lights to Literature series almost certainly used a “literature” emphasis, the basic APPROACH OF THESE TWO SERIES IS UNKNOWN.

Eulalie Osgood Grover copyrighted The Sunbonnet Babies Primer in 1902. It was illustrated by Bertha L. Corbett, “The Mother of the Sunbonnet Babies” (pastel-colored illustrations). See notes in this history concerning its content. It was in print in 1912 and 1928, according to the United States Catalogs, and was listed as a reprint by Rand along with Grover’s Outdoor Primer under Primers in the Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932. According to her preface, Eulalie Osgood Grover wrote her Sunbonnet Babies Primer in Chicago in 1901, and it was published in 1902 by Rand. It had a rigidly controlled vocabulary, and very pleasant illustrations, and was apparently very widely used, at least in the East. I have turned up references to its use before 1910 in a private school in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and in the public schools in Passaic, New Jersey. Grover’s later books such as the two series published by 1904 by another publisher, Atkinson, Mentzer and Grover (a relative?), appear to have been promoted as the result of her having established a good reputation with her famous 1902 Sunbonnet book. The Sunbonnet Babies Primer used A MEANING APPROACH.

See notes in the body of this history concerning the sight-word, controlled-vocabulary approach in The Outdoor Primer. The Outdoor Primer was in print in 1912 but not in 1928 according to the United States Catalogs so it was out of print before being revived between 1928 and 1932. Although the Overall Boys was in print in 1912 and 1928, it was not reprinted by 1932. Under Readers, the 1928-1932 Cumulative Book Index listed reprints by Rand of other of Grover’s books which had been out of print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published: Overall Boys in Switzerland (1916), Sunbonnet Babies in Holland (1915) and Sunbonnet Babies in Italy (1922). Both the Sunbonnet and Outdoor primers, and presumably all the others, used a strictly controlled sight-word vocabulary. That fact is the obvious reason for their being reprinted by 1932, even though the books had been written up to thirty years earlier. Yet the old-fashioned clothes worn by the Sunbonnet babies, who were really toddlers, drawn by Corbett in 1902 in her charming illustrations bore no resemblance to clothes worn by toddlers in the Depression era of 1932. Presumably the illustrations were redrawn for the 1932 editions, which would have destroyed much of the appeal of the original book. Grover’s primers used A MEANING APPROACH.

See the Atkinson-Mentzer entries concerning some of Grover’s books.

Katherine Elizabeth Dopp who wrote the texts listed above very probably had a tie to John Dewey before he left the University of Chicago in 1904. In a July 17, 1902, letter to Cattell before Dewey left Chicago, quoted earlier in this history, Dewey referred to possible work being done by a “Miss Dopp” of whom he obviously thought well and with whom he had apparently been planning future work.

In his July 17, 1902, letter, Dewey asked Cattell about Dewey’s chances for getting a grant from the Carnegie Institute Funds for work on anthropology for someone he would recommend, and that work on anthropology was meant to be applied to the education of children. Dewey enclosed a letter from a Miss Dopp, who had just received her doctorate at the University of Chicago, and who was the one he had in

mind to do the work. Her letter outlined its nature. Dewey said he was also interested in applying for a grant himself to work with several people on a child psychology topic.

“Miss Dopp” with her brand-new doctorate from the University of Chicago was almost certainly trying to find a paying job, and that was the obvious purpose of her 1902 letter which Dewey was enclosing, and which had the apparent nature of a grant application. Her letter very probably grew out of her earlier conversations with Dewey. In it, she obviously had outlined the nature of her proposed work in anthropology for use in children’s education.

A book was published the following year, in 1903, and both its title and its author’s name are intriguing. Both the title and the author’s name suggest it included the material for children on anthropology that Dewey in 1902 had wanted Carnegie Institute funds to finance. From the title of that 1903 book, and the titles of two others in 1904 and 1906, it is apparent that their author, Katherine E. Dopp, was riding the same thought-waves as Dewey. She almost certainly was Dewey’s “Miss Dopp” from the University of Chicago, which is supported by the additional fact that a Chicago company, Rand, was the publisher.

Note the indoctrination aspect of the titles of these books for little children: 1903, *Tree-dwellers*; 1904, *Early Cave-men*; 1906, *Later Cave-men*. The “main idea” for the little children reading them obviously was, “Your great-grandfather was an ape.” Dewey certainly was interested in children’s education, but the books he apparently sponsored to be put into the hands of children posed quite a contrast to the ancient horn book with its *Lord’s Prayer* and to the *Book of Psalms* or *Psalter!* Dopp’s grand finale, published between 1928 and 1932, also had a remarkable title: *Bobby and Betty with the Workers*. Kroupskaia, Lenin’s widow, who was so concerned with education and who also idolized John Dewey, would have loved that title. Kroupskaia wanted little children to learn about “workers,” too. Dopp’s 1916 primer, however, apparently had nothing to do with either apes or “workers.” Because it combined “content” with “drill,” W. S. Gray found fault with it in his book review in the 1917-1918 *Elementary School Journal* (page 383). Gray said:

“Ability to organize words at sight is developed through (word missing), memorization, word and sentence games, and dramatization.... interesting content has been sacrificed to provide vocabulary opportunities. In endeavoring to combine the [different] characteristics of a reader and a drill book in one volume essential features of each have been necessarily omitted.”

Therefore, Gray was not finding fault with Dopp’s “drill,” which was obviously Code 3 phony phonics from sight words and context-guessing. Gray merely wanted it handled separately from the “content” book in a “drill” book. To do so was apparently common in 1917, to judge from Gray’s remarks. Dopp’s material appears to have been *A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS*.

Washburne who co-authored the 1926 works was a major “expert” in the early 1920’s. Despite the use of the word, “sound,” on one of the 1926 books, it is reasonably certain that any 1916 primer Washburne co-authored would be *A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS*.

The Rand, McNally & Company “Riverside Publishing Company” series in 1981 was listed as one of “The Dismal Dozen,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. It is not known why Rand used the name, “Riverside,” that had been used for so many years by Houghton, Mifflin Company. Possibly Rand bought out some such division from Houghton, Mifflin.

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1899 (From E. B. Huey, p. 442)  
*Songs of the Treetop and Meadow*



McMurry and Cook  
Bloomington, Illinois  
1904 (From E. B. Huey, p. 442)  
Classic Stories for the Little Ones  
McMurry, Lida B.  
Bloomington, Illinois

Listed in E. B. Huey's bibliography on page 442, with no further information given.

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1899 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Wooster Readers (Primer, 1st-5th)  
Wooster, Lizzie E.  
Wooster & Co., Chicago, Ill.  
1909 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Industrial Primer and Readers (six books)  
Wooster, Lizzie E.  
Wooster & Co., Chicago, Illinois

Harvard has a copy of the 1899 Wooster Primer published at that time by Crane & Company, Publishers, Topeka, Kansas, 1899. (See the 1893 entry on other materials from Crane.) The Wooster Primer can be described as a Code 3 sight-word approach with a peculiar kind of phony phonics, not the customary building of new words from parts of memorized sight words. Instead, the children were taught sight words, unrelated in any phonetic manner, and copied the teacher in "marking" them with phonetic signs. Yet no indication is given that the children are taught how to read new words by themselves, the "phonics" apparently meant only to result in clear pronunciation. The text has an emphasis on kindergarten methods and on nature study. The 1912 United States Catalog reported the Industrial Primer and Readers as published in 1909, but the 1928 United States Catalog listed "Wooster Readers; primer, first-fifth readers." The 1928 material still in print may therefore have been the 1899 material. The 1909 Wooster material most probably also was A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1900 and 1910**

1900 (In 1928 United States Catalog; Harvard copy of Primer)  
Wheeler's Graded Readers  
Wheeler, William H. and Gail Calmerton  
Wheeler Publishing Company, Chicago  
1923 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
The Silent Reading Hour - (It also had a Catholic edition.)  
Buswell, Guy T. and Wm. H. Wheeler  
Wheeler Publishing Company, Chicago  
1926-1927 (In 1928 U. S. Cat.; N. B. Smith 213, 218, 225, 236)  
The Child's Own Way Series (Primer and grade 1-3)  
Hardy, Marjorie  
Wheeler Publishing Company, Chicago

Wheeler wrote Wheeler's Graded Readers with Gail Calmerton in 1900, and they included a primer and first and second readers. They were still in print in 1928 since they were listed under Calmerton's

name followed by Wheeler's in the 1928 United States Catalog, but a third reader had been added. The 1900 Wheeler material used controlled vocabulary and A MEANING APPROACH.

The 1928 United States Catalog showed that the Buswell-Wheeler series had a "Primary Book" (1926) and first to third readers that had teacher's editions (1923). The Buswell-Wheeler series is discussed by Nila Banton Smith on pages 170, 172, 180 and 431 of her "history." The 1923 Buswell-Wheeler series also had a Catholic edition.

Buswell of the University of Chicago was an associate of Charles Hubbard Judd, and Buswell's work justifying the "meaning" approach has been discussed elsewhere in this history.

On page 172 of her "history," Nila Banton Smith quoted Buswell:

"Practically all the primary readers which are in common use at the present time (1923) are made up of fairy tales, folklore, myths, Mother Goose rhymes and similar fanciful material."

Buswell said factual material was needed:

"...in order that the child's thinking may be more directly related to the actual experiences which he daily encounters."

Buswell said his series was largely factual. What he did NOT mention was that far fewer low frequency words would be needed for his "factual" material than for "fanciful" material, so it would be far easier to reduce the vocabulary. Smith quoted Buswell again on page 180:

"Silent reading is more than noiseless reading. Silent reading is not mere non-vocal reading. It is the complex process of getting thought from the printed page and involves an entirely new pedagogy. Silent reading objectives will never be attained by oral reading methods."

It certainly was a different pedagogy, but not a "new" pedagogy. It was only the Abbe de l'Eppe's deaf-mute method from the eighteenth century that Buswell, Judd, Thorndike, et al were promoting. From the teacher's manual for the Buswell-Wheeler third reader, Smith added:

"The development of comprehension was one of the major concerns of the new silent reading methods"

De l'Eppe, himself, had endorsed "comprehension" as one of the reasons for supporting his sight-word method! Smith then referred to Courtis's experiments at Detroit but made no mention of her own work in Detroit or of jointly writing the 1920 picture reading lessons with Courtis. The Buswell-Wheeler material used the MEANING APPROACH.

Nila Banton Smith listed The Child's Own Way Series as one of the post-1925 series, and mentioned it on pages 213, 218, 225 and 236. On page 236, she gave this quotation:

"If phonics is taught, it should not be begun before the tenth week and preferably later."

The primer was titled, "Wag and Puff," and it is the apparent source of the very-high-frequency word "Wag and Puff" "comprehension" paragraphs which have been duplicated so frequently and so widely ever since for primary grades. A MEANING APPROACH

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1902-1904 (In 1912 United States Catalog - N. B. Smith p. 127, 429)

Standard Reading Series  
“Scientific Alphabet” - 1st, 2nd Readers and Teacher’s Manuals  
Funk, Isaac Kaufman and M. J. Moses  
Funk & Wagnall’s Company, New York

E. B. Huey discussed this material at length on pages 268 and following, and pages 288-289, 355, and 442. Huey also reproduced a sample page in his 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. The background on the Funk & Wagnall’s material is discussed elsewhere in this history. The material used a PHONIC APPROACH.

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1903 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Columbia Primer (In 1905 American Catalogue published by Eldredge)  
Columbia First Reader (no date)  
Moran, W. J. and C. H. Brelsford  
Hinds  
1905 or earlier (In 1905 Am. Cat.; 1928 U. S. Cat. with 1910 date)  
Character Building Readers, 1st-8th and Teacher’s Edition, 1st, 2nd.  
Warner, E. E. (See also Appleton, Noble, C. E. Merrill, Bardeen.)  
Hinds  
1910 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog under Primers;  
U. S. Dept. of Education has 1910 Primer and 1917 Primer and First Reader)  
The Howell Primer (“Other books in preparation”)  
Logan Douglass Howell  
Howell and Company, New York.  
Hinds, Noble & Eldredge (See later Noble entries)  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Children’s Method Readers (1st and 2nd Year, 4 Bks, Teacher’s Manual)  
Mandel, E. and R. Wallach  
Hinds

The Hinds company but not the Noble company appeared in the 1912 U. S. Catalog. When “Hinds” published Howell’s 1910 primer, the company’s name was Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, and Howell’s materials are shown elsewhere in this appendix under the entries for “Noble.” Yet, by 1917, a company, Hinds, Hayden & Eldredge, Inc., of New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago was publishing B. Norman Strong’s *Correct Spelling*, a copy of which is at Harvard. It would appear that the Noble of the 1910 company, Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, left to form his own company, which was publishing Howell’s 1917 materials in 1928, and the original company took in a new partner, with the resultant name, Hinds, Hayden & Eldredge. However, all that appears in the U. S. Catalogs is the first word of a company’s name, so any change is not reflected in the catalogs. See Noble entries for 1905 and later.

The Howell material which has been discussed at length in this history used A PHONIC APPROACH.

No information is available on the other materials published by “Hinds.”

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1903 (Copy in Library of Congress. Unlisted elsewhere)  
The Passaic Primer (same “meaning” approach as 1907-1909 Aldine)  
Bryce, Catherine T. and Frank E. Spaulding (1866-1960)  
A. L. Freeman Printing Company, Passaic, New Jersey  
1904 (1912 United States Catalog under Readers)  
Living Thoughts for All Ages

Bryce, Catherine T. and Frank. E. Spaulding  
 F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York  
 1907-1909 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog, N. B. Smith p. 142, 147-9, 430)  
 The Aldine Readers (Primer and 7 books - revised 1916-1918, 1911 Manual)  
 Bryce, Catherine T. and Frank E. Spaulding (See Ginn speller.)  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1908 (Copy at Harvard)  
 The Graded School Speller, Book 1  
 Spaulding, Frank E. and William D. Miller  
 Ginn & Co., Boston (Bryce wrote a speller later for Newson)  
 1910 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Fables from Afar  
 Short Stories for Little Folks  
 That's Why Stories  
 Bryce, Catherine T. (See Laurel and Scribner entries)  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1912 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 New Friends in Storyland  
 Bryce, Catherine T. and Frank E. Spaulding  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1913 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Folk Lore from Foreign Lands  
 Bryce, Catherine T.  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1913 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Busy Brownies at Work  
 Davidson, Isobel and Catherine T. Bryce (See also Laurel pubs.)  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1915 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Playtime Primer  
 Bryce, Catherine T.  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1916 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Busy Brownies at Play  
 Davidson, Isobel, and Catherine T. Bryce (See also Laurel pubs.)  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1917 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Beginner's Reader  
 Hammond, M.  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Storyland  
 Bryce, Catherine T. and Others  
 Newson and Company, New York  
 1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Newson Readers, (See N. B. Smith, pages 212 and 433)  
 (Playtime-Primer, Good Times-Bk. 1, Open Door-Bk. 2, possibly more)  
 Bryce, Catherine T. and Rose L. Hardy  
 Newson and Company, New York

The Harvard library has a copy of the Aldine Readers - Learning to Read - A Manual for Teachers by Frank E. Spaulding, Superintendent of Schools, Newton, Massachusetts, and Catherine T. Bryce, Supervisor of Primary Schools, Newton, Massachusetts, published by Newson & Company, New York, in 1911. That copy carries the remark on page iv:

“The working out of this system of reading has been possible only through the cooperation, always sympathetic, intelligent, and enthusiastic, of many teachers and principals in the public schools of Passaic, N. J., where the system originated, and of Newton, Mass., where the system has been developed and perfected.”

Spaulding’s and Bryce’s earlier Passaic Primer of 1903, a copy of which is in the library of Congress, used the sentence method. Passaic is probably only about fifteen miles from Columbia Teachers College in New York City. In 1903, Passaic was within easy commuting distance of New York City by the former Lackawanna or Erie railroads to Hoboken, Jersey City, N. J., and from the railroad terminals by each railroad’s very large and rapid Hudson River ferries to various terminals in New York City. The fact that Passaic was so comfortably close to New York City suggests very possible input from Columbia Teachers College in New York in the “sentence” method used in The Passaic Primer of 1903, particularly because of Spaulding’s later association with people from Columbia Teachers College. (I powerfully suspect that Bryce was only one of the customary female hacks in those years who did all of the real work on such reading series, while the series usually showed as its principal author the name of some male education “expert.” One such series was the Elson series of Scott, Foresman.)

Only four years after The Passaic Primer was published, the Aldine readers were published, and the first book of the Aldine readers must be considered the direct successor to The Passaic Primer. It used the same “sentence” method and was written by the same authors, Spaulding and Bryce. Then Spaulding’s and Bryce’s Aldine reader series succeeded in blanketing the United States until 1930 (although until 1930 there were always many, many other reading series in print and in use). Since the Aldine readers achieved a huge success, it appears almost certain that Spaulding’s and Bryce’s materials must have received powerful promotion from influential sources, and very likely some of them were associated with Columbia Teachers College.

Clear records exist on some of those powerful influences which most probably account for the widespread promotion of the Aldine readers, which were the vastly used and immediate predecessors to the 1930 Dick and Jane deaf-mute-method readers. The late Lance J. Klass’s critically important book, *The Leipzig Connection*, which he wrote with Paolo Lionni and which was published by Heron Books, Portland, Oregon, in 1981, documented the enormous influence of Wundtian materialistic psychology on American education. The influence was achieved by Wundt’s American students and their proteges who used almost bottomless foundation moneys from the Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations. Klass quoted from the Congressional Record concerning the Senate inquiry on the activities of these foundations in 1917.

Page 2843 of the 1917 Congressional Record, not included in Klass’s book, showed a long list of dollar-a-year-men who were paid a dollar a year for their supposed services to the government, but whose real salaries were paid from other sources. These dollar-a-year men were the kind of outside agents about whose educational activities the Congressional inquiry was taking place, because such activity was considered to be an illicit use of Government power by private interests. Appointed as one of these dollar-a-year men on March 25, 1914, was Frank E. Spaulding, then Superintendent of Schools in Minneapolis and co-author with Catherine T. Bryce of the massively used 1907-1909 Aldine “sentence-method” readers.

A senator introduced a bill in 1917 to CRIMINALIZE some of the activities of such dollar-a-year men. However, America went into World War I in the spring of 1917 and the Congressional inquiry into what can best be described as the subversion of American education by those using foundation monies was stalled.

According to the Blumenfeld Education Letter (February 1994), Spaulding was a Wundtian (Leipzig) Ph. D. “who organized Yale’s department of education and wrote numerous textbooks, was a member of the Rockefeller funded Education Board from 1917 to 1920.”

The Library of Congress has a copy of The Passaic Primer of 1903 by Frank E. Spaulding, Passaic, New Jersey, and Catherine T. Bryce, copyrighted in 1903 and printed by A. F. Freeman Printing Company, Passaic. Whether Frank Freeman of the University of Chicago was related to the Passaic printer is unknown. A beginning page read as follows:

“To memorize: Fly, little birds, to the tall tree  
Fly to the nest there, little birds three

“Birds - little - to the - fly, the - to - and - tree - tall - nest - three

“Fly little birds  
“Fly to your nest  
“Fly to the tall tree, little birds  
“Fly to your little birds  
“Fly to your three little birds  
“Your little birds fly  
“Your little birds fly to your tall tree  
“Your little birds fly to the nest”

Page 3 showed the introduction to whole word “phonics”:

“t all, nest - n.”

Page 23 showed the rigid limitations of rhyming “phonics”:

“fall - called; last fast past.”

As is obvious from the above, The Passaic Primer, like the Aldine material, used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Aldine reading series was used massively, nation-wide, for very many years. On statistical tests run by Superintendent of Schools Harris in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1916, reported in the Elementary School Journal, (Volume 17, page 18), the Aldine readers and the Horace Mann readers were significantly outscored by the phonic Beacon method on oral reading, rate and comprehension. Yet the Elementary School Journal of the University of Chicago where C. H. Judd and W. S. Gray were located stated,

“The conclusions cannot be accepted as final, however.”

Those test statistics supporting phonics have fallen into education history’s black hole. Yet Currier and Duguid’s New Hampshire “study,” reported in the Elementary School Journal in 1916 without any numerical data whatever, and which purported to show that the sight word approach was better, has been referred to ever since in the literature. The massively used Aldine readers have been discussed previously

in this history. Obviously, Catherine T. Bryce was expert at writing controlled vocabulary “stories,” which is the probable reason for her many entries in this bibliography. Undoubtedly, any material by Bryce, Spaulding and Hardy used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

A 1927 copy of the Newson Readers, Book 2, The Open Door, showed the total vocabulary in the back.

“This book contains 436 of the words used in Playtime and Good Times. Excluding variants and compound words, there are 643 new words in this book, an average of 3.3 per page.....”

The total vocabulary, therefore, was 1,079 words. The note continued:

“Excluding proper names and nonsense words, 71% of the vocabulary is in Gates’ 1500 words; 63% is in Thorndike’s first 1000, 94% in his 5000.... 551 words of Newson Readers primary vocabulary is in either Thorndike’s or Gates’ first 500.....”

The figures are misleading and therefore effectively incorrect, the result of being computed from the text’s tiny total vocabulary of only 1,079 words. Using a large amount of adult materials, Ayres’ 1915 work had shown that 1,000 words composed about 90 per cent of simple material, not 63% as stated in the above. Yet it is obvious that a second grade book such as the Newson Reader could not be more complex than Ayres’ adult materials, even that portion of Ayres’ material that was composed of routine correspondence.

Nevertheless, this second grade book was no where nearly so controlled as sight-word books became later. The book was correspondingly less dull to read. It even included some delightful poems by Robert Louis Stevenson, but the word list at the back of the book showed an inordinate number of new words in italics for those “Stevenson” pages. This meant some of the words Stevenson used had such a low frequency that they did not have to be “fixed as a part of the child’s permanent vocabulary.” Yet, by 1930, Stevenson’s poems were largely passe, and so was the enrichment of children’s vocabulary. The 1927 Newson readers used A MEANING APPROACH PROBABLY WITH SUPPLEMENTARY PHONICS.

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1904 (1912 United States Catalog under Readers)  
Living Thoughts for All Ages  
Bryce, Catherine T. and Frank. E. Spaulding  
F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Happy Hour Readers  
Johnson, L. E. and J. L. Eisenberg  
F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
First Term Primer  
Maguire, E. M.  
F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Primer from Fableland  
Maguire, E. M.,  
F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York  
1930 (In Cum. Bk. Index 1928-1932, In N. B. Smith’s p. 213, 434)  
The Happy Childhood Readers (Primer, 1st-3rd, Manuals)  
Lisson Albert C.; Evelyn V. Thonet; Emma G. Meader  
F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York

No information is available on the 1904 Spaulding-Bryce material. See the Newson entries on the Aldine readers written by these authors.

No information is available on the other materials, or on any recent reading instruction materials Owen may be presently publishing.

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1904 (From date on illustrated page in Huey's book, page 327)  
Bible Symbols, or The Bible in Pictures  
Beard, Frank and Van Marter  
Hertel, Jenkins & Co., Chicago

E. B. Huey lists this book on page 442 of his own 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, describes it on page 326, and illustrates one of its pages on his page 327. Huey said:

“It is made up of Bible texts and stories with some of the words printed and very many of them replaced by pictures, large and small, that suggest the omitted words. The pictures usually suggest enough of meaning to help the child guess the meaning of the printed words, and his knowledge of words grows apace, while the fact that he must always attend to the meanings to get the words develops reading for thought.”

Of course, that is a classic deaf-mute, or Code I, method. A MEANING APPROACH.

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1904 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog by Mentzer)  
Folk Lore Readers, The  
(Primer, First, Second and later a Third Reader)  
(Primer had 285 words)  
Grover, Eulalie Osgood, (See her Rand entries)  
Atkinson, Mentzer and Grover, Chicago and Boston (See 1908 Atkinson entry)  
By 1904 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog by Mentzer)  
Art-Literature Readers  
(Primer to Bk. 4 by 1912. Primer had 258-word vocabulary)  
Grover, Eulalie Osgood and Frances Elizabeth Chutter  
Atkinson, Mentzer and Grover, Chicago and Boston (See 1908 Atkinson entry)  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Columbia Readers  
Bonser, F. G. and L. B. Beckington (8 books)  
Mentzer (Atkinson had dropped out, possibly by 1908. See 1908 entry.)

By 1912, Grover's Folk Lore Readers and her Art-Literature Readers were being published by Mentzer, presumably still in Chicago and Boston and presumably the successor to the original publishing company which had included Atkinson. By 1908, M. and G. Atkinson were publishers, as shown below. One was possibly the "Atkinson" who had been associated with Mentzer in 1904. According to the 1928 United States Catalog, Mentzer was publishing in 1928 only the Primer and Book I of the Art-Literature Readers. In 1928, Mentzer was publishing the Primer and First through Third books of the Folk Lore Readers. The rigidly controlled vocabulary indicates that both of these primers by Eulalie Osgood Grover used A MEANING APPROACH.

No information whatsoever is available on the 8-book reading series, Columbia Readers, by Bonser and Beckington. Since the series was written some time after 1912 and was still being sold in 1928, that certainly should not have been the case.



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THE FIRST FIVE BOOKS BELOW ARE OBVIOUSLY GLOBE'S SERIES OF ABOUT 1905. THE 1902 DATE ON ONE IS EITHER WRONG OR SUGGESTS GLOBE WAS IN EXISTENCE IN 1902 INSTEAD OF BEGINNING IN 1905, AS DISCUSSED BELOW, AND THEN POSSIBLY BECOMING WORLD BOOK IN 1912. NEVERTHELESS, APPENDIX C OF THE 1975 EDITION OF HOW TO INCREASE READING ABILITY BY HARRIS AND SIPAY LISTS, AS 1975 PUBLISHERS, GLOBE BOOK CO. (NOT GLOBE SCHOOL BOOK) OF 175 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, AND WORLD PUBLISHING CO. OF 280 PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK, SO THE ORIGINAL GLOBE COMPANY AND THE ORIGINAL WORLD COMPANY MAY HAVE REMAINED SEPARATE COMPANIES.

By 1905 (Per 1900-1905 American Catalogue and in print in 1912)

Story Friends

Blaisdell and Others - PRIMER (Probably Eva Austin Blaisdell McDonald. See her entries under Macmillan, Lothrop and Little.)

Globe School Book

By 1905 (Per 1900-1905 American Catalogue but not in print in 1912)

Little Folk Tales: FIRST READER.

Gilman and Others

Globe School Book

By 1905 (Per 1900-1905 American Catalogue but not in print in 1912)

Story Land: SECOND READER

Hall and Gilman

Globe School Book

By 1905 (Per 1900-1905 American Catalogue but not in print in 1912)

From Many Lands: THIRD READER

Holbrook and Hall

Globe School Book

1902 (Per 1912 U. S. Catalog. Listed without date in 1900-1905 American Catalogue)

Nature and Life, FOURTH READER, or in 2 pts.

Sterling, A. W. and others, eds.

Globe School Book

By 1905 (Per 1900-1905 American Catalogue but not in print in 1912)

Literature: FIFTH READER

Hale, E. E. Jr., and Sterling, A. W.

Globe School Book

By 1905 (Per 1900-1905 American Catalogue and 1928 U. S. Catalog)

Easy Road to Reading No. 1-3 (No. 1-4 by 1928)

(Same title as 1919 Lyons and Carnahan Series)

Chancellor, L. B.

Globe School Book (Available from World Book by 1928)

1905 (Per 1912 U.S. Catalog, 1913, World Book, per 1928 U.S. Catalog)

When the World Was Young

Brown, E. V.

Globe School Book

1907 (In 1912 and 1928 U. S. Catalogs sold by World Book)

First Year Book

Fee, M. H. and Others

World Book Co., Yonkers-on-Hudson in 1912 (Presumably Globe in 1907)

1907

Story Reader for the Second Year at School (Per 1912 U. S. Catalog)

Bowen, James A.  
Globe School Book Company  
1909 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
Story Readers - Primer  
White, M. L.  
World Book Co., Yonkers-on-Hudson (Presumably Globe in 1909)  
Before 1912 (Per 1912 United States Catalog)  
Hawthorne Readers, 1st-5th  
Hale, E. E., Jr., and Sterling, A. W.  
Globe School Book

\*\*\*\*\* (The assumption is made that Globe became World Book in 1912 even though the 1925 book below carries the notation that World Book Company was established by Caspar Hodgson in 1905. The evidence suggests his company was originally called Globe, or, what is more unlikely considering that the names are almost synonymous, that a Globe in existence before 1905 was absorbed by a World Book of 1905 in 1912. Nevertheless, as already mentioned, the 1975 edition of How to Increase Reading Ability, by Harris and Sipay, lists in Appendix C both Globe Book Co. of 175 Fifth Avenue, New York and World Publishing Co. of 280 Park Avenue, New York, so the companies may have always remained separate.)

1914 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
Philippine Chart Primer  
Coleman, M. E. and Others  
World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y., and Chicago  
1920 (Detroit Pilot Program. Library of Congress copy. 1924, 1926. In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
Picture Story Reading Lessons, Teacher's Manual - Revised  
Smith, Nila Banton and Stuart A. Courtis  
World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y., and Chicago  
1925 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Hale Literary Readers (3 books)  
Hale, E. E.  
World Book Co., Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y., and Chicago  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog, not 1912)  
Philippine Primer  
Purcell, M. A. and Others  
World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y., and Chicago  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog, not 1912)  
Story-World Readers (1st-4th)  
Suhrie, A. L. and Others  
World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y., and Chicago  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog, not 1912)  
Oldtime Stories.  
Bowen, James A. and others.  
Possible Publisher: World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson and Chicago  
1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Spellers, not 1912)  
English Words as Spoken and Written  
(2 books, primary and upper grades)  
Bowen, James A.  
World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York and Chicago  
1929 (From Harvard Copy and Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1934 - Spellers)  
Growth in Spelling, Book One, for Grades Two to Four

(Cum. Book Index shows also Book 2, Grades 5-6 and teacher's manual)  
Thorndike, Edward L. and Julia H. Wohlfart  
World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, N. Y., and Chicago

Both J. McKeen Cattell and Edward L. Thorndike, famous psychologists from Columbia University, lived not far from Yonkers and commuted to New York City. The choice of the neighboring Yonkers company, World Book Company, to publish Thorndike's "first" speller for second graders may have been far more convenient for Thorndike than a company in New York City. Cattell, in his comments at the Columbia Teachers College program honoring his close personal friend, Thorndike, in 1926, as reported in the Teachers College Record in February, 1926, referred to a colony or social circle of educators in their neighborhood. Both Smith and Curtis came from Detroit, so their choice of World Book in Yonkers in 1924 instead of some Manhattan or Detroit publisher suggests some personal contact about 1924 with that Thorndike-Cattell colony not far from Yonkers.

The record shows that Curtis must have had a long-standing and close contact with persons in that colony. In 1911, Curtis had been a member of the Hanus Committee on School Inquiry of New York City, and in charge of testing for the public schools of Boston in 1912. Curtis also participated in school surveys in Gary and Indianapolis. Cattell and Thorndike were very active in the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Curtis was a fellow and secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science from 1913 to 1917, and President 1918-1919 and 1932-1933. In his youth, Curtis had attended Central High School in Detroit and MIT for two years. Although Curtis had been highly visible and active in testing in education for years, Curtis surprisingly did not get his B. A. degree until 1919 at Columbia at the age of 45, and his M. A. at Columbia in 1921. Curtis had prepared material on arithmetic with Thorndike in 1919, which is listed in the 1926 Teachers College Record honorary issue on Thorndike. Since Curtis prepared that paper with Thorndike in 1919, it is certain he knew Thorndike well in 1919. Curtis received his Ph. D. in 1925 from the University of Michigan. Curtis had been head of the Department of Science and Mathematics at Liggett School in Detroit from 1898 to 1914, and Director of Educational Research for the Detroit Public Schools from 1914 to 1919. He was Director of Instruction and Dean of the Detroit Teachers College from 1920 to 1924, and Professor of Education in the School of Education at the University of Michigan from 1921 to 1944.

Although I do not have the publishers and dates, I seem to recall seeing Curtis's name as an author on a so-called "picture dictionary" in use in primary grades as late as the 1970's. Preparing a so-called picture dictionary, in which whole printed words and phrases are defined by pictures, instead of other words as in a true dictionary, certainly would have been a logical follow up to Curtis's and Smith's 1920 Picture Story Reading Lessons, discussed below. Such a "dictionary" is an obvious application of de l'Epee's method for deaf-mutes. Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Principal of the American Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, used the same method in his 1830 book, *The Child's Picture Defining and Reading Book*, meant for both deaf and hearing children. It is very possible that some time after 1920 Curtis and Smith prepared the first American "picture dictionary" that was meant solely for hearing children.

Nila Banton Smith received a Ph. B. degree from the University of Chicago in 1928 and M. A. in 1929, showing that, as with Curtis, her "academic" credentials came long, long after her entry into the reading instruction field. Presumably those academic certificates were supposed to make the influence of Curtis and Smith on reading instruction more "respectable." Smith received her doctorate from Columbia Teachers College in 1932 (or 1934), based on her reading instruction "history." She was Director of Reading Instruction at New York University from 1949 to 1963. The kind of "reading instruction" that must have been given at that university from 1949 to 1963 under Smith's direction is another topic that is open to study.

However, Smith and Courtis were both resident in Detroit in 1924, far from New York City when their 1920 book, *Picture Story Reading Lessons*, which had been used in a Detroit pilot program in 1920, was ready for more formal publication. Their 1920 work, officially published in 1924, had apparently been the VERY FIRST ONE to use Thorndike's list of the commonest words to teach beginning reading. Smith's and Courtis's *Picture Story Reading Lessons* (1920, 1924, 1926) based on Thorndike's high-frequency word studies were very widely used, as demonstrated by the fact the 1928 United States Catalog did not list all the data for the material under the heading, "Readers," as was done for the vast majority of other readers. Instead, it was only mentioned by the series and author names, with the note, "See main entry." That treatment was reserved for very few, which were obviously the best sellers. Yet only six years later, Smith totally omitted any mention of her obviously well-known 1920 (and 1924-1926) work in her 1932 "history," despite the fact that she mentioned many, many other "silent reading instruction" materials. Why? What is cut out does leave an intriguing silhouetted hole.

A comment from the publishers on the back of the title page of the 1926 edition of the *Teacher's Manual, Picture Story Reading Lessons, Series I, Revised*, read in part:

"By means of a unique procedure... pupils teach themselves to read..."

The Preface to *Teacher's Manual, Picture Story Reading Lessons, Series I, 1926, Revised*, read in part:

"It was in 1920 that the first edition of *Picture Story Lessons* was put into experimental use in four schools in Detroit. Since that time, the method has been adopted for citywide use with Detroit semi-annual classes of approximately 25,000 first-grade children and (its use has) been widely extended to... important cities and towns throughout the United States."

Someone certainly had a remarkable net of influence and a great deal of power to achieve such a thing from 1920 to 1926. Certainly Nila Banton Smith had no such power before 1926, and it is highly unlikely that Courtis did either, since he was always a peripheral figure in the history. The net of influence and the power must have emanated from that Cattell-Thorndike "colony" near the book's publishers, World Book Company, in Yonkers.

At the end of the Preface appeared this remark:

"Teachers in the third and fourth grades... frequently express their opinion that these pupils... have such good habits of reading for thought."

Yet, most emphatically, what had been produced was not "good." Pupils taught by the pure deaf-mute "meaning" method of *Picture Story Reading Lessons* had developed crippled conditioned reflexes in reading. The children taught by the deaf-mute "meaning" method were incapable of reading automatically. Therefore, their forced but divided attention when reading silently (part to the content, part to figuring out the words) was probably very noticeable to third and fourth grade teachers who previously had taught children who had healthy automatic conditioned reflexes in silent reading and so had free attention which might wander. Children with healthy, normal, automatic reflexes in reading had the capacity to read with total attention to the content and resultant maximum reading comprehension, which the crippled readers could not do. However, if the mood struck them, children with healthy, normal, automatic reflexes might read with a total inattention to content and near zero reading comprehension, which the crippled readers ALSO could not do! The crippled readers had to pay attention to "meaning" or they could not read at all! Despite its lowered silent reading comprehension, their forced but divided attention was wrongly interpreted by some upper grade teachers as a strength. This was during the massive emphasis on "silent reading," so the third and fourth grade teachers probably rarely if ever heard

the children read aloud and so did not know the degree to which the children were stumbling and groping in their other school books which, at that time, did not use controlled vocabulary.

Since the early 1930's, however, school books in other subjects have used increasingly stringently controlled vocabulary, so crippled reading has been more completely masked, even when done orally, which would not have been the case in the 1920's when vocabulary control was not in place except in some reading books. Furthermore, after 1930, upper-grade teachers have increasingly accepted the fiction that it is "normal" for some twenty percent or so of readers to stumble when reading orally, even on the stringently controlled vocabulary textbooks used in other school subjects than reading instruction. Most upper-grade teachers before 1930 would not have accepted that fiction. Yet with the near total suppression of oral reading tests since 1930, the massive reading disabilities since 1930 have remained largely hidden.

On the page opposite the "Preface," this appeared:

"The lessons cover a vocabulary of 265 words. This vocabulary is composed of words having the highest frequencies in the Thorndike word list together with... ten common primers. At the end of the lessons... the child has mastered the basic elements of the mechanics of reading. He is now ready to read primers and first readers and to begin work on Series II of Picture Story Reading Lessons, in which he gains power to attack new words by a variety of methods.... (He) must be able to match words, to match letters - to find letters (which) look exactly like the first letter in any given word."

The material mentioned alphabetical order in Lesson 3, and a blackboard dictionary with initial letters. Finding "letters (which) look exactly like the first letter in any given word" is, of course, necessary for two-step whole-word phony phonics. Two-step whole-word phony phonics is essentially the same as Gallaudet's deaf-mute-method "visual" phonics, in which soundless but meaning-bearing words are compared to each other to see like parts, so as to commit the words to memory.

This also appeared on the "Preface" page:

"It is now well recognized by psychologists and educationists that the only learning that is really efficient is purposeful learning.... the result... when once started... the pupils teach themselves to read."

The 1926 revised edition showed Nila Banton Smith as First Assistant Supervisor of Research, Detroit Public Schools, and reported she prepared the manual:

"...under the direction of Stuart A. Courtis, Professor of Education, School of Education, University of Michigan, and Educational Consultant, Detroit Public Schools."

Courtis and Smith's Picture Story Reading Lessons primarily used the eighteenth-century Abbe de l'Epee's deaf-mute MEANING APPROACH.

Concerning the earlier books listed above, see entries for Eva Austin Blaisdell McDonald's other books under Macmillan, Lothrop, and Little. Her Globe book was still in print in 1912, according to the United States Catalog. Eva Austin Blaisdell McDonald was apparently a highly successful author of "meaning" primers for about thirty years, until about 1930. She used a MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

James A. Bowen who wrote the 1907 Story Reader for the Second Year at School shown above, published by Globe School Book Company, also wrote a reading series in print in 1928 according to the 1928 United States Catalog. In the listings under "Readers" appears, "Bowen, James A. and others. Oldtime Stories. See main entry." Such separate listings not included under the "Readers," or "Primers" sections in the 1928 United States Catalog, almost the only portions of which I have photocopies, only appeared for important series. Therefore, presumably Bowen's series was important in 1928, and yet Nila Banton Smith totally omitted any mention of it. Bowen's series published sometime between the dates of the publication of the 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs (and probably about 1928) has fallen into reading history's black hole, along with so much else. The publisher's name, presumed to be World Book, can be confirmed by checking the 1928 United States Catalog under the isolated entry for Bowen.

Bowen was also concerned with word lists, to the extent of World Book's publishing Bowen's spellers by 1928 or before. This suggests a possible tie with Thorndike, who had his spellers published by World Book in 1929. Thorndike's 1929 spellers and Bowen's probably pre-1928 spellers followed the same somewhat unusual grading pattern for the 1920's: one book for primary grades and one for upper grades. The possibility is that Globe School Book Company who published Bowen's 1907 material became World Book Company by 1912, and later also published Bowen's reading series, just as the record shows it published Bowen's spelling series.

Presumably many of these books are in Harvard's collection, but I only looked for specific titles in their collection after 1900 so would not have seen these. However, James A. Bowen is listed with Florence Holbrook in Early American Textbooks as an author on the Rand, McNally Introductory Geography in 1899. That suggests that the Holbrook who wrote the Globe material may also be the Florence Holbrook who revised the Geo. Sherwood & Co. materials for Scott, Foresman in 1897 and who wrote the Hiawatha Primer published by Houghton, Mifflin in 1898.

No reading books were listed in the 1928 United States Catalog for the Globe School Book company (address unknown), but since World Book published Globe School Book's E. V. Brown material by 1913, that suggests that in 1912 World Book may have become the successor to Globe School Book. The similarity in the names (Globe, World) certainly suggests that. Nevertheless, Appendix C to How to Increase Reading Ability, by Harris and Sipay in its 1975 edition, lists both Globe Book Co. of 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, and World Publishing Co. of 280 Park Avenue, New York. Therefore, Globe School Book may have remained in business as a separate company.

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1905 or Before (In 1905 American Catalogue and 1912 United States Catalog)  
Practical Primer for Home and School  
Rogers, Mrs. F. R., Ed.,  
Southern Pub. Assn.

1910 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Practical Primer  
White, J. E.  
Southern Missionary Society, Nashville

No information is available on these materials, which may possibly be related. It is possible that the 1910 material was a revision of the material written before 1905. However, whether the Southern Pub. Assn. and the Southern Missionary Society are related or not is unknown.

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1905 or Earlier (In 1905 Am. Cat.; 1928 U. S. Cat. with 1910 date)  
Character Building Readers - 1st-8th, Teacher's Ed. 1st, 2nd.  
Warner, E. E. (See Appleton, Hinds, C. E. Merrill and Bardeen)  
Noble and Noble, New York (Published by "Hinds" in 1912 and before)

1905 (In 1928 United States Catalog but not 1912)  
Spanish-American Readers (Primer, first, Second)  
Mowry, G. E. and Others  
Noble and Noble, New York (In 1928)  
1908 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Thought and Action Readers  
(Primer, Thought Reader, 1st-3rd Readers, Teacher's Manual)  
Summers, M. (Published by Beattys in 1908 per 1912 U. S. Catalog but E. B. Huey showed on page 442  
of his 1908 book that The Thought Reader, Book I, was published by Ginn & Co., Boston)  
Noble and Noble, New York (In 1928)  
1910 (In 1912 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
The Howell Primer (Other books in preparation)  
Logan Douglass Howell  
Howell and Company, New York.  
Hinds, Noble & Eldredge  
1917 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog published by Noble)  
"How to Teach Reading" (Primer, 1st, 2nd Reader, Manual)  
Howell, Logan Douglass, Former Supt. of Schools, Raleigh, N. C. and Frances S. Williams, Primary  
Teacher, Lynchburg, Va., Schools  
Howell & Company, New York. (Apparently privately published in 1917)  
1925 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog)  
New Howell Primer, for Foreign Children  
Howell, L. D. and Frances S. Williams  
Noble and Noble, New York  
1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Story-Time Readers (1st-4th)  
Reynolds, J. J. and E. J. Neville  
Noble and Noble, New York  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Graded Stories for Reading,  
Reynolds, J. J. and Others  
Noble and Noble, New York

Also see earlier entries on "Hinds." The Noble company did not appear in the 1912 U. S. Catalog so far as I could see. By 1917, a company, Hinds, Hayden & Eldredge, Inc., of New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago was publishing B. Norman Strong's Correct Spelling, a copy of which is at Harvard. It would appear that the Noble of the 1910 company, Hinds, Noble & Eldredge, left to form his own company, which was publishing Howell's 1917 materials in 1928, according to the 1928 United States Catalog.

See the discussion on the Summers material in the 1908 entry below for Beattys.

The 1910 Howell materials and their revision have been discussed at length in this history. They are PHONIC MATERIALS.

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1905 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Little People's Sound Primer  
Chadwick, M. L. Pratt  
Educational Pub.  
1905 (In 1928 United States Catalog - 4 primers)  
Little Red Hen  
The Three Bears

Three Little Kittens, Chicken Little  
 Three Pigs (no date)  
 Chadwick, M. L. Pratt  
 Educational Pub.  
 1906 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 First Reader: Puss in Boots, Reynard the Fox.  
 Chadwick, M. L. Pratt  
 Educational Pub.  
 1906 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Jack the Giant Killer (Possibly 2nd, following above first reader?)  
 World History in Myth and Legend (3rd and 4th grades)  
 Chadwick, M. L. Pratt  
 Educational Pub.  
 1908 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Nixie Well (no grade given)  
 Chadwick, M. L. Pratt  
 Educational Pub.  
 1907 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Graded Readers (Primer and 5 volumes)  
 Black, B. N. (Wrote primer and 3 vols. in 1905 or before for Bardeen)  
 Educational Pub.  
 1911 (Both in 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Eureka Primer  
 Eureka First Reader (no publishing date and not in 1912 U. S. Catalog)  
 Klingensmith, Annie (See also Bancroft/Indiana, Amer. Bk., Flanagan)  
 Educational Pub.  
 Before 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Action, Imitation and Fun Series  
 Chadwick, M. L. Pratt  
 Educational Pub.  
 Before 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Our Little Folk's Primer  
 Newton, M. B.  
 Educational Pub.  
 Before 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Sprague Classic Readers (Book 1 through Book 5)  
 Sprague, Sarah E. (See D. D. Merrill entries.)  
 Educational Pub.  
 Before 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Foundation Readers (1st-4th)  
 Burke, B. E.  
 Educational Pub.  
 Before 1912 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
 Good Time Primer and First Reader  
 Seymour, F. G.  
 Educational Pub.

Sprague's other materials are listed under Rand and under D. D. Merrill. Her materials all apparently used A MEANING APPROACH, although she recommended supplementary phonics in the 1898 Rand material. The fact that "Educational Pub." published a book by Klingensmith suggests a possible



connection with Indiana, where Klingensmith worked on that state's reading series. Possibly, therefore, the company was located in Indianapolis, Indiana.

It should be noted that D. D. Merrill was possibly a publisher of state-adopted texts, and Educational Pub. may have worked on state-adopted materials. If these companies did publish state-adopted materials, then Sprague was associated with two "official" publishers.

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1906 (In 1912 Catalog)

First Reader o. p. (Presumably, "out of print.")

McIntyre, W. A.

Morang

No further information is available on this material.

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1906 (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Brownie Primer (See also Flanagan publishers of book with that title)

Cox, Palmer

(M. E. Sullivan and P. M. Cox, possibly the same as Palmer Cox, who wrote Beacon Gate to Reading published by Ginn in 1926)

Century Co., New York

1917 (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Story and Play Readers

Lutkenhaus, A. M. and M. Knox, Editors

Century Co., New York

1919 (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Young America's First Book

Baylor, A. S. and E. Colbert

Century Co., New York

On page 16 of Americana in Children's Books, a Library of Congress 1974 pamphlet, the following appears:

"Cox, Palmer. The brownies through the Union. New York. Century Co.

[1895] 144 p. illus. 26 cm. PZ8.3C839 Bth JuvColl Rare Bk

The prankish Brownies explore famous sites and historic landmarks in the series of rhyming stories (1887-1913) first published in St. Nicholas and the Ladies Home Journal."

Those magazine stories are the apparent source for the Brownies material.

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1908 (In 1912 United States Catalog)

Summers' Readers - Primer, 1st Reader, 2nd Reader, Teacher's Manual

Summers, Maud (See also Noble & Noble who were the 1928 publishers. Ginn was mentioned as her publisher by E. B. Huey in his 1908 book)

Beattys

Summers' "meaning" materials were discussed at length by E. B. Huey in his 1908 book, The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading, on pages 324, 342, 343 and 442. On page 442, he showed the publisher of The Thought Reader, Book I, by Maud Summers as Ginn & Co. of Boston, not Beattys. The 1928 publisher according to the United States Catalog was Noble & Noble.

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1908 (In 1912 United States Catalog under Reading, not Readers)

First Book in Phonics

Akin, F.(lorence?)

M. & G. Atkinson (Possibly formerly of Atkinson, Mentzer and Grover)

1913 (Copyright by Florence Akin. In 1928 United States Catalog)

Word Mastery, A Course in Phonics for the First Three Grades

Akin, Florence, Formerly a Teacher in Primary Grades, Portland, Oregon

The Riverside Press, Houghton Mifflin Company, Cambridge, Mass.

1941 (Copyright by Florence Akin Banks, Copy from Kathryn Diehl)

Word Mastery, A Course in Phonics for the First Three Grades

Akin, Florence, Formerly a Teacher in Primary Grades, Portland, Oregon

The Riverside Press, Houghton Mifflin Company, Cambridge, Mass.

Mrs. Kathryn Diehl sent me her copy of the 1913 material, which had been published some time after 1941. It is straight "Code 10" phonics, and so, presumably was the 1908 material, probably written by the same "F. Akin" but published by M. and G. Atkinson, not Riverside Press. The 1913-1941 material, however, is a child's textbook listed under "Readers" in the 1928 United States Catalog, while the 1908 material was listed under "Reading" (guides) instead of "Readers," (children's textbooks) in the 1912 United States Catalog. The preface of the 1913-1941 material begins:

"This little book is intended to be put into the hands of children at the beginning of their first year in school. It may be used in conjunction with any series of readers.

"Teachers generally recognize the value of a good foundation in phonics as an important aid in learning to read. Unfortunately many teachers are not sufficiently familiar with the principles underlying phonic analysis and the building of words to feel sure that they can make their phonic drills as economical and as effective as they should be.... it must of necessity be presented to the pupils from the blackboard, or from large printed cards and charts. It has seemed to the author that it would be a great advantage to both teacher and pupil to have before the pupil in a book a carefully worked out and thoroughly tested series of exercises in phonics, which have been found to make pupils self-reliant in word mastery.

"The author has evolved this system of teaching phonics in her own schoolroom, and has found that it ensures rapid progress in learning to read...."

Akin's "Suggestions to Teachers," pages 112 to 117, followed by "List of Phonograms Studied" is an excellent guide to teaching Code 10 phonics. While some of her "Phonograms" are actual word parts instead of isolated phonemes, her guide suggests teaching them solely by "sound" and not by "meaning," so the material does rate Code 10. She originated this material in the early twentieth century, when supplementary phonics became the norm in American first grades, and she apparently had it on the market by 1908. Yet she obviously still expected her material to be solely "supplementary," as she referred to two ten-minute daily drills in phonics, to be done apart from the "reading" lesson. That Akin's excellent supplementary phonics material was still being published by Houghton Mifflin as late as 1941, and very probably even later, is very surprising, considering the blanketing effect in America of the Dick and Jane readers. The Dick and Jane so-called "intrinsic" phonics of 1930 was intended to do away with such supplementary phonics drill as Akin's, which had been around since shortly after 1900.

However, apart from its listing in the United States Catalogs of 1912 and 1928, I never saw any reference to Florence Akin's material in the literature until Mrs. Diehl sent the book to me from her collection of reading materials. It does not seem probable that the Akin material had any wide use after 1928, at which time it was listed in the United States Catalog as in print.

1909 (In 1928 United States Catalog; Harvard copy of The Primer)  
The Child Classics (primer to 6th reader)  
Alexander, Georgia  
The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis  
1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Bobbs-Merrill Readers (Harvard copy, 1st Gr. Man'l, shows all authors)  
Betts, George Herbert; Clara Belle Baker; Edna D. Baker  
Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Reading for Children (Primer, Bks. 1-3)  
Baker, Clara Belle and Edna D. Baker  
1928 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
True Stories Series (See N. B. Smith p. 212, 218, 433)  
Baker, Clara Belle and Edna D. Baker  
Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis  
1959 (Reviewed in Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates on p. 305)  
Reading for Living Series  
Burton, William H.; Clara Belle Baker; Grace E. Kemp.  
Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis

Harvard's copy of the 1909 Child Classics - The Primer by Georgia Alexander shows that it used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

Clara B. Baker, Professor, Curriculum and Method, National Elementary College, Chicago, and Edna D. Baker, President, National Elementary College, Chicago, wrote The First Reader Manual in 1924 for the Bobbs-Merrill Readers. George Herbert Betts was Editor. George Herbert Betts was an early endorser of "meaning," having studied with John Dewey, possibly at the University of Chicago before Dewey left in 1904, or at Columbia Teachers College in New York after Dewey arrived in 1904. George Herbert Betts wrote The Mind and Its Education, published by D. Appleton and Company, New York, in 1906, in which he mentioned having been a student in Dewey's class. According to its title page, in 1906 Betts was Head of Department of Psychology and Education in Cornell College. Later, after about 1915, Betts was very active in promoting the "meaning" method in Iowa, which resulted in the heavy reading disabilities reported in the 1920's by Dr. Samuel Orton. The Iowa catastrophe was the reason for Orton's involvement in reading instruction.

Betts' involvement seems to have been scrubbed from "official" records, possibly because of the connection with Orton. His name appears nowhere in Nila Banton Smith's "history," so far as I could find. Any material associated with Betts can be assumed to have used a meaning approach, and that is the case in the Manual for the Bobbs-Merrill First Reader. It used two-step phony phonics, continuing the approach from the primer. The vocabulary for the Primer, First Reader, and Second Reader totalled only 1,200 words. A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1910 and 1920**

1910 (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Child's World Readers  
Smith, C. A.

Clark

The Child World Readers listed in the 1900-1905 American Catalogue as having been published between 1900 and 1905 by Kellogg presumably have no connection with the above material. Nor, probably, is there any connection between the above material and the 1917 series published by B. F. Johnson. Nor, presumably, is there any connection with the 1908 Child World Primer listed in the 1912 United States Catalogue under Primers, written by A. E. Bentley and G. R. Johnston, published by "Barnes," presumably a division of American Book Company.

No information is available on the material on the Child's World Readers published by "Clark."

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At some point after 1930, Row, Peterson of Chicago may have merged with Harper & Brothers to form Harper and Row. See also the earlier entries for Harper & Brothers. By 1997, the company name had become Harper, Collins, a unit of Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation.

1910 and later (In 1928 United States Catalog. Multiple references by N. B. Smith discussed below. Harvard copy of 1911 First Reader)

Reading-Literature Series

Treadwell, Harriette Taylor and Margaret Free

Row, Peterson & Co., Chicago

1930-1931 (In Cumulative Index 1928-1932)

Storyland - Books 4-6

Treadwell, Harriette Taylor and Others

Row, Peterson & Co., Chicago

1936 (Date per Hillel Black's The Amer. Schoolbook. A copy of Round

About, the third book after Basic Preprimer and Basic Primer, shows copyright dates of 1936, 1941, 1948, 1957, and states vocabulary is 195 words plus those in two primers; N. B. Smith p. 277 dated to after 1940.)

The Alice and Jerry Basic Readers

O'Donnell, Mabel

Row, Peterson & Co., Chicago

1955

Why Johnny Can't Read, and What You Can Do About It

Flesch, Rudolf

Harper & Row, New York

1963 (See Chall, Learning to Read)

The Linguistic Science Readers

Stratemeyer, Clara G. and Henry L. Smith, Jr.

Harper & Row, Publishers, Incorporated, New York

1966 (Reviewed in Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates, p. 298-299)

The Harper and Row Basic Reading Program

O'Donnell, Mabel; Byron H. Van Roekel, Educational Consultant

Harper & Row, Evanston, Illinois

1981

Why Johnny Can't Read, The Scandal of Our Schools

Flesch, Rudolf

Harper & Row, New York

On the 1910 Reading-Literature Series by Treadwell and Free, Gates stated in 1925 the 1910 Primer had been written by both, but the 1922 manual was written by Grace E. Storm, Mae F. Mardorf and

Jeannette G. Baughman. Nila Banton Smith discussed the series on pages 142 and 143, and 149 to 152, dating it 1910 to 1916. She made the doubtful statement on page 149:

“Margaret Free and Harriette Taylor Treadwell were the first authors to prepare beginning readers with a content consisting wholly of adaptations from the old folk tales.”

Smith added:

“Miss Treadwell was principal of the West Pullman School, Chicago and Miss Free was a primary teacher in the Forestville School, Chicago.”

Their Chicago locations raise the possibility that, like so many other school personnel at the time, they were taking graduate courses at the University of Chicago which was full of “correct” ideas on the teaching of reading. Smith said on page 150:

“The subject matter is wholly concerned with adaptations from the following folk tales: The Little Red Hen, The Gingerbread Boy, The Old Woman and the Pig, The Boy and the Goat, The Pancake, Chicken Little, Three Billy Goats Gruff, Little Tuppens, and Little Spider’s First Web.

“The word range is small. Four words (the, little, red, hen) appear on the first page of the primer, and on the second page we find six new words - the largest number introduced on any of the first ten pages. The cumulative features of the folk tales provide abundant repetition.”

The text was obviously the pure “meaning” sight-word approach, with the same endless repetitions of phrases so familiar today in the omnipresent “whole language” materials. However, on page 134 of the Harvard library copy of the First Reader of 1911, supplemental phonics drill of fifteen or twenty minutes a day was recommended. Smith’s comments suggest that the 1922 manual written by others did not include such a recommendation.

Smith described the approach of this and similar “literature” materials on pages 142-143:

“The essential steps of method advocated in these series were: first, the teacher would tell a story or rhyme to the children until they had memorized it or had become very familiar with it; the selection was then read and analyzed into separate words and phrases; and eventually phonetics was applied in sounding the words. The emphasis upon phonetics, however, was not marked. The authors of the Reading-Literature series of readers say in regard to this phase of reading:

““It is not the purpose here to set forth a “scientific system”“ of phonetics. It is not believed desirable that children in these early grades have even “a complete system” of phonics. It is the aim to give, in this manual, only such work as experience has shown necessary to train children into independent power over words in their reading vocabulary. There have been complete and scientific systems used for drill in the past. There are such systems yet in use in some sections of the country. But these systems have proved generally unsatisfactory. Their failure may be clearly traced to the fact that they are too complex and elaborate.”“

Paper never refuses ink, and so it soaked up the unfounded and fake statement, “these systems have proved generally unsatisfactory.” With that statement, the Chicago “authors,” with their possible “graduate school” ties to the University of Chicago and its “experts” like Judd and Gray, rewrote history. They had buried anew Dr. Leigh and Rebecca Pollard and so many others, including the old Scottish

Schoolmaster of 1829, Pere I. D. B. of seventeenth-century Paris, and Quintilian himself from ancient Rome.

But that was not all that was buried with that quotation. Smith mentioned “phonetics” and then added, “The authors of the Reading-Literature series of readers say in regard to this phase of reading” after indicating here and elsewhere (pages 142, 149, and 430) that the authors were Free and Treadwell in the period 1910 to 1916. She even gave the reference for the quotation. It was from the Primary Manual. Yet Gates in his 1925 Teachers College Record article, “Problems in Beginning Reading,” indicated that the Primer had indeed, been written by Treadwell and Free in 1910, but the Manual was written by three other women, in 1922, at which time the post-war anti-phonics crusade of Gates of Columbia Teachers College and Gray of the University of Chicago was well under way.

It was hardly news that “experts” like Gray and Gates, and those under their influence, disapproved so publicly of phonics by 1922. After all, Nelson Rockefeller and his brother were being turned into dyslexics at that very time at great expense at the Lincoln School associated with Columbia Teachers College. It was also about that time that Gates told of the poor little fellow who tried to hide behind the piano when his teacher gave the sight-word lessons. Once again, Smith had distorted history by juggling dates and burying names. She wrote her original book as her thesis apparently in 1932, and it was first published in 1934, when the differences between the intellectual climates of pre-war 1910 and post-war 1922, which dates she was juggling, would have been very obvious to her readers. The Free-Treadwell material obviously used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

N. B. Smith dated Mabel O’Donnell’s Alice and Jerry Basic Readers to the 1940-1950 period (on page 277). However, the following from page 300 of Samuel L. Blumenfeld’s *The New Illiterates*, 1973, 1988: The Paradigm Co., Boise, Idaho, places its origin at 1936:

“Hillel Black, in his book, *The American Schoolbook*, tells us that Alice and Jerry have earned Miss O’Donnell \$2,700,000 in royalties since 1936.”

A 1957 copy of the first reader in the series, entitled *Round About*, also shows the first copyright date as 1936. O’Donnell’s material was a controlled-vocabulary MEANING SERIES ALMOST CERTAINLY WITH PHONY PHONICS.

A widely used series in England, Janet and John, is called the “O’Donnell” series, dating from 1949, written by “O’Donnell and Munro.” It is remotely possible it is related to Mabel O’Donnell’s American series.

Dr. Rudolf Flesch’s 1955 best-seller, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*, has been discussed in this history. As mentioned elsewhere, his 1981 book, *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read* was unavailable in many bookstores in 1981. I personally found it to be unavailable in a bookstore in the Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York where a clerk said it had been on order from the publishers for a considerable time. I also found it unavailable in 1981 in the 30th Street Philadelphia Station book store, in a book store in Dallas, Texas, and elsewhere. I then ordered it directly from the publishers. However, Flesch’s 1981 book is now easily available from Barnes & Noble bookstores and from the current publishers, and so is his 1955 book.

See the 1997 entry in Appendix E in which Mona McNee of Reading Reform Foundation in England stated that Dr. Flesch had written her, saying:

“Harper & Row sabotaged the [1981] book, didn’t advertise, and eventually recalled it from the stores.”

Dr. Flesch's earlier, famous and best-selling, 1955 book included a manual at the back for teaching children to read, the same method that he had used to teach his own little children and the famous older "Johnny," the son of a neighbor. The book is still in print, and carries on its title page the additional words: "Use this book to teach your child to read in six weeks." That is overstated, except for an adult total illiterate. For the average six-year-old, it should take several months, and longer for younger children (who would be better off to wait until six years of age). It would take MUCH longer for most older children who have been crippled by the "meaning" sight-word method. In the book, Flesch himself tells of constantly telling Johnny not to guess. Such whole-word guessing is deeply ingrained, highly resistant to change, and interferes with learning true phonics. Flesch's 1955 book, still available in many libraries and still sold by its publisher, provides one of the easiest-to-locate and simplest methods for a parent to use to teach a child to read.

The Linguistic Science Readers by Clara G. Stratemeyer and Henry L. Smith, Jr., published in 1963, were among the programs used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first grade studies, which were reported in The Reading Research Quarterly, Summer, 1967.

The Harper & Row series in 1981 was listed as one of "The Dismal Dozen," by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of his 1981 book, Why Johnny STILL Can't Read.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Home and School Primer for Beginners  
Saalfield

No further information is available on this material.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Dulany's Primer and First Reader  
Dulany

No further information is available on this material.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
My Very First Little Book of Letters  
My Very First Little Reading Book  
Doran

No further information is available on this material.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Nursery Primer  
Donohue  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Home Primer  
Donahue  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Picture Primer of the First Lessons at Home  
Donahue

No further information is available on these materials.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs)  
True Education Reader Series (Primer, 1st-7th)  
Hale, K. B. and Others  
Pacific

1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Out-Of-Doors  
Hale, K. B.  
Pacific

1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Joan and Peter  
Howell, F.  
Pacific

No further information is available on these materials.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Woodward's Readers for Grade Schools (5 books)  
Woodward and T.

No further information is available on this material.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
First Book for Children  
Valentine, L.  
Warne

The relatively uncommon name, "Valentine," and the date, "1912," are an intriguing combination. Who the publisher, "Warne," was is unknown but the company may have been English. The 1876 American Catalogue listed Scribner's reprinting of "primer" materials with Mavor's name, which were almost certainly of English origin and based on materials Mavor wrote in England in the early nineteenth century. Scribner also published in 1876 varieties of "Warne's" primers, and they were very possibly also reprints of material by an English author or English company named Warne. Valentine might well have been associated with such a company, if "Valentine" was the well-known English reading researcher who defended phonics in beginning reading.

The author of First Book for Children, Valentine, may be that English reading researcher, C. W. Valentine, with his initials wrongly recorded as "L," or it may have been someone related to C. W. Valentine, such as possibly his wife. In 1912, an American branch of an English company named "Warne" may have been selling Valentine's or his relative's work. The question of phonics in reading was a concern in Great Britain by 1912, as shown by C. W. Valentine's 1913 research, reported on pages 105-106 of Jean Chall's 1967 Learning to Read, the Great Debate. Valentine's research was also reported by W. H. Winch as cited elsewhere in this history. Winch said Valentine had disproved Dumville's pro-sight-word research. Dumville's research was cited by W. S. Gray in his UNESCO book. Note that, if this was a phonics text, it was out of print by 1928. In "beginning reading instruction," nothing fails like success. This was POSSIBLY A PHONICS APPROACH.

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1912 or Earlier (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Laurel Primer  
Hailmann, W. N.  
(Promoter of kindergartens, in 1891 Supt. Schools, La Porte, Indiana)  
Birchard



1922-1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog. Also from 1924 Advertising Brochure Now at Harvard Prepared for 1924 NEA Annual Meeting)  
(See N. B. Smith, p. 179, 180, 191, 206, 211 and 432)  
Laurel Readers (Primer, 1st, 2nd)  
Hyer, F. S.  
Lincoln Readers (Grades 3-8)  
Davidson, Isobel and Charles J. Anderson (On Davidson, see Newson Co.)  
(N. B. Smith, p. 211, referred to Davidson and Anderson's Lincoln Readers Primer, in a list of "Study Type Readers for Silent Reading") Also: The Economy Method of Writing  
Laurel Book Company, Chicago - New York - Philadelphia

Nila Banton Smith said on pages 179-180 that the Lincoln Readers published by Laurel Book Company, appearing between 1922 and 1926, were widely used.. She said the authors stated:

'The selections are predominantly informational and testable and are designed as directly preparatory to the reading of such informational materials as that met in history, geography, and other informational courses of the elementary school.'

Smith said the readers used checks on silent reading such as yes and no exercises, directions for making things, answering questions, and so on.

The company's advertising brochure prepared for the 1924 NEA meeting clearly listed two distinct names on different levels of the readers, Laurel and Lincoln, and a different author for the lower level books. Whether there was a Lincoln primer to book 2 section published in addition to the Laurel primer to book 2 after the advertising brochure for the NEA meeting was printed in 1924, or whether there is simply a confusion of names on the same primer to book two materials, is unknown.

However, might the "Lincoln" readers, because of the choice of the name, Lincoln, in the 1920's, have had some connection with the avant-garde Lincoln School of the 1920's with its associations at Columbia Teachers' College?

Isobel Davidson had also worked with Catherine T. Bryce, the co-author of the Aldine readers, on 1913 and 1916 Newson books, which see. Nila Banton Smith on pages 191 and 432 said Charles J. Anderson and E. Merton wrote an "expert" article, "Remedial Work in Reading," published in the Elementary School Journal in January, 1921 (giving the date as 1920 on page 191). Also, on page 206, she said C. J. Anderson and Isobel Davidson wrote a book, "Reading Objectives," on which she did not give the date.

The Laurel/Lincoln materials apparently were put together by contemporary reading "experts," and appear to have used A MEANING APPROACH.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)  
Nature and Life Readers (Primer, First) (see 1928 entry below)  
Pardee, L. P.  
J. A. Lyons (Apparent predecessor to Lyons and Carnahan)  
1914 (Library of Congress Copy)  
Teachers' Manual to Accompany Easy Road to Reading  
Smith, Carrie J., Ft. Atkinson, Wis.; and Ella D. Howe, Primary Teacher, Columbus, Ohio.  
Lyons and Carnahan, Chicago - New York  
1919 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog and per Gates 1925 primer article)  
Easy Road to Reading (10 books, Primer-8th and Higher and Manual)

(Gates referred to the “revision” of the primer and manual without giving dates. Earlier manual was dated 1914, so revision was presumably 1919.)

(Same title as different World Book series from before 1905)

Smith, Carrie J., and Ella D. Howe, Manual Revised by Frank E. Sanford

Lyons and Carnahan, Chicago

1927-1928 (In 1928 United States Catalog -

In N. B. Smith’s book on p. 212, 218, 226-28, 232, 240, 433.)

Child Story Readers (Primer, 1st-6th, Primer Work Book)

Freeman, Frank N.; Grace E. Storm; Eleanor Murdock Johnson; and W. D. French

Lyons and Carnahan, Chicago

1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Nature and Life Readers (Primer, 1st-4th) (See 1912 entry above)

Smith, Carrie J.

Lyons and Carnahan, Chicago

1950-58 (Revised 1962) (N. B. Smith p. 326, 337-8-9, 437; reviewed by Blumenfeld in The New Illiterates on p. 302)

The Developmental Reading Series

Bond, Guy L. and Others (Bond worked on USOE reading study of 1967)

Lyons and Carnahan, Chicago

1954

Child Experience Readers

(Copy of 1st reader shows controlled, small vocabulary - Happy Children, First reader, after Paul and Betty; and At Home and School)

Goldin, Myron R., Benjamin Sallen, Principals, N.Y.C. Junior High Schools; Helen Hay Heyl, Chief, Bureau of Curr. Dev., El. Ed. Div., State Dept. of Ed., N. Y.; John J. Loftus, Former Asst. Supt., N.Y.C.

The 1914 Teachers’ Manual To Accompany Easy Road to Reading said in the Preface:

“The Easy Road to Reading Primer and First Reader are for the child. Every word on every page is for the child to read. Suggestions for seat work, phonic drill, and other material intended for the teacher are entirely eliminated from the child’s book and placed in this Manual, which is the teacher’s book.... It cannot be too strongly emphasized that recognition of the words at sight is the sine qua non of successful work in learning to read.... The teaching of the recognition of written forms usually precedes that of printed forms.... Nothing can equal the teaching effectiveness of the live teacher and the blackboard. The crayon that talks and the teacher who makes the crayon talk are two factors unequalled in potency in aiding the child in acquiring a vocabulary of written forms. Most teachers give from twenty to thirty lessons in reading from the blackboard before placing the Primer in the hands of the child. In these blackboard lessons, the order of procedure is as follows:

- “1. Awaken the idea or thought in the mind of the child.
- “2. Get the spoken word or sentence.
- “3. Present the written form.
- “4. Require the oral (or dramatized) expression of the word or sentence....”

On page 45, the manual referred to having already taught “in written and printed form” a vocabulary of ninety-one words, and methods of sight-word drill had been suggested. These 1914 authors would have felt right at home in Colonel Parker’s Quincy schools in 1875. Chapter VI, “Phonics,” recommended daily drill in “sounds” and “families” to form new words: i. e., two-step phony phonics. The Easy Road to Reading was obviously A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The 1927-1928 Series obviously received heavy reporting by Nila Banton Smith in her “history,” as the pages listed above show. Not surprisingly, the series’ main author, Frank N. Freeman, was at that time with the University of Chicago, where Judd and Gray were located, as was Grace E. Storm. Eleanor Murdock Johnson was a Supervisor at York, Pennsylvania, and W. D. French was Superintendent of Schools, Drumright, Oklahoma. Nila Banton Smith stated on page 232, concerning the approaches in reading books published between 1925 and 1935:

“There is no case in which such small units as letters or words are used in introducing the child to reading. A complete story, a small thought unit, and a combination of sentences, phrases, and words are the three types of introductory units most frequently employed.”

She had clearly testified that phonics was dead in “readers” by 1925. Yet, according to Gates, most teachers still used heavy supplemental phonics until the arrival of his and Gray’s 1930 deaf-mute-method materials. The deaf-mute-method readers did away with such supplemental phonics because of their so-called “intrinsic” phonics (context guessing from a sight-word stew and parts of previously memorized whole sight-words).

Although “reading groups” had been recommended in the 1914 manual above and sometimes elsewhere, “reading groups” only became common after the “meaning”-method readers finally took over and supplementary phonics was finally dropped. That is because “grouping” became mandatory once only the “meaning” method was used. The “meaning” method guarantees failures, but the failures are always spread over a huge range, from what falsely seems to be success to almost total failure. Whole-class instruction, therefore, is no longer possible when the “meaning” method is used to “teach” reading, because of that great spread in “achievement,” which spread does not exist in classes which are taught to read by “sound.” As a result, the “meaning” method to “teach” beginning reading brought along with it the installation of reading groups in classrooms all over America, from what might have been called the “bluebird” top group, through what was perhaps called the “sparrow” middle group, down to what could have been called the poor little “crows.” Time-wasting grouping, where children receive only one-third of the teacher’s instructional time, posed quite a contrast to the previous whole-class reading instruction, when each child received one hundred per cent of the teacher’s instructional time.

Smith stated on page 239:

“...[before 1925] a beginning had been made in the recommendation of ability grouping in reading, the use of diagnostic tests and remedial work - all as a means of meeting individual differences. The number of teachers’ manuals and courses of study, however, which made such recommendations prior to 1925 was exceedingly limited. Since that date practically every publication of either of these types has devoted considerable space to a discussion of these topics....”

It was the mushrooming failures from the post-1925 readers which made “reading groups” and “remediation,” mandatory but that brand-new failure was being publicized by the change-agents who were causing it, like Smith herself, as “progress.” The Freeman 1927-1928 series fitted Nila Banton Smith’s description of post-1925 series, recommending three reading groups in third grade (N. B. Smith, page 240). Harvard library has a copy of My Work Book for Terry and Billy, the Child-Story Primer, published in 1930. The few photocopies available to me now show it concerned, at least in part, the sorting and matching of short, whole, meaning-bearing sentences. That is a pure “meaning” approach. Therefore, the series used A MEANING APPROACH.

Dr. Guy L. Bond of the University of Minnesota, the principal author on The Developmental Reading Series of 1950-58 (revised in 1962), was also a co-author with Miles A. Tinker, also of the University of

Minnesota, of a textbook on the teaching of reading. It was entitled Reading Difficulties, Their Diagnosis and Correction, and was published in 1973 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Bond also was head of the 1967 USOE studies on beginning reading, discussed in Appendix E. His reading series was reviewed by Blumenfeld in The New Illiterates on p. 302.

On the 1954 Child Experience Readers, note that the authors were New York City and New York State administrators. That fact recalls the following remarks of Dr. Hilde Mosse, associated with the New York City Schools, quoted elsewhere in this history. She wrote on page 273, under the heading, "Suppression of Critical Studies" (though her remarks do not specifically concern New York):

"The mere mention of the fact that the teaching of phonics had helped one of my patients, for instance, was cut out of an article on "Creativity and Mental Health," a curriculum journal had asked me to write in 1959....

"Another example is the experience of a guidance counselor and an assistant principal with special expertise in reading disorders. They were charged with investigating the reading difficulties of all the children who attended special remedial reading classes during the summer. They found that all of them had one reading defect in common: they did not know phonics. Their report was never published. They were called to their supervisors and asked how they dared go against the theory of the Associate Superintendent."

Although the two primers of the 1954 series are not available, a first reader is available. It used a small, strictly controlled vocabulary, which fact indicates that the 1954 Child Experience Readers used A MEANING APPROACH AND PROBABLY PHONY PHONICS.

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1912 or Before (In 1912 United States Catalog)

Metcalf-Call Readers (Primer, 1st-3rd)

Metcalf, R. C. and A. D. Call

Johnson, Blagden and McTurnan

1912 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalogs)

Metcalf-Call Readers (Primer, 1st-5th)

Metcalf, R. C. and A. D. Call

Laidlaw Brothers, Chicago and New York

1916 (Reviewed by W. S. Gray in Elementary School Journal., 1917-18, p. 38)

The New Barnes Primer and Manual, The Kearny Plan

Robbins, May - Primary Supt., Kearny, N. J.; Herman Dressel, Supt. of Schools, Kearny, N. J.; Ellis U. Graff, Supt. of Schools, Indianapolis.

"A. S. Barnes" was the publisher in 1916, per W. S. Gray. It was presumably a division of American Book if Gray was correct. See American Book, and Laidlaw, below, as the 1924 publisher.

1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog)

New Barnes Readers

Dressel, Herman; May Robbins, Ellis U. Graff

Laidlaw Brothers, Chicago - N. Y. (Also see 1916 entry under Am. Bk.)

1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Sunny Book Readers, Primary Grades (3 Books)

Laidlaw Brothers, Chicago and New York

1928 (In Cumulative Book Index 1928-1932)

Laidlaw Readers

(Listed under Primers as pub. in 1928 but Readers entry gave no date)

Dressel, H. and Others

Laidlaw Brothers, Chicago and New York

1981 or Before (Mentioned by Dr. R. Flesch in 1981 “Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read as one of the Dismal Dozen)  
A Laidlaw Reading Series (exact title unknown)

The original Barnes’ New National Readers were published in 1883, and the Barnes Company merged with others to form American book in 1890. The New Barnes Readers and New Barnes Primer of 1916 were also put out under the name of A. S. Barnes Company, but obviously as a subsidiary of American Book Company. Laidlaw apparently bought the Barnes’ series of 1916 (not the 1883 series) from American Book sometime after 1917 or 1918 since the 1924 book six is copyrighted under Laidlaw’s name. According to the 1928 United States Catalog, American Book was still selling the 1883 Barnes series, at the same time that Laidlaw was selling the 1924 revision of the 1916 Barnes series. Neither Barnes series appears in Nila Banton Smith’s 1932 reading “history,” so far as I could see.

Three sources of information are available on The New Barnes Readers - The Kearny Plan, 1916-1924, by Herman Dressel, Superintendent of Schools, Kearny, N. J.; May Robbins, Primary Superintendent, Kearny, N. J.; and Ellis U. Graff, Superintendent of Schools, Indianapolis. One source is my own copy of Book Six, which shows a copyright date only of 1924. The second source is a reference in Arthur I. Gates’ March, 1925, article in Teachers College Record, “Problems in Beginning Reading Suggested by an Analysis of Twenty-One Courses.” The third is a review of the 1916 New Barnes Primer by William Scott Gray in the 1917-1918 Elementary School Journal, page 38. In a footnote, Gray cited the publisher as A. S. Barnes, but A. S. Barnes was absorbed by American Book Company in 1890, so in 1916 it must have been an American Book subsidiary, if Gray’s listing that name was not in error. Gray wrote:

“The New Barnes Primer assumes that reading is a thought-getting process. The first two lessons attempt to develop a basic vocabulary by means of exercises involving a large amount of repetition. Beyond the first ten pages, the lessons are based on interesting, familiar stories such as the ‘Three Bears,’ the ‘Three Little Pigs,’ etc. The distinctive feature of The New Barnes Primer is that silent reading is emphasized from the beginning in order to train pupils to secure the meaning of what is read. The manual provides suggestions for training in word analysis during drill periods.”

Gray did not name the authors. However, Gates did in his 1925 summary of 21 programs:

“Barnes Readers (New Series). Primer and Manual by May Robbins, Herman Dressel and Ellis U. Graff, 1916. Laidlaw Brothers, N. Y.”

Gates commented in the body of his article, with statistical tables to support his comment, that all the 21 series he listed gave heavy supplementary phonic drill.

My used-book-store copy of Book Six of The New Barnes Readers - The Kearny Plan, shows it was copyrighted by Laidlaw Brothers, Chicago and New York, in 1924, and it lists the same three authors as shown by Gates for 1916, giving their affiliations and the fact that The New Barnes Readers were subtitled, “The Kearny Plan.”

Sorting all of this out suggests the whole series probably came out about 1916, probably published by an American Book subsidiary, but it then was acquired by Laidlaw, some time before 1924. Presumably there would not have been an eight-year hiatus (1916-1924) from the arrival of the primer in 1916, confirmed by Gray in 1916 and Gates in 1925, to the arrival of book six in 1924, which my copyrighted copy might otherwise seem to suggest. Florence C. Fox’s 1916 comments, quoted under her Putnam book entry, stated that from about 1914 to 1916 a pronounced increased emphasis on phonics was appearing in

“meaning” or “content” series. Gray’s comments establish that the 1916 “Barnes” material used a meaning approach with some kind of phonics in the manual. From combining Gates’ and Gray’s comments on the 1916 manual, it can probably be safely assumed that the material used A MEANING APPROACH WITH HEAVY SUPPLEMENTARY PHONICS DRILL.

Two of the authors of The New Barnes Readers - The Kearny Plan were from Kearny, New Jersey, about twelve miles from Columbia Teachers College. The third was from Indianapolis, which is not so very far from the University of Chicago for any administrators who might wish to enroll for summer courses. On the back of the title page of the 1924 sixth reader appeared:

“Grateful acknowledgment is given Elda L. Merton, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Waukesha, Wisconsin, for helpful suggestions in the preparation of Test Paragraphs appearing throughout the book.”

Waukesha was also not so very far from Chicago for any administrator wishing to enroll for summer courses. It is noteworthy that so many of the most widely used reading series from about 1907 (the Aldine) to 1930 were written by school personnel who had been located not too far from New York or Chicago, where they were so likely to have taken graduate courses under prime movers in “education” at Columbia Teachers College in New York and the University of Chicago in Chicago.

The series Laidlaw was publishing in 1981, on which I have no other information, was listed as one of “The Dismal Dozen,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. That suggests it used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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1913 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
See and Say Phonetic Series (1st-3rd, each with manuals)  
Arnold, Sarah Louise; Elizabeth C. Bonney; E. F. Southworth  
Iroquois Publishing Co., Syracuse, New York

Sarah Louise Arnold had written much widely used material before this series, such as Silver-Burdett’s Stepping Stones to Literature, with the “meaning” approach. Yet, with the “sound” approach, she apparently had to resort to an apparently unknown publisher. The 1913 material is presumed to use A PHONIC APPROACH.

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1916 (Reviewed by W. S. Gray, 1917-1918 Elem. Schl. Jnl., p. 38)  
Kewpie Primer  
O’Neil, Rose  
Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York  
1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Kewpie Primer (Also dated 1916)  
Quinn, E. V.  
Frederick A. Stokes Co., New York

From Gray’s description, the 1916 material was almost pure sight words and meaning, lacking even sight-word repetition, though it used some “word building.” It was so bad, however, that even W. S. Gray recommended that it be “supplemented by drill exercises to develop power in word analysis,” i. e., Code 3 phony phonics. The material can be classified as A MEANING APPROACH.

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1918 (In 1928 U. S. Catalog - Harvard copy of Primer Manual)  
Winston Readers (Pre-Primer, Primer, 1st-5th, Manual)  
Firman, Sidney G. and Ethel H. Maltby (Gehres)

The John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia  
 1920-1924 (In 1928 U. S. Cat., N. B. Smith p. 172, 175, 176, 431)  
 The Silent Readers (First-Eighth)  
 Lewis, William Dodge, Albert Lindsay Rowland, Ethel H. Maltby Gehres  
 The John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Winston Companion Readers (Primer, 1st-3rd)  
 Firman, Sidney G. and Ethel H. Maltby (Gehres)  
 The John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 When Mother Reads to Us Series (4 vols.)  
 Firman, Sidney G. and Ethel H. Maltby (Gehres)  
 The John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia  
 1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
 Child's First Reader  
 Firman, Sidney G. and Ethel H. Maltby (Gehres)  
 The John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia  
 Between 1940 and 1950 (N. B. Smith, p. 277,)  
 Easy Growth in Reading  
 Hildreth, Gertrude and Others  
 The John C. Winston Company, Philadelphia  
 1960-62 (N. B. Smith p. 326, 331, 375, 437; reviewed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates* on pages 303, 304)  
 Winston Basic Readers  
 Stauffer, Russell G.; Alvina Treut Burrows;  
 Mary Elizabeth Coleman, and Others  
 The John C. Winston Company,  
 A Division of Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.,  
 New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Dallas, Atlanta  
 1981 or Before (In 1981 *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read*, by Dr. R. SFlesch, listed as one of the Dismal Dozen)  
 Holt, Rinehart and Winston Series, Exact Title Unknown  
 (See entry under Harcourt Brace Jovanovich concerning a 1989 Holt, Rinehart and Winston Series being published by Harcourt in 1992)

The Winston Readers of 1918 were written by Sidney G. Firman, Superintendent of Schools, Glen Ridge, New Jersey, and Ethel M. Maltby (Gehres), of Corning, New York. Their 1918 Primer Manual, which reproduced the pages of the actual primer, is particularly odious. The method used was the sentence approach from the very beginning of the primer, and then it very soon began to use absolutely classic two-step phony phonics, which is, of course, the French Code 3 "echo" method devised in the eighteenth century. The material is A MEANING APPROACH WITH TWO-STEP PHONY PHONICS.

Nila Banton Smith wrote on pages 175-176:

"William Dodge Lewis and Albert Lindsay Rowland were the first authors to produce a complete set of readers devoted to silent reading, under the title *The Silent Readers* (The John C. Winston Company). The authors were well prepared for their work; both had practical school experience and both held doctor's degrees. At the time the books appeared, Lewis was Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction in Pennsylvania, and Rowland was Director of the State Bureau of Teacher Training of Pennsylvania."

Note that Rowland with his wrongheaded ideas on teaching reading was in charge of “teacher training” for the whole of Pennsylvania about 1924, which certainly boded ill for “teacher training” in the teaching of reading in Pennsylvania. Of course, no government official in a truly free society should ever have anything whatsoever to say about teacher training. In our society, such attempts to control teacher training are manifestly violations of the Bill of Rights which guarantees freedom of speech.

Concerning the 1960-1962 Winston Basic Readers, Nila Banton Smith quoted this remarkable statement of Dr. Stauffer’s, on page 331 of Smith’s book:

“At the heart of this program is the authors’ firm belief that children can and do think and that reading is importantly concerned with the thinking process. Deliberately selected stories in each of the readers focus on problem-solving situations. From first through sixth grades, the directed Reading-Thinking Activity invites children to value and to improve their skill in critical thinking.”

The 1990’s emphasis on the so-called “skill” of critical thinking, the ultimate oxymoron, was therefore promoted by Stauffer by the 1960’s. Those who promote such programs are themselves lacking in “critical thinking” or they would not state that such self-evident and demonstrable facts as “...children can and do think” rank only as “beliefs.”

A copy of the Winston series primer, *Come with Me*, (1960), states it includes 83 new words, plus the 56 at the pre-primer level. It also states:

“Each of the 139 words is maintained by being used a minimum of ten times after it is introduced.”

The primer is presumably followed by the customary First Reader, which is the regular basal-reader first grade sequence.

Therefore, the total printed words taught in grade one (but only for those who succeeded!) would be 139 plus the first reader words. The whole first-grade-year reading program provides remarkably few words for the “successful” children to “think” with. By contrast, Walcutt’s and McCracken’s 1963 first grade phonic series contained about 2,000 words, and in addition taught children to sound out any word they met in print. The Russian Soviet programs at about that time contained about the same number of words and also provided the same independence in reading by the end of first grade. The 1960-1962 Winston series used A MEANING APPROACH AND MOST PROBABLY WITH PHONY PHONICS.

The Holt, Rinehart & Winston series in 1981 was listed as one of “The Dismal Dozen,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. The material therefore presumably used A MEANING APPROACH WITH PHONY PHONICS.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1920 and 1930**

1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Clinton Primer  
Clinton, M. B. and E. E. Lewis  
W. S. Benson and Co., Austin, Texas



No further information is available on this material.

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1924 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Here and Now Primer  
Mitchell  
Dutton

No further information is available on this material.

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1924-1926 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Modern School Readers (Primer - 5th)  
Thompson, R. and H. B. Wilson  
Wagner, Harr  
1925 (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Jingles, A Reader for Beginners  
Power, A. R.  
Wagner, Harr  
1928 or Before (In 1928 U. S. Catalog under Primers)  
Alaska Primer  
Porter, Z.  
Wagner, Harr

No further information is available on these materials.

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1927 (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Tiddly Winks Primer, Rev. Ed  
Six Tiddly Winks and the A-to-Zees (reader with no date)  
Smith, L. R. (See also Smith's Flanagan publishers)  
Whiteman, Albert (publisher)

The titles make it evident this was a sight-word series with phony phonics. Its first book obviously must have begun with the word "Tiddly," a complex phonic form which would have to be taught as a whole to rank beginners. Apparently, it was only in the second book that the alphabet was covered (the "A-to-Zees").

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1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)  
Easy Primer  
Burnett, E. M.  
Ryerson Press

No further information is available on this material.

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1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Corona Readers  
Egan, M. F. (Catalog shows, "See main entry," so it was apparently popular or it would not have had an individual entry besides being listed in the "readers" section. It was possibly a Ginn series since Egan wrote Ginn materials.)

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1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)  
Imperial Readers (Books 1, 2, 3)

Renouf Pub.

No further information is available on this material.

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1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Natural Readers (Primer, 1st-5th)

Robbins, F. W.

F. M. Ambrose

1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)

Rhyme and Story Primer

F. M. Ambrose

No further information is available on these materials.

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1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Strang Readers (1st-6th)

Strang, Mrs. H.

Oxford

No further information is available on this material.

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1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Life and Literature Readers (Primer, 1st-3rd)

Talbert, L. E. (See Talbert primer under Ginn)

Doubleday

No further information is available on this material.

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1928 or Before (In 1928 United States Catalog)

Parmly Readers

Parmly, M. (Has note, "See author entry," so apparently popular.)

No further information is available on this material.

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1928 or Before (In the 1928 United States Catalog)

Mary Domitilla, Sister

Ideal Catholic Readers. "See author entry."

No further information is available on this material.

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1928 or Before (In the 1928 United States Catalog)

Catholic Education Series.

First to fourth "books" and third to fifth "readers."

Shields, T. E.

Catholic Education Press.

No further information is available on this material.

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1928 or Before (In the 1928 United States Catalog under Primers)

Ready to Read. "See main entry."

McLaughlin, E. M. and Sister Mary Ambrose, eds.

No further information is available on this material.

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**#Publisher First Appearing in This List Between 1930 and 1940**

1930's, With Revisions to 1990 (See Chall, Learning to Read)  
The Carden Method (In most subjects, kindergarten to grade 12)  
Carden, Mae  
Carden Educational Foundation  
Brookfield, Connecticut (Previously in Glen Rock, New Jersey)

The Carden materials have been frequently revised, and contain children's books and very elaborate teacher's guides (the latter a little forbidding in appearance). Miss Carden reportedly was tireless in training teachers and in giving demonstrations of her method. Her reading instruction materials are indisputably excellent and have an astonishing track record of success, mostly in private schools.

Nila Banton Smith received her doctorate from Columbia Teachers College about 1932. However, Mae Carden dropped out of Columbia Teachers College in the early 1930's, where she had been enrolled in a program for a doctorate because she was so appalled by the reading methods which were endorsed there. Carden then wrote her own programs, financing them reportedly with her own funds, since she was a rich woman. The results of Mae Carden's programs were praised in a Saturday Evening Post article of September 9, 1961, "These Children Love to Read," by Frances Rummel. Despite Carden's astonishing success and the nationwide attention given to her success by that Saturday Evening Post article, Mae Carden is not even mentioned in Nila Banton Smith's 1965 revision of her so-called reading "history," American Reading Instruction, the original version of which Nila Banton Smith had written about 1932 at Columbia Teachers College as her doctoral dissertation. The contrast between the worth of "Dr." Nila Banton Smith's work and non-"Dr." Mae Carden's work is just one more indication that the value of academic degrees such as the Ph. D. is, at the very least, to be questioned. The Smith/Carden history suggests that such academic degrees are sometimes the result of a willingness to conform rather than the result of a pursuit of truth.

Miss Carden died not long ago, but her company continues in existence, as a foundation. One point on which she was in error was her refusal to use pictures in beginning reading materials. However, her materials were otherwise indisputably excellent and used a true PHONIC APPROACH.

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**#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1940 and 1950**

1940 (See Chall, Learning to Read)  
Remedial Training for Children with Specific Difficulty in Reading, Spelling and Penmanship  
Gillingham, Anna and Bessie Stillman (Based on Dr. Orton's work)  
Sacket and Williams Lithographing Corp., New York

These materials are heavily and truly phonic.

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1944, 1945, 1953, 1960, 1961 (See Chall, Learning to Read, p. 16, 329 and 333)  
Phonovisual Method  
Schoolfield, Lucille D. and Josephine B. Timberlake  
Phonovisual Products, Washington, D. C.

Chall said on page 16:

“Even before Why Johnny Can’t Read appeared, some school systems were using concentrated supplemental phonics programs - Reading with Phonics (Julie Hay and Charles E. Wingo), Phonetic Keys to Reading (Theodore L. Harris et al.), Phonovisual Method (Lucille D. Schoolfield and Josephine B. Timberlake). Since 1955, however, many more phonics programs have been published, only a few of which are mentioned here....”

Chall said on page 348 concerning her evaluation of reading programs:

“...I distinguished between programs teaching *sounding* and *blending* [Ed.: true synthetic phonics], those teaching *analysis* and *substitution* [Ed.: what I label two-step phony phonics], and those teaching the child to *spell* (say the letters) [Ed.: the old ABC-word approach of the nineteenth century]. An example of the first is the Phonovisual Method, which teaches blending of sounds through a simple technique that uses the concept of a moving train....”

The moving train technique recalls an approach I saw in use in Sweden in 1977. The teacher asked the children to think of blending in terms of a sailboat reaching a dock. However, sounding and blending of letters sounds to determine unknown words is rare in America, even in most phonic methods. Its use is certainly a strong point in favor of the Phonovisual Method. Nevertheless, Chall recorded that the Phonovisual Method was not a straight phonic method. She said the following on page 333, concerning the major emphasis in this program, according to the publisher’s answer to her questionnaire sent to such publishers in the late spring of 1966:

“Major emphasis (according to publisher): Phonic (‘phonics’ is ‘another tool’ - a ‘supplement’ not a ‘substitute’ for sight reading or the various other means of word recognition)”

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#### A SIGHT-WORD SERIES FROM ENGLAND

1949  
The Janet and John Books  
O’Donnell and Munro

This series was apparently very popular in England. It is remotely possible that the O’Donnell of The Janet and John Books was the Mabel O’Donnell who wrote The Alice and Jerry Basic Readers which were published by Row, Peterson & Co., Chicago, from 1936 until some time after 1957.

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#### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1950 and 1960**

1952, 1953, 1958 (See Chall, Learning to Read)  
Phonetic Keys to Reading, and  
Keys to Independence in Reading

Sloop, Cornelia B., et al  
The Economy Company, Oklahoma City, Okla.  
1964 (Reviewed in Blumenfeld's *The New Illiterates*, p. 306; see  
Chall, *Learning to Read*)  
Phonetic Keys to Reading, A Basic Reading Series  
Harris, Theodore L.; Mildred Creekmore; Margaret Greenman  
The Economy Company, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Related to Laurel Co.?)

Chall said on page 16

“Even before *Why Johnny Can't Read* appeared, some school systems were using concentrated supplemental phonics programs - *Reading with Phonics* (Julie Hay and Charles E. Wingo), *Phonetic Keys to Reading* (Theodore L. Harris et al.), *Phonovisual Method* (Lucille D. Schoolfield and Josephine B. Timberlake). Since 1955, however, many more phonics programs have been published, only a few of which are mentioned here....”

The original Economy material was apparently heavily phonic but was only a supplemental program. However, the later material was a complete basal reader series, and not supplemental material. It was listed as one of “The Phonic Five,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. I disagree with Flesch's rating of this material as a truly phonic program, as the materials which I saw were heavily geared to “meaning” and had insufficient phonic emphasis.

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#### A PHONIC SERIES FROM ENGLAND:

1954, 1959, 1960 (See Chall, *Learning to Read*)  
The Royal Road Readers  
Daniels, J. C. and Hunter Diack  
Chatto & Windus, Ltd., London

Jean Chall said on page 4:

“England saw the beginnings of a similar controversy [Ed.: on reading methods] in 1956 with the publication of the first experimental report of J. C. Daniels and Hunter Diack. These authors concluded that their newly devised approach, which they called the “phonic-word method,” produced better results than the prevailing mixed methods (sight, then phonics) then in use in England.”

Chall said further on page 24 concerning the Daniels and Diack materials:

“*The Royal Road Readers* use a ‘phonic-word’ method created by the authors as a way around the shortcomings of both the sight and the phonic approaches. The child who follows this program does not isolate and blend sounds, as he would do in synthetic phonics programs. Instead, he is expected to learn sound-letter relations from a beginning reading vocabulary that is controlled for spelling regularity, and he is taught what the letters “mean” through a process of visual analysis and substitution resembling quite closely the phonics instruction in conventional American basal series. Theoretically, controlling words for spelling regularity helps the child discover for himself the relationship between sounds and letters. Although Daniels and Diack do not call their approach “linguistic,” in many ways it does resemble the linguistic innovations of Leonard Bloomfield, whose beginning reading program also controls vocabulary for spelling regularity.”

However, Chall said the following on page 170 concerning the teaching of letter sounds without teaching the blending of letter sounds, which was the approach of the Royal Road materials. These comments suggest that The Royal Road Readers which did not teach such synthetic phonics must have been inadequate:

“But [Dr. Samuel T.] Orton [a neurologist] also stated that a phonic method in the initial stage does not guarantee success. He cites reading-disability cases who had learned to give the sounds for the letters and phonograms, etc., but still could not read:

““In these cases, examination has revealed the fact that while the teaching of the phonetic [i.e. phonic] equivalents may have been fairly complete, the next and most cardinal step, that of teaching the blending of the letter sounds in the exact sequence in which they occur in the word, had not been attempted or had been poorly carried out. It is this process of synthesizing the word as a spoken unit from its component sounds that often makes much more difficulty for the strephosymbolic child than do the static reversals and letter confusions.”“

Chall added in a footnote on this page:

“In a series of studies going back as far as Gates et al (1939), auditory blending has been found positively related to reading achievement....”

Chall said on page 334 that, in answer to her questionnaire, the publishers stated that the major emphasis in this program was on “a phonic word method.” The program was listed as among those used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies (in Project 2735, Nita M. Wyatt, University of Kansas, one of many).

The Royal Road Readers created a great stir in England but then went out of print, just as so many phonic series have done in this country.

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1956, 1964 (See Chall, Learning to Read, p. 34, 35, 329, 334)  
Sounds and Letters  
Hall, Frances Adkins  
Linguistica, Ithaca, New York, Distributed by Chronicle Guidance Publications, Moravia, N. Y.

Jean Chall recorded the following, concerning the major emphasis in this program, according to the publisher’s answer to her questionnaire sent to publishers in the late spring of 1966:

“Major emphasis (according to publisher): Phonemically based  
(“I definitely do not consider it a phonic approach”)

Yet Chall’s conclusion, on page 38, was that this program and “linguistic” programs like it:

“...may be classified as either phonic or linguistic.”

Concerning the “linguistic” programs which were so popular in the 1960’s, Dr. Chall wrote on page 118:

“In fact, the best results [Ed. in linguistic programs] probably come from using some control of spelling patterns and directly teaching their sound values. Indeed, this is what several of the

new “linguistic” reading programs do - the Allen Reading Materials, *Sounds and Letters*, *The Programmed Reading Series*, and *The Structural Reading Series*.”

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1957 (Revised 1963) (N. B. Smith p. 326, 329-331, 437; reviewed in Blumenfeld’s *The New Illiterates* on page 300)  
Sheldon Basic Reading Series (1st to 8th grade texts)  
Sheldon, Wm. D.; Mary C. Austin; Queenie B. Mills; Robert A. McCracken; Merle B. Karnes; Bess M. Saddoris  
Allyn & Bacon, Inc., Boston

The 1957 Sheldon material was one of the programs used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies. As described by Nila Banton Smith on page 332 of her book, the primer used the standard basal reader MEANING APPROACH.

The Allyn & Bacon series in 1981, presumably a different series from the 1963 revision show above, was listed as one of “The Dismal Dozen,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981.

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1957, 1962, 1969, 1986 (See Chall, *Learning to Read*. Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, 1993)  
*The Writing Road to Reading*  
Spalding, Romalda Bishop with Walter T. Spalding  
William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York  
1989-1990 (In *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, 1993)  
*Spelling & Reading With Riggs*  
(To be used in conjunction with *The Writing Road to Reading*)  
McCulloch, Myrna T.  
K & M Publishing, Beaverton, Oregon

The late Mrs. Spalding’s phonic program, in the form of a teacher’s guide, has been widely used and was praised by Dr. Hilde L. Mosse in her work, *The Complete Handbook of Children’s Reading Disorders*, 1982: Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York.

In the Spalding program, children are taught to write 70 basic “phonograms,” which had been given to Mrs. Spalding by Dr. Samuel T. Orton, the neurologist. These phonograms are then used in spelling high-frequency words. Mrs. Spalding used the Extended Ayres List of the 1700 commonest words (Buckingham’s list) for this purpose. However, whether it is desirable to work with the commonest words in teaching beginning reading, which risks placing the emphasis on meaning-bearing words instead of sound-bearing syllables, is open to question. Her program reportedly gives heavy drill on symbol-sound correspondence before concentrating on the high frequency words, which may remove that objection. Nevertheless, as Dr. Chall pointed out on page 345:

“...the Spalding system is difficult because the words are not selected on a spelling-regularity principle to ease the transfer of the various elements learned.”

Because of the drill on the 70 basic phonograms, Spalding’s reportedly very successful program uses A PHONIC APPROACH.

The above two programs were included in the section of *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study* of 1993 which was entitled, “Instructional Approaches.” As such, these programs did not receive the degree of sampling and study which were given to programs in the section, “Basal Reading Programs.” For the

basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the “Instructional Approaches” section, the report was either “included” or “excluded.” That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On The Writing Road to Reading program in its copyright version of 1990, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” “Decoding strategy... Explicit” and “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.”

On the Spelling & Reading with Riggs program in its copyright version of 1989-1990, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” and “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” It is, of course, a Code 10 phonic program which this vague method of rating does not make sufficiently clear. Mrs. McCulloch’s materials are a great improvement to the basic Spalding program, which was very difficult to use without such materials.

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1957-59 (See Chall, Learning to Read, p. 34, 331, 332 and others)  
Language Through Pictures Series, (Books 1 to 4),  
First Steps in Reading English Series (Gibson-Richards)  
Gibson, Christine M. and Ivor A. Richards  
Washington Square Press, Pocket Books, Inc., New York

On page 34, Jean Chall wrote:

“Another beginning reading program that may be classified as representing a linguistic approach is the *Language through Picture Series, or First Steps in Reading English Series*, coauthored by Christine M. Gibson and Ivor A. Richards. This program controls both letters and sentence patterns. The letter control is primarily visual. Unlike the Bloomfield program, there is no attempt to control the first words either on spelling regularity or on a one-sound-to-one-letter principle - e.g., *this* and *his* are among the first words taught. Like Bloomfield and Fries, Gibson and Richards do not teach the sound-letter relationships directly. Their major concern is with control of syntax or sentence patterns.

“We can see from these brief descriptions that there is no one ‘linguistic method.’”

Chall said the following on page 332, concerning the publisher’s answer to her questionnaire sent to such publishers in the late spring of 1966:

“Major emphasis (according to publisher): Reading for meaning with attention to alphabetic identification and word intake.”

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1957, 1961 (All SRA below except DISTAR listed in Jeanne Chall’s Learning to Read)  
Reading Laboratory Ia  
Reading Laboratory 1: Word Games  
Parker, Don  
Science Research Associates, Inc.,  
Chicago, Illinois (Became IBM Subsidiary 1964; became McGraw Hill subsidiary some time before 1994, and may or may not still be.)  
1963



The Basal Progressive Choice Reading Program (Adapted by SRA)  
Woolman, Myron  
The Institute for Educational Research, Inc., Washington D. C.  
1964

Woolman, Myron,  
Reading in High Gear  
Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago  
1964, 1965, 1985 (Presumably other editions as well)  
SRA Basic Reading Series (“BRS”)  
Rasmussen, Donald and Lynn Goldberg  
Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago  
1966

Lift Off to Reading  
Woolman, Myron (Chall said basically the same as 1963 Woolman’s, and quoted Woolman: “The most fundamental concern is meaning, and therefore a meaning approach.”  
Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago  
1969 (From advertising brochures when briefly sold by IBM)

Distar Instructional System and Corrective Reading  
Engelmann, Siegfried and Carl Bereiter  
Science Research Associates, Chicago Illinois  
1980’s (From newspaper accounts)

Ready to Read Program  
Martin, John Henry (Died 1994)  
International Business Machines (Still sold by IBM, not SRA)  
1986 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

Merrill Linguistic Reading Program  
(See Charles E. Merrill entries for original 1965 program)  
Rudolph, Mildred K., Rosemary G. Wilson, Savannah Miller Young, Priscilla P. Waynant, Elizabeth R. Otto  
SRA School Group (Merrill), Chicago, Illinois  
1988 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

Reading Mastery (Presumably a revision of the DISTAR program)  
Engelmann, Siegfried, Elaine Bruner, and Susan Hanner  
Science Research Associates, Chicago, Illinois  
1991 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

Pathways to Literacy  
Lieberman, Billie E.  
SRA School Group (Barnell Loft), Chicago, Illinois

The SRA Reading Laboratories were in exceedingly wide use in American classrooms until the 1980’s, and may still be in wide use. Kits are provided for all levels from about late first grade to upper grades. Children use individual cards and proceed at their own rates.

The SRA materials are particularly subject to children’s “cheating,” since children are supposed to mark their own cards. Frequently, unless a teacher is very careful, children simply copy answers to the questions on the SRA story cards from the answer-key cards in the kit, as I know from my own classroom experience with the materials over many years.

The SRA story cards consist of a “phonic” section (whole word phony phonics) and a “reading comprehension” section, with an illustration. The reading content is frequently very interesting, but since the cards jump from one subject to another, and there is no sequence of subject matter from one card to

another that the children can use as a framework with which to organize the content in their own minds, very little long-term learning is likely to result.

Yet the purpose of the cards is not to teach subject matter, but only to “teach” “reading comprehension,” which is, as an oxymoron, quite unteachable. The original material attempting to do the same kind of thing was the McCall-Thorndike practice-paragraph material in the 1920’s. Such self-corrected silent reading exercises do show children whether they are or are not paying attention to what they read. They therefore encourage voluntary attention on subsequent selections which the children know will have to be marked, and on which they most naturally want to avoid an embarrassing low mark. Beyond encouraging voluntary attention (but only on such cards, with probably no carry-over on other material), such cards serve little purpose. The time would be better spent studying properly organized subject matter, and then testing on that content, thus producing real learning. The virtually useless phonics portion on the SRA reading comprehension cards is PHONY PHONICS.

However, the rarely used SRA kit of word games, which games are probably too difficult for most children to use independently, do have wonderfully organized analytic phonic materials. While they use whole-word, two-step phonics, the cards could be used very effectively by a careful teacher for many purposes, most commonly for remediation. However, I have not seen the Word Games Kit for some fifteen years so am unfortunately depending only on my memory for these comments. The Word Games are EXTREMELY THOROUGH TWO-STEP PHONICS MATERIALS.

On pages 353 and 354 of her book, Dr. Chall wrote:

“More than half [the code emphasis programs] teach sounding and blending. The others are divided into those which use spelling (saying the letters)- e.g., the Bloomfield System, the Fries Linguistic Readers, BRS [SRA Basic Reading Series], and the Moore program - and those which use visual analysis and substitution: The Royal Road Readers, the American ITA program, and Breaking the Sound Barrier.”

From Dr. Chall’s comments, the SRA Basic Reading Series does not use the phonic approach, but the “linguistic” method.

The BRS program was included in the section of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 which was entitled, “Other Instructional Programs.” Since BRS is a true basal program, it is not clear why it was not included in the basal reader section. Programs in the “Other Instructional Programs” section of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study did not receive the degree of sampling and study which was given to the basal reader programs. In the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the “Other Instructional Programs” analysis, the report was either “included” or “excluded.” That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On the BRS edition of 1985, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included no activities on “Sound/symbol relationships,” either “Explicit” or “Implicit.” It did include “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” but did not include “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.”

Distar was listed approvingly as one of “The Phonic Five,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. While the phonic content is certainly good, the teaching materials are, in my opinion, far too rigidly programmed, particularly for use with little

children. To quote from the article, "Goodbye to Bad Grades" in Think Magazine of IBM, 1979, at which time IBM was temporarily the publisher:

"The system relies heavily on repetition, demonstrations, immediate feedback, positive reinforcement and drill exercises. The pace in the half-hour lesson is steady and swift. The Distar method has been called 'verbal bombardment' because the teacher functions with written instructions (a script) from which there is almost no deviation throughout all 160 lessons."

The Distar material is meant to be taught to small groups of five or ten students, but, even so, "no deviation" is an extraordinarily undesirable standard. The article also said:

"In Chicago, the Distar method is introduced to three-year-olds in five of the inner city's 2 child/parent centers. At age four, the children are ready for Distar Reading I."

Yet, as shown by the norms established by Dr. Elizabeth Koppitz in 1963 on the Bender Gestalt test of visual-motor integration, average children of four years of age cannot adequately draw many simple geometric patterns, even when they are looking straight at them and have no time limit. Therefore, average children of that age are NOT ready to distinguish one letter from another and to read them in combinations in words. To try to teach many four-year-olds to read is only to torment them unnecessarily and to court pathetically large failure rates. Soviet curriculum was arranged for about fifty years by its psychologists. It is no accident that Soviet children had to reach seven years of age before they could begin first grade.

For the reasons stated above, its rigidity and its promotion of teaching beginning reading to three- and four-year-old children, this reviewer believes that the Distar program is grossly defective. Nevertheless, the Distar program does use A TRUE PHONIC APPROACH.

The Ready-to-Read computer program has received considerable publicity and is still being marketed by IBM, although Distar no longer is. While the attempted phonic instruction by computer in the Ready-to-Read program progresses, kindergarten children use the computers to help them write their freely-spelled stories. The program has been widely criticized because the wild and apparently uncorrected spellings which children make while using this program may retard progress. It uses, nevertheless, A PHONIC APPROACH APPARENTLY WITH SOME SIGHT WORDS.

The Merrill Linguistic Reading Program copyrighted in 1986, a revision of the original program published in 1965 by the Charles E. Merrill company, was reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993. It is not an explicit phonics program. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the Merrill Linguistic samples at first grade, none had concerned "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit," but 6/6 had concerned "Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit," which is the usual "linguistic" approach. For "Decoding strategy... Implicit," the score had also been 6/6, also the usual linguistic approach, but for "Decoding strategy... Explicit," the score was zero. Furthermore, not a single sample concerned "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly." Yet, since the material probably is organized to show language patterns, it also must demonstrate phonic regularities. To the extent that it does, it can be used to teach explicit synthetic phonics, although that is clearly not the intent of its authors.

Reading Mastery, which was copyrighted in 1988, is presumably a revision of Siegfried Engelmann's original DISTAR program. It was reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993. It is an explicit phonics program. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal reading series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the Reading Mastery samples at first grade, all had concerned "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit." For "Decoding strategy... Explicit," the

score was also 6/6. For “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly,” the score was also 6/6. In the 1993 government study of full basal reader programs (not supplemental programs), only Reading Mastery (DISTAR) and Open Court received such properly high scores for the teaching of true synthetic phonics in first grade. Since basal reading programs are presumably still the widest used in American first grades, that means the great majority of American first graders are not being given proper instructional materials today, even without considering the fact that the poison of the “whole language” approach has also been massively propagandized for American first grades. For some reason, however, the Scribner (ex-Lippincott) program, which still has some diluted true phonic emphasis at first grade, was not included in the 1993 study. Of course, it is possible that it was no longer being marketed in 1992-1993 when the study was being prepared.

The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 reviewed Pathways to Literacy by Billie E. Lieberman in its “Other Instructional Programs” section. It showed that Pathways to Literacy had no activities on “Sound/symbol relationships.... Explicit” but did have “Implicit” activities. It did not teach “Decoding strategy... “Explicit” but did teach “Decoding strategy... Implicit.” The program did not include “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” The SRA School Group (Barnell Loft), Chicago, Illinois, is apparently a successor to the original Barnell Loft concern which published (presumably among other materials) supplementary reading instruction materials for elementary schools.

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## **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1960 and 1970**

1961-65 (N. B. Smith p. 387-8-9, 438; See Chall, Learning to Read)  
Let's Read (One book originally, later 9 small books and workbooks)  
Bloomfield, Leonard and Clarence L. Barnhart  
Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan  
(The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993, lists Educators Publishing Service of Cambridge, Massachusetts, as the 1992 publisher. See that 1971 entry.)

On pages 353 and 354 of her book, Dr. Chall wrote:

“More than half [the code emphasis programs] teach sounding and blending. The others are divided into those which use spelling (saying the letters)- e.g., the Bloomfield System, the Fries Linguistic Readers, BRS [SRA Basic Reading Series], and the Moore program - and those which use visual analysis and substitution: The Royal Road Readers, the American ITA program, and Breaking the Sound Barrier.”

Bloomfield was adamantly opposed to real, sounding-and-blending synthetic phonics. His method was “linguistic,” teaching children to read from whole words and their sounds. Yet, when his materials, organized by the sound patterns in whole words, fall into the hands of most teachers, most probably instinctively would teach real phonics, just as many 1916-1930 teachers must have done with supplementary materials like those on Winston's 1918 Code 3 phony phonics texts. It is interesting that even Rudolf Flesch, in his 1955 Why Johnny Can't Read, misunderstood Bloomfield's intent and thought he backed real phonics.

As a rather interesting footnote, a young Austrian college student in Innsbruck, Austria, in 1977, who had acted as my interpreter during my meeting with a school official in the city schools' central office, told me that Bloomfield was considered in Austria to have been given credit for certain work in linguistics when the credit should actually have been given to an Austrian.

The Bloomfield/Barnhart Let's Read program was one of the 27 programs used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. studies, listed in Appendix E.

Bloomfield's material was organized and published after his death by Clarence L. Barnhart, who surprisingly had worked on the Thorndike-Barnhart school dictionaries. The Bloomfield-Barnhart material received heavy opposition from “reading experts.” It is MEANT AS A LINGUISTIC PROGRAM BUT CAN BE USED AS A PHONIC PROGRAM.

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1962, 1964, 1965, 1966 (Chall, Learning to Read, p. 44, 47, 48, 195n, 330, 331)  
City Schools Reading Program  
Writers' Committee of the Great Cities School Improvement Program of the Detroit Public Schools  
Follett Publishing Company, Chicago

Dr. Jean Chall wrote on pages 44-48:

“The first three preprimers of the City Schools series contain about half the number of different words in the usual three preprimers of conventional basal series. In general, the authors seem to accept all other aspects of the prevailing view: a slow, easy start; emphasis on meaning and appreciation from the beginning; introduction of sight words first; control of vocabulary for

meaning frequency. Also, phonics and other word-analysis skills are introduced later and taught primarily through an analysis of known sight words.”

Dr. Chall reproduced on page 47 of *Laugh with Larry*, presumably one of the three preprimers, which used a standard sight-word approach:

“Look, look, Mother. See Wiggles. Wiggles can get the ball. See Wiggles get the ball. See Wiggles play ball.”

Yet the publisher considered this to be phonic material. Dr. Chall recorded the following concerning the answer she received on the questionnaire she sent to publishers:

“Major emphasis (according to publisher): Phonics (‘although, as you say, you understand that no single approach is used in any series’)”

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1963 (Chall’s *Learning to Read*, page 323 and elsewhere)  
Automatic Responsive Environments and Exceptional Children  
Moore, Omar K.  
Responsive Environments Foundation, Inc.  
Hamden, Connecticut

On pages 353 and 354 of her book, Dr. Chall wrote:

“More than half [the code emphasis programs] teach sounding and blending. The others are divided into those which use spelling (saying the letters)- e.g., the Bloomfield System, the Fries Linguistic Readers, BRS [SRA Basic Reading Series], and the Moore program - and those which use visual analysis and substitution: The Royal Road Readers, the American ITA program, and Breaking the Sound Barrier.”

Therefore, Moore’s program obviously does not use phonics. His material did not consist of a set of readers. Moore attempted to teach reading to two and three years olds in what can be described as a laboratory setting using automated typewriters and equipment. His approaches were discussed more fully by Dr. Chall.

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1963, 1966 (See Chall, *Learning to Read*, p. 31, 34, 36, 134, 329, 334, 339)  
The Structural Reading Series  
Stern, Catherine  
The L. W. Singer Company, Inc., Syracuse, N. Y.

Dr. Chall wrote on pages 31-34:

“Another linguistic program that selects words on a spelling-regularity principle and teaches the sound values of the letters is *Sounds and Letters* by Frances Adkins Hall. The Structural Reading Series by Catherine Stern also incorporates the above features, but in addition uses color as a cue and teaches writing and spelling at the same time.”

This program was among those used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first grade studies, reported in the Summer, 1967, issue of *The Reading Research Quarterly*.

In her book, Dr. Chall wrote concerning the answer received to her questionnaire to publishers:

“Major emphasis (according to publisher): Synthetic approach to phonics also called ‘modified linguistic approach’“

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1963 (Revised 1976, 1979 and later) (Reviewed by Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates*, p. 306-307)  
Open Court Basic Readers  
McQueen, Priscilla L., and others  
Open Court Publishing Company  
La Salle, Illinois

1989 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, 1993)  
Open Court Reading & Writing  
Hirshberg, Jan, Carl Bereiter, Ann Hughes, S. A. Bernier, Nellie Thomas, Valerie Anderson, Jerome D. Lebo, Marlene Scardamalia, Ann Brown, Joseph Campione, Walter Kintsch  
Open Court Publishing Company  
Chicago, Illinois

This series, which has been frequently revised, apparently far more so than in the revisions noted above, was listed approvingly as one of “The Phonic Five,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. It has always been, and presumably still is, a very effective phonic series. However, the content of some of the upper-grade books has been reported by some teachers to be too far above the mental age of the children, although I have been told revisions have been made to correct this. Mrs. McQueen, an author on the first edition, later published her own series, listed below. Open Court has apparently always used a true PHONIC APPROACH.

Open Court Reading & Writing series of 1989 was reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study* of 1993. Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For the Open Court Reading & Writing samples at first grade, 6/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit” and none had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score had also been 0, but for “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score was 6/6. Furthermore, every sample scored for “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” Obviously, the Open Court program is a true, Code 10, synthetic phonics program.

Something which is wryly amusing should be mentioned concerning the current near hysteria on “whole language” with its supposed emphasis on “real literature.” The Open Court series has always made an intense effort to teach “real literature” and undoubtedly still does. Yet it cannot be considered a “whole language” series.

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1963 (Grade 1-1 on McQueen’s Open Court material) 1967-1968 (Grades 1 to 3 on McQueen’s own material, reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, 1993)  
McQueen Basic Readers (Grades 1 to 3)  
McQueen, Priscilla  
McQueen Publishing Company  
Tiskilwa, Illinois

Mrs. McQueen was an author, the main author, apparently, at the beginning level of the 1963 Open Court series which has been so highly successful because of its Code 10 phonic approach at that beginning level. The copyright dates suggest that in 1967 she began marketing her own basal reading program with books through grade three. Mrs. McQueen’s reading series, which I have seen exhibited at Reading Reform Foundation meetings in the early 1980’s, is physically very attractive and apparently uses a straight Code 10 PHONIC APPROACH.

The McQueen program was inexplicably included in the section of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 which was entitled, "Other Instructional Programs," rather than in the section entitled "Basal Reading Programs." Yet it is a basal reading program! Programs in the section entitled, "Other Instructional Programs" did not receive the degree of sampling and study which were given to programs in the section, "Basal Reading Programs." For the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly." That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the "Other Instructional Programs" section, the report was either "included" or "excluded." That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On the McQueen Integrated Phonics and Language Arts material, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit," "Decoding strategy... Explicit" and "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly." That vague rating, which told nothing about the degree of emphasis, certainly did not make it clear that the McQueen program undoubtedly rates a straight Code 10 on the teaching of synthetic phonics.

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1963-1964, 1966 (N. B. Smith, p. 401-2-3, 439; see Chall, Learning to Read, p. 118, quoted in the following entry on the Allen linguistic materials)

Programmed Reading Books

Buchanan, Cynthia Dee, Program Director, and Sullivan Associates

Webster Division

McGraw Hill Book Company, New York

These self-correcting "linguistic" books are apparently meant to be handled by the children individually and silently, which would be very undesirable for rank beginners. I have used them, however, orally with non-English speaking Korean children and found them to be very effective, since the pictures and content supplied the meaning of the words to these children who knew no English, while simultaneously teaching them to read alphabetic print. If used orally with a teacher's careful phonic direction, these workbooks could be very effective for phonic teaching and/or for language teaching, at least at the lowest levels while the student is learning the mechanics of reading and/or of pronouncing English. However, at that beginning level, if used silently, they would be akin to the deaf-mute sight-word method. However, **ONLY IF USED ORALLY UNDER A TEACHER'S PERSONAL DIRECTION AT THE BEGINNING LEVELS, THESE WORKBOOKS CAN BE USED AS A PHONIC APPROACH AND/OR FOR TEACHING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.**

Programmed Reading was one of the 27 programs used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. studies, listed in Appendix E.

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1964 (See Chall's Learning to Read, p. 31, 118, 330)

Read Along with Me

(Stories, manual, rhyming words, alphabet cards and films)

Allen, Robert A. and Virginia F. Allen

Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York

Dr. Chall wrote on page 31:

"Robert and Virginia Allen have developed a linguistic approach for teaching reading to preschool and primary-grade children (Read Along with Me) that, unlike the Bloomfield and Fries programs, teaches phonics and encourages sounding and blending. In fact, the publisher's announcement states that it may be used '...as a means of relating phonics more closely to



reading, and as a remedial tool for those children who have been unable - or reluctant - to respond to more conventional methods of teaching reading.”“

Concerning the “linguistic” programs which were popular at the time, Dr. Chall wrote on page 118:

“In fact, the best results [Ed. in linguistic programs] probably come from using some control of spelling patterns and directly teaching their sound values. Indeed, this is what several of the new “linguistic” reading programs do - the Allen Reading Materials, Sounds and Letters, The Programmed Reading Series, and The Structural Reading Series.”

On page 330, Dr. Chall wrote the following concerning the publisher’s answer to her questionnaire on the Allen materials:

“Major emphasis (according to publisher): Spelling patterns.”

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1964

Phonics and Word Power, Program I.  
Johnson, Eleanor M.; C. Singleton and Elaine Wonsavage  
American Education Publications

This program was listed as among those used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies. No further information is available on it.

However, the use of the word, “phonics,” in its title does not necessarily mean Code 10 true phonics. It may relate to two-step, Code 3, whole word phonics, which is the comparing of whole, meaning-bearing words to each other to see like parts.

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1964 (N. B. Smith p. 392-3-4-5, 438)

The Downing Readers  
(Pitman Augmented Roman Alphabet)(i/t/a)  
Downing, John and Faith Graham  
Initial Teaching Publishing Co., Ltd., London  
1963-1964 (N. B. Smith, p. 395-6-7, 438; see Chall, Learning to Read)  
Early-to-Read i/t/a Program  
Mazurkiewicz, Albert J; Harold J. Tanyzer  
i/t/a Publications, Inc., New York

Besides writing The Downing Readers, Downing was also was the editor of the 1973 book, Comparative Reading, The Macmillan Company, New York, referred to in this history and in Appendix E. Chapters were written by people from various countries.

John Downing prepared his material in England using i/t/a print, based on the nineteenth century Pitman materials. Downing’s materials were widely used in England, and the Mazurkiewicz materials were widely used in America, but both have virtually disappeared in recent years. As of the year 2000, Pitman Publishing Company has reportedly gone out of business, and so, presumably, has Initial Teaching Publishing Co., Ltd., which may, or may not, have been a separate company from Pitman Publishing Company, Ltd. . The only reported source for ITA children’s texts in the year 2000 is the ITA Foundation, Roslyn Heights, New York. Therefore, presumably the Early-to-Read i/t/a/ American program is also out of business. On March 2, 2000, I was told that both Downing and Mazurkiewicz are no longer living.

On pages 353 and 354 of her book, Dr. Chall wrote:

“More than half [the code emphasis programs] teach sounding and blending. The others are divided into those which use spelling (saying the letters)- e.g., the Bloomfield System, the Fries Linguistic Readers, BRS [SRA Basic Reading Series], and the Moore program - and those which use visual analysis and substitution: The Royal Road Readers, the American ITA program, and Breaking the Sound Barrier.”

Obviously the American ITA program was not a synthetic phonics program, and yet its phonics approach was greater than that in use in England, which reportedly was often taught like a sight-word program.

Both the Downing and the Mazurkiewicz programs were among those used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies.

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1964, 1965, 1966 (See Chall, Learning to Read, p. 50, 195n, 331)  
The Chandler Reading Programs (books, films, etc.)  
Chandler Language-Experience Readers (pupils' readers)  
Carillo, Lawrence W., Editor  
Chandler Publishing Company, San Francisco

In a footnote on page 195 of her book, Dr. Chall wrote:

“Two new series based generally on conventional basal-reader methods have been designed specifically for the urban and ethnically different child - the Bank Street Readers and the City Schools Readers. The Chandler Readers, which use an urban setting, incorporate a slight change of methodology, but this too is basically a meaning-emphasis reading program.”

On page 331, Dr. Chall recorded the following answer to her questionnaire to the publishers:

“Major emphasis (according to publisher): Eclectic (‘every established method of teaching reading’)”

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1964 (See Chall, Learning to Read, p. 16, 328)  
Words in Color  
Gattegno, Caleb  
Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago  
1975 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
Words In Color  
Gattegno, Caleb  
Educational Solutions, New York

Caleb Gattegno has perhaps been best known for his work some years ago in promoting the colored, wooden Cuisinaire rods in America, which are used in teaching arithmetic.

Dr. Chall wrote on page 16:

“Since 1955, however, many more phonics programs have been published, only a few of which are mentioned here: Sister Mary Caroline’s *Breaking the Sound Barrier*, Romalda B. Spalding and Walter T. Spalding’s *The Writing Road to Reading*, and Caleb Gattegno’s *Words in Color*.”

Gattegno's program is therefore a phonic program. Nevertheless, the use of color in teaching sound-symbol correspondence is, in my opinion, adding unnecessary complexities to the learning process. The only rational use would be to show vowels in a different color than consonants, a method used in Europe for many years. The use of colored letters was also recommended in France in Py-Poulain Delaunay's 1719 book. Delaunay used italic print or red to mark silent letters in initial lessons and when beginning with connected reading. It is possible that he was the first to make use of color in teaching beginning reading.

Gattegno's program was included in the section of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 which was entitled, "Instructional Approaches." As such, it did not receive the degree of sampling and study which were given to programs in the section, "Basal Reading Programs." For the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly." That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the "Other Instructional Programs" section, the report was either "included" or "excluded." That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On Words in Color of 1975, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it recommended activities on "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit," "Decoding strategy... Explicit" and "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly."

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1964 (See Chall, Learning to Read, p. 44)  
Teaching Machine Course TM-002: First Steps in Reading for Meaning  
Grolier Educational Corp.  
845 Third Avenue  
New York, New York

In her 1967 book, Dr. Chall wrote on page 44:

"Theoretically, any approach to beginning reading - sight, sentence, meaning, phonic, or linguistic - can be programmed. It is interesting to note, therefore, that the programmed beginning reading courses currently available - The Basal Progressive Choice Reading Program by Myron Woolman et al., Programmed Reading by Cynthia Dee Buchanan and Sullivan Associates, and Grolier's *First Steps in Reading for Meaning* - rely heavily on a phonic-linguistic approach. All three start the child on the letters and their sound values and control vocabulary on a spelling-regularity principle."

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1965  
Reading in a Nutshell  
Brennan, Martin D. and George J. Ameer  
Colfax Press, Inc., Wayne, New Jersey

Originally conceived as a remedial phonics drill program for high school students, this was highly successful when used as remedial phonics for primary grade students who had begun with "meaning" sight-word programs which only taught phony phonics. For years, I used this very simple and very effective paper-back 9x12 inch workbook at the third grade level to teach children who had begun with such sight-word programs with phony phonics as Ginn's and Scott, Foresman's.. However, I seemed to observe the irreversible effect of the "meaning" reflex at that time for children who had begun with the "meaning" method. Their reading behaviour seemed to indicate that they could only consciously, not

automatically, use the phonic skills which they did successfully learn from this program. Nevertheless, the program was extremely successful because the children's ability to read and to spell did enormously increase after they had been intensively drilled in this program.

Principal Brennan later used the phonic approach in this remedial program to compose a complete first-grade phonic program which I believe was used in his Wayne, New Jersey, Kennedy School, although I do not have the date of its publication nor the name of its publisher. Mr. Brennan's present address can presumably be obtained from the Wayne, New Jersey, public schools.

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- 1965 (Listed in 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies, reviewed by International Reading Assoc.)  
Speech to Print Phonics  
Murphy, Helen and Donald Durrell  
Harcourt, Brace and World, New York
- 1970 (Reviewed in Blumenfeld's *The New Illiterates*, p. 313-314)  
The Bookmark Reading Program  
Early, Margaret; Marian Y. Adell; Elizabeth K. Cooper; Nancy Santeusanio  
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York
- 1984-1989 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, 1993)  
Impressions (Grades K-3 reviewed)  
Booth, Jack, David Booth, Willa Pauli, Jo Phenix, Larry Swartz (K)  
(1984 teacher's manual: W. Cochran, editor, per Dr. Groff)  
(1984 edition published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston)  
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Orlando, Florida
- 1989 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, 1993)  
HBJ Imagination: An Odyssey Through Language (Grades K-3 reviewed)  
(Presumably HBJ stands for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)  
Heald-Taylor, Gail  
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Orlando, Florida
- 1989 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, 1993)  
HBJ Reading Program (Grades K-3 Reviewed)  
(Presumably HBJ stands for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)  
Cullian, Bernice E., Nancy L. Roser, W. Dorsey Hammond, Roger C. Farr, Dorothy S. Strickland  
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Orlando, Florida
- 1989 (Reviewed in *The Beginning Reading Instruction Study*, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, 1993)  
HRW Reading: Reading Today and Tomorrow (Grades K-3 reviewed)  
(Presumably HRW stands for Holt, Rinehart and Winston)  
Beck, Isabel L., T. Tana Herchold (Kindergarten kit), Rosann C. Englebretson (Kindergarten kit), Lenore H. Ringler, Donna M. Ogle, Taffy E. Raphael, Bonnie B. Armbruster, Margaret G. McKeown  
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Orlando, Florida

The Murphy and Durrell material was listed as among those programs used in the 1967 U.S.O.E. first-grade studies. In her book, *Learning to Read*, Dr. Chall discussed at length research by Dr. Durrell and his associates concerning beginning reading, the results of which favored a more phonic approach.

The Harcourt Brace Jovanovich series in 1981 was listed as one of "The Dismal Dozen," by Rudolf Fleisch on page 9 of *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read*, Harper & Row, New York, 1981.

Concerning the 1984 series, Impressions, Dr. Patrick Groff of San Diego University wrote "A Critique of Impressions." It appeared in January, 1991, in a Special Issue of *The Sounds of Reading*, a publication of the Reading Reform Foundation, Tacoma, Washington, of which Mrs. Paul B. Hinds is president. Dr. Groff's comments were based on the teachers' manual for the 1984 edition of the Impressions reading series published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston in Toronto, Canada, and the manual listed W. Cochran as senior editor. Holt, Rinehart and Winston were apparently later absorbed by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Some of Dr. Groff's comments are quoted below (not all in their original order):

"Impressions must be judged as an inferior method for teaching reading skills to young children. For the reasons detailed in this critique it is recommended that Impressions not be adopted for this purpose in primary-grade reading programs....

"The senior editor of Impressions is eager to claim that the reading instruction practices it recommends in its teachers' manuals are based on the so-called "Whole Language" (WL) theory of reading development. It is clear that WL teaching is different from the conventional kind in several remarkable ways.

"The WL theory holds that instruction in written word recognition should be unsystematic, indirect, and incidental or nonintensive. The WL approach therefore contends that there is no preferred sequence or hierarchy of reading skills that should or can be taught. All reading skills must be learned coinstantaneously, WL avers. Instead of pupils being shown directly what reading skills they need, they merely are stimulated to infer what these are. Extended practice or exercise on reading skills is to be avoided, especially on isolated reading skills.

"The WL theory maintains, moreover, that beginning readers learn to recognize written words best in context. Teachers are advised to urge children learning to read to guess at ("predict") the identity of the separate words they see in sentences. Whether or not this speculation is sufficient for its purposes is left to the subjective opinion of individual teachers.

"Since the precise recognition of written words is de-emphasized in WL, it follows that this program allows real latitude for pupils to decide what it was an author intended to convey. Leaders of the WL movement castigate the traditional practice of expecting children to give the "right" answer to the teacher's question, "What did this author actually write?" To the contrary, they exhort teachers to prompt children to "construct" eccentric, idiosyncratic versions of what an author intended to say (Groff, 1989).

"It is fair to conclude that Impressions conforms to the above principles of WL in a deliberate and methodical manner. It admits freely to its plan for having pupils "encounter new words" in context "before dealing with them in isolation" (Cochran, 1984, p 2). In this respect, Impressions is reminiscent, as is WL, of the earlier "look-say" method of word recognition instruction.

"As did its antecedent, the look-say method, Impressions claims to teach phonics information and how to apply it to the recognition of written words. This "phonographemic cueing system," as Impressions grandly dubs it, is conducted in this series of books by having pupils look at and say "whole words." In fact, because Impressions follows the tenets of WL so closely, it is more severe in its rejection of the teaching of isolated letters and their corresponding speech sounds (i.e., traditional phonics information) than was its predecessor, the look-say scheme.

"In this regard, Impressions insists that 'word identification does not mean word naming' (Cochran, 1984, p. 13). Word identification can best be developed through the use of contextual

material,' it goes on. 'Strategies for word attack should not be isolated' (p. 16). The initial, final and middle speech sounds of words may be 'discovered' by children, Impressions concedes, but should never be perceived as isolated items.

"The steps in a typical lesson in word recognition in Impressions proceed as follows:

- "1. Pupils listen to a story read aloud by the teacher or from an audiotape;
- "2. Pupils read the selection by themselves; and
- "3. Pupils engage in activities that involve specific words and letters.

"As noted so far, Impressions distinctly reflects the influence of the WL theory. In this respect, it suffers from the illogical assumptions, and from the lack of experimental verification that plagues the WL hypothesis.

"It doubtless taxes reasonable-minded persons' credulity to ask them to believe that unsystematical, indirect, and incidental instruction in reading can be as effective as that which is ordered, straightforward, and involves much practice. The intelligent layperson probably would also find having children first read written stories on their own, and only after this to receive instruction on how to read the words in this material, as logically topsy-turvy. How is it possible for illiterate children to read stories by themselves before they have learned to identify the words these stories contain? laypeople might ask. And, if stories can be read successfully without prior preparation in word recognition, why is this latter teaching then needed?

"Then, the idea that there is no hierarchy of difficulty in reading skills, and therefore that children learning to read should not be taught first the ones they find the easiest to learn, also would appear implausible to fair-minded persons. They likely would find equally incongruous, if not inconceivable the notion that everything that one needs to learn in order to read must be learned simultaneously. In addition, people who have jobs that require a precise understanding of office memos, plans or proposals, of manuals for operating technical equipment, or of documents that can affect the very lives of people, would find preposterous the WL proposition that comprehension of written texts can be successful if readers guess at the identity of words in these materials.

"From a common sense standpoint, therefore, the Impressions' version of the reading process and how best to teach it, fails badly. From the perspective of pertinent experimental research on reading, it fares even worse.

"Recent comprehensive surveys of the experimental research on reading, and especially that on word recognition instruction (for example, Adams, 1990; Anderson, et al., 1985; Chall, 1983; Feitelson, 1988; Groff & Seymour, 1987; Henderson, 1982; Pearson, 1984; Perfetti, 1985; Resnick & Weaver, 1979), do not support the WL theory of reading, nor Impressions adoption of it as the basis of its teaching methodology....

"To the contrary, this empirical evidence suggests that unless beginning readers are weaned away from the use of context cues (guessing at words) when reading, their progress in learning to read will be handicapped significantly. The research on reading has reported that reading programs that set up a hierarchy of reading skills, including isolated speech sound-letter relationships, and teach them in a systematic, direct, and intensive manner, produce greater reading achievement than the version of the WL scheme that Impressions uses....

“In a bold yet reckless attempt to countermand the formidable opposition set against the WL scheme, the leaders of the WL movement have expediently announced that all experimental research in reading is fraudulent, and therefore any evidence of this nature that detracts from the WL theory is illegitimate....

“In addition to its decidedly substandard qualities as a means to teach reading skills to young children, Impressions has been accused of another grievous fault. It must be noted that the content of the stories in Impressions has been found by parents of certain religious beliefs to violate their ethical, moral, and spiritual beliefs. I do not offer myself as an authority as to the degree to which these parents’ civil rights have been abridged and abused by school officials’ insistence that their children must read the stories in Impressions.

“As a longtime, ardent civil libertarian I am repulsed, however, by the possibility that the forced reading of Impressions by certain children transgresses their Constitutional rights to the free expression of their religious beliefs....”

The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, 1993, included a review of several of Harcourt’s programs, one of which was “Impressions.” Six samples had been taken from all the different basal series being reviewed, and the samples had then been analyzed for content. For Harcourt’s “Impressions” samples at first grade, none had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” but 6/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score had been 1/6, but for “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score was zero. Furthermore, not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” While it is obvious from these samples that the “Impressions” series is not teaching synthetic phonics to beginning readers, in no way does The Beginning Reading Instruction Study even hint at the degree of the grave “decoding” deficiencies in the Impressions series which Dr. Groff discussed in the above excerpt. It is obvious, therefore, that The Beginning Reading Instruction Study provides a very inadequate guide to beginning reading programs, which fact should be considered when reviewing its ratings quoted elsewhere in this appendix concerning other programs.

The Beginning Reading Instruction study reported that the series, HBJ Imagination of 1989, was even weaker on phonics than it had reported for Impressions. For HBJ Imagination samples at first grade, none had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” but 6/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy, both “Implicit” and “Explicit,” the score was zero. Not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” Obviously, the HBJ Imagination series is not a phonic series. The series sub-title, “An Odyssey Through Language,” and the titles of some of its materials suggest it is strongly oriented to the “whole language” approach.

The 1989 HBJ Reading Program was included in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study. For HBJ Reading Program samples at first grade, none had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” but 6/6 had concerned “Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit.” For “Decoding strategy...Explicit,” the score was zero, but for “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score was 6/6. However, not a single sample concerned “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” Obviously, the HBJ Reading Program is not a synthetic phonics series.

The program entitled HRW Reading: Reading Today and Tomorrow, was presumably originally prepared for Holt, Rinehart and Winston, now apparently affiliated with Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. While its phonic ratings were far weaker on The Beginning Reading Instruction Study than the truly phonic Open Court materials or the Science Research Associates’ “Reading Mastery” (presumably an update of the former DISTAR program), it was nevertheless considerably more “sound” oriented than the

other three Harcourt programs just discussed. On “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” the score was 1/6, and on “Sound/symbol Relationships... Implicit,” it was 2/6. For “Decoding strategy... Explicit,” the score was 5/6, and for “Decoding strategy... Implicit,” the score was 1/6. For Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly,” the score was 1/6. That was a very weak score on blending, compared to Open Court’s 6/6, and the score for Science Research Associates’ “Reading Mastery” of 6/6. However, of the 13 full basal reader programs covered in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, all with reading books at least through third grade, only HRW Reading, Open Court and “Reading Mastery” taught any blending at all. (Many of the supplemental reading programs covered in the study did, however, teach blending.) In summary, the ratings on the U. S. Department of Education first-grade study suggest that HRW Reading makes some use of a weak but probably true synthetic phonics approach.

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Before 1966

Play’n’Talk

LeDoux, Marie

Carlsbad California

This self-instructional program for beginning readers uses records, books, etc., and is based on a program used by the Isabelle Buckley School in Southern California. Mary Pride stated in her 1988 *The New Big Book of Home Learning*, page 181, concerning that private school’s program:

“In over fifty years of operation, they have never had a reading failure for any child who enrolled before third-grade level.”

Mrs. Pride considered this program one of her favorites, and it undoubtedly has many excellent qualities. However, I question the value of three points mentioned:

1. The program is supposed to be self-instructional. Yet beginning readers of any age should read orally to a competent judge at every stage of development, or mistakes are not going to be observed. To assume that a child (or even an adult) can make self-corrections by listening to a taped lesson is an error. If it were not an error, we could develop flawless French accents simply by listening to instructional records on French.

2. The program drills extensively on “word families,” (at, bat, cat, fat). That runs the risk of developing readers who use two-step, whole-word substitution phonics, instead of one-step synthetic phonics. Instead, beginning phonic drills should emphasize mixed endings, and not drill on building new words from parts of other words. Speech (and reading) can be seen as having three levels: Syllables, syntax-generating-words, and meaning. After, and only after, children learning to decode print have a firm grasp of material on the syllable level should much drill be given at the second level, syntax-generating-words. Only at that stage is it appropriate to give much drill on word structure: baby-babies; run-running; make-making; rough, tough, through, though; etc.

3. The program teaches touch typing to beginners, which is extraordinary and wonderful. Therefore, it is to be regretted that it does so by “whole words” instead of by the classic keyboard letter-drill, fgf, frf, fvf, etc. That is tantamount to teaching a child how to play the piano by teaching him to play from finished sheet music, instead of first giving him simple keyboard drills so that he can develop the proper conditioned reflex between each printed note and its equivalent on the piano keyboard. Obviously, to give a child sheet music first would at the very least slow down his forming such conditioned reflexes.

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A SIGHT-WORD SERIES FROM ENGLAND

1969 or earlier (Plus later editions)



The Ladybird Key Words Reading Scheme  
Murray, W.  
Wills & Hepworth Ltd., Loughborough, Leicestershire, England

Key Words to Literacy by J. McNally and W. Murray, published by the Schoolmaster Publishing Co., Ltd., London, in 1962, gave a list of the 300 most frequent words, on the basis of their individual frequency, apparently independently of Ayres' 1915 work which did the same thing for the 1,000 commonest words. Thorndike's published work (with Lorge) in his 1944 The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words (and presumably in his two earlier editions of the 10,000 and 20,000 commonest) had not broken down the frequency of the words he listed as the 500 commonest. That was surely very curious since Thorndike's enormous original data on the 10,000 commonest words, which he, himself, had compiled over a period of ten years from 1911 to 1921, had not only made it possible to show the relative frequency of those 500 commonest words to each other but must have made those highest-frequency words extremely evident to him as he was doing his work. W. Murray became the author of the Ladybird Key Words Reading Scheme, published by Wills & Hepworth, Ltd., Loughborough and Leicestershire, England. His reading books were based on the 300 commonest words which compose about 75 per cent of children's books.

This series using the 300 highest frequency words introduces them gradually and then systematically repeats them in 36 small story books. The material is arranged in 12 levels, each with an A, B, and C book. The "C" book in each level covers the "phonic" strand, but it is Code 3, two-step, phony phonics. The system was apparently in massive use in England for many years and is still in print. Because of its rigid vocabulary control and repetition, it can produce the illusion that children are learning to read, when, in reality, all that the children are learning are the few high-frequency sight words. The series has also been sold in the United States for some years, but it most probably has been used only minimally in America.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1970 and 1980**

1970's

Alphatime Letter People Program

(Publishers changed over the years, but The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993, of the Dept. of Education lists its being sold again in 1992 in a 1988 edition by a former publisher, shown below:)

1988 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

Alphatime Kit (Kindergarten)

Alpha-One Kit (First Grade)

Niemann, Elayne R. and Rita Friedman

New Dimensions in Education, 61 Mattatuck Hts. Road, Waterbury, Conn.

This was fine material in its original form, with a very good sequence for introduction of phonic elements and rules. Children loved the Letter People and the stories built around them, whose purpose was to teach the phonic material. The program was written by the two women shown above who apparently had first-grade experience and knew how to interest little children. Its phonic content was also placed on a set of story film-strips which were excellent.

The first grade workbook, Chatterbook, originally was very useful for phonic reinforcement, and the two first grade readers were superior. However, the Chatterbook was altered from a "sound" emphasis to

a far heavier “meaning” emphasis in a revised edition, with much of the drill material removed. Other materials were put out which were more appropriate to a “meaning” basal reader program than to a phonic program. This material ORIGINALLY USED A SYNTHETIC PHONICS APPROACH WHICH EVENTUALLY BECAME UNACCEPTABLY DILUTED WITH A HEAVY MEANING EMPHASIS.

I do not know if the superb filmstrips are still available from the current publisher. However, it is to be hoped that the 1992 publisher who had once published the material in its original excellent form before it was passed to another publisher has replaced the revised material with the original material. It would have been particularly important to drop the revised Chatterbook workbook being sold in 1985, by the publisher who was then handling the program, and to replace it with the original excellent Chatterbook. IF THE 1992 PUBLISHER HAS REVISED THE MATERIAL BACK TO ITS ORIGINAL FORM, IT IS A CODE 10 SYNTHETIC PHONICS PROGRAM.

The 1988 revision was in the section of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 which was entitled, “Other Instructional Programs.” As such, this programs did not receive the degree of sampling and study which was given to the basal reader programs. In the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in this analysis, the report was either “included” or “excluded.” That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On Alpha Time in its 1988 revision, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit” and “Implicit,” “Decoding strategy... Explicit” and “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.”

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1970's?

Addison-Wesley Publishing Co.'s reading series  
Menlo Park, California

1982 (Listed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993,  
U. S. Department of Education)  
Addison-Wesley Reading Program  
Rowland, Pleasant T.  
Addison Wesley, Reading, Massachusetts

This series was listed approvingly as one of “The Phonic Five,” by Rudolf Flesch on page 9 of Why Johnny STILL Can't Read, Harper & Row, New York, 1981. I have never personally seen these materials. However, for years at third grade, and then at first and second grade, I used this company's arithmetic materials, and they were excellent, although weaker in later editions. The material may be presumed to use A PHONIC APPROACH.

The program which Dr. Flesch reviewed in 1981 may have been by a different author than the program currently being sold, which was copyrighted in 1982. The Beginning Reading Instruction Study in 1993 listed the results on six samples of text taken from each program it studied, and the 1982 Addison-Wesley program was among those studied. “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit” was present in all six samples taken from the 1982 Addison-Wesley program. However, “Decoding strategy” was “Implicit,” not “Explicit” in those six samples, and in none of the six was “Blending taught explicitly.” Therefore, the 1982 program appears to use only a weak phonic approach. The titles of the books for kindergarten and the first-half of first-grade even suggest a heavy use of sight-words, unless the children are not supposed to read the titles: Meet the SuperKids, SuperKids Club, and Adventures of the SuperKids.

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1971-1985 (Listed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
A Multisensory Approach to Language Arts (Slingerland)  
Slingerland, Beth H.  
Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
1977-1979 (Listed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
Let's Read (and Let's Look At....)  
Original 1961 Bloomfield materials and additions mainly of 1977-9)  
Barnhart, Clarence L.; Robert K. Barnhart; Cynthia A. Barnhart; Leonard Bloomfield (See 1961 entry on earlier materials)  
Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
1988-1993 (Listed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
Multisensory Teaching Approach  
Smith, Margaret Taylor  
Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
1990 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
Recipe for Reading  
Traub, Nina and Frances Bloom  
Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge Massachusetts  
1990 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
Explode the Code  
Hall, Nancy and Rena Price  
Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge, Massachusetts

The above programs were included in the sections of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 entitled, "Other Instructional Programs" and "Instructional Approaches." As such, these programs did not receive the degree of sampling and study which were given to programs in the section, "Basal Reading Programs." For the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly." That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the "Other Instructional Programs" and "Instructional Approaches" sections, the report was either "included" or "excluded." That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On Slingerland's Multisensory Approach, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit," "Decoding strategy... Explicit" and "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly."

On the Bloomfield/Barnhart material, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on "Sound/symbol relationships" "Explicit" and "Implicit," and Decoding strategy... Implicit," but nothing on "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly."

On the Multisensory Teaching Approach of Margaret Taylor Smith, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit," "Decoding strategy... Explicit" and "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly."

On the Recipe for Reading of Nina Traub and Frances Bloom, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit," "Decoding strategy... Explicit" and "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly."

For the program, Explode the Code, by Nancy Hall and Rena Price, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” and “Decoding strategy... Explicit” but it did not include “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.”

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1972, Revised 1984 (Reviewed in Mary Pride’s 1988 The New Big Book of Home Learning, and The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993, U. S. Department of Education)  
Sing, Spell, Read & Write - Total Language Arts, K-3  
 (“Winning” - program adapted for illiterate teen-agers and adults)  
Dickson, Sue  
International Learning Systems  
1000 112th Circle North, Suite 100, St. Petersburg, Florida 33716

This superb and child-motivating program uses songs and games to great effect, which is hardly surprising since its author wrote the first-grade portion over the years that she was actually teaching first grade, tailoring the material to the children’s “needs,” as the “experts” would say. However, some of the storybooks were written by her associates. She re-invented, apparently unknown to herself, a version of the ancient syllabarium, setting it to the music of an imaginary carnival’s merry-go-round, and uses that for one of her skill song/games. Apart from its purpose, her “merry-go-round” song/ drill is actually good music. The program includes a series of 17 phonically-sequenced little story books on which to practice the phonic skills that are taught. I used the program with great satisfaction as a supplementary program in my primary grades ever since 1973, until 1985 when I retired. (I had to buy almost all the supplementary materials myself over a period of a dozen years before I retired, as my school system usually refused to do so.) The program is best used for whole-class instruction on the skills, and games and on the skill workbooks, but the reading of the story books can be handled in smaller groups. (To buy enough 17-book-sets for the whole class to read simultaneously would be rather expensive). The program is also packaged for beginning readers in a Home Kit, which includes the 17 storybooks, two workbooks, and the games, as well as tapes of the songs. Parents can therefore use it to teach children at home. The story books should not be used until the specific skills needed for each one are thoroughly taught from the work book and games. However, Book 7 unfortunately introduces a list of sight words and a sight word story at its beginning. The list and story should be skipped. So should book 6. The few sight words from that list which appear later can be handled as they come up, focusing on their phonic parts.

The program should not be confused with the California-based program for teaching reading which claims to use music in teaching reading, but which only uses quiet, monotonous background music on some tapes, unrelated to the teaching of any skills. That program, Hooked on Phonics, advertises widely. In my opinion, unless it has been almost totally changed in its recent revisions, it is very unsatisfactory and is very “meaning” oriented because of its heavy use of sight words and its exceedingly badly organized phonics instruction. Despite its phonic label, in actual practice I believe it rates only a Code 3 on a scale from Code 1 for a pure “meaning” approach for the teaching of beginning reading to Code 10 for a pure “sound” approach. However, Sing, Spell, Read & Write obviously uses a true Code 10 SYNTHETIC PHONICS APPROACH.

Sing, Spell, Read & Write was included in the section of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 which was entitled, “Other Instructional Programs,” rather than in the section entitled “Basal Reading Programs.” Yet, since it is a complete first-grade program, with 17 little storybooks, it might logically have been included in the “Basal Reading Programs” section. Materials in the section entitled, “Other Instructional Programs” did not receive the degree of sampling and study which were given to those in the section, “Basal Reading Programs.” For the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the “Other Instructional Programs” section, the report was either “included”

or “excluded.” That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score. Yet Sing, Spell, Read and Write would have deserved a 6/6 score.

On Sing, Spell, Read & Write, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” “Decoding strategy... Explicit” and “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” That vague rating, which told nothing about the degree of emphasis, certainly did not make it clear that the program rates a straight Code 10 on the teaching of synthetic phonics, if both Book 6 and the story and word list at the beginning of Book 7 are omitted.

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1973 (Information from their brochures)  
The Sound Way to Easy Reading  
Bremner, A. J. and Josephine Davis  
Bremner-Davis Educational Systems, Chicago, Illinois

This company advertised in newspapers for many years. Their brochures included an article from the Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 49, No. 1, attesting to the program’s fine results. It used records to teach the sounds of the letters, and provided workbooks. Like all good programs, which it apparently is, it has virtually been ignored by our government schools and reading gurus. Yet “whole language,” one of the greatest fakeries of modern times, has taken the government schools in the entire nation by storm! The Bremner-Davis program appears to use a true PHONICS APPROACH.

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1974 or Earlier (Reviewed in Mary Pride’s 1988 The New Big Book of Home Learning)  
Professor Phonics Gives Sound Advice (for younger students)  
A Sound Track to Reading (for older students)  
Folzer, Sister Monica  
S. U. A. Phonics Dept. (St. Ursula Academy)  
Cincinnati, Ohio

This is an excellent, inexpensive, and highly successful phonic program. It has been endorsed by many teachers who have used it with great success, including the justly famous Marva Collins of Chicago. The program uses a Code 10 TRUE PHONIC APPROACH.

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#### PHONICS- ORIENTED MATERIALS FROM ENGLAND

1974-1983  
Language in Action  
Morris, Dr. Joyce, et al.  
1990  
The Morris Montessori Word List  
Morris, Dr. Joyce

I have not seen these materials which are mentioned in passing in Dr. Morris’s excellent 1993 paper, portions of which are quoted extensively in Part 6 of this history. However, since Dr. Morris is the author of these materials, the probability is that they are, indeed, excellent and very useful.

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#### A PHONICS RESOURCE FROM ENGLAND

1974  
Alpha to Omega: The A-Z of Teaching Reading, Writing and Spelling  
Hornsby and Shear

This is described as a phonics resource “with a linguistic-sound base,” by Dr. Joyce Morris in her 1993 paper, which is quoted extensively elsewhere in this book,

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1975 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
Auditory Discrimination in Depth  
Lindamood, Charles and Patricia Lindamood  
Development Learning Materials  
Allen, Texas

1984 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)  
Swain Beginning Reading  
Swain, Emma Halstead  
Development Learning Materials  
Allen, Texas

The above two programs were included in the section of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 which was entitled, “Other Instructional Programs.” As such, these programs did not receive the degree of sampling and study which were given to programs in the section, “Basal Reading Programs.” For the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.” That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the “Other Instructional Programs” section, the report was either “included” or “excluded.” That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On DLM’s Auditory Discrimination in Depth of 1975, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” “Decoding strategy... Explicit” and “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.”

On DLM’s Swain Beginning Reading of 1984, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 also showed it included activities on “Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit,” “Decoding strategy... Explicit” and “Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly.”

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1975 (Sixth edition, first in 1940 by Harris alone)  
How to Increase Reading Ability,  
A Guide to Developmental and Remedial Methods  
Harris, Albert J. and Edward R. Sipay  
David McKay Company, Inc., New York

This book is included in this appendix because it lists many reading instruction materials on the market in 1975.

This book was used in graduate reading instruction programs, and it favored the “meaning,” and not the “sound” approach (sounding-and-blending phonics) in teaching beginning reading. In its chapter, “Deficiencies in Word-Identification Skills,” from pages 426 to 434, it listed “Workbooks,” “Programs and Kits,” and “Multimedia Materials” then on the market for teaching those skills. It is obvious that many used two-step, whole-word substitution “phonics” and not true synthetic sounding-and-blending phonics.

However, its listing of available reading-workbook-type materials on the market in 1975 is an excellent guide to the materials that were most widely in use in 1975, for those who wish that

information. The listing is too long to include in this appendix. Yet, only concerning their section on workbooks and boxed sets of phonics practice, and not their sections on “Programs and Kits” or “Multimedia Materials,” the authors stated that it was very far from comprehensive, since in recent years so many materials had been produced that a complete list would “run on for pages.”

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1976, 1979

Johnny STILL Can’t Read - But You Can Teach Him at Home

Diehl, Kathryn (Mrs.) and G. K. Hodenfield (75-page booklet)

(No publisher listed. Formerly available from Reading Reform Foundation for \$4.50 but out of print in 1995)

Includes background information on the sight-word/phonics controversy and instructions on how to teach a child to read by true phonics. Sister Monica Foltzer’s Spelling and Reading Word List is on pages 69 through 75. Mary Pride, in *The Big Book of Home Learning*, Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois, 1986, page 107, said:

“Armed only with this book, I taught our oldest son to read before he turned four. Kathryn Diehl explains why you need to teach phonics and how to do it....”

Mrs. Diehl is widely recognized as an unofficial source of general information on the reading problem. In the preface to his 1981 *Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read, The Scandal of Our Schools*, Dr. Rudolf Flesch thanked Mrs. Diehl for the helpful background information she had given him. The Diehl/Hodenfield material which is now out of print, used A TRUE PHONIC APPROACH.

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1978 (Information from their brochures)

The Literacy Primer

The Homestead Readers

Coleman, Eunice; Mary Coleman; Eugene Coleman, Jr.; Mary C. McLaughlin

The Literacy Press, Inc., Madison, Georgia

As of 1988, per Mary Pride’s *The New Big Book of Home Learning*:

The Literacy Press, Inc., 24 Lake Drive, DeBary, Florida 32713 (Eunice S. Coleman); Branch Office: Eugene E. Coleman, Jr., 677 Follett Run, Warren, Pa., 16365 (tel.: 407-668-1232)

The brochure for this program stated:

“In 1978 Eunice and Mary, now a primary teacher, and Eugene Jr., now principal of a Christian Academy worked together to produce THE LITERACY PRIMER, How to Teach Any Child to Read Write and Spell. Their book was rejected by 40 ‘Name Publishers’ who had new expensive detours to learning which they wanted to promote.

“The Colemans found a printer and published the book themselves and sold it to mail order customers in 47 states.”

Obviously, there was a market in those 47 states for the Coleman materials which the 40 “Name Publishers” chose to ignore. Their Literacy Press program is listed in Mary Pride’s 1988 *The New Big Book of Home Learning* on page 180.

The material uses A TRUE PHONIC APPROACH.

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1979 or Before

Discover Intensive Phonics for Yourself

(Teacher's Manual, 8 Sets of Phonic Cards, and Chart)  
Lockhart, Mrs. Charlotte  
Char-L Publishing Co.  
Decatur, Illinois

Mrs. Lockhart's program provides one of the best phonic sequences of any materials presently on the market. Mrs. Lockhart calls her program a "bare-bones" program. Because of its simplicity, it can be used at first grade or for remediation with any age group. Mrs. Lockhart has had many letters of testimony telling of success with her excellent materials. The material uses A TRUE PHONIC APPROACH.

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Many more phonic materials could be listed here if space and time permitted. The Reading Reform Foundation, in Scottsdale, Arizona, in the 1970's and into the 1980's, when Mrs. Bettina Rubicam was president, used to have a folder listing some one hundred or so phonic programs on the market. Most of them never found their way into our benighted, counter-productive government schools. However, it is beyond the scope of this bibliography, unfortunately, to include all such programs, many of which were undoubtedly excellent.

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### **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1980 and 1990**

1980's

Alpha Phonics: A Primer for Beginning Readers  
Blumenfeld, Samuel  
The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho

Blumenfeld's program is highly effective, as confirmed by the great number of appreciative letters Blumenfeld has received from parents who used his program. It is not only excellent for teaching beginning readers, but for teaching retarded readers or illiterates of any age. The material is very simple, very direct, and very successful, and obviously uses a true PHONIC APPROACH,

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1981

The Basal Reader Approach to Reading  
Aukerman, R. C.  
John Wiley, New York

On page 167 of Preventing Reading Failure, An Examination of the Myths of Reading Instruction, National Book Company, Portland, Oregon, 1987, Dr. Patrick Groff said,

"Aukerman's extensive analysis of the content of the basal readers up to 1981 confirms that most of these textbooks still commence their instruction with the whole-word, look-say method. Some phonics elements are taught in these volumes, it is true, but generally in a delayed manner. This procedure, called the 'eclectic' approach, is one that Austin and Morrison found reading professors firmly committed to, twenty years earlier. That many of the research findings on phonics are not reflected in most of the basal readers currently in use thus can be said without fear of contradiction."



I have not seen Aukerman's 1981 book, but it is obviously an excellent guide to relatively recent series of reading books.

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1984, 1988

Hooked on Phonics

No Authors Shown

Gateway Educational Products, Ltd.

1100 West Katella, Suite 8 - Sean Shanahan, President

Orange, California 92667 - Telephone: 1-800-ABCDEFGH

On July 18, 1992, I wrote Mr. Shanahan and enclosed my nineteen-page critique on the program, Hooked on Phonics, which program was and is being massively promoted nation-wide. My critique was based on a lengthy examination of the books and recorded tapes in the Hooked on Phonics kit. I said:

“Your nation-wide coverage is a superb means to promote the proper teaching of beginning reading and you are to be commended for your extraordinary ability to market your program. However and unfortunately, as the enclosed comments show, it is not really possible to upgrade Hooked on Phonics into a program which it is desirable to promote nationwide. The program must be totally rewritten, and I urge that you do NOT this time ask for help from any ‘university’ sources or ‘accredited’ reading experts. Such people have created America’s reading problem.”

I suggested to Mr. Shanahan that he compare the rational phonic exercises in the back of Rudolf Flesch's 1955 book, *Why Johnny Can't Read*, to those in Hooked on Phonics to see how different the two approaches are. I further suggested that he seek help in rewriting the program from phonic authors such as Sister Monica Folzer, Samuel Blumenfeld, Charlotte Lockhart, Sue Dickson or some other phonic authors who could be suggested by the Reading Reform Foundation. Mr. Shanahan never replied to this letter.

In my opinion, despite the program's surface use of phonics, its heavy use of sight words at the beginning and the nature of its various exercises earns for this program the charge that it is really teaching two-step phony phonics. Two-step phony phonics is bringing up whole meaning-bearing sight words in a reader's memory to find like parts to an unknown new printed word. After finding such like parts in memory, the reader then pieces together the like parts from those previously learned words to figure out the unknown new printed word.

Furthermore, most of the printed phonic exercises in Hooked on Phonics have to be done by the learner alone without any way to correct his errors since almost all of the printed phonic exercises are not spoken on the tapes. Since the program seems to expect a learner to use it alone, without constant monitoring by another person, the omission of almost all these phonics exercises from the spoken tapes is a critical fault.

My rating for this program is therefore a Code 3. I believe it would be indistinguishable in its effects on children from any standard Code 3 basal reader approach. However, it has, in my opinion, a further serious fault, which is that I believe children would find the exercises to be boring and tiresome. While doing my study of the tapes, in which a contralto female voice is the only sound beside the occasional background music, I found that background music - such as it is - to be actually irritating because it seemed to me to be extraordinarily monotonous and remarkably dull.

Reportedly, a newer edition of Hooked on Phonics is now on sale. Whether the new edition is sufficiently phonic is not known to this writer.

1987 (Scholastic kits of reading books have been produced for many years, probably since the 1950's, but the dates and names of the earlier editions are not available. This 1987 revision was reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

Bookshelf

Complete Bookshelf Stage 1 (kit - kindergarten)

Complete Bookshelf Stage 2 (kit - grade 1)

Complete Bookshelf Stage 3 (kit - grade 2.

(Undoubtedly higher grade kits as well)

Authors: "Multiple contributors"

Scholastic, Jefferson City, Missouri

1988 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

Bridges

Authors: "Multiple contributors"

Scholastic, Jefferson City, Missouri

The Scholastic materials have been available for many years, in excellent kits of reading books matched to children's age levels. To the extent that they included instructional approaches, the intent was that the teacher use an "individualized" approach, teaching each child at his own level. That is, of course, a physical impossibility in a classroom of twenty or so first-graders, since each child only can get a few minutes of instructional time, no matter how organized a teacher is in keeping schedules and instructional chart records. Nevertheless, the Scholastic kits of relatively inexpensive paper-bound books are a wonderful addition to any classroom, provided the children have already been taught how to read. Even at the kindergarten or beginning first-grade level, the teacher can read the books to the children, which certainly motivates the children to learn to read themselves.

The only drawback to the Scholastic materials is that most apparently use vocabulary control, which reduces children's exposure to normal language. That can stunt vocabulary growth, if only such materials are used and no others.

Also included in the kits of reading books, at least in the lower grades, and at least as late as the early 1980's, were very entertaining reading games for children to use in small groups. However, my familiarity with the earlier materials published by Scholastic makes me question whether they properly qualify for inclusion in a beginning reading instruction study, except to note that they can be used with the individualized reading approach. The two Scholastic programs had zero scores in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 on the teaching of decoding. (Teachers' guides in earlier kits did, however, include instructions on decoding, as I know from my own experience, so I find this score somewhat surprising.)

However, the real strength and worth of the Scholastic materials might be lost by judging them solely by the criteria of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, since they should not properly be used to teach beginning reading. Yet, in my opinion, Scholastic kits (or their equivalents) should be in every elementary school classroom from grade K up, and ample opportunity should be given to children, once they have been taught how to read, to use the book kits themselves for reading pleasure (which means for real reading practice, despite the fact that the lower books may have controlled vocabulary). Even in kindergarten and beginning first grade, the teacher can read the books aloud to the children, which is something little children really enjoy.

## **#Publishers First Appearing in This List Between 1990 and 1995**

### A PHONICS PROGRAM FROM ENGLAND

1990 (Reprinted 1991, 1992, 1994: fourth printing, going out of print in 2000)

Step by Step

McNee, Mona

Published by Mona McNee

2 Keats Avenue, Whiston

Prescot, Merseyside, Lancashire, England

(Printed by Studioprint, Rash's Green, Dereham, Norfolk, England)

2000

C-A-T=Cat: Teach Your Child to Read with Phonics

McNee, Mona

Published by Elliot Right Way Books

Lower Kingswood, Tadworth, Surrey, England KT20 6TD UK

The cover of Step by Step also carries the comments, "Anybody can teach reading," and "A day-by-day programme of intensive, systematic phonics for all ages." It is, indeed, systematic, but it is also concise. For those two reasons alone, "anybody" certainly should find it easy to use. Besides being simple and easy to use, Mrs. McNee's very attractive material rates a Code 10, as it is truly phonic.

The persistence of reading problems in England, as in America, is what inspired Mrs. McNee to write this material. The back cover of Step by Step reads:

"Mona McNee's concern about reading started in 1970 when, having seen her son fail with professional teaching, she found that with no training, but relying on a phonic scheme, Royal Road Readers, old-fashioned sounding out and common sense she was able to teach him.

"In May 1975 she became the remedial teacher at a Middle School, and soon concluded that nearly all her pupils could have got it right first time around if they had been spared look-say, the whole-word start.

"She retired in 1981 and by now has taught well over 300 dyslexics, plus other young children. She believes we would be better off starting with letters/sounds, and has now set up a British Chapter of the Reading Reform Foundation.

"This book provides the vital phonics base which the National Curriculum lacks. Teachers who want to TEACH reading can use it. Otherwise, parents can use it to schoolproof their own child."

Mrs. McNee mentioned having made some use of Daniels and Diack's Royal Road phonic reading series of 1954, now out of print, which received so much criticism from British "experts" at that time. That phonic series is listed earlier in this bibliography and is mentioned by

Dr. Morris in her 1993 paper, a large portion of which is quoted elsewhere in this history.

In April, 2000, Mrs. McNee's earlier work, Step-by-Step, was replaced with her new material, C-A-T=Cat: Teach Your Child to Read with Phonics, published by Elliot Right Way Books of Surrey, England. Press releases put out by Elliot Right Way Books on the publication of the new material stated that it was 192 pages in length, and sold for 3.99 pounds. With Mrs. McNee's great expertise, it is safe to conclude that the new material lives up to the high praises that it received in those press releases from Elliot Right Way Books.

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1991 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

MCP Phonics

Elwell-Murray-Kucia

Modern Curriculum Press

Cleveland, Ohio

1992 (Reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

Discovery Phonics

Authors: "Multiple Contributors"

Modern Curriculum Press

Cleveland, Ohio

The above programs were included in the sections of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 entitled, "Other Instructional Programs" and "Instructional Approaches." As such, these programs did not receive the degree of sampling and study which were given to programs in the section, "Basal Reading Programs." For the basal reader programs, six samples were taken and a fraction shown for the number including certain qualities, such as "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly." That might have been reported as 6/6 (in all six samples), 1/6 (in one of six samples) or zero (none of six). Instead, in the "Other Instructional Programs" and "Instructional Approaches" sections, the report was either "included" or "excluded." That obviously could make no distinction between programs which might have deserved a 6/6 score compared to programs which might have deserved a 1/6 score.

On MCP Phonics of Elwell-Murray-Kucia, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on "Sound/symbol relationships... Explicit," and "Decoding strategy... Explicit" but did not include "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly."

On Discovery Phonics, The Beginning Reading Instruction Study of 1993 showed it included activities on "Sound/symbol relationships... Implicit," but did not include "Decoding strategy," either "Explicit" or "Implicit, or "Decoding strategy... Blending taught explicitly."

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1991 (Listed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, 1993)

EL-HI Textbooks and Serials in Print, 119th edition, 1991

Publisher not named

This reference work was listed on page 3 of The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., although its publisher was not named. Presumably earlier and later editions of this reference work might be of great help in identifying reading programs. If it is a quarterly publication, it might date from 1961. If it is a semi-annual edition, it might date from 1931. However, it is highly unlikely that it goes back further than about 1931.

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#### A PHONICS RESOURCE FROM ENGLAND

1992

The Phonics Handbook

Lloyd, Mrs. Sue

I have not seen this material, but it is mentioned approvingly in Dr. Joyce Morris's 1993 paper, quoted elsewhere in this history.

The following comments to be given shortly are taken from Mrs. Sue Lloyd's paper, "Phonics Prevents Failure," which was given at the Reading Reform Foundation's Conference in London on September 26, 1993. That paper was included in *Teaching Reading: What Works*, The Reading Reform Foundation, Published by Mona McNee now at 2 Keats Avenue, Whiston, Prescot, Merseyside, Lancashire, L352XR, England. Mrs McNee has been the head of The Reading Reform Foundation's English branch. The booklet is a compilation of four papers given at that conference.

It is interesting that Sue Lloyd's auditory training method for rank beginners is essentially the same as the method used by Soviet psychologists, as described in the chapter by D. B. Elkonin in *Educational Psychology in the U. S. S. R.*, Edited and With an Introduction by Brian and Joan Simon, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California: 1963. Concerning the necessity to teach auditory discrimination of sounds in words, and to teach the skill of blending separate sounds into words, Elkonin said (page 169):

"Ability to hear the separate sounds in words, to distinguish one from another, and to generalize sounds, is vitally important for succeeding stages in mastering reading and writing."

On page 170 of Dr. Jeanne Chall's *Learning to Read, The Great Debate*, McGraw-Hill, New York: 1967 (second and third editions 1983 and 19967, Forth Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace), she quoted the neurologist, Dr. Samuel Orton, concerning the necessity for teaching blending, and also cited a series of studies confirming that fact.

Sue Lloyd's program also resembles the Letterstad program of Dr. H. J. Kooreman, Pedagogisch Centrum, Enschede, Holland, which excellent program I saw in use in Holland in 1977. Dr. Kooreman consciously modeled his program on Russian programs. However, the English schools begin with four-year-olds, but the Russians wisely wait almost until age seven. The Bender Gestalt norms indicate that by the age of seven most children's brains have matured sufficiently to deal with geometric shapes like letters, but perhaps half cannot do so at age four. Obviously, auditory discrimination, like visual discrimination, is less developed in the average four-year-old than the average seven-year-old. Success must therefore come far more slowly for the immature English beginners than for the older Russian beginners.

Sue Dickson's excellent American program uses music drill exercise on the syllabary and is essentially the same as the method used by the ancient Greeks. Therefore, "What Works" keeps getting re-invented independently by dedicated teachers all over the world, like Mrs. Dickson, Mrs. Lloyd, and Dr. Kooreman, but it also keeps on being rejected by "expert"-plagued government schools all over the Free World.

Portions of Mrs. Sue Lloyd's paper follow:

"...children should be trained to hear all the sounds in words as a pre-reading requisite....

"...The children are told that the letters have sounds and when they know their sounds and put them together, they can read words for themselves.... For teaching the sounds, a multisensory method is used.... They LOOK and LISTEN to the letter-sound, they FEEL the formation and do an action. For each letter-sound there is a short story, e.g. for 'h' some children run a race and get puffed out and say 'h h h h'..... Forty-two of the sounds of English are covered this way....

Regularly the letters are revised [Ed.: reviewed] and as each letter is held up, the children do the action and say the sound.

“After a week of learning the first six letter-sounds and doing the auditory training, I show the children how to blend the sounds and read words...

“Once most of the letters have been taught, [they] are given their first word box. Each box has regular words that can be worked out by blending. By going through these, the children get the valuable blending practice. By the time they have gone through all the boxes, the last of the letters have been taught. Now they are ready to start reading books for themselves. They need to know that not all words can be worked out and some are ‘silly’. It helps to go over the irregular keywords such as WAS. They enjoy looking for the ‘silly’ bit.....

“...In their first term, all the children are taught the sounds of English and the main letters that are used for those sounds. They are taught to blend the sounds for reading, and to identify the sounds in words for writing....”

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1993

First Reader

Schlafly, Phyllis

First Reader System Inc.

P. O. Box 495

Alton, Illinois 62002 (Telephone: 1-800-700-5228)

Mrs. Schlafly is famous for her work in defending the American Constitution in state legislatures all over the country against the ever-recurring threat of a call by two-thirds of the states for a new constitutional convention. Such a convention, which would almost certainly be under the control of the same change-agents who have been working for it for decades for various propagandistically expressed “good” reasons, would suspend our Constitution that has safeguarded our freedoms for over two hundred years. It would be replaced with a substitute constitution tailored to the liking of the change-agents, and our freedoms would almost certainly expire along with our Constitution.

Mrs. Schlafly is famous also for so many other worthwhile activities. Yet she took the time to write a very effective beginning reading program. Her interest in phonics began when, as a young mother, she became aware of the problems in beginning reading (presumably as a result of Dr. Flesch’s 1955 best-seller, *Why Johnny Can’t Read*). Mrs. Schlafly taught all her own children to read before they began to go to school.

Formerly, The Eagle Forum Education Fund founded by Mrs. Schlafly had for sale to parents the Hay-Wingo-Hletko Lippincott Phonics Workbooks, and the McGuffey First and Second Readers (edition date unknown). However, when the Lippincott materials were no longer available (presumably when the Lippincott company was absorbed by another company), Mrs. Schlafly wrote her own phonic reading program.

Mrs. Schlafly’s reading program consists of the 192-page, 4 color, hardbound First Reader, a 128-page workbook, two instructional audio cassettes, and two “fat” pencils suitable for beginners’ fingers. In 1993, it was available for \$79.95, plus \$7.00 shipping and handling charges. I have seen only the advertisement and not the material itself. However, considering the author’s expertise and background, it is safe to say that it is undoubtedly an excellent (and probably enjoyable) phonic program for children.

1993

The Beginning Reading Instruction Study

Stein, Marcy, University of Washington-Tacoma, with Carmen Hadreas, Molly Riley Olson, Gerilyn Parker, Susan Wayne

Office of Research

U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C.

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All 13 full basal reader programs reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study have been discussed elsewhere in Appendix C, under the publisher's names. However, the study also listed 30 "Other Instructional Programs," which had readers or workbooks only to grade 3 or lower, or only supplemental instructional materials. (Why Mrs. McQueen's program was included among those 30 instead of among the full basal programs is not known. Possibly the others had readers above the third grade level, which Mrs. McQueen's does not, but that should not have mattered in this beginning reading study.) Also listed were 12 "Other Instructional Approaches," a mixture of various programs. Some of these last two groups of (30 and 12 programs) are reviewed elsewhere in Appendix C, but it is not feasible to discuss them all. Those not included elsewhere in Appendix C are listed below, and interested readers can refer to The Beginning Instruction Study for further information:

Alphaphonics/Kite, San Mateo, California; Judith Brown et al, 1984-89

At Last! A Reading Method for Every Child, Pecci Educational Publishers, San Francisco, Cal.; Mary F. and Ernest F. Pecci, 1988.

The B.E.S.T. Introductory Phonics Program, Eugene, Oregon; Jan Hasbrouck et al, 1983

Companion, Metra Publishing, Salt Lake City, Utah; Grant Von Harrison, 1986-1992

The Golden Key to Reading, Paula Di Educational Enterprises, Jamaica, New York; Paula G. DiGiovanni, 1982

High Hat, American Guidance Service, Circle Pines, Minnesota; Ronald Goldman and Martha E. Lynch, 1986.

Integrated Total Language, American Guidance Service, Napa, California; Donna R. Connell, 1985.

Literacy 2000, Rigby, Crystal Lake, Illinois; Avelyn Davidson, 1991.

Phonics Pathways, Dorbooks, Livermore, California; Dolores G. Hiskes, 1991.

Reading Links: The Phonics-Literature Connection, Steck-Vaughn, Austin, Texas; Authors are "Multiple contributors," 1992.

Steck-Vaughn Phonics, Steck-Vaughn, Austin, Texas; Barbara K. York, 1991.

The Stevenson Language Skills Program, Stevenson Learning Skills, Attleboro, Massachusetts; Nancy Stevenson and Janice L. Semple, et al, 1992

Souder, Edmark Corporation, Redmond, Washington; Ronald F. Smith, 1988.

The Story Box, The Wright Group, Bethel, Washington; Authors are "Multiple contributors," 1990

Teaching All Children to Read, University of Chicago Press; Michael Wallach and Lise Wallach, 1976.

Total Reading, Total Reading (Publisher), Mary Minor Johnston and Elizabeth Paris Dunford, 1983-1990.

Yak Phonics, Yak Corporation, San Diego, California; E. M. Swengel, Ph. D., 1974.

Baratta-Lorton Reading Program (Dekodiphukan), Center for Innovation in Education, Campbell, California; Robert Baratta-Lorton, 1985.

Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI - Includes the Start Reading Program), Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction, Salt Lake City, Utah; Ethna R. Reid et al, 1986.

McOmber Reading Package, Art City Publishing, Provo, Utah; Rachel B. McOmber, 1987.

Success for All, Educational Research Service, Arlington, Virginia; Robert E. Slavin et al, 1992.

Zoo-Phonics, Zoo-phonics (Publisher), Groveland, California; Georgene Bradshaw and Charlene Wright, 1985-1988.

It is to be regretted that some very widely used, successful, and widely known phonic programs were not reviewed in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study. Such programs include Samuel Blumenfeld's, Sister Monica Folzer's, and Char Lockhart's, all of which are discussed elsewhere in this Appendix C.

Furthermore, even the vastly publicized Hooked on Phonics, which does such a poor job teaching real phonics, was omitted from this study. Yet anyone in America who listened to the radio or who watched television was almost certain to have heard its advertisements over and over again. It is used in many schools and certainly is influential in the teaching of beginning reading in America. Presumably it was excluded because it "depended heavily on audiotapes," one of the reasons the report stated for exclusion of programs. Yet the bulk of the Hooked on Phonics program is contained in its printed workbooks.

Presumably, because of its dependence on computers, the study excluded the Ready to Read Program. That program was written by John Henry Martin in the 1980's and is very widely sold to schools by International Business Machines. Yet the exclusion of such programs as Ready to Read or Hooked on Phonics from an American beginning reading instruction study simply because they are not dependent solely on printed material is arbitrary and misleading, since these programs have become very influential in the teaching of beginning reading in America.

Also excluded from The Beginning Reading Instruction Study was the fine reading series published by the Colemans (also included in this appendix). Also excluded was the very long-lived and very comprehensive reading program of Mae Carden, which is so justly famous (also included in this appendix). Most surprisingly, the Scribner (former Lippincott) series which was so widely used in America, and which was in use at least as late as 1991, was not included in The Beginning Reading Instruction Study. However, it may have been out of print in 1992, when this study was being prepared. The Scribner-Lippincott material is discussed elsewhere in Appendix C.



## APPENDIX D

### A Partial Annotated List of American Texts, Largely Before 1932, on the Teaching of Beginning Reading

Texts on the teaching of reading before 1932 are difficult to obtain, particularly concerning the teaching of reading in America. Some materials summarizing such texts are in print, but they are insufficient, and sometimes wrong.

G. Stanley Hall occasionally discussed certain German programs in his writings from probably 1874 until after 1900. A commonly cited German text on the history of teaching reading, primarily in Germany, is Karl Kehr's *Geschichte der Methodik des deutschen Volksschulunterrichts*, Volume 1, Second Edition, 1889. A Swedish history is *ABC Bucher in Schweden* by Ingeborg Willke, 1965, Svenska Bokforlaget Bonniers, Stockholm. Unfortunately, I could make little use of either of these two works. I cannot read German in which both of these books were written, but can only read English and French. Various articles, particularly "Lecture," in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire*, Paris, 1887, edited by F. Buisson, discussed French texts and teaching methods at length as far back as the seventeenth century, and to a slight degree texts in other countries. The *Dictionnaire* is a magnificent source for reading methods which have been used in France, but is of little use concerning practices in America.

The Soviet white-leatherette-covered coffee-table-like book in Russian, V. P. Bogdanov's 1974 *Ot Azbukilvana Fedorovado Sovremennaug Bukvaria*, is a history of Russian primers from 1574 to 1974. It would be a fine source for methods used in Russia, for anyone able to read Russian. However, our disinterested "reading instruction community" not only has never troubled itself to translate it, but probably does not even know of its existence. A copy is presently in the Library of Congress and I had some very few pages translated commercially at my own expense.

Texts on the teaching of reading in Great Britain have been discussed in this history to some extent in Part 6, for the most part by the use of source material that I saw which is presently in the British Library in London. *Teaching Reading in Early England* by W. J. Frank Davies, Pitman Publishing, London: 1973, is a fine source for information on the early teaching of reading in England before about 1500. *A History of Children's Reading and Literature*, by Alec Ellis, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1968, is an invaluable source for general information on primary education in Great Britain. *The Victorian Country Child*, by Pamela Horn, The Roundwood Press, Kington, England, 1974, is also a fine source for factual material about education and children in nineteenth-century Great Britain.

Yet reliable texts concerning the history of methods in the teaching of reading in America are lacking. Nila Banton Smith's "history," reportedly written for her doctorate about 1932 at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, which was first printed commercially in 1934 and then revised in 1965, cannot seriously be considered an historical source, except in part after about 1920. The defects in her "history" have been discussed at length previously. Rudolph R. Reeder of Teachers College, Columbia University, wrote *The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading*, Columbia University Contributions to Philosophy, Psychology and Education, Volume 8, No. 2, The Macmillan Company, New York, May, 1900, but his book is also unsatisfactory. Another book of very limited value concerning the history of reading instruction is *Old-Time Schools and School-Books*, by Clifton Johnson, The Macmillan Company, New York: 1904; Peter Smith, New York: 1935. Also gravely limited is the famous text, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading, With a Review of the History of Reading and Writing and of Methods, Texts, and Hygiene in Reading*, by Edmund Burke Huey, The

Macmillan Company, New York and London: 1908; The M.I.T. Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Cambridge, England, 1968.

A worthwhile source concerning some textbooks, but not teaching methods, is *Old Textbooks - Spelling, Grammar, Reading, Arithmetic, Geography, American History, Civil Government, Physiology, Penmanship, Art, Music - As Taught in the Common Schools from Colonial Days to 1900*, by John A. (Ifred) Nietz, Emeritus Professor of Education, University of Pittsburgh. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: 1961. Mitford Mathews' *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1966, is an important book, but Mathews' sources of information were insufficient and his book is therefore sometimes misleading. Some other texts treat the topic of beginning reading instruction in America to some extent, but they are also insufficient.

A need therefore exists for a bibliography on actual American guidebooks for reading instruction which have been published over the years, as such contemporary guidebooks provide much of the necessary historical information on the teaching methods for beginning reading that were used. The following is such an attempted bibliography but it is necessarily also very incomplete.

While the most of the references are American in origin, some are British, because there was a great overlapping of materials on education between Great Britain and America until about 1835.

Various sources have been consulted to prepare this partial listing. The listing is broken down into sections, according to these sources. However, the first heavily annotated section given below concerns titles which turned up not just from one but from many scattered locations. It consists of titles of American texts and some foreign texts which were influential in America such as the Edgeworths' material. The list omits uninfluential material such as *First Book of English for Children*, by Charles Kraitsir, M. D. His book was published in Boston in 1846 by Elizabeth P. Peabody, Horace Mann's and Nathaniel Hawthorne's sister-in-law. She is referred to elsewhere in this history. Kraitsir had a phonic system for reading English based on Latin vowel pronunciations, which system is obviously unworkable in English. Peabody wrote the *First Nursery Reading Book* in 1849 partially based on Kraitsir's work but including sight words, and her book was ludicrous.

Some of the titles in this first list were taken from *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*, published by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Washington, D. C., 1985. These texts (all of which are shown below with library call numbers beginning with "P") may be presumed to have been of some influence or copies probably would not have managed to survive and to end up in the Department of Education library, the source for *Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900*. Samuel R. Hall's very influential 1829 text, *Lectures on School-Keeping*, is also in the Department of Education library in Washington but is not listed in *Early American Textbooks*. I made photocopies of this text while visiting the Department of Education library. Hall's 1828 book is referred to in Samuel Blumenfeld's *Is Public Education Necessary?* and was also referred to in material printed in the 1830's in this country and England. However, many other titles in this first list came from sources other than *Early American Textbooks* and the Department of Education library.

At the beginning of the first list of titles, which is given chronologically, are some very early English materials which obviously eventually influenced the teaching of beginning reading in America. Although R. C. Alston's *Spelling Books, Volume IV, 1962*, of *A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800*, published in Great Britain, lists many hundreds of early English spellers, most are omitted here and in Appendix B unless there is evidence that they were used in America. Information on some of the early titles shown in the first list below came from some of the volumes of Alston's bibliographies, and from Foster Watson's *The English Grammar Schools to 1660*,

Their Curriculum and Practice, First Edition 1908, Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., London, New Impression 1968.

Following the first list of titles given chronologically are the other lists, which are arranged in alphabetical, not chronological, order. These titles came from various other catalogs and sources which are, nevertheless, also inadequate. For instance, Leyboldt's American Catalogues did not adequately report on contemporary reading instruction texts as proven by their omission of March's ABC Book by Francis A. March (1825-1911), published by Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston, which was referred to twice in 1882 issues of the Primary Teacher.

Yet March's book, which must at least have concerned the initial teaching of the alphabet, would be of interest, and not just because March had been a college student of Noah Webster whose famous spelling book dominated the teaching of beginning reading in America from 1783 until about 1826. Anything from March concerning beginning reading would be of interest because Mitford Mathews' wrote that in March's book, *Spelling Reform*, Washington: 1893, March had not only discussed the use of Pitman phonetic print used to teach reading in Waltham, Massachusetts, but wrote on pages 37 and 38 concerning St. Louis. March's comments on St. Louis must concern, of course, the use of Leigh print there.

In the Cattell manuscript files in the Library of Congress is Cattell's eulogy for the philologist, Francis A. March. As discussed by Dr. Michael M. Sokal in *An Education in Psychology*, James McKeen Cattell's Journal and Letters from Germany and England, 1880-1888, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981, March was Cattell's favorite college teacher when Cattell was an undergraduate at Lafayette College until 1880. Therefore, through his association with March, Cattell most probably would have been informed about the Pitman and Leigh print "sound" attempts to displace the sight-word "meaning" method in American beginning reading in the approximately twenty-year period from the early 1850's to the early 1870's. Cattell most probably would also have been informed about what may or may not have been March's endorsement of those attempts.

Cattell's probable exposure to March's knowledge about beginning reading may have led to Cattell's adapting some of Wilhelm Wundt's earlier reaction experiments so that they concerned the reading of print instead of listening to speech. The latter type had been among the reaction experiments that G. Stanley Hall had seen done in Wundt's laboratory in Germany. Cattell devised his obvious adaptation of Wundt's earlier experiments (and Cattell also devised rather clever laboratory equipment to carry out his reading experiments) while Cattell was a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, under G. Stanley Hall. Hall had himself been a subject in Wundt's German experiments and undoubtedly had described those experiments to his students at Johns Hopkins, one of whom was Cattell.

Therefore, it is very easy to see where Cattell probably got the basic idea for his reaction experiments in reading and why Hall wished to claim partial credit for Cattell's work, as discussed in Sokal's book. Cattell's results have, of course, falsely been used for a hundred years to support the teaching of reading by "meaning" instead of by "sound." Yet March has largely faded from the records and it has never before been suggested that there is a very probable connection between March's work on spelling and reading and Cattell's devising his misinterpreted reading experiments.

The first list follows, in chronological order.

Concerning the earliest items, it should be noted that with the sixteenth-century switch in much of Europe to teaching beginning reading in the vernacular instead of in Latin, England was the only country which found it necessary to invent "spelling books." Such English "spelling books" were originally invented after the mid-sixteenth century SOLELY to help in teaching beginning reading! No such a thing

as an English dictionary had ever existed, either, and “spelling books” predate English dictionaries by a considerable number of years, as shown by Alston’s bibliographies on both categories.

Before the early sixteenth century, when Latin was the common written language for educated Englishmen, there never had been any such thing as the “correct” spelling of English words nor any need for “spelling books,” even when people wrote in the English vernacular. Nor apparently had the thought of “correct” English spelling (or “correct” spelling of most of the words in ANY language) ever occurred to anyone. People simply wrote down sequential syllable sounds, and they most naturally produced word sounds.

However, of all the European languages, only the English language had come from so many different roots and as a result had so many conflicting spelling patterns for syllables. It was this confused background on syllable spellings which made training in English “spelling” necessary for little beginners trying to learn to read in English as the first step. They no longer were learning to read regularly spelled Latin syllables as the easy first step, which firm “sound” foundation had made the later tackling of irregular English syllables fairly easy. After the switch to teaching beginning reading in the vernacular, other European countries in contrast to England managed quite well simply by having children study their languages’ complete and generally consistent syllabaries. This was true much later in France, even though France had a similar but less daunting problem, when France finally made the switch to teaching beginning reading in the vernacular instead of in Latin after 1700.

Yet the English “spelling” problem surfaced immediately after the switch to teaching beginning reading in English instead of in Latin, as shown by the 1551 remarks by John Hart, below. If Hart had been a young teacher of about 21 when he made these remarks, he would have learned to read at about six years of age in 1536, which was two years after the English Reformation. It is also highly probable that some English non-conformists, who had been objecting to having the Scriptures in Latin, had been teaching beginning reading to their children in English for some ten years or so before 1534, the date for the English Reformation, and Hart may have been one of those children.

The first list follows, in chronological order. Although some of the titles listed are of books which I have not seen, their titles suggest they may be of interest.

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Hart, John -The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of Our English Toung, 1551. Mentioned in Charles C. Fries’ article, “Linguistics and Teaching of Reading,” page 594 and following of The Reading Teacher May, 1964. Hart, a school teacher, said: “For even so I have opened the vices and faultes of our writing: which cause it to be tedious, and long in learnyng: and I learned hard, and evill to read.... And then have I sought the meanes (herin writen) by the which we may use a certaine, good and easi writing, onli following our pronounciation; and keping the letters in their auncient, Simple and Singular powers.” Fries said, “Hart’s Orthographie of 1569 developed much more completely the principles set forth in his manuscript of 1551 and proposed the use of an ‘augmented’ Roman alphabet as a consistent spelling of the ‘sounds.’” Reproductions of Hart’s later material are available in libraries.

Mansell, Andrewe An alphabet and plaine pathwaye to the facultie of readinge, 1576. R. C. Alston lists this book in his Spelling Books. A 1601 copy survives of a work by Mansell with a slightly different title which was clearly a spelling book: A nevv booke of spelling with syllables: or an alphabet and plaine pathwaye to the facultie of readinge the English, Romane, Italica, and secretarie hands,.... Alston also lists a record of a publication by Thomas Johnson in 1590, The pathwaye to readinge; or, the neweste spelling A,B,C; conteyninge a most shorte, easie, and profitable way of teaching to spell and reade. Alston said, however, that Johnson’s 1590 book might only have been a reprint of Mansell’s 1576 work.

Clement, F. 1576, 1587 *The Petie Schole, With an English Orthographie*, wherein by rules lately prescribed is taught a method to enable both a childe to reade perfectly within one moneth (sic), & also the unperfect to write English aright. Clement's book contained lists of rules illustrated by certain words, and was not a "dictionary" word-list approach. It has been reproduced in *Four Tudor Books on Education, Facsimile Reproductions*, with an Introduction by Robert D. Pepper, Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, Gainesville, Florida, 1966.

Johnson, Thomas - *The Pathway to Reading, or the Newest Spelling A B C*, 1590. Foster Watson on page 179 of *The English Grammar Schools to 1660, Their Curriculum and Practice*, said Johnson's book had been published in 1590 and so preceded Coote's 1596 book. He thought Johnson's might have been the *Spelling A B C* in the list of school books owned by the Stationer's Company in 1620.

Coote, Edmund - *The First Book of the English Schoole-maister, and The Second Book of the English School-maister*, 1596. This is followed by a catechism, all three bound together as one book. Coote's was the model for the spelling books which were to follow, and was enormously popular, being produced in a vast number of editions for over a century. It contained not just systematic rules, but systematic spellings, and inserted short paragraphs for reading practice, and it had many imitators. The three which were bound together as one book have been reproduced on microfilm from a copy in the British Museum, London, by University Microfilms Inc. (Gt. Britain) Ltd., which microfilm copy I saw at the Library of Congress in 1988.

Brinsley, John (1585-1665) - *Ludus Literarius, or, The Grammar Schoole; Shewing How to Proceede from the First Entrance into Learning, to the Highest Perfection Required in the Grammar Schooles, With Ease, Certainty and Delight Both to Masters and Schollars....*, London, 1612. Coote's 1596 speller was praised by John Brinsley, who was a grammar school teacher. Brinsley discussed methods to teach reading. His book has been reproduced in full as No. 62 in that astonishing series, *English Linguistics 1500-1800 (A Collection of Facsimile Reprints)* Selected and Edited by R. C. Alston, The Scolar Press Limited, Menston, England, 1968. Alston of the British Library who produced a vast literature on the English language is an unsung hero!

Hornbye, William - *Hornbye's Horn-Book*. "Printed by Aug. Math. for Thomas Bayly, and are to be sold at his shop in the middle Row, neere Staple Inn, 1622." Andrew W. Tuer reproduced a long section of this poem in *History of the Horn-Book*, first published in 1897 and republished by Arno Press, A New York Times Co., New York, 1979. On page 213, Tuer said, "Concerning (Hornbye's) birth and death we are ignorant, but Hornbye says of himself that he was educated at Peterborough Free School." The poem from which Tuer quoted lengthy excerpts, on pages 214 to 220, casually mentions much about teaching methods.

Hodges, Richard - *The English Primrose....*, 1644. In Mitford Mathews' 1966 book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, The University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, Mathews showed on pages 27-28 that the schoolmaster Hodges taught children to pronounce English words by diacritical marks, presumably by the use of analytic and not synthetic phonics. Mathews reproduced a page of Hodges' work, and cited a Heidelberg, Germany, 1930, reproduction of Hodges' 1644 book, which had been edited by Dr. Heinrich Kauter.

Maxey, Thomas, 1651. *Learning's Foundation*. Listed by Foster Watson in *The English Grammar Schools to 1660, Their Curriculum and Practice*, 1908, 1968.

Lloyd, Richard - *The Schoole-masters Auxiliaries....*, 1654, London. Watson referred to this on pages 183-184. Lloyd taught letters by comparing them to objects. Watson said he showed the powers of the

letters, and that Lloyd wrote: “Thus a just account is given of every letter in the right sound thereof; and when the same is silent, or doth vary from the proper sound....”

Hoole, Charles - A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching School, The Petty School, 1660. Hoole discussed the teaching of reading, and wrote a beginning reading book, the New Primar. Hoole’s material had been reprinted by C. W. Bardeen of Syracuse, New York, in 1912 and probably earlier as well, and as No. 133 in the series, English Linguistics 1500-1800 (A Collection of Facsimile Reprints) Selected and Edited by R. C. Alston, The Scolar Press Limited, Menston, England, 1969.

Ellis, Tobias - The English School, 1680. Listed by Foster Watson in The English Grammar Schools to 1660, Their Curriculum and Practice, 1908, 1968.

Anonymous - The Irish Spelling Book, 1740. A Scolar Press Facsimile, English Linguistics 1500-1800 (Collection of Facsimile Reprints) Selected and edited by R. C. Alston. No. 199. The Scolar Press, Limited, Menston, England, 1969. This extremely important but exceedingly rare and largely unknown book has been discussed in the text of this history. It marked the entrance of Pascal synthetic phonics into the teaching of reading in English and was the probable source for Sheridan’s interest and famous work on phonics. It was Sheridan’s influence through his lectures and books which eventually produced phonic spellers like those of Noah Webster, Perry, etc., as well as pronouncing dictionaries.

Edgeworth, Richard and Maria Edgeworth, Practical Education, Published in 1798 in Ireland, and very influential. A section of their book concerned the teaching of reading, endorsing phonics on whole words but decrying the use of the ancient syllabary. Edgeworth claimed his use of phonic markings had predated the publication of Sheridan’s material. Possibly Edgeworth also had a copy of The Irish Spelling Book!

Bell, Rev. Andrew, The Madras School, or Elements of Tuition, London: 1808 (New York Public Library). This book has been discussed in this history. It promoted monitorial schools.

Neef, J. The Method of Instructing Children Rationally in the Arts of Writing and Reading. Philadelphia. 1813. Cited in Mitford Mathews’ Bibliography to Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, University of Chicago Press, 1966, page 213. Neef, an Alsatian, had come to America in 1806 at the request of an American philanthropist (unnamed), after having opened a Pestalozzian school in Paris in 1803. Neef’s book was an attempt to teach regularly spelled English words first. Mathews described Neef’s material, which was probably Code 10 “sound,” on page 153. Dr. Keagy cited Neef as a source for his own 1826 book. That was very curious, since Keagy endorsed (but did not use) a Code 1 “meaning” approach for beginning reading. Keagy claimed the time had not yet arrived for the use of “meaning” to teach beginning reading. Keagy’s work is discussed at length elsewhere in this history.

Kelly, James. An Improved Method of Education Instituted by Dr. Bell.... Also Joseph Lancaster’s Method of Teaching. Philadelphia, 1817. (New York Public Library). This book, discussing Lancaster’s method and Bell’s original method of teaching beginning reading has been discussed in this history.

McKenney, Frederick. A Key to the American Tutor’s Assistant. Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank. 1817. 182 p. PE 1120 . M35

Bell, Rev. Andrew. Mutual Tuition and Moral Discipline, or Manual of Instructions for Conducting Schools Through the Agency of the Scholars Themselves, Seventh Edition, London: 1823. (New York Public Library). This book has been discussed in this history.

Mead, Charles. The School Exercise. 2nd. ed. rev. enl. impr., Philadelphia: James E. Moore. 1823. 304 p. PE III7.A1M .M4

Journal Articles from Various Sources, from 1826 to 1900 Various articles in the American Journal of Education (later American Annals of Education) from Russell's beginning it in 1826; articles in Horace Mann's Common School Journal from 1839; and reports from the American Institute of Instruction are a fine source for comments on teaching reading. Dunn stated on page 4 of his book, Popular Education (1836), "One source, however, from which I have drawn unsparingly must be specially mentioned. I refer to the 'American Annals of Education and Instruction,' edited by the Rev. W. C. Woodbridge, of Boston, U.S., a journal of which it is impossible for me to speak too highly; I scarcely know the extent of my obligations to this educational treasury." At a later date, Barnard's American Journal of Education, unconnected with the first journal with that name, is an excellent source. The large numbers of educational journals published in America in different states after the 1830's and all through the nineteenth century, which are virtually forgotten today, are further sources. I have seen many of them lining shelves in the stacks of the Library of Congress.

Parkhurst, J. L. The Teacher's Guide. Portland, Maine: Shirley & Hyde, 1827. 382 p. PE II20 .P3. See 1830 entry on Parkhurst.

Infant Schools (on cover), Infant Education (on title page), by A Friend to the Poor, Published by Shirley and Hyde, Portland [Maine]: 1827-1828 (Harvard library). This book has been discussed in this history.

Wood, John. Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School, 1828. Republished in 1830 by Munroe & Francis, Boston and New York. Copy in the New York Public Library.

The work of John Wood, a pivotal figure, is discussed in this history.

Pillans' Letters to Kennedy, commented on by the Scottish Schoolmaster listed below, and on page 68 of Dunn's Popular Education, also listed below. 1828.

Wilderspin, Samuel. Infant Education; or Practical Remarks on the Importance of Educating the Infant Poor, from the Age of Eighteen Months to Seven Years, Fourth Edition, Carefully Revised, with Considerable Additions, London: Published by W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, Sold Also by Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh; Collins and Ogle, Glasgow; William Currie, Jun. and Co.; and Westley and Tyrrel, Dublin, 1829. Internal testimonials are dated 1823, so presumably that was the date of the first edition, while 1829 was the date of the fourth revised edition. Wilderspin began in the infant school at Quaker Street, Spitalfields, on August 7, 1820, which had been established by Joseph Wilson on July 24, 1820. Wilson with Brougham and others had established the first English infant school at Brewer's Green, Westminster, London, in 1818, for which they hired Buchanan from Robert Owen's prototype for infant schools which was attached to his factory at New Lanark, Scotland. Wilderspin claimed the earlier infant schools had merely been "asylums" and not schools, and that he originated the practice of teaching "infants."

Wilderspin told of the formation of the London Infant School Society at Freemason's Hall, London, on June 1, 1824, with Brougham and others in attendance. Wilderspin's long-winded account of the speeches showed that it was a public relations, fund-raising event, to which Brougham, Robert Owen and others gave "subscriptions," or money. The purpose of the meeting was to establish a training school for infant school teachers. Therefore, only six years after having introduced the brand-new idea of infant schools to England, the activists were already getting public support for a normal school to train teachers for future infant schools. That was an extraordinary public relations accomplishment and certainly

suggests that the activists were well organized! Brougham gave 25 pounds and some others gave more. However, Robert Owen, like a typical good socialist, gave only ten pounds. After all, that was his OWN money and not other people's tax money that he was subscribing!

Wilderspin's description of "reading" instruction in his school is ludicrous and vague. Apparently the school emphasized "meaning" far beyond the mental level of two- to six-year-old children, and the drill work consisted of memorizing the letters of the alphabet and lists of spelling words on cards. Whether there was any phonic arrangement to the word lists on the cards is unknown. Since the one word that Wilderspin listed as being spelled by a class was the phonically irregular word, "post," (it should have the vowel-sound in "pot"), that suggests that the lists may not have been sound-oriented.

Anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster. His book was entitled Letters Addressed to the Parochial Schoolmasters of Scotland, Concerning the New Method of Tuition. Containing Strictures on Professor Pillans' "Principles of Elementary Teaching".... By a Schoolmaster, Edinburgh: 1829. The book was a collection of letters published between November 30, 1827, and August 15, 1828, with additional material after that written by the Schoolmaster. The Schoolmaster was responding to Pillans' remarks in his lectures and book vilifying parish schools and promoting monitorial schools such as John Wood's famous Sessional School. Henry Dunn had approvingly quoted Pillans' 1828 and 1836 work in Popular Education. Reverend T. H. Gallaudet edited a book of Dunn's (probably Popular Education) for American readers. Yet Dunn made NO mention of the powerful 1829 rebuttal to Pillans made by the Scottish Schoolmaster. That rebuttal was presumably well known, since a copy survives in the New York Public Library today. The Schoolmaster's material has been discussed at length in this history.

Hall, Samuel R. Lectures on School Keeping, 1829. This was a very influential book in its day. See comments elsewhere in this history. Samuel R. Hall also wrote at least two children's texts, The Child's Instructor, or Lessons on Common Things, Flagg and Gould, Andover, Mass: 1832 (PE1119.A1H.H3) and The Grammatical Assistant, G. and C. Merriam, Springfield, Mass., 1836 (PE 1109 .H3). Hall's important 1829 book is also in the Department of Education library but is not listed in Early American Textbooks.

Parkhurst, J. L. Moral Philosophy, (by 1830) listed on page 17 of Lectures on School Keeping by Samuel Reed Hall, Second Edition, Boston, 1830. Hall quoted Parkhurst as having said:

"...to send an uneducated child into the world is like turning a mad dog into the street."

Hall concluded, "...all are under obligations to regard with high interest, those institutions which furnish the means of mental culture to the great mass of people." Such remarks were part of the ongoing propaganda for centralized government schools in the literate America of the 1820's which had no need for them, since literacy was almost universal except for those held in slavery. (It was not lack of private, non-governmental schools which accounted for the illiteracy of slaves. On the contrary, some governments of slave-holding states specifically forbid the teaching of reading to slaves, and penalized private individuals who tried to teach them. That fact is a particularly ugly facet of our history, and demonstrates that the slaveholders clearly recognized that literacy equals power.) In centralized, government schools, the change-agents obviously could set up the curriculum. With control over the curriculum, they almost immediately after 1826 gave functional illiteracy instead of real literacy "to the great mass of people" by promoting the use of "meaning" instead of "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading. That obviously resulted in less "power to the people," pulling them down closer to the cultural level of those still held in slavery. Propaganda for such government schools was also widespread in Great Britain, where literacy had not been so high but was fairly general, as shown by the massive sales of cheap chapbooks which had a high readability level during the eighteenth century.



Seton, S. W. The Abecedarian, Printed by J. R. Requa, 1830. See Blumenfeld's Is Public Education Necessary? for Seton's connection with the activists. Seton's incredibly bad text is described elsewhere in this history. (Harvard library)

Key to the First Step in Teaching Children to Read, According to the Lesson System of Education, First American from Third Edinburgh Edition, Publisher: Jonathan Leavitt, New York: 1830. This appalling book has been described in this history. (Harvard library)

Howland, Mrs. The Infant School Manual, or Teacher's Assistant. Boston: Richardson, Lord, Holbrook. 1831. 274 p. PS 681 .H6 This was the publisher of Samuel Worcester's Code 1 reading series. "Holbrook" was not Josiah Holbrook.

Philosophy of Instruction or Nurturing Young Minds, Greenfield, Massachusetts, 1832. Since this book was published in Greenfield, Massachusetts, in 1832, it is very possible it was published by Phelps, the original publisher of the Franklin Primer. Its content might be of interest.

Davis - Manual for Teachers of Common Schools. Mentioned in G. & C. Merriam's The Easy Primer (1833, 1836), below. The identity of "Davis" is unknown.

Abbott, J(acob) (1803-1879), The Little Philosopher, or Infant School at Home, published in or before 1833. The preface of G. and C. Merriam's The Easy Primer (1833, 1836) said that "to excite a love for school" teachers should suggest to every parent that he or she read The Little Philosopher, or Infant School at Home, by J. Abbott, Hall's Lectures on School Keeping and Davis' Manual for Teachers of Common Schools. Jacob Abbott also wrote the famous Rollo series of children's books as well as school histories. See references in Early American Textbooks for such books, but no reference is made there to Abbott's book which was cited as a teaching guide by G. and C. Merriam in 1833 in America. Nor is any reference made to Abbott's book, The Teacher, which was cited as an authority by Dunn in England in 1836. Yet these teacher's guides were apparently critically important in the history of education. On page 233 of Mary F. Thwaite's From Primer to Pleasure in Reading, she said Jacob Abbott eventually wrote 180 books. After teaching college and being head of a girls' school in Boston, she said Abbott devoted himself to the ministry and to his books for children. She said his earliest book was The Little Philosopher, The Infant School at Home, published in 1830. He later also wrote three books for the Tract Society, two of which he wrote jointly with his brother, John S. C. Abbott.

Taylor, J. Orville. The District School, New York, circa 1835. Taylor also briefly published a journal, Common School Assistant, from January, 1836, until at least February, 1839, which is of interest concerning that period in education.

Outline of a System of National Education. London, 1835. Mentioned on page 65 of Popular Education by Henry Dunn, 1836. Note the use of the term, "national" in connection with education, which use had first surfaced in 1763 with the proposal for "national" schools by Chalotais in France. The use of the term, "national" in connection with education increased in France after that and became common in France after the French Revolution in 1789.

Dwight, Theodore, Jr. The School-Master's Friend, with the Committee-Man's Guide, New York: Roe Lockwood, 1835. Endorses Code 1 reading. On page 51, the following appears:

"Learning to read without spelling. The University of France and the Deaf and Dumb Institution of Paris have adopted a system for teaching to read without spelling. This has been approved by some very good judges in that country...."

Dwight gave a garbled explanation of the “French” method, which apparently had some Pascal phonics, and then recommended teaching pure Code 1 sight words in English. Recommended American Annals of Education by W. C. Woodbridge, Boston, The District School by J. O. Taylor, New York, Hall’s Lectures to Schoolmasters, and The House I Live In by Dr. W. A. Alcott, Boston. These authors were all change-agents, and the change-agents often recommended each other’s works. Yet, as this list makes clear, almost the only works on elementary education being published at that time were such change-agent works, since the general public had an enormous disinterest in the topic. Dwight actually confirmed the public’s disinterest in this book. See the note in the text of this history concerning the “meaning” primer written by Dwight.

Pillans’ Three Lectures, 1836. Mentioned on page 50 of Dunn’s Popular Education, 1836. See comments of the Scottish Schoolmaster in this history concerning Professor Pillans’ 1827 remarks, and Pillans’ Letters to Kennedy, which were also mentioned on page 68 of Dunn’s Popular Education.

Abbott, Jacob, The Teacher, partly quoted on pages 2 and 3 of Popular Education by Henry Dunn of the British and Foreign School Society, 1836, published in a second edition by The Sunday-School Union, London, 1837.

Peabody, Elizabeth P. Record of a School, Boston: 1836, Second Edition. Reporting on A. Bronson Alcott’s school in the basement of Boston’s Masonic temple in which Peabody also taught. See elsewhere in this history concerning the fact that Alcott’s school eventually scandalized Boston and lost support because of Alcott’s teachings, although undoubtedly very tame by today’s standards, on the topic of sex.

The Schoolmaster, 2 vols., Knight, Ludgate Hill (England), before 1836. Mentioned on pages 70 and 71 of Popular Education by Henry Dunn, 1836. Contains American lectures, one by Thayer at the formation of the American Institute of Instruction in 1830. Dunn said Thayer, like Parkhurst in his book, The Teacher’s Guide, had said words:

“to be spelled should first be embodied in reading lessons, and afterwards arranged in columns; and both insist that the evidence of their being possessed by the pupil should in all cases be rendered in writing.”

Such silent written spelling which by its nature concentrated on word “meanings” was meant to replace the former very extensive oral drill which instead had concentrated on syllable “sounds” and their construction. Dunn quoted Thayer:

“It may be said, the eye remembers. It is more attentive than the ear. Its objects are not confused. It takes in a single and perfect image of what is placed before it, and transfers the picture to the mind.”

Such written spelling did not replace oral spelling until much later, but the effect was the same after about 1830. That was because the sound-bearing syllabary was no longer learned as a first step, and words were no longer spelled syllable by syllable.

In America, William Bentley Fowle, publisher and school book author, referred on the back cover of The Common School Speller (1842) to The School and Schoolmaster of Geo. B. Emerson and Dr. Potter, both Americans. That material presumably was unrelated to the British publication, The Schoolmaster.

Emerson, Geo. B. and Dr. Alonzo Potter - The School and Schoolmaster, 1849 or before - mentioned on back cover of Wm. B. Fowle’s Common School Speller, in which they recommended Fowle’s book. All were government-school activists.

Manual of the System of Primary Instruction, British and Foreign School Society. Mentioned on page 73 and elsewhere of Dunn's Popular Education (1836). Also see later entry, page 67 of 1886 Ontario catalog, listing third edition of National School Manual in 1858.

Dunn, Henry, Secretary to the British and Foreign School Society. Popular Education; or, The Normal School Manual, 1836. Second Edition, London: Published by The Sunday School Union, 1837. Dunn signed the preface to the second edition, "Borough Road, December, 1837," so he was apparently located at the Borough Road School, which he said on page 2 had trained four hundred and sixty instructors, presumably for the British and Foreign School Society schools. Borough Road apparently had a model school for children as well, to judge from the article from the Educational Magazine, mentioned below. Reading was taught by "meaning," not "sound."

Educational Magazine, mentioned in Popular Education, or The Normal School Manual, by Henry Dunn, Secretary to the British and Foreign School Society, London: 1836. See entry for Dunn's text. On page 84 of Dunn's text, he referred to a reprint in his Appendix of an article from that magazine, "A Day at the Borough Road School." On page 87, he referred to the Educational Magazine article (no date given), "Method of Teaching Mental Arithmetic."

Mann, Edwin John, The Deaf and Dumb, D. K. Hitchcock, Boston: 1836. Listed in Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, published by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Washington, D. C., 1985. PE 1126 (.D4) .M3

Gallaudet, Rev. Thomas Hopkins, Schoolmaster's Manual.

"...(Gallaudet) edited an American edition of Dunn's Principles of Teaching, a British work, which had done much good in that country, under the name of the Schoolmaster's Manual."

The quotation is from W. A. Alcott's Tall Oaks from Little Acorns, 1856, and it gave no date for Gallaudet's edition of the British text, which was most probably Dunn's 1836 Popular Education, or The Normal School Manual, and not a book called Principles of Teaching, on which I have found no record. As Alcott's book establishes, W. A. Alcott was a close friend of Gallaudet, so presumably Gallaudet was his source for the comment that Dunn's book "had done much good in that country." How could Gallaudet have known that Dunn's book "had done much good in that country" unless there were a trans-Atlantic clique of improvers who were able to communicate effectively through publications, personal letters, or visits? Alcott's cousin, Amos Bronson Alcott, made a kind of triumphal visit to England about 1840, even though he had shortly before fallen into disfavor with the Boston public, as mentioned in the entry above for Elizabeth Peabody. The trans-Atlantic lines of communication between educational reformers had obviously been in good working order for some time before Amos Bronson Alcott's visit about 1840.

American Common School Union, New York City. from March, 1837 and later. According to C. W. Bardeen in his 1893 paper given at the Chicago World Fair, mentioned elsewhere, the following books were listed in The Common School Assistant as being sold by the American Common School Union, New York City. That group had been founded by J. Orville Taylor, editor of The Common School Assistant (1836-1840):

Sigourney's Girl's Reading Book and Boy's Reading Book.  
Taylor's District School, on which Taylor had won a prize,  
Burton's District School As It Was,  
Wittich's Essay on the Method of Teaching in Prussian Schools

Lord Brougham On Education  
Prussian and New York School Systems Compared  
Satirical Hits on the People's Education

Todd, John, The Sunday School Teacher, "Pastor of the First Congregational Church, Philadelphia; Author of 'Lectures to Children,' 'The Student's Manual,' &c., With a Preface, and Edited by Henry Althas, of the Sunday School Union." Todd's book was so advertised as "Just Published," in Henry Dunn's Second Edition of Popular Education, published by the Sunday School Union, London, England, 1837.

Dunn, Henry, An Apology for the Bible in Schools for the Nation, with Remarks on Centralization, the Voluntary Societies, &c, &c, &c. Advertised as "shortly will be published" (1837?) in the back of the 1837 Second Edition of Dunn's Popular Education, published by The Sunday School Union, London. Note appeal to religion, which would have been widely acceptable in 1837, with only "afterthoughts" on "centralization." Yet centralization was a primary aim of the activists. Centralization was well under way by 1837, the independent Sunday schools having formed a "union" in both America and England. It should be noted that the biography of Keagy, a very important activist on both government schools and Code 1 reading, said Keagy had also worked with American Sunday schools. An American Sunday school text, referred to elsewhere in this history, had moved sharply toward meaning by 1826, at a time when such a move was almost unheard of. T. H. Gallaudet also wrote material for the Sunday school societies. Early American Textbooks shows on page 247 Gallaudet's The History of Jonah, New York: American Tract Society, no date, 156 pages, and Scripture Biography for the Young. New York, American Tract Society, 200 pages, published in 1896. Therefore Gallaudet, like Keagy, had a firm tie with the Sunday school groups, even though there is no record of his having published beginning reading materials for them specifically.

Bilby, T. and R. B. Ridgway. The Infant Teacher's Assistant, for the Use of Schools and Private Families, Ninth Edition, 1843, Published by R. B. Ridgway, Infant School Depot, 22, Chichester Place, Gray's Inn Road (England). Much flowery "piety," followed by total endorsement of pure Code 1 reading and the removal of little toddlers of two through five years old from their parents. One of the authors said he had been working in infant schools almost from their inception, which would be some time after 1818 in London. The Code 1 suggestions were contained in the chapter, "Elementary Reading," beginning on page 77, and subheaded, "As adopted at Hart Street Infant School, by R. B. Ridgway." According to their recommendations on organization, in a "school" containing 40 to over 200 little children, the toddlers were to be placed in strictly regimented small groups taught by "monitors" no older than themselves. If more than 80 children were enrolled, both a master and mistress were presumed to be needed. The authors opposed combining "the Infant and National Systems, thus spoiling both." This suggests that these organizations were firmly entrenched well before 1843, when the ninth edition of this book was published. The division between infant school and elementary school persists even today in the organization of English government schools, except that "infants" are not received until about four years old. Except for its highly successful public relations, the monitorial system was a monstrous failure even when used with older children, as the Scottish Schoolmaster made plain in his 1829 text. I photocopied portions of this text when I saw it in the Department of Education library in Washington, D. C., but, like some other important books there, it is not listed in Early American Textbooks. This ninth edition was dated 1843, but the date of the original edition is unknown.

Ellis, Alexander John - A Plea for Phonotypy and Phonography. Published in England, 1845. According to Mitford Mathews' discussion of Pitman print in Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, University of Chicago Press, 1966, pages 166-170, Ellis had met Isaac (later Sir Isaac) Pitman (1813-97) in 1843. Ellis was a wealthy and well-educated young man about Pitman's age. Ellis helped Pitman in his invention of a phonetic alphabet with a separate sign for each sound, and Pitman print was used in some

places in America and Great Britain to teach beginning reading for some years. The Initial Teaching Alphabet (ITA), based on that system, was widely used in America and Great Britain over a hundred years later, largely during the 1960's. Longley published American materials based on Pitman print in the mid-nineteenth century. See the Longley entries in Appendix B, and the body of this history concerning the use of Pitman print in America.

Goldsbury, John. Exercises and Illustrations on the Blackboard, 1847. Goldsbury referred to William Russell on page 133 and had joined with William Russell in writing the American Common School Reader and Speaker. Goldsbury's preface to this 1847 book quoted Horace Mann on the use of blackboards in Prussia and referred also to teachers' institutes, which were obviously firmly established by 1847. The use of blackboards in America spread after 1847.

Emerson, Rt. Rev. Geo. B. and Dr. Alonzo R. Potter - The School and Schoolmaster. Published in Boston in 1843 per Ontario listing later. This material was mentioned on the back cover of Wm. B. Fowle's Common School Speller, stating they had recommended Fowle's book.

Jacobs, J. A., Principal of the Kentucky Institution for the Education of Deaf-Mutes., Learning to Spell, to Read, to Write, and to Compose, - All at the Same Time, Part I., D. Appleton & Company, New York: 1861. (Copyrighted in 1859 by Jacobs.) To a large degree, this book used portions of the systematic syllable and spelling book "sound" methods to teach deaf-mutes to learn to read and write (even though Jacob's pupils were mute and had not been taught to speak). Jacobs did not seem to realize he was using some "sound" methods to teach reading and writing but claimed correctly that his methods were also more desirable for teaching hearing children to read and write than the current ones. His book was among those advertised in the back of Appleton's copy of James Johonnot's The Sentence and Word Book, directly under their advertisement for the heavily revised edition of Webster's speller, so Jacobs' book had remained in print for at least twenty-four years. It should be remembered, however, that in 1885 Appleton's phony phonics series was probably the best-selling series in America.

Wilbur, H. B., M. D. Suggestions on the Principles and Methods of Elementary Instruction, Published by J. Munsell, Albany: 1862. The copy in the Harvard library is inscribed, "1863, April 6, Gift of Thomas Hill, Pres. Harv. Coll. (1843)." President Hill had graduated from Harvard in 1843. The author was the principal of The New York State Asylum for Idiots. With excellent supporting reasons, he condemned "object teaching" as practiced in England and America. He also condemned the object-teaching enthusiasts' version of phonics, which was indeed defective, but unfortunately he effectively endorsed what is Code 3 sight-word reading.

Leigh, Edwin, Dr. (1815-1890) Pronouncing Orthography, St. Louis, 1864. According to Mitford Mathews in Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, University of Chicago Press, 1966, page 170, this was an eight-page pamphlet describing Leigh's method of marking letters and silent letters to show word pronunciations. Most primary reading series had editions in Leigh pronouncing print by 1873, and it was an enormous success until suddenly being extinguished through the influence of the Boston/Quincy change-agents and "philosophers" who endorsed "meaning," not "sound," in beginning reading. The most obvious anti-Leigh-print vehicles were the 1873 NEA report mentioned below, and the enormously used, non-Leigh-print 1878 Appleton series. The widely used Appleton series on which William Torrey Harris was the principal author, published in 1878, apparently was almost the first new series in years to omit an edition in Leigh print. (Sheldon's 1875 series which used highly inadequate phonics, published by Scribner, had apparently omitted a Leigh edition, but it was never remotely so influential as the Appleton series.) It is not surprising that the "philosopher" Harris established a "philosophical" center not far from Boston and Quincy in 1880, after he resigned (?) as Superintendent in St. Louis, which, unlike other cities, went right on using Leigh print, not only after 1873, but for years after 1880.

Harris's 1878 Appleton series had an enormous and widespread use all over the United States. Vail said in his history of the McGuffey readers that Harris's Appleton series and Vail's 1879 McGuffey's series, which used Leigh-like markings to show pronunciations, fought to a draw in a textbook war, which war was apparently only in the Midwest. It was Appleton's 1878 series almost blanketing America for a few years after 1878 which was probably most effective in killing off the use of Leigh print, after the publication of Farnham's anti-phonetic 1873 article, mentioned below. That it was the Appleton series which largely succeeded in replacing Leigh materials hardly seems accidental, since the Appleton's series omission of a Leigh-print edition was obviously quite deliberate.

An article by the well-known Leigh, entitled "Pronouncing Orthography," appeared on pages 207-219 of the NEA Report, 1873, immediately after an article by the little known Farnham on his new "sentence" method of teaching reading, discussed at length in this history. As also discussed elsewhere, the placement of the anti-phonics Farnham article, with its specious reasoning, directly before the Leigh article, was most probably quite deliberate. It was almost immediately after the publication of that NEA Report that Leigh print went out of general use.

However, in Leigh's plea for the widespread use of Leigh print in first grades, because with it children could become independent readers before the end of one year in school, Leigh said:

"...we have our children in school but very few years, few of them more than four or five years, half of them only three years, one third of them only two years; and in this time, with our old books and methods, they have been able only to read through two or three primary readers in children's language; and this third or half of our children leave school unable to read understandingly an article in the morning newspaper. At the news-boys' lodging-houses in New York, twenty children in every hundred report themselves unable to read; though most of them have attended school two years or more; and many - perhaps another twenty, - who say they can read, are found, on trial, to be unable to read easily or well enough to make use of this art, and confess that they do not and can not read the daily papers. The facts are substantially the same, though in varying degrees, with the 20,000 children who annually go out of the New-York public schools to various employment, to earn a few dollars a week by making plows, or boxes, or as errand or cash boys, or to help mother at home, etc., etc. They have not yet learned to read well enough to be actual readers. Try it with any class in the second or third reader, in the second or third primary years.... One-half or one-third of our children remain at school only three years or less, and in that time do not learn to read well enough to become actual readers of the daily papers...."

This comment appeared after Leigh's speech: "The subject was further discussed by Dr. Adolf Douai, of New Jersey; W. N. Barringer of Newark, N. J.; Mrs. A. J. Rickoff, of Ohio; Charles O. Hurlbut, of N. J.; E. A. Sheldon, N. Y.; Mr. Ross, N. Y.; C. Goodwin Clark, Mass.; and Messrs. Freeborn and Abbott, N. Y." Mrs. A. J. Rickoff of Ohio was presumably Mrs. Rebecca Rickoff who shortly after wrote the phony phonics Appleton "meaning" charts, demonstrating that she was a highly active opponent of Leigh print. Two of the three authors of the 1878 Appleton series were Superintendent A. J. Rickoff of Cleveland and Superintendent Harris of St. Louis. (The third was Mark Bailey of Yale.) St. Louis had used Leigh print since 1866, and continued to do so after Harris resigned (was fired?) in 1880. Leigh's 1873 remarks concerning illiteracy in the United States were later paraphrased by Ferdinand Buisson of France in his report on the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition.

In Leigh's 1873 NEA speech, he made a further very interesting comment:

"The Latin scholar finds that the very meaning of the words depend upon the spelling, even down to the minutest details.... he can not study or read his Latin without noticing every letter in

very word. He acquires this habit. He carries it with him in all his English reading, and it has been noticed that, as a general rule, Latin and Greek scholars become the best spellers in English. Dr. Geo. B. Emerson had some remarkable facts of this class come under his notice when he began to teach in Boston, many years ago. All his best spellers (save one who was superior in every thing), were from the Latin school, where they had had no lessons in English spelling; and all his poorest spellers were from the English high school, where they had had daily lessons from the English spelling-book. He first pointed out to me this relation between the study of Latin and good English spelling, and he predicted in 1865 that this very same result would come from the use of the pronouncing orthography. The reports of the actual results have verified his prediction.”

Of course, Emerson’s remarks further confirmed that poor spelling had been the result in Boston when the “meaning” method had been adopted.

Wickersham, James Pyle, A. M., Principal of the Pennsylvania State Normal School, Millersville, Pennsylvania - *Methods of Instruction, That Part of the Philosophy of Education which Treats of the Nature of the Several Branches of Knowledge and the Methods of Teaching Them According to that Nature*. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1865. (Copy in the Library of Congress). Extensively describes 1865 methods of teaching reading. Wickersham was a highly respected authority, apparently with good reason, to judge from the quality of this book. The “word” method or the ABC-“word” method was in almost total use in 1865, and the use of phonic methods extremely rare.

From the 1870’s to about 1920 Excellent late nineteenth century references are educational journals such as the *School Bulletin of Syracuse*, New York, the *New York School Journal* published in New York City, and the *Primary Teacher* published in Boston.

Martin, Mrs. A. C. *What Shall We Attempt in Elementary Schools?*. Harvard copy of an 1874 speech which demonstrated many contemporary attitudes concerning “improvements.”

Kiddle, Henry, City Superintendent of Public Instruction, New York City; N. A. Calkins, First Assistant Superintendent of Primary Schools in New York City; and a New York City superintendent named Harrison: *How to Teach*, “A manual of methods for a graded course of instruction.” 269 pages, J. W. Schermerhorn & Co., New York. Listed in *The School Bulletin*, September, 1874, page 5. “This volume contains essentially the course of study pursued in the schools of New York city, given in minute detail.... We know of no single work corresponding with it in practical value.”

Calkins, N. A. *How to Teach Phonics*. Chicago: Beckley-Cardy Co., n. d., 80 p. PE 1120 .C3 (From other sources, this can be dated to about 1870 or 1880 and may originally have been a portion of the book mentioned above. Calkins of the New York City primary schools did not endorse real phonics.)

Hall, G. Stanley. *How to Teach Reading and What to Read in School*, Monographs of Education No. 4, Heath, 1886. Hall’s book, without the “Monographs” title, was shown by E. B. Huey as 1874 in Huey’s 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*. Heath’s 1886 edition may have been a reprinting of an 1874 original. Note Hall’s use of the term, “How to,” as in the New York City material by Kiddle, Calkins and Harrison, above, which was mentioned in 1874 in *The School Bulletin*. The New York schools’ material may well have come out before 1874. Hall may have been emulating the New York group, since the use of “how to” occurs nowhere else before 1874 in the titles in this Appendix D except for John Brinsley in 1612. However, the “how-to” usage in titles concerning reading is common after 1874, the probable date for Hall’s book, as the use of the search key on this software can demonstrate.

Sheldon, E. A. Ph. D., Principal of Oswego State Normal and Training School, Author of “Sheldon’s Readers,” “Elementary Instruction,” and “Lessons on Objects,” and E. Hubbard Barlow, A. M., Professor

of Rhetoric and Elocution in Lafayette College, Easton, Pa. Teachers' Manual of Instruction in Reading; Designed to Accompany Sheldon's Readers. New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Company, 1875. Sheldon, whose own "phonics" was perhaps a Code 3, described 1875 methods of teaching reading in this manual. His comments provide an unimpeachable source confirming that sight-words were and had been the norm in teaching in America. Sheldon was famous as a promoter of "object lessons." Apparently, his 1875 edition did not include a Leigh-print version, and it was the first major reading series in years to omit such a version. That was the probable result of Farnham's 1873 NEA paper promoting the sentence method and implicitly rejecting real phonics. Sheldon certainly knew of the sentence method that Farnham introduced in 1873 when Sheldon wrote this 1875 series, as he specifically referred to its use. Appleton's, which was far more influential than Sheldon's, omitted a Leigh-print version when it was published three years later, in 1878. That probably dealt a death-blow to the use of Leigh pronouncing print which had been so astonishingly successful in teaching beginners to read before Farnham's 1873 NEA paper was published. (Copy of Sheldon's Manual at the Library of Congress.)

Boston Schools, (June?) 1878: Outline Course of Study - Primary Schools; Suggestions Accompanying the Course of Study for Grammar and Primary Schools; Both Prepared by Board of Supervisors. Apparently attached to School Document No. 16, Superintendent's Report, September, 1878. Endorsed the "meaning" method for beginners. This implicitly outlawed the use of Leigh phonetic pronouncing print in Boston first grades. Leigh print had been voluntarily adopted by almost all Boston schools by March, 1878, and had been extraordinarily successful before this curriculum guide was published, probably only about three months after Boston Superintendent Philbrick, who had moved Leigh print into the Boston schools, was fired in March, 1878. As noted elsewhere in this history, the complaint was made by the heads of individual schools in Boston a few years later that many of their record books and other materials had disappeared over the summer vacation of 1878. The materials that disappeared over the summer of 1878 presumably included the records on the successful use of Leigh print before March, 1878, and very probably the Leigh-print versions of reading books for the first grades which had been used until 1878. Without Leigh-print books available in September, 1878, first-grade teachers would no longer have been able to teach children to read by Leigh phonics. As discussed elsewhere, non-Leigh print Franklin primers had been, very strangely, published by the private press used by Harvard the previous year, 1877, and not by the normal publisher of the Franklin primers. Leigh print had been almost uniformly used in Boston in 1877, and there had been in 1877 no apparent need in the Boston area for the non-Leigh print primers being published by the privately owned press used by Harvard. It seems only reasonable to assume that unnamed persons had arranged to have the non-Leigh-print Franklin copies surreptitiously printed and stockpiled in 1877. They would then have been available to move into the schools in September, 1878, when Leigh print had been effectively outlawed and when the previous Leigh-print copies had been quietly removed over the summer of 1878

Johonnot, James. Principles and Practice of Teaching, D. Appleton and Company, 1878. See the text of this history concerning Johonnot's comments on Agassiz. In 1885, Johonnot wrote The Sentence and Word Book, reported later, a total endorsement of pure "meaning" in beginning reading.

Greene, S. S., L.L.D., and F. B. Greene, A. M. First Steps in Written Language, Numbers 1 - 6, Woolworth & Company, Publishers, 76 Duane Street, New York: 1879. This is not the F. W. Woolworth Company of the chain stores. Nor can this S. S. Greene be the same S. S. Greene who wrote the pro-"sound" article, "Methods of Teaching to Read" published in the American Institute of Instruction volume for 1844, which material is reproduced in Samuel Blumenfeld's book, The New Illiterates. In 1844, that Greene was principal of the Phillips Grammar School in Boston. The Samuel S. Greene who was co-author of this material is apparently the same man who was an author of grammar books published by Thomas, Cowperthwait of Philadelphia. He is also apparently the Samuel S. Greene who was listed as Late Superintendent of Public Schools of Providence and Professor of the Normal Department of Brown University, in connection with a letter he wrote on December 21, 1857, endorsing



the Hillard readers. That letter was included in the publisher's brochure, *Truth Vindicated*, available at the Harvard library. He was also the S. S. Greene who gave a lukewarm endorsement of Leigh print on an 1866 edition of Hillard's *Primer*. His endorsement appeared with others from notables, and he was listed as President of the National Teachers Association (now NEA). On page 452 of *Teaching Reading*, by Walcutt-Lamport-McCracken, Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974, the Greene who wrote the 1844 article is identified as the principal of Phillips Grammar School, and "later a professor at Brown University." The authors of that 1974 book obviously mixed up their "Greenes." It is totally inconceivable, from the content of the 1844 article, in comparison to the content of S. S. Greene's writings on reading in *The Primary Teacher* and in the materials described below, that the 1844 pro-"sound" S. S. Greene and the 1879 pro-"meaning" S. S. Greene could be one and the same man. After all, Samuel Greene, with or without the "e" on Green, was a very common New England name. At the very least, if the author of the 1857 letter who was with Brown University at the time was the same Greene who wrote the 1844 article, as the Walcutt-Lamport-McCracken material claims, then he could not have been the Greene who was the author of the material described below.

Copies are in the Harvard library of the pamphlets, *First Steps in Written Language*, Numbers 1 - 6, which were the "Language" part of Woolworth's Popular Educational Series, which also included *Penmanship*, "Spelling" and "Drawing" sections. The back cover of Number 5 of *First Steps in Written Language* said of the Popular Educational Series, "The Series of School Books just issued under this title comprises a full course of study in the branches enumerated.... The books are based upon the latest and most improved methods of instruction. The best available talent has been employed in... the work...." The paper-bound booklets of workbook pages on written language included a teacher's guide for teaching beginning reading and beginning writing by the sentence method, pure "meaning," avoiding at first the teaching even of the alphabet.

S. S. Greene also wrote articles for *The Primary Teacher*, Boston, in 1878. It had started publication in 1877. His articles were flowery endorsements of teaching beginning reading with the sentence method and what he called "written language." Beginning students copied words and sentences in connected script form without even being able to name their letters. These were the "latest and most improved methods of instruction" in 1879, and had obviously originated in 1875 in Parker's Quincy. Some comments from booklets 5 and 2 of *First Steps in Written Language* are:

"Design of the Series. Language is the medium through which we express our thoughts.... To teach a child 'to talk on paper' is the design of this series; and these books, by easy and natural steps, furnish the means for accomplishing this result. The work in the lower numbers (1 and 2) is to be largely imitation. Simple idiomatic forms in carefully engraved script, are found at the top of each page. These the pupil is to copy...."

"The child should attend to nothing but ideas and signs of ideas. To make a word does, in fact, spell it, for the letters are actually put together in the right order; but he should do all this now unwittingly, just as he takes hundreds of steps in a brisk play without knowing it, so intent is his mind upon the game... He next spells or constructs idioms, and thereby produces customary forms. Two or three words together - See the cat, for example - are written and read as the formula for the thought.... To attend to the parts either of the word or idiom at present would be most unwise, since it would draw off attention from the significance of language to its mere mechanism. To begin with language as a system of orthography or phonetics, except as these are implicitly involved in its significant forms, would be to turn away from its simple and natural use, to an abstract and difficult philosophy for which the mere child has not aptitude. This procedure is wholly uncalled for, since the avowed end of teaching spelling, reading, and construction, is better secured by the indirect and unconscious method which nature pursues than by any scientific process...."

The “meaning” approach in the teaching of beginning reading, recommended by the Greenes, above, in 1879 and ever since the early nineteenth century, is constantly being recycled as “the latest and most improved means of instruction.” For instance, in The New York Times on page 18 of Section 4A, “Education Life,” an article appeared which was entitled “The Flowering of Innovation.” The article describing work by Gay Su Pinnell, education professor, Ohio State University, and others, appeared on November 3, 1991, 112 years after the Greenes wrote the above nonsense. The “innovation” in the so-called Reading Recovery Program from New Zealand was supposed to be revolutionary. Yet there is hardly anything revolutionary in its recommendation, as stated in The New York Times, that “reading should be taught in whole ideas rather than simply in words.” The Greenes in 1879 would have felt right at home with the “innovation” of the Reading Recovery Program. What the Times article failed to mention but appears in other reports, however, is that the Reading Recovery Program does add a convoluted variety of “phonics” to its doses of “meaning.” Yet the Greenes would eventually have gotten around to doing that also, with two-step, whole-word phony phonics.

The article stated that, in recent years, 13 American universities have set up teacher training centers for the Reading Recovery Program in which children are tutored individually. The program is meant for the bottom twenty per cent of first-grade classes, the ones who are the most likely to fail. Yet no “training centers for teachers interested in the approach” were ever established at universities across the United States after Rudolf Flesch wrote his blistering books in 1955 and 1981 recommending phonic “sound” in beginning reading. This is not surprising since our anti-intellectual “universities” only have room for “approved” thinking such as that of the so-called Reading Recovery Program (if, indeed, such lock-step parroting of approved themes can even be called thinking).

Rhode Island Institute of Instruction. Three papers on reading and Eng. lit. in schools. 1880. 25 cents. Inst. Instr. (Mentioned in Leypoldt’s American Catalogue for 1876 to 1885.)

Farnham, G. L. Sentence Method of Teaching Reading. (1881) 50 cents. Bardeen. See the text for history on Farnham. The 1895-1900 American Catalogue listed the “New 3d ed. ‘95.” It had obviously sold well from 1881 to 1894 or it would not have had a third edition by 1895. The “sentence method” was entrenched in American schools long before 1895, despite Nila Banton Smith’s dating the widespread use of the sentence method far later.

Parker, Francis W. Tracts for Teachers. No. 1. Spelling. “Sold by Willard Small, Boston.” 1882. An important source document, which totally endorses “meaning” in the teaching of spelling.

March, Professor Francis A. - March’s A-B-C Book, Ginn, Heath & Co., Boston - Listed in Primary Teacher, page 262 (February?) 1882, in a list of “Method Manuals.” No other information is available on it. After a reported fifty years at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, Professor Francis A. March took over the direction of the work on both sides of the Atlantic on the Oxford English Dictionary. March had reportedly originally come from New England, had studied under Noah Webster, and returned to Massachusetts to work on the Oxford English Dictionary.

Documents of the School Committee of the City of Boston for the Year 1883; School Document No. 1 - 1883. Method of Teaching Reading in the Primary Schools, Prepared by the Board of Supervisors for the Public Schools of Boston. This important material is discussed in this history. It endorses Code 3 phony phonics while outlawing true phonics.

Le Row, C. B. How To Teach Reading. 1884. 12 cents. Clark & Maynard. Mentioned in Leypoldt’s American Catalogue for 1876 to 1885. In 1912 United States Catalog, still being published by C. E. Merrill and sold for 12 cents. 1912 catalog shows author also wrote Well Planned Course in Reading,

1901, still being published by Hinds for \$1. The 1890-1895 American Catalog listed under “Speakers” that C. B. Le Row had written Werner’s Readings and Recitations, No. 10, America’s Recitation Book, in 1893, sold by the Werner company for 60 cents and 35 cents, as one of their series. Presumably the same company published the sight word The Werner Primer by F. Lillian Taylor in 1895, discussed in Appendix C.

Johonnot, James. The Sentence and Word Book, A Guide to Writing, Spelling and Composition by the Word and Sentence Methods. On Title Page: “The letter killeth; but the spirit giveth life.” New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1885. On page 3: “To the end that all words may be associated with the ideas which they represent, the plan adopted is as follows: I. The words are all used in sentences, or are so arranged that they may be put into sentences by simple substitution....” On page 6: “...the object of this book is to render the acquisition of language, on the part of the pupil as nearly unconscious as possible....” See my previous text for Johonnot’s ties to movers-and-shakers.

Johonnot’s book is the purest Code 1 material. Therefore, his pious quoting from the Bible is jarring, because so many of the people pushing government schools, and such Code 1 “meaning” in teaching beginning reading, have been opposed to traditional religions. It is a curious fact that so many of these nineteenth-century government-school activists and “meaning-method” reading instruction activists appear to have been agnostics, atheists or pantheists at the same time that the vast majority of American and British people, whom they were trying to influence, were believing Christians or Jews.

Humphrey, James - Manual of Reading, for Use in Normal Classes, Wayland, Mich.: The Author, 1885 - 80 pages DE 1117.A24.H8, in the U. S. Dept. of Education Library.

Bailey, Mark - The Essentials of Reading. New York: Taintor Bros., 1887. 61 p. PE 1121 .B3. Bailey, a professor of elocution at Yale, was one of the authors on the Appleton 1878 readers and also worked earlier on the Hillard readers, and possibly on the Franklin Hillard. Until about 1887 or shortly before, Taintor (and Sherwood of Chicago) had been publishing the Franklin Hillard and the earlier Hillard readers. The above book by Bailey possibly only concerns elocution.

Hall, I. Freeman. Riverside Manual for Teachers, Suggestions leading to Primary Reading. 1890. Houghton, Mifflin, Boston. Listed on page 172 of 1885-1890 American Catalogue. Harvard has an 1898 copy giving an original date of 1891. This has been discussed in this history.

Hussey, M. S. - Helps in Teaching Reading, Lothrop, 1891, 75c. Listed in the 1890-1895 American Catalogue.

Spears, M. A. and Augsburg - Preparing to Read, or the Beginning of School Life, N. E. Pub., 50 cents. Listed in the 1890-1895 American Catalogue. Also in Early American Textbooks, p. 73, New England Publishing Co., Boston and Chicago, 1891. E. B. Huey’s 1908 book, The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading, lists Spears and Augsburg as the authors, and the publishing date as 1892. Huey describes the material on page 319 and lists it on page 442.

Coleman, Florence Cromer. Stanford University, California. Pages from My Note Book. A Treatise on Primary Education for Parents and Teachers. Press of the Pomona Times, Pomona, California, 1900. Harvard copy. Razor-work had removed adjacent parts of pages 5, 6, 7 and 8, apparently aimed at that section running from pages 6 to 7. Such careful censoring, leaving blank margins after removing printed centers, most naturally arouses any reader’s curiosity! Also in the Harvard library, I saw razor-work on most of a back cover, leaving the margin, of a September, 1914, reprint of the Primer of The Horace Mann Readers. Presumably it would have concerned state adoption information, as that sometimes appeared on back covers. The copy of that Horace Mann Reader with Harvard’s call number EducT 759

14 453, had puzzling gift dates. On the inside cover was a Ginn and Company book plate sticker, indicating that it had been in the Ginn library, and under it in words which had been type-set, was printed, "Harvard College Library - The Gift of Ginn and Company, December 26, 1923." Yet the actual ink-pad stamp which Harvard customarily put in, on the copyright page, read "Harvard College Library, Gift of Ginn & Co. Dec 11 1930." Apparently the type-set notation on the inside cover had been made by Ginn in 1923, but either Ginn curiously did not send the book to Harvard for another seven years, or the book remained unfiled by Harvard for another seven years. I also saw razor-work on the centers of some pages, leaving the margins, of an 1870's Quincy school committee report in the Harvard library. I have also seen razor-work removing pages on some New York Library materials, and have always felt the same curiosity. What was on those pages that someone had carried a razor in with them to remove? A pen knife does not cut like a razor, so the visitor had to have had such a razor with him (or her) when they came into the library, and isn't THAT curious?

In the eight-line Preface on page 4, Coleman said she had taught in the primary grades ten years. Only a four-page chapter in the 48-page book was given to "Language - Reading and Spelling," but eight pages to "Language - Nature Work." She recommended Farnham's book on the sentence method, but then the later use of heavy, real supplemental phonics, confirming the move to real but supplementary phonics in classrooms about 1900.

Clark, Professor S. H. How to Teach Reading in the Public Schools, 1908, Scott, Foresman and Company, referred to in "Introduction," page 9, of Scott, Foresman and Company's 1909 Book Four, Elson Grammar School Readers, by William H. Elson (1856-1935), Superintendent of Schools, Cleveland, Ohio and Christine Keck, Principal of Sigsbee School, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The 1909 Elson Primary School Readers and Elson Grammar School Readers were followed by a 1915 edition with Lura K. Runkel, and were the forerunners of Scott, Foresman's William Scott Gray deaf-mute-method readers of 1930. Clark's 1908 book was listed as in print in both the 1912 and 1928 United States Catalogs, and is shown again below under those headings. Clark's 1909 book was still published by Scott, Foresman in 1928, according to the United States Catalog, and Row was publishing in 1928 Professor S. H. Clark's 1915 book, Interpretation of the Printed Page.

Taylor, Joseph S. District Superintendent of Schools, New York, New York. Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1912. This is invaluable concerning "expert" thinking of that period. On page 170, Taylor reported on a study of the number of words taught in first grade. The New York City syllabus required 300 in the first term and at least 300 more in the second term, but Taylor said:

"This study [for the first grade by 1912] shows the following results: the average number of words taught during the first half-year in 23 schools is 520; the average number during the second half is 1100. These schools therefore are doing much more than is demanded of them. The range of words is from 300 to 1575 for the first term, and from 350 to 2368 for the second term. For the entire year the average is 1620; the range is from 650 to 3556. The schools are therefore teaching nearly three times as many words as the syllabus requires...."

Vocabulary control had largely ceased after the arrival of supplementary phonics in the early 1900's, as the above figures for the first grade make very clear. However, as N. B. Smith also made very clear, vocabulary was drastically reduced again in the late 1920's, with the return of heavy sight-word teaching. Instead of the 1912 first half-year range for New York City of 300 to 1575, averaging 520, Smith reported that the range in 1922 for nine of twelve primers or first readers (the books usually used in the first half year) was 377 to 630. In 1931, the highest of seven was 333, and the lowest 274. The first half-year average for New York City of 520 in 1912 can be compared to a beginning book average of 274 to 333 in 1931, presumably averaging about 300. The first-half-year vocabulary had therefore been almost cut in

half by “experts,” but that unbelievable reduction had been successfully sold to incompetent school administrators as an “improvement.”

On page 172 of his 1912 book, Taylor said New York City had a list of approved books and supplies from which principals could choose. Rebecca Pollard’s phonic materials almost certainly did not make that approved list, but at least Ward’s phonic materials did. Taylor called this list of “approved” reading books for each grade an “open list.” However, that it must have been very “closed” is suggested by comparing the few books Taylor listed below as a partial list of those in actual use in the New York City schools to the 1912 United States Catalog’s four long pages of different regular and supplementary readers plus almost a full page of primers. Yet Taylor said on page 173, “With an open book list, one would naturally expect to find great variety in the choice of books. The following partial list of readers used in the several grades by the schools of [New York City] shows that such expectation is fully realized. No class is limited to a single reader. The number of books read in each half-year grade during the first three years averages about three per class, and ranges from two to six.” In his 1912 book, Taylor showed the following books in actual use in New York City for the First Year and Second Year, although he did say it was only a partial list:

“First Year - Ward’s Primer and First; Jones’s First; Aldine Primer and First; Cyr’s Primer and First; Baldwin’s First; Culture Readers, I (Miss Merrill); Finger Play Reader, I (Davis and Julien); New Education, First; Graded Literature, I; The McCloskey Primer; Stepping Stones, I; Child Life, I (Blaisdell); Lansing’s Rhymes and Stories; Folk Lore Stories and Proverbs (Wiltse); Eugene Field Reader; Pathways in Nature and Literature; Summer’s Primer; Progressive Road, I (Ettinger); Horace Mann, First; Art and Life Primer (Jacobs).

“Second Year - Ward’s Second and Third; Heath’s Second; Fables and Rhymes for Beginners; Pets and Companions; Brumbaugh’s Second; Blaisdell’s Child Life, II; Wilson’s Nature Study in Elementary Schools; Wade and Sylvester, II; Wake Robin, I; Baker and Carpenter’s Second; Cyr’s Graded Art Reader; Baldwin’s Second; New Education, Second; Culture, Second; Graded Literature, Second; Cyr’s Second; Grimm’s Fairy Tales; Book of Plays for Little Actors; In Mythland; Reynard the Fox, Aldine, Second”.

The materials shown above are all listed in Appendix C, except for Grimm’s Fairy Tales; Book of Play for Little Actors; and In Mythland. They were obviously supplementary readers, but no publishing data is available on those editions. Reynard the Fox listed above for second grade may or may not be part of the 1906 First Reader: Puss in Boots, Reynard the Fox, by M. L. Pratt Chadwick and published by “Educational Pub.”, listed in the 1912 United States Catalog. Of course, Reynard, the Fox, is a centuries-old folk tale, which was probably already centuries-old when it was first printed in English by Caxton in 1481 as *The Historye of Reynart the Foxe*.

Zirbes, Laura, Investigator in Reading, and Katherine Keelor and Pauline Miner, Cooperating Teachers, Practice Exercises and Checks on Silent Reading in the Primary Grades, Report of Experimentation, The Lincoln School of Teachers College, New York City: 1925. The Lincoln School is where Nelson Rockefeller and his brother acquired their “dyslexia.” Zirbes opened this booklet with the sentence:

“Due to an unusual combination of adverse circumstances the second grade of the school year 1920-1921 contained a large number of pupils who did not seem to be progressing satisfactorily in reading.”

On page 7 she said:

“All pupils were tested by means of the Gray Oral Test. Those who read less than one word per minute or failed to score on the third paragraph of the Gray Test were separated from those who did better.”

Did better?!! Normal speech is about 140 words a minute, which puts her “one word per minute” into the proper focus. It hardly qualifies as doing “better.” It is, instead, appalling failure. One of Gray’s earlier third test paragraphs is quoted elsewhere in this history, in Part 7. To fail to score at all on such a paragraph would be quite remarkable, and the probability is that Gray’s final third paragraph in 1921 was far easier than the third paragraph quoted in Part 7.

In her article, Zirbes listed some of the readers being used in the Lincoln School at second grade by 1922, as well as some first grade readers in use there. That list is historically of interest. However, she mentioned elsewhere in her 1925 article that the Lincoln School also used the Bolenius (Houghton, Mifflin) readers by 1922, but they are not included on this list. All of those given below are included in Appendix C of this history. Zirbes herself wrote a reader in 1925, listed in the 1928 United States Catalog, which was apparently not a beginning book. It was entitled Farm Book with Teacher’s Edition; and it also had a separate Teacher’s Edition, published by Teachers College Press.

“Elson Second Reader, Progressive Road to Reading II, Young and Field Second Reader, Merrill Second Reader, Winston Second Reader, Summers Second Reader, Story Hour Reader, Howe Second Reader, Riverside Second Reader, Child Classics Second Reader.”

For “Group work with less able readers,” obviously the first-grade level, Zirbes listed:

“Winston Primer, Free and Treadwell Primer, Winston First Reader, Free and Treadwell First Reader.”

Zirbes, Laura - Comparative Studies of Current Practice in Reading, With Techniques for the Improvement of Teaching, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City: 1928. This was Zirbes’ Ph. D. dissertation, a copy of which is in the University of Chicago Library and is undoubtedly in many other libraries. It described some specific classroom lessons given at that time. Many were very bad lessons because they focused on teaching decoding by “meaning” instead of by “sound.” It is Zirbes’ report on an actual “experience chart” lesson (pages 124-127) and its follow-up that is historically of use. Her 1928 description can be matched to the 1897 experience chart story from Colonel Parker’s Chicago school, covered by E. B. Huey on pages 297-300 of *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* (1908). Huey got the information from Miss Flora Cooke’s articles in the *Elementary School Teacher* of October, 1900, and April, 1904. Both the 1897 and 1928 materials can be compared to Decroly’s and Freinet’s European approaches. Decroly’s use of experience charts after 1900 was very probably inspired by probable reports from European visitors to Parker’s Chicago school during the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893.

English, Gladys, Chairman. [and Marion Horton] “Z 5817. A52 American Library Association - Section for Library Work with Children, Committee on Readers and Primers. Easy Reading Books of the reader and primer type and readers for the first 3 grades; a selection for libraries and schools prepared by the Committee on Readers and Primers, Section for Library Work With Children, ALA Section, American Library Association, 1933.... 8 p. on fold. sheet, 23 x 9 1/2 cm. Based on the list published in the ALA Catalog 1926-31 which was compiled by Marion Horton. 1. Readers and Publishers(?), 1870 - Bibl. 2. Primers - 1870 - Bibl. I. English, Gladys IJA(?). M CAT (in purple ink). Library of Congress Z5817.A52 34-19524 C1637 2K [3]”

This was a card in the catalog at the Library of Congress in October, 1981. I later tried to obtain these materials there but was not successful. They might be of real interest if they could be located, considering the dates (1931 for Marion Horton and 1933 for Gladys English) and the nature of the materials, and the fact that the American Library Association was on J. McKeen Cattell's proposed organization, discussed at the end of this bibliography. What was apparently the same material or an earlier version was listed with a 1929 date in The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932, and it is also shown at the end of this bibliography.

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### 1886 Ontario, Canada, Library Catalog

A very interesting and reliable source for the names of actual texts on education in the nineteenth century is a catalog from a Canadian library in 1886, a copy of which is presently in the New York Public Library under call number SSD p.1.57. Although, presumably, many of the books listed may now be scattered, the catalog itself remains as a fascinating list of the kind of reading being done by "educators" before 1886. Although the catalog is very long because the collection was very large, a few titles of particular interest are given below, many of which probably touch on the teaching of reading:

#### Catalog of the Books Relating to Education and Educational Subjects in the Library of the Educational Department for Ontario, Toronto, 1886

p. 7 Bell, Alex. Melville. On Teaching Reading in Public Schools, Brantford, 1879. Henderson

Birkbeck, Geo. Pioneer of English Popular Education. "See Godard, J. G. Title: Geo. Birkbeck, Pioneer... London, 1884, Bemrose"

p. 20 Under Ed. England, - Handbook to the Borough Road Schools.

p. 34 Gall, James Practical Inquiry into the Philos. of Ed., Edinburgh, 1840, Gall

Wyse, Thos. Educa. Reform, or the Necessity of National Ed., England, 1836, London, Longmans

p. 42 Infant School System. Wm. Russell. "See Am. Inst. 1830"

Iowa School Laws of 1873

Lotze, Herman - Outlines of Psychology. Under the entry, "Psych.and Ed.," it also listed works by Spencer of England, and Hailman in the United States who worked to found kindergartens. Lotze was the German psychologist with whom Cattell originally meant to study but Lotze died and Cattell went on to study under Wundt.

p. 58 Oberlin's Infant Schools. "See Gill, John, London 1875, Art of Teaching to Observe and Think"

Owen, Hugh. Elem. Ed. Acts, 1870-1880, London, 1884, Knight.

p. 60 Packer, Thomas - Teaching Reading (National Method of), Kingston, 1883, Smith. [This would concern the British government-supported church schools.]

p. 63 Pillans, Jas. Contributions to the Cause of Education, London, n.d.

p. 64 Potter, Alonzo R., Rt. Rev. Dr. and Emerson, Geo. B. School and the Schoolmaster, Boston, 1843 (See earlier listing on this material.)

Read, Methods of Teaching to, by Greene, S. S. "See Amer. Inst. 1844." [Refer to Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates for text. From the pro-"sound" content of this material, the "S. S. Greene" of 1844 cannot be the same S. S. Greene who wrote pro-"meaning" materials for The Primary Teacher in 1878, referred to previously. Samuel Greene appears to have been a common New England name.]

Reading, by Pierce, C. "See Am. Inst. 1843" Refer to Blumenfeld's The New Illiterates.

Educ. as a Science, Bain, Dr. A.

p. 67 Manual of School Method, 3rd, London, 1858, National Society, Richards, W. F. [The "National" schools were some of the government-subsidized church schools. They used Bell's inferior method of teaching beginning reading, which has been described in this history. See the similar entry above from p. 60. See the earlier entry for material from a similar group, the British and Foreign Schools Society manual.]

p. 67 Royal Institution of Great Britain, Lectures at the. "See Muller, Max, p. 57, Lectures on the Science of Language, 1861 and 1863, Eng., 2nd. N. Y. 1871-2, Scribner's"

p. 76 Spelling and Meaning of Words, Method of Teaching, G. F. Thayer, "See Am. Inst. 1830" [See also the reference in Part 4 of this history to the two-volume English publication, The Schoolmaster, 1836, which quoted Thayer's 1830 lecture.]

p. 77 Methods of Teaching, Swett, Jno. N. Y. 1830, Harper's

p. 78 Taylor, J. O. The District School, N. Y., 1834, Harper's

p. 79 Manual of the Science and Art of Educ. London, 1879, Orcutt, Hiram, and Palmer, Thom. H.

p. 80 Teaching, Catechism, on Methods of, Diesterweig, A. "See American Pedagogue Papers for Teachers, Barnard, H. W."

p. 82 Tod, James - Ed. Act for Scotland, 1872, Edinburgh

p. 82 U. S. Bureau of Ed. and Reports for, 1871-1884

p. 86 Young, Thomas U., Teachers' Manual for Infant Schools, Dublin

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Leypoldt's American Catalog, July, 1876 to June 30, 1884, showed the following entries for C. F. Adams, Jr. Adams' opinions were obviously reaching a wide audience:

New Departure in the Common Schools of Quincy, and Other Papers on Educational Topics, 79, Estes.

The Public Library and the Common Schools: Papers on Educational Topics, '79, Estes.



Adams' books on American railroads were published by Putnam, not Estes. Estes and Lauriat of Boston who published Adams' books on education may have had some tie to the activists. In 1879, Estes and Lauriat copyrighted *Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book*, which might have found its way into primary grades even though it was not meant as a reader. In that year of 1879, the Boston primary grades were looking for just such "meaningful" material, like Henry Cabot Lodge's *Six Popular Tales, "Authorized for Use in the Boston Public Schools,"* which was compiled largely from Harvard's chapbook collection. (Lodge's book showed no publisher, but only a Boston printer, but it used similar large, oddly shaped sheets to those used in *Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book*, suggesting they had a similar source or market.) A possible connection to the activists is suggested by the fact that Estes and Lauriat's *Our Baby's Primer and Pretty Picture Book* was printed by University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge, who had printed the *Franklin Primer* of 1877. Estes & Lauriat were also the American publishers of the English children's magazine, *Chatterbox*. Adams' use of a Boston publisher, who also published children's materials, for his few writings on education is intriguing.

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The *American Catalogue, 1900-1905*, "Founded by F. Leypoldt," "Compiled under the Editorial Direction of R. R. Bowker," reprinted by Peter Smith, New York: 1941, lists among others the following texts on reading which were published between 1900 and 1905. The earlier *American Catalogues* did not list texts on reading instruction, but only readers. (The dates given below, however, are from the 1912 *United States Catalog*.)

Arnold (Sarah) - *Suggestions to Teachers*. 36 cents. Silver.

Burns - *How to Teach Reading and Composition*. 50 cents. American Book.  
(1901)

Klingensmith. *Blackboard Reading Lessons*. 25 cents. Flanagan.  
(1903)

Klingensmith. *Reading Manual to four-book Indiana State Series of Readers*, Flanagan.

McMurry, C. A. *Special Method in Primary Reading and Oral Work*. 60 cents. Macmillan, 1903

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Edmund Burke Huey's 1908 Book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, published originally by Macmillan but republished in 1968 by The M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, has an extensive bibliography, which should be consulted by anyone concerned with researching the history of reading instruction. A great many of the titles are not included in this bibliography but they may be of interest, despite Huey's pronounced bias for the "meaning" method in the teaching of beginning reading.

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The *United States Catalog - 1912* lists among others the following texts on reading which were in print and for sale in 1912. Naturally, their list was far longer than that in *The American Catalogue*, which reported only on new books published over a five-year period. On the copies from the 1912 list shown below, where the original publication date was not listed but is known, it has been added in parentheses.

First, under the alphabetical headings, "Primary" and "Primer," the following books of probable interest appeared:

Primary Methods. Hailmann, W. N. 60 cents. American Book.  
Primary Methods. Sprague, S. E. 2v. \$7.50. Interstate School of Correspondence.  
Primary Reading. Kellogg, E. D., Ed. \$1. Educational. (1901)  
Primer of Pedagogy. Putnam, D. 25 cents. Pattengill.  
Primer of School Method. Dexter, T. F. G. and Garlick, A. H. 80 cents. Longmans.  
Primer of Teaching Practice. Green, J. A. and Birchenough, C. 90 cents. (2s 6d) Longmans.  
Primer on Teaching. Adams, J. pa. 20 cents. imp. Scribner.

Under "Readers - History" in the 1912 United States Catalog, the following is listed:

Vail, H. H. History of the McGuffey Readers. bds. 50 cents. 1911. Burrows.

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Yet I could not find Vail's book on the McGuffey readers listed in the 1928 United States Catalog. Presumably Vail's realistic history, even though a vested-interest and therefore somewhat inflated history, was strangely out of print in 1928 at the very height of the promotion of the monumental McGuffey Myth!

The following are among those listed under "Reading," (not "Readers") from a longer list in the 1912 United States Catalog. A few have already been shown from the 1900-1905 American Catalogue, or are on an earlier list.

Akin, F. First Book in Phonics. 25 cents. 1908, M. & G. Atkinson  
Arnold, S. L. Learning to Read. 36 cents. Silver.  
Arnold, Sarah Louise, Reading: How to Teach It. \$1. 1899. Silver  
Badlam, A. B. Suggestive Lessons in Language and Reading, \$1.50 Heath Pub. in 1887 per 1885-1890 American Catalogue  
Bailey, M. Essentials of Reading. 50 cents. American Book.  
Ball, L. A. Natural Reading (For Teachers) 30 cents. 1906. Ginn.  
Bell, G. F., Regents Syllabus in Reading, 60 cents. Bardeen  
Branson, E. C. Reading Methods. pa. 15 cents. Heath.  
Briggs, Thomas H. and Coffman, L. D. Reading in Public Schools. \$1.25. 1911. Row, Peterson & Co. (Listed by N. B. Smith)  
Burns, J. J. How to Teach Reading and Composition. 50 cents. 1901. American Book.  
Burrell, A. Clear Reading and Good Speaking. 90 cents. 1898. Longmans. Calmerton, G. Reading: Phonics, Spelling, Penmanship (Outlines). 1909. Fort Wayne Public Schools, Fort Wayne, Indiana.  
Carnefix, F. D., Practical Sight-word Reading Chart and Phonic Exercise. \$7.50, \$12.50. B. F. Johnson.  
Clark, S. H. How to Teach Reading in the Public Schools. \$1. 1908. Scott.  
Coon, C. L. How to Teach Reading. pa. gratis. 1909. North Carolina. Dept. of Public Instruction, Raleigh.  
Curry, C. M. New Reading Note-Book. \$1. pa. 60 cents. 1909. Inland Pub. Co., Terre Haute, Ind.  
Dearborn, W. F. Psychology of Reading. \$1. 1906. Science Press.  
Farnham, G. L. Sentence Method of Teaching Reading. (1881) 50 cents. Bardeen.  
Gordon, Emma K. Comprehensive Method of Teaching Reading, 2 books, each 30c; teacher's ed. each 35c. 1902. Heath. (Gordon also wrote a very important phonic reading series.)  
Haliburton, M. W. Phonics in Reading. 40 cents. Drill Book, Separate. 18 cents. B. F. Johnson.

- Hall, G. Stanley How to Teach Reading and What to Read in School, Monographs of Education No. 4. pa. 25 cents. Heath.(Shown by E. B. Huey as 1874. It was published by Heath in 1886, and that may have been a reprinting.)
- Hamilton, F. M. Perceptual Factors in Reading. 50 cents. 1907. Science Press. (The Science Press was in Lancaster, Pa., and was later, and possibly in 1907, associated with J. M. Cattell, who was teaching psychology at Columbia in 1907 and who did the first reading perception experiments starting in 1883.)
- Hinsdale, B. A. Teaching the Language-Arts. \$1. Appleton.
- Huey, Edmund Burke, The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading. \$1.40. 1908 Macmillan. (Listed by N. B. Smith. She called it, "impartial"! A June 8, 1897 letter from Huey to Cattell in the Manuscript files of the Library of Congress asked Cattell's help in Huey's enrolling for the study of psychology. Huey was apparently Cattell's protege in psychology. Huey studied psychology at Clark University where G. Stanley Hall was president. Huey's book which contained a brief reference to Messmer's two kinds of readers, objective and subjective, was not in print in the 1928 United States Catalog.)
- Hughes, J. L. Teaching to Read. 50 cents. 1909. Barnes.
- Johnson, W. D. Methods in Reading. 50 cents. Crist.
- Kellogg, A. M. How to Teach Reading. 25 cents. Barnes.
- Kenyon, E. E. Reading Without a Primer. pa. 20 cents. March.
- Klingensmith, A. Blackboard Reading Lessons. bds. 25 cents. 1903. Flanagan.
- Laing, M. E. Reading: A Manual for Teachers. \$1. 1908. Heath.
- Le Row, C. B. How to Teach Reading. pa. 12 cents. C. E. Merrill.
- Le Row, C. B. - Well Planned Course in Reading. \$1. 1901. Hinds.
- Libby, K. J. - Key Method of Teaching Primary Reading. 25 cents. Northwestern School Supply Co.
- Libby, R. M. Reading for Training Classes. 50 cents. 1906. Bardeen.
- McMurry, C. A. Special Method in Primary Reading and Oral Work. 60 cents. 1903. Macmillan.
- McMurry, C. A. Special Method in Reading in the Grades. \$1.25. 1908. Macmillan.
- Monroe, L. B. How to Teach Reading. (Pre-1882 because his widow revised his series at that date, so Monroe had died before then.) 12 cents. American Book.
- Moore, M. Blackboard Reading. 50 cents. 1909. Educational.
- Mortimer, F. L. Reading Without Tears. (English, 1850's) \$1.75. Longmans.
- Pease, M. A. First Steps in Reading. pa. 8 cents. Flanagan.
- Quantz, J. O. Problems in the Psychology of Reading. 75 cents. 1900. Psychological Review (From Univ. of Wisconsin. One of Cattell's subjects in his reading experiments at Johns Hopkins in 1883, Joseph Jastrow, had been there for many years.)
- Quigley, E. M. How to Teach Beginners to Read. 25 cents 1906. Quigley.
- Searson, J. W. and Martin, G. E. Studies in Reading. 80 cents. 1910. Univ. Pub. Neb.
- Sherman, E. B. and Reed, A. A. Essentials of Teaching Reading. \$1.25. Univ. Pub. Neb.
- Soulsby, L. H. M. Record of a Year's Reading. 30 cents (9 d.) 1910. Longmans.
- Southwick, A. P. Dime Question Book of Reading and Punctuation. 10 cents. Bardeen.
- Spaulding, F. E. and Bryce, C. T. Learning to Read. 60 cents. 1911. Newson. (Authors of the extremely widely used Aldine reading series of 1907 which was apparently based on their sentence-method Passaic Primer of 1903.)
- Teaching Reading in 10 Cities. \$1. Educational.
- Todd, E. J. and Powell, W. B. How to Teach Reading. 40 cents. Silver. (Authors of The Normal Course in Reading series by 1889.)
- Van Sickle, W. M. and Demarest, A. J. Teaching Primary Reading. 10 cents. 1907. American Book. (Authors of New Education Readers, 1900)
- Ward, E. G. and Warner, E. E. Rational Method in Reading (Ward's widely used phonic series, Rational Method in Reading, appeared by 1894.)

Listed separately in the 1912 Catalog is the following, which might be a useful book:

Norton, A. O., Readings in the History of Education. 85 cents. pa. 70 cents. Harvard Univ.

Under "Readers, Indexes" in the 1912 United States Catalog, the following appears:

Classified Index of the Materials Contained in the Different School Readers. 50 cents Alex Dulfer Printing Co., San Francisco, Calif. 1910. ( This would be an interesting historical document for the period around 1910, if it could be located.)

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The following material came out after the 1912 American Catalog was published:

Supplementary Educational Monographs, University of Chicago Press, No. 1. Studies of Elementary School Reading Through Standardized Tests. William Scott Gray, 1917.

This was William Scott Gray's doctoral thesis at the University of Chicago in 1917, and its bibliography should be consulted by anyone concerned with the history of the teaching of reading. Gray's thesis can be found as one of the entries in the 1918 report published by the University of Chicago, Reading: Its Nature and Development, on which Charles H. Judd was senior author. I found the bibliography to Gray's 1917 thesis to be invaluable for following the activities of the psychologist change-agents in the early twentieth century. Note the prestigious number of Gray's 1917 University of Chicago Supplementary Educational Monograph: IT IS NUMBER ONE!

W. S. Gray's Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, University of Chicago Supplementary Monograph, No. 28, Chicago, 1925, should also be consulted.

Jean Chall's The Great Debate, McGraw Hill, New York: 1967, second and third editions 1983 and 1996, Forth Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace, also has an extensive bibliography which should be checked for materials before 1930, as well as later.

Also of interest to a serious researcher working on the history of the teaching of reading are the yearly publications of the National Society for the Study of Education, mentioned again below, which group has been under the auspices of leading educational "experts" ever since the turn of the twentieth century. Many of these publications touched on the teaching of beginning reading.

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A selection is given below from the listing of texts relating to reading instruction in the 1928 United States Catalog. Texts which were obviously manuals for reading series have been omitted, because the manuals can usually be obtained if the name of the series is known. Other materials are omitted which do not seem too pertinent. The actual 1928 listing from the "Reading" section is far longer than below.

Anderson, Charles J. and Davidson, Isobel, Reading Objectives. \$1.80. 1925. (Also listed by N. B. Smith) Laurel Book. (Anderson and Davidson wrote the Laurel and Lincoln readers, 1922-1926, emphasizing silent reading.)

Ball, L. A. Natural Reading "See author entry." (1906, Ginn)

Briggs, T. H. and Coffman, L. D. Reading in Public Schools, Rev. Enl. Ed. \$1.60. 1911. Row (Briggs received his doctorate in 1913 and was a professor of education at Columbia Teachers College in 1926. NBS listed this text.)

Brooks, F. D. Applied Psychology of Reading. \$1.80. 1926. Appleton -(Listed by N. B. Smith)

- Burgess, M. A. Measurement of Silent Reading. pa \$1. 1921. Russell Sage Foundation (Note the appearance of this 1921 "scale" probably in deliberate contrast to Russell Sage Foundation's 1915 Measurement of Spelling Ability by Ayres.)
- Buswell, Guy T. Experimental Study of the Eye-voice Span in Reading. \$1. 1920. Univ. of Chicago. Dept. of Educ.
- Buswell, Guy T. Fundamental Reading Habits. A Study of Their Development. \$1.50. 1922,. Univ. of Chicago. Dept. of Educ. (Listed by N. B. Smith)
- Carroll, R. P. Experimental Study of Comprehension in Reading. \$1.50. 1926. Teachers College.
- Chapman, J. C. Speed of Reading Comprehension Tests: Grades 5-12. \$1. Lippincott.
- Clark, S. H. How to Teach Reading in the Public Schools. \$1.60, 1908. Scott.
- Clark, S. H. Interpretation of the Printed Page. \$1.50. 1915. Row.
- Coxe, W. W; Richards, E. B .Suggestions for Teaching Silent Reading. Rev.Ed. N.Y. State Lib.
- Cram, F. D. Silent Reading. Rev. Ed. 25 cents. Iowa State Teachers College, Cedar Falls, Ia.
- Dougherty, M. L. How to Teach Phonics. \$1.20. 1923 Houghton.
- Farnham, G. L. Sentence Method of Teaching Reading, Writing and Spelling. 3rd Ed. 50 cents. Bardeen. 1895 (Ed.: Real first date of publication was 1881.)
- Foran, T. G. Present Status of Silent Reading Tests. Pts. 1-2 pa ea 35 cents. 1927. Catholic Educ. Press.
- Gates, A. I. Improvement of Reading. \$2. 1927. Macmillan.
- Gates, A. I. Primary Reading Tests.
- Gates, A. I. Silent Reading Test.
- Gates, A. I. and Others. Problems in Beginning Reading. 25 cents. 1925. Teachers College.
- Germane, C. E. and E. G. Silent Reading: A Handbook for Teachers. \$1.60. 1922 Row (Listed by N. B. Smith.)
- Gist, Arthur S. and King, William A. The Teaching and Supervising of Reading. \$1.80. 1927. New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons (Also listed by N. B. Smith)
- Gray, W. S. Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading. pa \$2. 1925. Univ. of Chicago, Dept. of Educ.
- Greene, H. A. State Survey of Silent Reading in Iowa. 1923. Univ. of Ia.
- Haggerty, M. E. and others. Reading Examination: Sigmas 1, 3, Forms A-B. "See main entry."
- Hall, G. Stanley How to Teach Reading. pa 36 cents. 1886. Heath. (E. B. Huey probably correctly showed the date as 1874.)
- Harris, Julia M., H. L. Donovan and Thomas Alexander. Supervision and Teaching of Reading. \$2. 1927. Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company (Listed by N. B. Smith.)
- Hilliard, G. H. Probable Types of Difficulties Underlying Low Scores in Comprehension Tests. 50 cents. 1924. Univ. of Iowa.
- Horn, E. and McBroom, M. M. Survey of the Course of Study in Reading. pa. 1924. Univ. of Iowa.
- Hosic, J. F. Empirical Studies in School Reading. \$1.50. 1921. Teachers College. (Listed under Readers section, not Reading, in 1928 United States Catalog.)
- Howell, L. D. and Williams, F. S. How to Teach Reading; a rev. manual for teachers. 50 cents. 1919. Noble
- Indiana University. School of Education. Cooperative Study of Reading in Sixteen Cities of Indiana. 35 cents, 1918. The University. (Other sources show this was written by W. S. Gray.)
- Jenkins, F. How to Teach Reading. 66 cents. 1913, Houghton.
- Jenkins, F. Reading in the Primary Grades. \$1.20. 1915. Houghton.
- Klapper, Paul, Teaching Children to Read. 4th ed. rev. and enl. \$1.90. 1926. Appleton (1914) (Listed by N. B. Smith)
- Kramer, G. A. ed. Improvement in the Teaching of Reading. pa 50 cents. 1926. Thomas & Evans ptg. co., Baltimore
- Laing, M. E. Reading \$1.36. 1908 (Original date, but revised). Heath.
- Lee, A. S. Reading and Literature. 45 cents. 1915. Condensed Text Bk.

- Leonard, Sterling A. Essential Principles of Teaching Reading and Literature in the Intermediate Grades and the High School. \$2. 1922. Lippincott. (Listed by N. B. Smith.)
- Lewis, G. W. Story Method of Teaching Reading and Spelling Manual \$2.50, 1916, Lewis Pub.
- Lewis, W. D. and Rowland, A. L. Discussion of Silent Reading. Gratis. 1924. Winston.
- Libby, R. M. Reading for Training Classes. 50 cents. 1906. Bardeen.
- Lloyd, S. M. and Gray, C. T. Reading in a Texas City. 50 cents. 1920. Univ. of Texas.  
(C. T. Gray worked with W. S. Gray, C. H. Judd and others at the University of Chicago from 1915 to 1918 on a grant from the General Education Board, which resulted in the 1918 report published by the University of Chicago, Reading: Its Nature and Development, on which Charles H. Judd was senior author, mentioned by N. B. Smith. See Lance Klass' The Leipzig Connection, 1981, (with Paolo Lionni) concerning the General Education Board. It can therefore safely be assumed that "Reading in a Texas City" reflected "expert" opinions not only at the University of Chicago but at Columbia Teachers College in New York and was not the result of "grass roots" efforts in Texas.)
- McCall, W. A. and Crabbs, L. M. Standard Test Lessons in Reading. Teachers College.  
(This was silent reading material, based on McCall's original work with Thorndike. The method used eventually resulted in the SRA reading comprehension kits, written by other authors, which were massively used in American classrooms in the 1960's and 1970's. The reading cards, which were self-scored, encouraged voluntary attention on the part of students, who liked to get a high score. They did not "teach" comprehension, because it is unteachable, as has been discussed at length in this history.)
- McMurry, C. A. Special Method in Reading in the Grades. \$1.30. 1908, Macmillan. (The 1890's "expert.")
- McMurry, L. B. Method for Teaching Primary Reading. 80 cents. 1914. Macmillan. (Not Charles A. McMurry's brother. His brother was Frank M. McMurry, another "expert" and in 1911 Professor of Elementary Education in Teachers College, Columbia University, but for how many years before or after 1911 is not known.)
- Michigan. Public Instruction. Department of, Lansing. Reading in the Grades. 1922.
- Moeller, H. C. and Tormey, T. J. First Days at School. pa 60 cents. 1926. Ginn.
- Monroe, W. S. Critical Study of Certain Silent Reading Tests. pa 50 cents. 1922. Univ. of Ill.
- Morin, J. C. Phonetic Method in Reading. 72 cents. Heath.
- National Society for the Study of Education. Twentieth Yearbook, 1921; pt. 2. Society's Committee on Silent Reading. Factors Affecting Results in Silent Reading, and Exercises for Making Reading Function. \$1.10. Public School. (Listed by N. B. Smith)
- National Society for the Study of Education. Twenty-fourth Yearbook, 1925; pt. 1. Report of the National Committee on Reading. 2d ed 2 v ea \$1.50 1925 Public School.  
(Listed by N. B. Smith who said it had "wide acceptance of its recommendations." W. S. Gray worked on this report, which was shortly after praised in an Elementary School Journal article by A. I. Gates who then proposed the use of his invention, "intrinsic" phonics. Note the baleful effects on America that came from accepting the dictates of a "national committee" of "experts" instead of accepting the dictates of private common sense. Thorndike had written an article in 1920 that in general we should let "experts" do our thinking for us, and America's functional illiteracy came from taking his pernicious advice.)
- Newark, New Jersey. Board of Education. Reading Survey in the Public Schools of Newark, N. J. pa 1923. The Board, Newark, N. J.
- O'Brien, J. A. Silent Reading, with Special Reference to Speed. \$1.40. 1921. Macmillan (Listed by N. B. Smith)
- Ohio, Education, Department of, Columbus. Reading. 1923.
- Pease, M. A. First Steps in Reading. 10 cents. Flanagan.
- Pennell, Mary E. and Cusack, Alice M. How to Teach Reading. \$1.80. Houghton. (Listed by N. B. Smith. They wrote a reading series, The Children's Own Readers, published by Ginn in 1929.)

Rock, R. T. Reading Tests for Primary Grades. pa 35 cents. 1927. Catholic Educ. Press.  
 St. Cloud, Minnesota. Board of Education. Reading in the Saint Cloud Public Schools, Grades One to Six.  
 Rev. ed. \$1.75. 1925. The Board

Sherman, E. B. and Reed, A. A. Essentials of Teaching Reading. \$1.60. 1917. Univ. Pub.

Smith, E. E. Heart of the Curriculum. \$1.50. 1924. Doubleday.

Smith, N. B. One Hundred Ways of Teaching Silent Reading, for All Grades. \$1.40. 1925. World Book  
 (Very peculiarly NOT mentioned by N. B. Smith in her "history" though she mentioned her  
 post-1928 materials.)

Smith, N. B. and Curtis, S. A. "Picture-story Reading Lessons. See Main Entry." (Very peculiarly NOT  
 mentioned by N. B. Smith in her 1932 and 1934 "history," even though it was obviously a best-seller  
 in 1928 or it would not have had a separate "Main Entry" in the 1928 United States Catalog.)

Stevens, M. P. Teaching What to Read and How to Read It. 2 v \$1.28. 1924. Heath

Stone, C. R. How to Plan and Conduct Silent-reading Lessons. 3 cents. 1924. Houghton. Stone, Clarence  
 R. Silent and Oral Reading, rev and enl ed \$2. 1926. Houghton. (Listed by N. B. Smith)

Streitz, R. Teachers' Difficulties in Reading and Their Correctives. pa 30 cents. 1925. Univ. of Ill.

Thorndike, E. L. and McCall, W. A. Reading Scale, per package of 100 \$2. Sample Set 10 cents.  
 Teachers College.

Tinley, L. W. First Steps in Reading. 75 cents. 1918. Univ. Pub.

Turner, N. E. Teaching to Read. \$1.28. 1915. American Book

Uhl, Willis L. Materials of Reading. \$1.80. 1924. Silver. (Listed by N. B. Smith)

Uhl, Willis L. Scientific Determination of the Content of the Elementary School Course in Reading.  
 \$1.50. 1921. Univ. of Wis.

Van Amburgh, D. First Days in Reading. 35 cents. 1916. Mentzer.

Van Amburgh, D. Story in Primary reading. \$1.50. 1916. Mentzer.

Watkins, Emma, How to Teach Silent Reading to Beginners, 3d ed rev \$1.60 1926 Lippincott (Listed by  
 N. B. Smith)

Wheat, Harry Grove "Teaching of Reading. See Author Entry." (1923, Ginn) (Listed by N. B. Smith)

Winch, W. H. Teaching Beginners to Read in England: Its Methods, Results, and Psychological Bases.  
 \$1.25. 1925. Public School  
 "Public School" also published the Public School Journal from the 1890's which was a  
 sounding-board for "experts" like the McMurrays and R. R. Reeder. Winch was endorsing the  
 teaching of phonics with a phonetically marked print.

Wyld, H. C. K. Teaching of Reading in Training Colleges. 75 cents. 1909. Stechert.

Zirbes, L. and Others. Practice Exercises and Checks on Silent Reading in the Primary Grades. 45 cents.  
 1925. Teachers College.

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I have attempted to note on the above titles from the United States Catalogs whether they were mentioned in some way in Nila Banton Smith's "history," though I may have missed some. Her index is very incomplete, as is her bibliography. Many items that she mentioned are not listed in either so it is necessary to leaf through her book to pick up all references. However, since some titles on reading instruction which she mentioned were not listed as in print by the United States Catalogs of 1912 and 1928, they are shown below.

Dolch, Edward W., Reading and Word Meanings  
 Gates, Arthur I., New Methods in Primary Reading  
 Gray, William S. and Ruth Munroe, The Reading Interests and Habits of Adults  
 Judd, Charles H. et al - Reading, Its Nature and Development, Supplementary Educational Monographs  
 Vol. 2, No. 4, University of Chicago. 1918.

Judd, Charles H. and Guy T. Buswell - Silent Reading: A Study of the Various Types, University of Chicago

Mirick, George A., Teaching to Read. N. J. State course, 1914

Smith commented of Mirick's 1914 book, "The entire treatment was a superior piece of work and in advance of its time in many respects." Note Smith's implicit belief in the progress fallacy, "in advance of its time." "Later" is presumed automatically to be "better.") Of course, if Smith thought it was "in advance," it was undoubtedly poor.

McMurry, Charles A., Special Method in the Reading of Complete English Classics, 1899 Mead, A. S., Journal of Educational Psychology, 6, 1915, 345-348, Silent Reading Versus Oral Reading with One Hundred Sixth Grade Pupils.

O'Brien, J. A. - Reading, Its Psychology and Pedagogy

Olcott, Frances J., Children's Reading

Patterson, Samuel W., - Teaching the Child to Read

Pintner, R., Journal of Educational Psychology, 4, 1913, 333-337, Oral and Silent Reading for Fourth Grade Pupils.

Scudder, Horace E., Literature in the Schools, 1888

Smith, Nila B. and Grace E. Storm - Reading Activities in the Primary Grades

Smith Wm. A., The Reading Process, 1922 (history and methods)

Walton, Sidney, quoted by Gerald. A. Yoakam, The Supervision of Instruction in Reading, Educational Method, Vol. 15 (April, 1935)

Gerald A. Yoakam, Reading and Study

Sixteenth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, "The Relation of Silent Reading to Economy in Education," by W. S. Gray, 1917.

(This was mentioned on Smith's page 162. Note the "authoritative" promotion of silent reading by W. S. Gray as early as 1917, following the re-introduction of silent reading into the literature by R. Pintner in the Journal of Educational Psychology, 4, 1913, pages 333-337, "Oral and Silent Reading for Fourth Grade Pupils," as noted above. Pinter's reintroduction of the emphasis on silent reading in 1913 was after the quiescent period following the promotion of silent reading in the late 1870's, 1880's, and early 1890's. Note also silent reading was introduced under the topic of psychology, interestingly suggesting a possible tie to Cattell. James had died in 1910. There were very, very few psychologists in America in 1913, and they were closely affiliated through the American Psychological Association, founded on July 8, 1892, in G. Stanley Hall's study at Clark University, with James, Dewey and Cattell in attendance. This founding meeting is recorded in "The Founding of the APA," American Psychologist, 7, 1952, 95-97, according to the reprint entitled "Edward Wheeler Scripture, 1864-1945," from the section, "Notes and Discussions" of The American Journal of Psychology, June, 1965, Volume 78, No. 2, p. 314-317.)

Eighteenth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, "Principles of Method in Teaching Reading, as Derived from Scientific Investigations," by W. S. Gray, 1919.

Twentieth Yearbook, Part I, National Society for the Study of Education, "New Materials of Instruction." 1921. (Including experience charts. See note below.)

Thirty-Third Yearbook, Part II, National Society for the Study of Education, "The Activity Movement." 1934.

(The report rejected basal reading books (beginning reading instruction), very much in the manner of today's "whole language" movement. Reading instruction in the activity movement was essentially a combination of experience charts and what is called today the "whole language" approach. Of course, both the 1934 Activity Movement and the 1990's "whole language" abomination are simply variations on the 1890's Colonel Parker/John Dewey themes.)



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The Twentieth Yearbook concerned experience charts, a la Colonel Parker's 1890's Chicago school, yet Smith claimed experience charts were a "radical departure" in 1921 "... not widely accepted till later." "Experts" keep recycling the same "meaning" rubbish in beginning reading, such as experience charts and "whole language." Yet these "roses" by any other names all smell as bad. Experience charts were being pushed as radically new when I visited schools in Sweden in 1977, and children diligently kept card files of their "sight words" from these charts. (I was told that the government mandated the use of the reader, Nu Laser, in first grade. Since this was heavy synthetic phonics or "sound", it served to reduce sharply the harmful effect from the experience chart "meaning" approach.) I was told that, during the time I was in Sweden, the Swedish "expert" who had promoted the method was at that very moment promoting the method in lucky Austria. Yet the "new" method was very much the same as the Belgian Ovide Decroly's experience-chart approach used since the early twentieth century in Europe, which idea was probably picked up by European visitors to Colonel Parker's school during the 1893 Chicago World's Fair (Columbian Exposition). That fair had many foreign visitors. In 1977, I saw the experience chart method in frequent use in France, but it was used to teach heavy analytic/synthetic phonics. That was a happily successful adaptation, since the conditioned reflex being established was ultimately based on "sound" and not on "meaning." However, a "meaning" version had been used in France since the 1920's by a particularly odious "expert," Celestin Freinet, for the teaching of sight-words. With Freinet's version, the children used printing presses to "write" their "productions."

Concerning additional texts to be added to this listing, in W. H. Winch's Teaching Beginners to Read in England, Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois: 1925, he mentioned on page 18 Sonnenschein's "little book for teachers on the Teaching of Reading." He said elsewhere that the Sonnenschein method was the teaching of syllables, without any phonic analysis. Winch also mentioned the Dale phonic method, which was popular, apparently, for many years in England, but did not teach syllabifying. Therefore, these two English teachers' texts should be included in this listing:

Sonnenschein, Teaching of Reading, published in England before 1905

Dale (A phonic manual, title unknown, pub. in England before 1905

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The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932, added many additional titles under "Reading" which will not be listed here, both general texts and manuals for reading series, as well as many books for children under "Readers." However, it is of interest that among those texts published between 1928 and 1932 were three from England which promoted the old sentence method. Concerning such texts, Mitford Mathews wrote on pages 119-121 of Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, The University of Chicago Press, 1966:

"Bradley's article [Ed.: "Spoken and Written English," 1913] made a great impression upon J. H. Jagger, an English student who later became well known in connection with his advocacy of the sentence method. In 1929 he published a book with the same title as Farnham's much earlier work, The Sentence Method of Teaching Reading. About this identity of subjects he wrote: 'In 1887 [sic] a pamphlet bearing the same title as this book was published by A. B. (sic) Farnham at Syracuse, New York State. As far as the author is aware, no copy of this pamphlet reached the shores of England and it does not appear to have exercised any influence on English education.' Jagger explained that 'The Sentence Method has arisen spontaneously in some London schools, as a reaction against the mechanical tyranny that phonetic teaching has imposed... The written form of each word is associated directly with its meaning, and indirectly with its sound... To teach reading ideographically, without the interposition of sounds between written sign and meaning, is

therefore in accord with the present character of English spelling as well as in accord with the historical development of writing.... Ordinarily, the mind proceeds from the... whole to the part... Reading is getting the meaning of printed and written symbols....”

However, if the sentence method arose “spontaneously” in England in 1929 as Jagger claimed, then water must run up hill there, too, without being pumped, just as “spontaneously.” Three publications by these “spontaneous” authors which are listed in The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932, are shown below.

“Clark, A. G. Sentence-method of teaching reading. pa. 1s '29 Arnold, E. J.”

“Jagger, J: H. Sentence method of teaching reading, 3s 6d '29 Grant educ co.

“Luke, E. Teaching of reading by the sentence method. 3s 6d '31 Methuen.”

W. S. Gray's 1956 *The Teaching of Reading and Writing* listed the last two as J. Hubert Jagger, The Grant Educational Co., Ltd., 1929, 119 pages, and Edith Luke, Methuen & Co., Ltd., London, 1931, 82 pages.

It is also of interest that The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932 indicated that the American Library Association was publishing material concerning primers and readers. At the end of the “Primer” section, under “Bibliography,” appeared:

“American library association. Section for library work with children. Committee on readers and primers. Readers and primers. pa per 10 45c '29 A.L.A.”

This general material, with dates of 1931 and 1933, was listed in the card catalog of the Library of Congress, and has been listed at the beginning of this bibliography, but was not available when I requested it at the Library of Congress.

The Cattell manuscript files at the Library of Congress have two interesting typed sheets, on which the name of the American Library Association appeared. Cattell was a superb organizer (which William James acknowledged in one of his letters to Cattell, now in the Library of Congress manuscript files). These two typed pages are reproduced on the following two pages, and might be seen as kinds of organization charts. The many American associations, like the American Library Association, which were listed on each sheet reached into almost every area of American cultural life. Each had a suggested representative named for the two proposed new master organizations to be concerned with “education.” At the bottom of each list appeared the American Association for the Advancement of Science, to be represented by Cattell who at that time was the Chairman of its Executive Committee, a post which he held for many years.

If the two proposed organizations on the two copies reproduced on the following pages, or any organizations like them, ever materialized, with their named representatives chosen by the arch-activist Cattell, they operated safely outside the public sphere and could exert massive influence from the top to reach all of America, insulated from voters at the polls.

The Constitution authorized the United States Congress and the office of the Presidency to set public policy and to steer the course of this nation. Therefore, for such unauthorized privately organized groups quietly to take over the functions of the elected Congress and the elected Presidency can best be described as sedition. Such activity in 1917 by men with apparent ties to Cattell and his associates had raised a furor

in Congress, which unfortunately died down because of the advent of World War I. (See Lance J. Klass's book, *The Leipzig Connection*, with Paolo Lionni.)

The United States of America has needed laws for a very long time which can serve at least to publicize such sub-rosa quasi-legal seditious activities. After all, no one and no group has any "right" to control other people and the environment of other people without publicly announcing their intentions to do so. After all, that is the purpose for the legal listings in newspapers of tax sales on properties with back taxes, and for public notices on similar things. Whether Cattell's proposed organizations ever existed as suggested on his typed sheets is not known. At the very least, such activities should have been announced ahead of time publicly, and any meetings of such a group should always have been open to the public. However, that such was the intent is very doubtful. Yet those two typed sheets do demonstrate how effectively illicit influence can, potentially, be exercised on the life of this entire nation, and how it is probably being exercised, without the properly informed consent of the voting public, at this very time.

*(Reproduced from the Cattell Manuscript Files, Library of Congress, Washington, DC)*

**PROPOSED TRUSTEES FOR THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION**

National Education Association	Professor G. D. Strayer Teachers College, Columbia University
Department of Superintendence, N.E.A.	
National Association of Secondary School Principals, N.E.A.	
National Council of Primary Education	
American Federation of Teachers	Professor John Dewey, Columbia University
Society of College Teachers of Education; Department of Teachers Colleges, N. E. A.	Dean W. F. Russell, Teachers College, Columbia University
American Association of University Professors	Professor A. O. Lovejoy, The Johns Hopkins University
Society for the Study of Education	Professor William C. Bagley, Teachers College, Columbia University
Educational Research Association	Professor Edward L. Thorndike, Teachers College, Columbia University
American Council on Education	Dean Charles H. Judd, University of Chicago
American Sociological Society	Professor William F. Ogburn, University of Chicago
American Public Health Association	Professor Edwin Bidwell Wilson, School of Public Health, Harvard University
American Library Association	Joseph L. Wheeler, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore
American Association for the Advancement of Science	Dr. J. McKeen Cattell, editor of SCHOOL AND SOCIETY and SCIENCE

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PROPOSED TRUSTEES FOR THE EDUCATIONAL CORPORATION

U. S. Office of Education	Dr. J. W. Studebaker
State Department of Education	Dr. Frank P. Graves
National Education Association	Dr. Willard E. Givens
National Catholic Educational Association	Rev. George Johnson, Catholic University of America
American Association of School Administrators	Professor G. D. Strayer, Teachers College, Columbia University <i>M. &amp; S. Standard</i>
National Association of Secondary School Principals	H. V. Church
National Council of Primary Education	
National Society of College Teachers of Education	Dr. Charles H. Judd, University of Chicago <i>John F. Russell</i>
American Council on Education	Dr. George F. Zook
American Association of University Professors	Dr. R. E. Himstead
American Federation of Teachers	Professor John Dewey, Columbia University
Society for the Study of Education	Professor William C. Bagley, Teachers College, Columbia University
Educational Research Association	Professor Edward L. Thorndike, Teachers College, Columbia University
American Association of Teachers Colleges	Dean W. F. Russell, Teachers College, Columbia University
Association of American Colleges	President Raymond Walters, University of Cincinnati
American Association for Adult Education	Dr. F. P. Keppel, The Carnegie Corporation
American Sociological Society	Professor William F. Ogburn, University of Chicago
American Public Health Association	Professor Edwin Bidwell Wilson, School of Public Health, Harvard University
American Library Association	Joseph L. Wheeler, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore
American Association for the Advancement of Science	Dr. J. McKeen Cattell

It seems very possible that the above ALA "Committee on readers and primers" was influenced by Cattell and his clique of "experts" through some such net of influence as outlined on the reproductions just shown. Certainly uncontrolled vocabulary library books for children posed a real stumbling block to the anticipated arrival of the deaf-mute-method readers, with their appallingly impoverished vocabulary.

Library books for children would have had to change in tandem with school books, and they did change, it should be remarked. Controlled vocabulary took over most of children's literature some time after 1929. Presumably many of the great number of isolated titles appearing under "Readers" in The Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932 were such controlled vocabulary "story" books. They probably found their way into American libraries as alternatives for unadapted copies of such uncontrolled vocabulary works as Tom Sawyer, Pinocchio, Winnie the Pooh and Alice in Wonderland. When the controlled-vocabulary library books finally arrived some time after 1929 to function as replacements for real children's literature, the attack on American literacy had begun in earnest.

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Two additional articles not mentioned in the above listing should be included:

Gates, Arthur Irving - "Problems in Beginning Reading, Suggested by an Analysis of Twenty-One Courses," Teachers College Record, Columbia, New York, March, 1925.

Gates said in the above article:

"The reading books, teacher's manuals and supplementary materials suggested for use during the first year by each of twenty-one reading systems were analyzed. All of the systems were said to be widely used. The twenty-one courses, selected at random from a longer list, presumably provide a representative variety of primary reading methods now in use in this country."

Gates said that all of the materials, to a greater or lesser extent, used supplementary phonics.

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Burbank, E. D. - "Phonetics in the Elementary Grades for Teachers of Normal Schools," Volta Review, XXII, Nos. 3, 5, and 6. [circa 1915]

The Volta Review was published by Alexander Graham Bell's Volta society, so it is not surprising that it published a pro-phonetic article like Burbank's. Burbank's article (no date given, but presumably as Volta's 22nd volume, about 1915) was mentioned in Gates' March, 1925, article in the Teachers College Record, listed above. Gates said that Burbank's article was used to justify the supplementary phonics in almost universal use in 1925, since Burbank had reported that 85% of English words are phonetic.

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Two publications after 1928 are of enough importance to add to this list concerned primarily with materials before that date. One is:

Gray, William Scott - Teaching of Reading and Writing, An International Survey, Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1956.

Gray wrote this for UNESCO, and it has a number of useful international references. One such reference is to the following text:

Schonell, Fred J. - The Psychology and Teaching of Reading, London: Oliver and Boyd, 1946.

Gray reported the following:

“Schonell, too, considers that (the phonic method) interferes with the idea of grasping words, phrases and sentences as meaningful language units.”

The “expert,” Schonell has had a very harmful influence on the teaching of literacy in Great Britain for a great many years.

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Many “expert” guides to the teaching of reading appeared after 1930. Two of the best known by the 1970’s are shown below. However, Frank Smith’s and Kenneth Goodman’s “expert” writings which date from about the 1970’s, and which are the primary sources of the “whole language” misinstruction of the 1990’s, are not included below. There is a difference in kind between the thick books shown below, which adopt a “scientific,” data-reporting format, and the far thinner Smith and Goodman books which adopt an inspirational tone, instead of a “scientific” one.

Foundations of Reading Instruction, American Book Company, Emmett Betts, 1946 and later revisions.

This is a very large, pro-“meaning,” teacher-training book. Betts was also the co-author of the Betts Basic Readers of 1948 and later, and was a major “expert” of the post-World-War-II period.

How to Increase Reading Ability, by Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay, David McKay Company, Inc., New York. Original edition in 1940, and revised editions to 1975 (and possibly later).

Harris was the principal author of the Macmillan readers in the version which apparently followed Gates’ 1930 version. The series by Harris used a “meaning” approach and was in use for many years. This book, used in teacher training classes, has a strong bias toward the “meaning” approach.

The two books listed above will provide any interested researcher with a guide to “official” thinking on the teaching of reading from the 1930’s until the late 1970’s.

However, a teacher’s guide taking the “sound” approach to beginning reading in 1974 was the following:

Teaching Reading, by Dr. Charles Child Walcutt, Joan Lamport, and Glenn McCracken; Chapters on Research and Evaluation by Dr. Robert Dykstra. Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974.

Charles Child Walcutt and Glenn McCracken had been the authors of the phonic reading series first published by Lippincott in 1963, and the series was published in revised editions in later years. Dr. Dykstra had been involved in the USOE beginning reading studies reported in 1967 and was in charge of the second-grade follow up reported in 1968. Dr. Dykstra is on record as having concluded that phonics (“sound”) is more successful to teach beginning reading than the sight-word (“meaning”) approach, and stated that conviction in his comments in the above book. Despite the inclusion of worthwhile and concrete research data by Dr. Dykstra that favors the teaching of phonics, this pro-sound teacher’s guide which these authors published in 1974 apparently made no dent in the “official” teachers’ colleges endorsement of the use of “meaning” to teach beginning reading

About 1980 or so, I asked Dr. Dykstra by phone about the oral reading accuracy test scores for phonics-trained classes and sight-word trained classes on the 1968 second-grade USOE studies. Dr.

Dykstra said that the second-grade oral testing data had been accidentally erased from the computer which was processing all the rest of the second-grade test data. Since that “accidentally” erased data would have provided the first scores in perhaps sixty years or so comparing the oral reading accuracy of “sound” trained children to “meaning” trained children, I personally suspect that Dr. Dykstra may have been mistaken when he charitably termed that erasure accidental..

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Dating from about the 1980’s, “whole language,” a fanatically pro-“meaning” approach, became the institutionalized method all over the English-speaking world to teach beginning reading, from Australia to Great Britain, and it did so in an extraordinarily short period of time. Its seemingly near-immediate spread was an exceedingly curious development.

The Beginning Reading Instruction Study, Office of Research, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C.: June, 1993, on which Marcy Stein, Ph. D., University of Washington-Tacoma was the principal author, had the following on page 5:

“Those who support intensive, systematic phonics instruction assert that, to understand the alphabetic principle, children must understand the specific connection between letters and sounds. They also believe that children who use those strategies to read words quickly and effortlessly, without having to guess at individual letters or words, will be able to comprehend with ease what they read.

“In contrast, those who advocate a meaning-centered approach believe that reading will develop naturally as children interact with words, sentences, and ideas that appear in meaningful contexts and as part of genuine literary experiences. These experiences include handling and sharing books, talking about print and stories, and reading and writing meaningful stories. Numerous books and articles have been written about the whole language approach to reading instruction. Readers interested in exploring these ideas further should consult some of the books listed below:

“Cordiero, Pat. Whole Language and Content in the Upper Elementary Grades. Richard C. Owen, 1992.

“Graves, Donald. Discover Your Own Literacy. Heinemann, 1990.

“Holdaway, Don. The Foundations of Literacy. Scholastic-TAB, 1979.

“Mills, Heidi, O’Keefe, Timothy, and Stephens, Diane. Looking Closely: Exploring the Role of Phonics in One Whole Language Classroom. NCTE, 1992.

“Newman, Judith M., Whole Language: Theory in Use. Heinemann. 1985.

“Routman, Regie. Invitations: Changing as Teachers and Learners, K-12. Heinemann, 1991.

“In recent years, the whole language movement has emphasized the use of literature as the basis for learning to read, rather than the instructional routines, graded texts, and worksheets typical of basal reading programs. Whole language advocates strive to make reading instruction more spontaneous, integrated, and authentic. They call for students to be given more control over their own learning by allowing them to decide which books they will read and what topics they will write about.”

See the chapter in this history on the Quincy movement from 1875, which will establish that whole language is just a repackaging of a very old and very failed movement. Colonel Parker disapproved of reading textbooks, too, and instead he had a horse-drawn wagon filled with different books and made the rounds of the schools in Quincy, Massachusetts, to deliver those books. That was the “whole language” approach in earnest. With “whole language” (that stupid, half-witted phrase), students are supposed “to be given more control over their own learning....” In 1875, Parker also wanted to throw the responsibility for learning onto the children, which sounds very dramatic but is just empty talk, and an excuse for shifting the blame for educational failure to the poor little children’s shoulders. Yet Parker’s basic theme, “interest,” used as a magic wand to teach beginning reading instead of real content, was itself only being repackaged in 1875. “Interest” and “meaning” had previously been the theme of the beginning reading revolution in 1826, as this history has discussed. That revolution immediately (and predictably) produced functional illiteracy.

So is “whole language” producing functional illiteracy. Yet it is was promoted in the 1990’s, in a veritable symphonic orchestration, all over the English-speaking world, from Australia and New Zealand to North America, to Great Britain, and probably to South Africa.



## APPENDIX E

### An Annotated Partial Bibliography of Reference Works Used in the Preparation of this History

Most of the material in this history and its appendices is based on examination of reading instruction texts or original literature of the various periods. This examination has been aided by the approximately ten thousand photocopies I made during the summer of 1986 of pertinent portions of reading texts and other pertinent materials in the Harvard collections, as well as some penciled notes taken at their Houghton Library. Also available for consideration were some ten thousand or so photocopies I obtained since 1979 of pertinent portions of other old works at other libraries, and written notes taken at those libraries on materials on which photocopies could not be made.

The principal libraries used were the following:

Harvard Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
New York Public Library, New York, New York  
Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.  
U. S. Department of Education Library, Washington, D. C.  
University of Chicago Library, Chicago, Illinois  
American Antiquarian Society Library, Worcester, Massachusetts  
Syracuse Public Library, Syracuse, New York  
Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York  
The British Library, London, England

The principal catalogs consulted were the following:

American Catalogues, 1876 and Later  
United States Catalogs, 1912 and 1928

However, some general works have been of particular use and are listed below in chronological order, with notes where necessary. Some very early English texts of great interest in the history of reading instruction which are not listed below are discussed in this history in Part 2, Chapter 3, and some works in French not listed below are given in Part 3, Chapter 10.

Since I probably looked at thousands of books and periodicals over the last twenty-three years while doing my research, and in addition made photocopied excerpts and written notes on perhaps two thousand or so reading instruction textbooks and other books and periodicals, it is impossible to list them all here. Nevertheless, an attempt has been made to show here those particular non-textbook sources which seemed to be of most importance, since such a list may be of help to future researchers. In addition, some reference materials which I have not seen but which may be of use to researchers are also included below.

The listing follows, in chronological order.

\*\*\*\*\*

Circa 20 Before Christ - The ancient Greek Dionysius of Halicarnassus writing about 20 B. C. is quoted by Mitford Mathews, pages 6 and 7 of Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1966, listed later. Mathews took the quotation from Dionysius of Halicarnassus by W. Rhys Roberts, London, 1910, page 269:

“When we are taught to read, first we learn off the names of the letters, then their forms and their values, then in due course syllables and their modifications, and finally words and their properties, viz. lengthenings and shortenings, accents, and the like. After acquiring the knowledge of these things, we begin to write and read, syllable by syllable and slowly at first. And when the lapse of a considerable time has implanted the forms of words firmly in our minds, then we deal with them without the least difficulty, and whenever any book is placed in our hands we go through it without stumbling and with incredible facility and speed.”

Dionysius described automaticity in reading. However, something else is notable. He also described automaticity in reading print which was run together, with no separation between words, and even without any punctuation on sentence structure (capitals, periods, commas, etc.). Those refinements did not arrive in general use until after Alcuin’s influence in the ninth century, about the time that the use of capital and small letters also began. Before that time, print had been either all in capital letters or all in what we call “small” letters. (The evolution of letter types is covered very well in many reference works.) The automaticity in reading therefore concerned both the ability to syllabicate run-together print into words, and an apparent automatic ability to perceive syntactical structure at a high speed, without any markers in print (capitals, periods, commas, etc.,) to assist the reader.

As indicated elsewhere in this history, as late as the fourth century A. D., St. Augustine of Hippo expressed surprise at St. Ambrose when he found him reading silently to himself, instead of orally. On page 78 of *Teaching Reading in Early England*, Pitman Publishing, London, 1973, W. J. Frank Davies referred to St. Augustine’s surprised comment. Since reading until after St. Augustine’s time was oral, inaccuracies and even meaningful “psycholinguistic guessing” would have been glaringly obvious to listeners. Therefore, there can be little doubt about the high accuracy and speed which Dionysius claimed was the norm in the ancient past. Yet even the most proficient readers today are incapable of reading unfamiliar run-together print, without even any punctuation, at high speed, which Dionysius described as the norm in the ancient past. Those ancient readers had acquired an “automaticity” in dealing with run-together print which we do not have today. Readers today do not achieve that kind of automaticity in syllabifying, because today we read “words,” and are never faced with run-together print to divide into syllables and then into the words that result from those syllables. (Furthermore, readers today do not have to deal with run-together sentences!) It is obvious that a great but almost totally unacknowledged shift occurred in our writing system from “sound” toward “meaning,” when word separations in print became the norm, because of the influence of the monk, Alcuin, in Charlemagne’s court circa 800 A. D.

Circa 50 Anno Domini - The *Institutio Oratoria* of Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, Rome. A 1951 English translation, *The Institutio Oratoria of Marcus Fabius Quintilianus, With An English Summary and Concordance*, was made by Charles Edgar Little, Ph. D., Professor of Latin in George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, in “Two Volumes, Printed for George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee”.

Some excerpts from Quintilian’s work were also reproduced in Henry B. Barnard’s nineteenth-century *American Journal of Education* and frequently elsewhere as well. The English translation that Barnard printed (1863-1864?, page 113) of the pertinent and very valuable Quintilian section concerning reading is the best that I have seen. (From Mitford Mathews’ quote of a portion of that excerpt with almost the same wording, for which translation Mathews cited the 1875-76 work of John Selby Watson, London, it seems probable that Barnard about 1863 was quoting from an earlier Watson translation.)

Although the Little publication of the Quintilian material is of great value because it reproduces the original Latin, its translation of the following very important excerpt is shockingly inadequate. However,

since Little's work was not published until after his death, I suspect that some "expert" mouse must have nibbled at that particular piece of valuable cheese.

The translation given by Barnard follows:

"For learning syllables there is no short way; they must all be learned throughout; nor are the most difficult of them, as is the general practice, to be postponed, that children may be at a loss, forsooth, in writing words. Moreover we must not even trust to the first learning by heart; it will be better to have syllables repeated, and to impress them long upon the memory; and in reading too, not to hurry on, in order to make it continuous or quick, until the clear and certain connection of the letters become familiar, without at least any necessity to stop for recollection. Let the pupil then begin to form words from syllables, and to join phrases together from words. It is incredible how much retardation is caused to reading by haste; for hence arise hesitation, interruption, and repetition, as children attempt more than they can manage; and then, after making mistakes, they become distrustful even of what they know. Let reading, therefore, be at first sure, then continuous, and for a long time slow, until, by exercise, a correct quickness is gained. For to look to the right, as everybody teaches, and to look forward, depends not merely on rule, but on habit, since, while the child is looking to what follows, he has to pronounce what goes before, and, what is very difficult, the direction of his thought must be divided, so that one duty may be discharged with his voice, and another with his eyes."

It is interesting to see that Quintilian referred to what C. T. Gray called the "Anticipation of Meaning as a Factor in Reading," in an April, 1923, article in the *Elementary School Journal* of the University of Chicago. To some degree that is part of what Kenneth Goodman far more recently labeled "psycholinguistic guessing." Yet syntactical thought is a unit, so what is really at issue is the psychological urge to complete a syntactical unit once it has begun.

Brain research today suggests that the perception of printed syntax, like the perception of printed words, is automatic, and that the two activities (on syntax and on words) are carried out in specialized areas devoted to them in the brain. See the illustrations in *Inside the Brain*, listed later under 1980, concerning word areas and separate syntax areas in brains. These areas were identified in experimental work with actual patients prior to neurosurgery, although the precise location of the areas differed from patient to patient. In addition, it has been shown that some partial aphasics, incapable of speaking consciously but capable of parroting what others speak, can correct grammar when repeating what they hear. Because they are incapable of speaking consciously or of understanding speech, their correction of grammar has to be an automatic operation, confirming the automaticity of syntax. Sid J. Segalowitz wrote the following concerning such rare cases, on page 22 of *Two Sides of The Brain*, listed later under 1983.

"One last specific syndrome is very rare: isolation of the speech area. Patients in this situation cannot converse with someone nor understand them, yet are capable of repeating, completing sentences, producing automatic sequences, and of correcting faulty grammar in a phrase that is repeated! Meaningful comprehension and production are impossible."

"Closure" is the psychological urge to complete any action already begun. The patients Segalowitz described could even automatically complete sentences ("syntax") without understanding them! Therefore, "anticipation of meaning" in reading, when seen simply as an aspect of automatic syntax, might be described as the automatic application of "closure" to automatic syntax. Consciousness is not necessarily involved in such syntactical "anticipation of meaning," which is very much the same as what Quintilian described as looking to the right and looking forward while pronouncing what goes before. Nevertheless, Quintilian correctly assumed that the two simultaneous actions (looking forward while pronouncing what goes before) could occur efficiently only if the ability to read syllables and words were

perfected. Otherwise, that act could not be done “by habit,” automatically. That most famous educator, Quintilian, about 50 A. D., almost two thousand years ago in Rome, therefore deplored “psycholinguistically guessing” at printed words, instead of learning how to pronounce them rapidly with absolute certainty.

Circa 300 A. D. - The Ars Minor and Major of Donatus. See the entry under 1926 for the English translation of the Ars Minor by Wayland Johnson Chase.

Circa 350 A. D. - St. Jerome, Select Letters, edited by F. A. Wright. Published in the Loeb Classical Library. This volume reportedly contains St. Jerome’s letter to Laeta concerning the teaching of beginning reading, quoted in part in Teaching Reading in Early England, by W. J. Frank Davies, 1973, Pitman Publishing, London, which quotation is included in this history.

731 A. D. A History of the English Church and People, by Bede, an English monk (born 673, died 735), Translated and with an Introduction by Leo Sherley-Price, Revised by R. E. Latham, Dorset Press, New York, 1985, by arrangement with Penguin Books, Ltd., Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England.

Written in 731 A. D., this provides considerable background material on education at that time and for some hundred years before, besides being remarkably interesting in general. In Chapter 27, page 195, Bede wrote the following concerning the period about 664 A. D., only 67 years before he wrote:

“At this period there were many English nobles and lesser folk in Ireland who had left their own land... either to pursue religious studies or to lead a life of stricter discipline. Some of these soon devoted themselves to the monastic life, while others preferred to travel, studying under various teachers in turn. [Ed.: Concerning the following, before about 1,000 A. D. or so, “Scot” meant anyone from Ireland, while “Pict” meant anyone from what is now Scotland.] The Scots welcomed them all kindly, and, without asking for any payment, provided them with daily food, books, and instruction.”

The above translation differs slightly from the translation given by John Morris in The Age of Arthur, which was quoted previously in this history. An anonymous Irish work composed in the early 600’s, which partly confirms Bede’s last remark about the populace’s open-handed reception of scholars, is *Hisperica Famina*, referred to later in this bibliography. It had an excellent recent translation and commentary by Michael Herren of Toronto. However, it referred to Irish lay, not clerical, scholars, who were being schooled in what was a continuation of the Druid educational tradition. Further confirmation on general educational practices of the period can be had from the surviving written saints’ “lives.” In addition, The Age of Arthur, by John Morris, listed under 1973 in this bibliography, is a goldmine of information on the period, including the facilities for education for both boys and girls in ancient Ireland, and going back as far as Illtud’s British school for boys in the fifth century in what is now Wales. Several other relatively recent works concerning this period are also listed later in this bibliography.

On page 316 of the long article concerning the education of the deaf in Volume V of The Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), the following appears:

“According to Venerable Bede, St. John of Beverley (721) caused a deaf and dumb youth to speak by making the sign of the cross over him; and Bede himself, in his ‘De Loquela per gestum digitorum’ describes a manual alphabet.”

The Ogham alphabet was still in some use in Ireland about 700, and the Irish-English connections were still manifold at the time. As discussed elsewhere in this history, it is very likely that the circa 700 finger alphabet described by Bede was based on the finger alphabet that stood for the Ogham letter

characters. The Ogham letter characters are presumed to have been invented in the third century A. D. by pagan Druid scholars, inspired by the Germanic runes invented about 250 B. C. The Ogham finger alphabet certainly could easily have been adapted for teaching language to the deaf, which was apparently Bede's aim.

1100-1300 Charters and Documents Illustrating the History of the Cathedral City of Sarum, 1100-1300, [Salisbury, England], ed. W. D. Macray (R.S., 1891)

This is given in the Appendix to Parry's history, *Education in England in the Middle Ages*, listed here under 1920. Also included in Parry's Appendix are compilations and guides on many other materials from about 700 to 1500, including those concerning such historically important people as Aelfric, Alcuin, Aldhelm, Alfred the Great, Roger Bacon, Thomas a Becket, Bede, Chaucer, Giraldus Cambrensis, Robert Grosseteste, John of Salisbury, Lanfranc, Alexander Neckham, and the Pastons, Much information on education practices is contained in these works, and Parry quotes much of it.

Circa 1150 Metalogicon, by John of Salisbury (c. 1115-1180).

In his 1986 book listed later, Dr. O'Mathuna commented (page 127) concerning John of Salisbury's use of Quintilian's texts:

"Quintilian had for long enjoyed a richly deserved reputation. His *Institutio Oratoria*, particularly its opening books, contained more practical common sense capable of ready translation to the classroom than almost any other treatise from antiquity. By the late Middle Ages, however, only fragmentary copies of his famous work were known to have survived: the ideas developed in his opening books were known only through secondary sources, such as John of Salisbury (c. 1115-1180) in *Metalogicon*, or through tradition. In 1415, however, Poggio Bracciolini, who was attending as secretary at the Council of Constance, rediscovered a complete copy of all twelve books of 'The Training of an Orator' in the library of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Gall. This happy find had considerable influence on educational theory for many years to come and nowhere more than in the Jesuit order."

This establishes quite clearly that the early Middle Ages were very superior, culturally speaking, in comparison to the late Middle Ages. Before the early date of 1180, John of Salisbury in England had enough access to Quintilian's work so that he could write a secondary work based on it. Probably long before John of Salisbury in England in the 1100's (from before 900, to judge from reports dating the surviving complete books) the St. Gall Monastery in Switzerland had all twelve of Quintilian's books. Yet the use of Quintilian's works had declined so much in all of Europe after 1200 that copies of most of Quintilian's works had disappeared by 1415. How, then, can the 1200's and 1300's be considered culturally advanced over the 800's, 900's, 1000's and 1100's, as is almost uniformly considered to be true? See the comments of Roger Bacon in the 1200's, quoted at length elsewhere, which establish that Bacon, himself, one of the greatest scholars of all time, believed that the academic world of his own time was very degenerate.

In his 1920 history listed later, Albert Parry quoted from early medieval source materials which establish that excellent educational facilities were available for ordinary people in John of Salisbury's day in the 1100's. Parry specifically mentions the educational opportunities given to John of Salisbury.

1364 and earlier, Polychronicon, by Ranulf Higden, who became a monk in England in 1299 and died in 1364. In the article, "Annals," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume I, page 535, Higden is described as a chronicler who "... is known only by his great work, the 'Polychronicon,' a universal history down to his own times." It was in this work that Higden referred to the comment concerning testing a man for

literacy that had been made by Lanfranc (circa 1005-1089), Archbishop of Canterbury. That comment has been discussed earlier in this history, since it implies that the syllabary was used in Lanfranc's and Higden's time.

In the Appendix to Parry's 1920 book, *Education in England in the Middle Ages*, listed later, he described the following edition of the *Polychronicon*:

“Higden, Ranulf, *Polychronicon* (with the English translation of John Trevisa), ed. C. Babington, J. R. Lumby, 9 vols. (R. S.), Lond., 1865-83.”

1405 *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, by Christine de Pisan, translated by Sarah Lawson, Penguin Classics: 1985, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England. The existence of this book addressed to women of all classes by a very prolific and highly successful woman writer of the time establishes the fact of considerable non-clerical literacy in the late middle ages. This book appeared well before the arrival of the printing press. The book could only be “published” by being copied in handwriting by professional scribes.

The book is also a window on the world of that time. It is surprisingly illuminating in many respects, particularly concerning the moral degeneracy of the period. That period is wrongly represented in some works as a deeply religious time. Recently published material stated that there was a widespread and unwholesome fear of Hell in the fifteenth century. Yet the widespread ugly behavior in the fifteenth century is an ample explanation for the fact that some people had such a fear, which was in many cases apparently well earned! The author was herself a devout woman, but wrote matter-of-factly and bluntly of widespread ugly and vicious behavior in many fields, cautioning her readers to be on guard against it. For instance, prostitution was apparently so commonplace that she addressed a chapter in her book to prostitutes (urging them to reform). Yet she also cautioned young wives against even the appearance of infidelity because, almost unbelievably, at that time some allegedly unfaithful wives had been burned at the stake or even buried alive! Such husbands were certainly not concerned with the Gospel about the woman taken in adultery, whom men were going to stone but who was spared by Jesus! To call such degenerate people “Christian” is to defame the word. Christine de Pisan made matter-of-fact 1405 A. D. comments on contemptible everyday behavior in other fields, concerning routine cheating, lying, and stealing. Those comments should be contrasted to those of the monk, Bede, about 731 A. D., which establish that, unlike Christine de Pisan, he wrote in what was truly a deeply religious period for the Christian population as a whole.

What is most notable in the contrast between Bede's 731 work and Christine de Pisan's 1405 work is the relative status of women. It was extraordinarily high in Bede's period, but debased in Christine de Pisan's period. By itself, that alone confirms that the latter period was more pagan than Christian, since the status of women in pagan countries has almost uniformly been low. In Bede's time and before, women had sometimes been the heads of monasteries, and not infrequently women from those monasteries were famous for their learning. Yet learned women were extremely rare in Christine de Pisan's time. Nevertheless, Bede considered even his own period to be a degenerate period!

Circa 1414 A. D. - *ABC de Simple Gens* (*The A B C of Simple Folk*), by Father John Gerson (1363-1429), who had been the chancellor of the University of Paris. This is not a beginning reading text, but is an elemental catechism. However, its title confirms that ABC books were so ubiquitous in France by 1414 that the term, an “ABC,” could be used allegorically to mean a fundamental text in other areas than reading instruction. It also confirms that such an allegorical use would be very commonly understood about 1414, since the catechism was specifically written for teaching “Simple Gens,” or simple people, including children.

The intimate and chatty tone of Gerson's material differs from the formal tone of the earlier English catechisms of Peckham and Thoresby. John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, England, had written his catechism in 1281, and John De Thoresby, Archbishop of York, England, had written his in 1357, as outlined in *The Lay Folks' Catechism*, published for the Early English Text Society, London, 1901. However, because of the chatty tone of Gerson's catechism, in contrast to those of Peckham and Thoresby, it is probable that Gerson meant his material to be read personally by many of the "Simple Gens," instead of being merely read to them by a catechetical teacher. That seems to be a confirmation of more widespread literacy about 1414 than has generally been acknowledged.

It should be emphasized that teaching beginning reading in Latin by the syllable method is extraordinarily easy, and it was the standard approach at that time. Therefore, learning to read could easily be accomplished at home, if the home already had at least one literate member. The later transfer to reading the vernacular tongue was also easy, as the vernacular tongue, like Latin, was read by resurrecting a small and limited number of memorized printed syllable "sounds," instead of by resurrecting an almost unlimited number of printed word spellings. The fact that written French at that period, like written English, had variant word spellings proves that what people were reading (and writing) at that time was syllables, not words. Since printed syllable spellings are so limited in number and are therefore far easier to learn than vast numbers of word spellings, literacy was easily obtainable for simple people with the expenditure of little money or effort.

About 1414, Gerson also wrote for religious instruction *Opusculum Tripartitum de Praeceptis Decalogi, de Confessione et de Arte Moriendi*. According to M. Reu on page 574 of his article, "Religious Instruction of the Young in the Sixteenth Century," from the *Lutheran Church Review*, Volume 34, No. 5, of October, 1915:

"Gerson wished to have his book written wholly or at least partially on boards affixed to the walls in churches, schools and hospitals in order to keep its contents always before the eyes of people who were able to read."

The fact that some French churches of Gerson's period, about 1414, displayed tablets containing catechetical material to be learned is further confirmation of widespread literacy about 1414.

It is also confirmation of moral degeneracy, since the very simple contents of the basic catechism of the time (the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Apostle's Creed, the Ten Commandments, the seven sacraments, etc.) would routinely have been learned in childhood if the period had been even a moderately religious one. It must have been those basic portions of Gerson's work which he wanted displayed on tablets. (Note the Latin words for the English words, Ten Commandments, in the title: "Praeceptis Decalogi") Yet Gerson's request to display those tablets establishes that many people who had learned to read about 1414 did not know such basic religious material as the Ten Commandments! That fact is enlightening concerning the cultural degeneracy of that period.

1571 Historie of Ireland, by Edmund Campion. Campion was an Englishman and a Catholic martyr who was executed during Queen Elizabeth's reign and who was later canonized. Campion wrote this very hostile and brief "historie" of Ireland during his brief stay there. Since Gaelic was overwhelmingly still the dominant language in Ireland at that time, it is possible that Campion had trouble communicating, and that might have contributed to his very obvious hostility. The fact that there had already been some four hundred years of hostilities between the Irish and the English by the sixteenth century was probably the most important influence on Campion's outlook.

The quotation from Julius Caesar given earlier in this history concerning the Druidic Celts in France in the first century B. C. reported that they were forbidden to write their learning, being required instead

to memorize it, even though they had the use of Greek letters when needed. Caesar approved of the memorization, because he said in effect that over-dependence on writing tends to weaken the memory. Almost certainly, the memorization by the Druidic Celts involved oral recitation. Some of Campion's eye-witness comments, quoted below, are of great interest concerning what was effectively the persistence of that ancient Druidic education system, which had originated long before Julius Caesar's day and which Campion still saw in operation in the sixteenth century, although the Druids themselves had disappeared over a thousand years before. That Druidic education system reportedly was not extinguished for another hundred years, until the seventeenth century. Yet, as late as the sixteenth century, Campion heard the students in the ancient schools (which he called schools of "leachcraft" or medicine, and "law") demonstrate a remarkable proficiency in spoken Latin. They had learned Latin by the same "memorizing" method of the Celtic Druids that had been reported by Caesar, himself, in the first century before Christ.

Although the Druidic kind of education system died in the seventeenth century, the hidden "hedge schools" then sprang up in Ireland after the finally-victorious English had outlawed education for Irish Catholic children by the enactment of the infamous Penal Laws starting in the late seventeenth century. The Penal code concerned a lot more than forbidding education to Catholic children. It took away virtually every civil right of Roman Catholics, including the right to own almost anything, and it called for executing Catholic clergy if discovered. Montesquieu, the French jurist (who was not a practicing Catholic) said of the anti-Catholic Penal code that it was "conceived by demons, written in blood, and registered in Hell," as cited on page 455 of *The Story of the Irish Race*, Seumas MacManus, 1921, 1966, The Devin-Adair Company, Old Greenwich, Connecticut. Pages 458-460 of MacManus's book summarizes the unbelievable content of the Penal Laws that were not repealed until about 1829, although their once violent enforcement apparently began to fade by the end of the eighteenth century.

The probability is that the hedge schools that arose after the enactment of the Penal Laws did have a cultural link to the Druidic schools, since the persistence of cultural memories can be so astonishingly long. It is interesting that those hidden hedge schools into the nineteenth century were so successful in teaching poor boys Latin that many emigrant Irishmen became Latin schoolmasters in America. Those boys almost certainly would have learned Latin by the same memorizing method that was cited by Caesar, and by the same memorizing method that Campion observed in Ireland in the sixteenth century.

The hedge schools have already been discussed in Part 4, when mention was made of W. B. Yeats' Representative Irish Tales, as quoted in the article, "William Carleton," (1798-1869), in *Irish Literature*, Bigelow, Smith & Company, New York: 1904, Justin McCarthy, Editor. Yeats wrote of Carleton:

"His education, such as it was, was beaten into him by hedge schoolmasters. Like other peasants of his time, he learned to read out of the Chap-books - 'Freny, the Robber,' 'Rogues and Rapparees' or else, maybe, from the undesirable pages of 'Laugh and Be Fat'.... He sat under three schoolmasters in succession.... They were a queer race, bred by Government in its endeavor to put down Catholic education. The thing being forbidden, the peasantry had sent their children to learn reading and writing, and a little Latin even, under the 'hips and haws' of the hedges. The sons of plowmen were hard at work construing Virgil and Horace, so great a joy is there in illegality...."

"When a boy showed great attention to his books, he would be singled out to be a priest, and a subscription raised to start him on his way to Maynooth. Every peasant's house, as he trudged upon his road, would open its door to him, such honor had learning and piety among the poor..."

Note the enshrinement of "learning" among the poor in early nineteenth-century Ireland, even though that high regard for learning is certainly not characteristic of "the poor" in most areas. That high regard



was also a cultural relic from as long ago as the seventh century. See the later entry under 1974 for *The Hisperica Famina: I. The A-Text*, translated by Michael W. Herren of York University, Toronto. The material which Herren so interestingly translated and annotated is presumed by Herren to have been used as a student text in Latin in Irish lay schools about 650 A. D., the same kind of schools of medicine and law that Campion saw a thousand years later. The seventh century book demonstrates the same high regard of the general Irish population in the seventh century for learning, since the selections matter-of-factly report on lay scholars in the ancient Druidic tradition being routinely welcomed and fed by local people where ever they went.

A less mocking account of the “hedge schools” than Yeat’s is given by Henry Giles (page 1280, Volume IV of *Irish Literature*,) in the article “The Irish Intellect,” from a collection of Giles’ published in 1845:

“The Catholic Irish in those hard times when education was thus forbidden them, carried their literary studies into the silent fields, and amidst bushes and brambles coned Homer, Virgil, Euclid or the spelling book; and this was the origin of what has been called ‘the hedge-school.’ The old Irish hedge-school should be held in immortal honor, as the last refuge of a people’s mind and as the last sanctuary of persecuted intellect. The Irish who dared all penalties for their faith, dared no less for their understanding. They were as zealous martyrs for scholarship as for conscience. Even while the penal laws were still in force, peasants who spoke Latin could be found among the hills of southern Ireland, and at all times classical studies have been popular among the Irish.”

John O’Keeffe (1747-1833) (Vol. VII, *Irish Literature*, p. 2770 and following), wrote this in *From the Recollections of John O’Keeffe*, 2 vols., 1826. O’Keeffe had been a writer of successful plays who tragically had gone blind in mid-life. Born in 1747, his “early times” would have been well before 1770:

“In my early times, all the great outlets from Dublin had, inside the hedges, parallel footpaths with the road, and the stile, where the hedges divided the fields, were models for stiles all over the civilized world... in my time, the word village was not known, but every group of cabins had a piper and a schoolmaster, and before every cabin door, in fine weather, there was the Norah, or Kathleen, at her spinning wheel (no woman ever worked out of doors, or in the fields).”

Presumably, in the “hedge schools,” Latin was learned by an emphasis on oral, not silent practice of memorized selections, just as had been reported in anecdotes from the early Irish saints’ “lives” from the sixth to the eighth centuries, which are quoted elsewhere. The Irish students that Campion observed in the sixteenth century (“lustie fellows of twenty-five yeares and upwards”) were also required to memorize excerpts, just as Caesar had noted that the Celtic Druids did in Gaul long before. Campion noted that the Irish students had to recite those excerpts orally, although Campion belittled that practice.

Two probable reasons account for the accomplished Latin (bilingualism) of the Irish students that Campion noticed in the sixteenth century. Those same reasons probably account for the bilingualism of the early Irish monks from the sixth to the tenth centuries, which was discussed earlier in the material by Morris. They also probably account for the accomplishments in Latin of the boys taught in the forbidden Irish hedge schools, which accomplishments were so great that many of the obviously very poor boys emigrated to America to become Latin schoolmasters.

The first of those two probable reasons for the high proficiency of all three groups in spoken Latin is that the students in all three groups did not just memorize selections, as Caesar had noted the Celtic Druids did, but they also had to recite the selections aloud at the precise time that they were memorizing them. The second probable reason is that, by memorizing selections by reciting them aloud, students were

automatically dealing with syntactic wholes instead of with isolated words. Dealing with syntactic wholes, as discussed in Part 3, greatly aids in the learning of a language. (However, although it is not recorded in history, it is probable that Caesar's Druids also memorized their material by reciting it aloud.)

It is reasonable to assume, nevertheless, that when Campion saw the professional schools of medicine and Brehon law still operating in the Druidic tradition of professional schools in the sixteenth century, which was not long before they disappeared, the schools must already have degenerated because of the hundreds of years of conflict with the English and the resultant occupation of large parts of Ireland by the English. Campion wrote:

“...Without either precepts or observation of congruity, they speake Latin like a vulgar language learned in their common schooles of leach-craft and law whereat they begin children and hold on sixteen or twentie yeares, conning by roate the aphorismes of Hypocrates and the Civill Institutions and a few other parings of those two faculties. I have seen them where they kept school, ten in some one chamber... Books at their noses, themselves lying flatte prostrate and so they chant out their lesson by piecemeale being the most part lustie fellows of twenty-five years and upwards...”

In summary, the memorization and recitation of texts that Campion witnessed in the sixteenth century in Ireland, and of which Campion so obviously disapproved, was actually a highly successful Celtic Druidic practice about two thousand years old, and the same practice that had been cited by Julius Caesar sixteen hundred years earlier.

1587 (First version in 1576) The Petie Schole with an English Orthographie...., by Francis Clement. It is reproduced with a commentary in Four Tudor Books on Education, by Robert D. Pepper, Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, Gainesville, Florida, 1966. Pepper's reproduction includes Sir Thomas Elyot's The Education or Bringing Up of Children (1533), Dudley Fenner's The Artes of Logike and Rethorike (1584), and William Kempe's The Education of Children in Learning (1588).

Clement's book has been discussed in this history. It is of real importance as possibly the first English “spelling book,” although no where nearly so complete as the far more successful spelling book by Coote in 1596, listed below. Spelling books arrived in England not long after the switch to teaching beginning reading in difficult English instead of easy Latin, which switch had obviously caused a problem. Clement discussed spelling by rules instead of by giving word lists, which is what Coote did. Clement also cautioned against beginner's common errors: “Beware he missound not... gla, gle, gli, glo, glu, as if it were dla, dle, dly, dlo, dlu, which if they doe, must be corrected. For ing, ending a word, let him not prononce in, leaving out the g, as speakin, for speaking.” It is self-evident that Clement was using a “sound” approach to teach beginning reading, and not a “meaning” one.

1588 The Education of Children in Learning, by William Kempe. It is reproduced with a commentary in Four Tudor Books on Education, by Robert D. Pepper, Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, Gainesville, Florida, 1966. Pepper's reproduction includes Sir Thomas Elyot's The Education or Bringing Up of Children (1533), Francis Clement's The Petie Schole with an English Orthographie (1587), and Dudley Fenner's The Artes of Logike and Rethorike (1584). Kempe's book is a source of much material on the Elizabethan period. It is discussed by T. W. Baldwin in his book, William Shakspeare's Petty School, entered here later under 1943. See the comments under that 1943 heading on the initial steps of reading by the syllable method that were given in Kempe's book.

1596 The First Book of the English Schoole-maister, and The Second Book of the English School-maister (followed by a catechism, all three bound together as one book), by Edmund Coote, England.

This book is available on film in some major libraries, such as the Library of Congress. Coote's was the model for the spelling books which were to follow, and was enormously popular, being produced in a vast number of editions for over a century, as Volume 4, Spelling Books, in R. C. Alston's twelve-volume bibliography establishes. It contained not just systematic rules, but systematic spellings, and inserted short paragraphs for reading practice. (Alston's material is cited later under 1969: the twelve-volume series, A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Bradford, England.)

1612 Ludus Literarius: Or, The Grammar Schoole, Shewing How To Proceede from the first entrance into learning, to the highest perfection required in the Grammar Schooles, with ease, certainty and delight both to Masters and Schollars; onely according to our common Grammar, and ordinary Classical Authours: .... by John Brinsley (1585-1665), London. Reprinted in English Linguistics 1500-1800 (A Collection of Facsimile Reprints) Selected and Edited by R. C. Alston, No. 62, The Scholar Press Limited, Menston, England, 1968.

On page 16, Brinsley described the teaching of reading by the syllable method, plus analytic phonics ("hand, band, land, sand &c."), and wrote in the margin, "M. Coote's English Schoolemaster might be profitable to this purpose, in which booke are syllables & words of all sorts." See the 1596 entry above on Coote.

Despite Alston's extraordinary work in reproducing helpful materials such as this and in compiling his massive twelve-volume bibliography of the English language, (A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800, Bradford, England, 1969), his concern in doing so was with the history of linguistics, and not with the history of the teaching of beginning reading. Alston either had no knowledge of or no interest in the controversy concerning methods for teaching beginning reading, and most naturally therefore had no interest in the history of beginning reading.

Furthermore, Alston had the characteristic blind-spot of intellectuals concerning pre-Reformation educational facilities. Education in England in the Middle Ages by Albert W. Parry, listed later under 1920, quoted materials written before the Reformation which establish conclusively that widespread educational facilities were available in pre-Reformation England without charge for the unprivileged classes. Yet Alston repeated the common error that a concern for education of the "common man" dated only from long after the Reformation, when he said about Brinsley in the "Note" at the beginning of the Brinsley reproduction:

"It was, indeed, his zeal for promoting the education of the common man (in which respect he was in advance of Comenius, Hartlib and Milton) which led to his being suspended from teaching at Ashby-de-la-Zouch in 1620."

Alston's comment also seems to contradict the usual explanation for Brinsley's suspension, which is that he was a Puritan sympathizer in a Royalist environment.

1657 Orbis Sensualium Pictus.... by Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1670), Written by the author in Latin and High Dutch... Tr. into English by Charles Hoole M. A. for the use of Young Latin Scholars. New York, 1810.

Comenius was the famous Moravian educator, and this book was a successful and enormously widely used textbook for teaching Latin to beginners in the seventeenth century. The preceding description was given by Mitford Mathews in Teaching to Read, Historically Considered, 1966, University of Chicago, listed later. Mathews wrote:

“This work by Comenius appeared in 1657 and was at once translated by Hoole who signed his ‘Translator’s Preface, From my School in Lothbury, London, Jan. 25, 1658.’ The New York printing was a reproduction of the 12th London Edition.”

Another American edition was by the publisher of the School Bulletin, C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York, in 1887.

The fable which originated at Columbia Teachers College about 1900 that Comenius endorsed sight-words in the seventeenth century in his *Orbis Pictus* has been very widely promoted. Mitford Mathews provided the refutation of that fable in his book *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, as has been discussed at length in this history.

1654 The Parish School, or the Manner of Properly Instructing Children in the Little Schools, by a Priest of a Parish in Paris. [Ed.: shown as Pere I. D. B. in the article, “Lecture” in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire*, Paris, 1887-1887] - (*L’ecole Paroissiale ou la maniere de bien instruire les enfants dans les petites ecoles, par un pretre d’une paroisse de Paris*.) Paris.

This book was listed in the article, “Bibliographie,” in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire*, which is discussed later in this listing. The entry stated that it had been “Prescribed or recommended by a great number of bishops,” which indicates that it was very influential. The article, “Lecture,” in the *Dictionnaire* contained excerpts from this work, and they were precise instructions for the teaching of beginning reading in Latin by the syllable method. A relatively small portion of those quoted instructions follows:

“...not to undertake to make them fly in reading before they know how to spell the letters because, wishing to advance them teaching them so many things at one time, one makes their reading so confused that further they are a long time learning; [and] they never know to read well, neither in Latin or in French.

“To proceed, therefore, by order, it is necessary (1) to teach the little children to know the letters, (2) to assemble them to make syllables, (3) to spell the syllables to make some words, and afterwards to read....

“The letters should be shown to the children on an alphabet: that is, a little book of four or five sheets, which contain: (a) the lower-case letters, the capitals, abbreviations, italic letters, large and small, (2) two columns of syllables, of all the letters that can be assembled, as with the simple vowels, like ba, pa, [and] with a liquid and a vowel, like bra, bla. There must be in this same book [Ed.: all in Latin] the Our Father, Hail Mary, Apostles Creed, Misereatur, Confiteor, Benedicite, Agimus, Et beata, and Angele Dei, printed in large, lower case letters, and well distinguished, the syllables separated one from the other.... When the children know their letters and begin to spell, one must put in their hands a second book....”

The meaning at that stage really was, not to “spell” in the sense that we use the word today, but to “read” words instead of just syllables, by separating the words into syllables, and then naming the letters in each syllable (which is what was meant by “spelling), the sound of which “spelled” syllables had already been memorized in the first book.

The excerpt listed the contents for the second book: various prayers, seven Psalms, a list of numbers to 1,000, and the responses at Mass, which would obviously be in Latin, and then the excerpt listed the

material for the third book. The entire excerpt in the “Lecture” article was considerably longer than is given here.

It was only later, in the Christian Brothers’ schools for poor boys about the beginning of the eighteenth century founded by La Salle, that beginning reading was taught in French. That switch from Latin to French was intended to make learning to read easier and faster, because it skipped the initial Latin step, but it certainly did not make it easier.

The article, “Bibliographie,” in the Dictionnaire also listed some other seventeenth and eighteenth century works which included instructions for teaching beginning reading. One was:

R. P. Fourier’s Constitutions - Lettres Choiesies, written in Paris in 1649. He had founded an order for the teaching of poor girls, and this was a teacher’s guide which included instructions for using the syllable method to teach beginning reading. (That an order was founded in mid-seventeenth-century France specifically to teach poor girls indicates a sharp cultural improvement in comparison to Christine de Pisan’s period in early-fifteenth-century France.) Other works from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries were discussed in the article, “Lecture” in the Dictionnaire. Some of these works are listed in the section of this history concerning France.

One seventeenth century priest engaged in teaching beginners was recently beatified by Pope John Paul II. The Catholic Advocate (Newark, New Jersey, page 2) of March 10, 1999, reported that Pope John Paul II had beatified ten people on March 7 (beatification being the first step toward canonization, which means being declared a saint). The article stated:

“Also beatified was Father Nicolas Barre, who set up small instructional programs for children in low-income areas of 17<sup>th</sup>-century France. He promoted the principle of the right to education for all, based on human dignity, and respect for the profession of teaching. He also convinced authorities to create flexible school schedules, so working-class children could continue to help out at home.”

Possibly, despite the difference in first-name initials, Father Nicolas Barre was the “Pere I. D. B.” mentioned above.

1660 A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching Schoole, by Charles Hoole, reproduced as No. 133 by R. C. Alston in English Linguistics 1500-1800 (A Collection of Facsimile Reprints), The Scolar Press Limited, Menston, England, 1969. This includes Hoole’s 1659 book, “The Petty Schoole, Shewing A way to teach little Children to read English with delight and profit (especially) according to the New Primar”. Hoole wrote the New Primar, and this material was apparently meant as a teacher’s guide for the use of that book. Hoole’s directions in this work for teaching beginning reading by the syllable method were very specific, and he also referred back to Brinsley’s earlier work. For Hoole’s comments in his New Primar, see the entry under 1908 on Foster Watson, who quoted from that book.

1664 Grammaire Generale of Port Royal, France, by Antoine Arnauld.

Chapter VI in Arnauld’s book briefly described Blaise Pascal’s 1655 synthetic phonics method without naming the mathematician/scientist Pascal as its author. Before that date, the analytic “sound” method had been used for teaching beginning reading. However, it had been in the form of the syllable method (ba, be, bi, bo, bu, etc.), plus analytic phonics in irregularly-spelled English and very possibly in irregularly-spelled French, (make, take, cake; might, fight, right; etc.). Synthetic, sounding-and-blending phonics (cuh-ah-tuh, cat, etc.) had apparently never been used prior to 1655. Although the synthetic phonics method appears ludicrously simple to us now, apparently no one before Pascal had ever suggested treating consonant sounds as if they could exist apart from vowels. The fact is that consonants

cannot exist apart from vowels. Yet making that improbable intellectual leap was necessary to invent the synthetic phonics method. (Pascal had suggested pronouncing each of the consonants followed by what amounted to the schwa, or muted vowel sound, which is what is actually heard when reciting such sequences of letter “sounds” as *cuh-ah-tuh* instead of the letter names, *c-a-t*, in the attempt to produce synthetically such words as *cat*.) It is not surprising that it took an acknowledged genius like Blaise Pascal to make that apparently unprecedented intellectual leap and to invent synthetic sounding-and-blending phonics for the teaching of beginning reading.

The synthetic phonics method made learning to read much quicker and easier than the ancient, more time-consuming, analytic “sound” methods. However, that Antoine Arnauld knew Pascal was the source of the synthetic phonics method, and that it was unknown before that time, is indicated by a letter Arnauld wrote on January 31, 1656, discussed in the Blaise Pascal article on page 2215 of the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire* (listed below). In the letter, Arnauld asked his niece at Port Royal about how to use Pascal phonics as Arnauld wished to teach an illiterate. The *Grammaire* is discussed in the article, “Lecture,” in the *Dictionnaire*.

Nevertheless, the *Encyclopedie* article, “Syllabaire,” which appeared a century later, possibly by Denis Diderot, and which recommended Pascal phonics, said that all syllables had to be thoroughly learned, as Quintilian had stated.

1691 *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, by John Locke, London, England. In this book, John Locke referred to practices then prevalent in England in teaching reading as the “ordinary road of the horn book, primer, psalter, Testament and Bible.” It is very conceivable that by the word, “primer,” Locke meant a “speller,” rather than a catechism like the *New England Primer Enlarged* which first appeared in 1691. See Appendix B for a discussion of the *New England Primer Enlarged* and some of the spellers of that period.

The reasonable comments in this book of the famous philosopher, John Locke, are the probable basis for what is generally called, “progressive education,” though the probability is that “private” education in good homes, as opposed to “public” education in groups, has almost always been “progressive.” (As late as the end of the eighteenth century, “private” education meant home education, and “public” education meant group education outside the home.) St. Jerome’s fourth-century letter concerning the teaching of beginning reading at home certainly concerned “progressive” methods. “Progressive education,” which is simply stimulating and enjoyable teaching and learning, combined with an instructor’s concern for the feelings, abilities, and interests of the child, certainly is enormously important. It is self-evident that a child who is led can be taught considerably more than a child who is driven, and without harming the child by producing unwholesome fear and resentment. “Progressive education” is fundamentally the same as the playful teaching methods most loving mothers frequently use when teaching their own little children almost anything at all. Nevertheless much harm has been done under the wrongful use of its name in “public” or group education, when next-to-nothing is taught to children, and little or no guidance is given to children because of a false concern for their supposed native “interests” and “abilities.”

1726 (1734?) *On the Manner of Teaching*. (De la maniere d’enseigner et d’etudier les belles-lettres) or *Treatise on Studies* (Supplement to *Traite des etudes*.) Paris, by Charles Rollin, (1661-1741). Rollin elaborated on Dumas’ method which used Pascal’s synthetic phonics, without naming Pascal or Port Royal where the approach was first used. A 1738 English translation of Part 1 is in the Department of Education library in Washington, D. C.

1733 *La Bibliotheque des Enfants*, by Dumas, France, 1733. Three volumes, the first explaining the *Bureau Typographique*, the second *l’abecedaire Latin*, and the third *l’abecedaire Francais*. Listed in the article “Lecture” in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instuction Primaire* and in the section of this

history on France. Dumas' letter-card method, the Bureau Typographique, used Pascal's synthetic phonics, without naming Pascal. Dumas had actually carried on his work for some time before 1733. It is interesting that, as late as 1733, Dumas expected teachers in France to teach beginning reading in Latin first, before teaching reading in French.

1740 The Irish Spelling Book. Anonymous. A Scholar Press Facsimile, English Linguistics 1500-1800 (Collection of Facsimile Reprints) Selected and edited by R. C. Alston. No. 199. The Scholar Press, Limited, Menston, England, 1969.

This extremely important but exceedingly rare and largely unknown book using Pascal synthetic phonics for the first time in the English language (without mention of Pascal) has been discussed in this history, and was probably inspired by the English translation printed in Dublin in 1738 of Rollin's 1726 French book casually describing (without naming) Pascal phonics as used by Dumas. Thomas Sheridan, Jr., was a young man in Ireland when this was published in Ireland, and it is the probable source for Sheridan's later highly important work on synthetic phonics. Using synthetic phonics, Sheridan became the first to conceive of an English "pronouncing" dictionary. However, others, acting on Sheridan's widely attended lectures on phonics and elocution in England, Scotland and Ireland, produced "pronouncing" dictionaries shortly before Sheridan's finally appeared in print in 1780.

Considering the involvement of Thomas Sheridan, Jr., in "pronouncing" print, it is very conceivable that his schoolmaster father, a man well known in his own right and a close friend of Jonathan Swift, was the anonymous admittedly-schoolmaster author of the 1740 Irish Spelling Book, which book is the probable source for the later work of Thomas Sheridan Jr. If the elder Sheridan had been that 1740 author, it would account for the intense interest that Thomas Sheridan, Jr., later showed in "pronouncing" print. The senior Sheridan is considered to have been brilliant, like his son, Thomas Jr., and his grandson, playwright/Parliament-member Richard, and would certainly have had the intellect to write The Irish Spelling Book.

1744 Quadrille des enfants, by Abbe Bertaud, France. The article, "Lecture," page 1540, Volume I, Part II of the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris: 1887, summarized the long history of what was called the "echo" method on page 1540, and the article on the Abbe Bertaud in the Dictionnaire, Volume I, Part I, outlined its approach. Abbe Bertaud's program taught basic sounds by whole words. It was an elaboration of the idea first developed by Vallange in 1719, New System or New Plans, etc. (Nouveau systeme ou nouveau plans etc.) Both Vallange and Bertaud inspired the methods of Anonymous in 1751, Alexandre in 1777, Michel in 1779, possibly Madame de Genlis in 1801, and Daubanton in 1810, and they are the apparent source of Code 3, two-step, "echo," whole-word phony phonics. In his book, Emile, Rousseau had testified that a vast interest existed in the teaching of reading in France by 1762, and these programs are some of the confirmations of that interest.

That was the period, of course, of the malignant "philosophes," the philosophers like Voltaire and Diderot, who did so much harm to Western Civilization. It is not surprising that the record reveals that the enormously harmful Code 3, two-step, "echo" whole-word phony phonics arrived in Voltaire's and Diderot's time and that it was enormously praised by the period's "intellectuals," as discussed below. Yet the charlatan Rousseau denied the necessity to teach reading at all! The infamous Rousseau was probably the first proponent of the so-called purely "natural" method.

The article, "Bertaud, Abbe" in Volume I-I of the Dictionnaire explains his program. It is obvious that, not just a picture, but a picture with a whole word and a letter or letters from that whole word were printed on each card in the program.

“Reading without spelling. 88 square cards from which comes the name of quadrille. [Ed.: quadrillage is a French noun for squaring, and quadrille is a French noun meaning a troop.] These cards each carry a picture representing an object known to the child and are meant to make him remember mnemonically one of the 86 syllables in which the Abbe Bertaud summarizes all the teaching of French reading; for example, to remember the sound, ‘u,’ the picture shows a bossu [Ed.: a hunchback.]. One shows the engraving to the pupil and at the same time the word bossu, then only the letter u. The pupil remembers that letter, at first by the aid of the picture, and insensibly by the same form of the letter that is written thus in his memory. (One recognizes there in principal the system of ‘normal’ words of Vogel.) When the pupil knows a series of 12 cards, he applies his acquired knowledge, in a series of syllables, of words and of sentences that one finds in the teacher’s book. By this means, the child quickly learns the 88 cards; he knows how to read at the end of some weeks of exercises.

“This method had a great vogue in the last century. The king of Prussia, who had been struck by the results, had the prince royal, Frederick William, taught to read by this procedure. Like all reading methods without spelling, it succeeds only with those pupils who have, as has been said, the memory of the eyes.”

This Dictionnaire article was signed, A. Demkes. The French “Quadrille” system of 1744, later called the “echo” approach, is clearly the origin of Code 3 two-step, whole-word phony phonics. Bertaud’s was also apparently the first program which taught children to read whole, meaning-bearing words long before they knew the whole alphabet, or the sound-bearing syllabary. Demkes said the reading of connected, meaning-bearing sentences using these whole words, and apparently words built from them, began when only 20 of the 86 cards had been learned! (Possibly the remaining two cards, to bring the total to the recorded 88, were the alphabet, one in upper and one in lower case letters.)

Just as is true today, two-step, whole-word phony phonics, with its initial conditioned reflexes based on whole-word “meaning” instead of on syllable “sound,” brought failure in its wake, as Demkes specifically noted. Yet, although the history of its origin has fallen into oblivion, it was a very famous method in its day, and was in wide use by the “intellectuals” in both Germany and France in the mid- and late-eighteenth century. Although the French Revolution in 1789 and the following wars until 1815 probably delayed its spread, it is the probable source for the harmful “meaning” method introduced in America in 1826, and in Great Britain about the same time.

However, by that time, the sight-word method had been further refined by the Abbe de l’Epee’s work with deaf-mutes, dating from about 1760.

Two-step whole-word phony phonics had a gradually developing history in eighteenth-century France. As briefly mentioned above, in 1719, M. de Vallange apparently originated it, and it was revised by the Abbot Bertaud in 1744 under the title, *Quadrille des Enfants*. “Anonymous” had also made a revision in 1751.

The article, “Lecture,” stated:

“The system due to Vallange and to Bertaud enjoyed a vogue that lasted rather a long time. It is related that Crebillon and Marivaux had it put to the test in their presence on two chimney-sweeps who, at the end of a month, by means of two lessons a day, were in the state of fluent reading. The Abbe Desfontaines called the process the philosopher’s stone for the teaching of reading.”



That the two-step phonic method, the precursor to the Code 3 phony phonics of today's basal readers, was called the philosopher's stone for the teaching of reading, showed that poor approaches in teaching reading have often received warm approval! In 1777, the material was revised again by Alexandre, a professor emeritus from the Ecole Militaire and was used by Madame de Genlis. It was revised again in 1779 by Michel. Finally, it was revised by a professor of grammar, Daubanton, who also applied it to the teaching of writing, in his books, *Reading by Echo*, 1810, and *Application of Reading by Echo to Writing*, 1811.

All these authors used the idea of teaching reading by the so-called "echo," which meant comparing the sounds in new, meaning-bearing words, to the memorized sounds from memorized whole sample meaning-bearing words. That obviously omitted syllable "sound," and used only whole-word "meaning." That is, of course, two-step whole-word phony phonics since it requires resurrecting the visual memories of whole, meaning-bearing words to compare to parts of the unknown word before it is possible to sound out the sequential parts of that unknown meaning-bearing word, by analogy. Even deaf-mute pupils can use the process to memorize new sight words, without the any use of sound whatsoever, by simply putting together memorized parts of sight words, like jig-saw puzzle pieces.

Becoming a Nation of Readers, The National Institute of Education, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1985, page 12, lines 3 through 20, confirms that the time-consuming and distracting two-step "echo" approach is what is used by most American readers today, instead of one-step synthetic phonics. This is hardly surprising, since most adult Americans today were taught to read with Dick and Jane or its clones which drilled on the use of two-step, phony phonics.

Shortly after 1826 and until about the 1870's, most American reading books had used only Code 1 pure sight words, Gallaudet's initial approach, based on the beginning approach that the Abbe de l'Epee had used in teaching deaf-mutes to read. At an advanced stage, the Abbe had apparently used the Code 3 approach, because his follower, Gallaudet, had eventually used the Code 3 approach, comparing whole meaning-bearing sight-words to each other to tell them apart. Yet many of the post-1826 American materials used only the pure Code 1 method, in which each word was learned without reference to any others, but only by memorizing its letter sequence ("see-aye-tee, cat" which obviously is not phonics). In the United States in the 1860's, there was a partial but aborted return to true Code 10 phonics. This resulted in activists promoting instead the American use of Code 3 "echo" whole-word phony phonics for beginners in the 1870's and later.

The "echo" Code 3 method was also in almost universal use in England in the 1870's as shown by beginning reading books of that period. It had apparently been in such dominant use there since about 1830, although the Code 1 approach appeared in some texts. The source of both harmful methods, Gallaudet's 1830 (and before) initial Code 1 approach, and Daubanton's 1810 (as well as the deaf-mute method) Code 3 approach, obviously lies in eighteenth century France.

1751 to 1772 Encyclopedie ou Dictionnaire Raisonne des Sciences, des Arts et des Metiers, by Denis Diderot et al, 28 volumes published in France, in particular the article entitled "Syllabaire," in Volume 15 published in 1765, page 713. The last time that I consulted the volumes (with the paper in astonishingly good condition), they were on the open reference shelves in the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street, although those enormously valuable volumes may no longer be so readily available. (Those volumes may, of course, have been reprints, and not originals, but they did not appear to have been reprints.) The "Syllabaire" article is discussed elsewhere in this history. It defined "syllabaire" as "the common name for the little book containing the first elements of reading...." The author, very possibly Diderot, apparently expected children to learn to read in French, not Latin. However, he said it was essential that all syllables be taught at the beginning stage, citing Quintilian as an authority for that statement, but he endorsed (Pascal's) synthetic phonics for doing so.

In Volume 7 published in 1757, on page 845, the following appears (obviously, in French, but translated here) in the article, “Grammaire,” reflecting the classical idea that the subject of “grammar” includes the alphabet. It also demonstrates that it was common knowledge until after the eighteenth century that only vowels can have a sound, true consonants being merely “articulations” of those basic vowel sounds. Actually, the very word, “consonant,” carries the meaning that something does not exist in isolation.

“The elementary characters are those that usage destined originally to represent some elements of speech, the sounds and the articulations. Those that were established to represent the sounds are called vowels; those that were introduced to express the articulations are called consonants: both take the common name of letters....”

On page 846 of Volume 7 (1757) appears a table on the parts of grammar, which is also highly illuminating concerning the frame of reference at the time. The building blocks of words were vowels, consonants, and syllables. The starting point in beginning reading clearly was not whole words.

Circa 1757 to 1773 Correspondence Litteraire, by Baron Friedrich Melchior Grimm. Published every other week in France from 1753 to 1773, to which Denis Diderot contributed. Sixteen volumes were bound and published in 1882. This is mentioned in the Encyclopedia Britannica (1963) and obviously is a major historical source, which I have unfortunately not seen.

1756 British Education, Or The Source of the Disorders in GREAT BRITAIN... With An Attempt to shew, that a Revival of the ART of SPEAKING, and the STUDY OF OUR OWN LANGUAGE, might contribute in a great measure, to the Cure of those Evils.

By Thomas Sheridan, A. M. Printed by George Faulkner in Essex-Street, Dublin.

1759 A DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN THE THEATRE AT OXFORD, IN THE SENATE-HOUSE AT CAMBRIDGE, AND AT SPRING-GARDEN IN LONDON. By THOMAS SHERIDAN, M. A. Being Introductory to His COURSE of Lectures on Elocution and the English Language. London: Printed for A. Millar, in The Strand; J. Rivington and J. Fletcher, in Pater-noster-Row; J. Dodsley in Pall-Mall; and sold by J. Wilkie, in St. Paul’s Church yard.

This material was reproduced in 1969 by The Augustan Reprint Society, with an Introduction by G. P. Mohrmann, as Publication Number 136, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles. Alston showed it in his bibliography on Elocution. See the 1761 entry taken from Alston, below. (New York Public Library)

1761 A Dissertation on the Causes of the Difficulties, Which Occur, in learning the English Tongue. With a Scheme for Publishing an English Grammar and Dictionary, Upon a Plan Entirely New.... Thomas Sheridan, Jr. London, R. & J. Dodsley, 1761. From Alston’s section, “Pronunciation,” in which Alston said that it had been reprinted in facsimile by Menston in 1967. He stated that it had been mentioned in Monthly Review, XXVII, 1762, pages 69-70; Scots Magazine XXIV, 1762, pages 372-73; Dublin Magazine, August, 1762, pages 499-500; and Critical Review, XIII, 1762, pages 160-61. He also said that Sheridan’s dictionary had appeared in 1780 and was reviewed in Alston’s Volume V, item no. 312.

The reviews of the period which Alston listed, and the lectures Sheridan gave at that time, firmly placed Pascal synthetic phonics into the English language. Although Alston listed previous works on pronunciation, they were not concerned with synthesis of isolated letter sounds, but were concerned with analysis, by analogy to the sounds of known word parts: cake, make, bake; or ba, be, bi, bo, bu; da, de, di,

do. du. They also were concerned with indicating which syllables received emphasis in pronunciation. Synthetic phonics, the learning of isolated letter sounds, and then the blending of such isolated letter sounds, which idea had been conceived by Blaise Pascal in France in 1655 and which Sheridan proposed for his pronouncing dictionary, was indeed, as he wrote, “a Plan Entirely New.”

The idea of a pronouncing dictionary was also acknowledged as new by Sheridan’s contemporaries, however obvious it seems to us. If it had not been a new idea, Lord Bute would hardly have given Sheridan a pension to work on his “pronouncing” dictionary, and Samuel Johnson would not have taken time to ridicule it. Johnson said (quoted elsewhere in this history) that it was undesirable to attempt to fix standards of pronunciation, as Sheridan was proposing. Johnson’s dictionary certainly was not such a pronouncing dictionary! Synthetic phonics, instead of analytic phonics, was obviously also a new idea for teaching beginning reading in English, and it showed up in Perry’s 1776 Scottish speller and in Noah Webster’s 1783 American speller.

1762 A Course of Lectures on Elocution, Together with Two Dissertations on Language... Thomas Sheridan, Jr. London, W. Strahan, for A. Millar, R. & J. Dodsley, T. Davies (et al). Alston stated that printed separately in 1761 and 1762 was “A dissertation on the causes of the difficulties which occur in learning the English tongue. With a scheme for publishing an English grammar and dictionary.” Alston showed that separate printing in his section on works in English concerned with “Pronunciation.”

1762 Emile, by Jean Jacque Rousseau, Paris, France. The charlatan, Rousseau, has had a most malignant influence on education. In his vastly influential novel, Emile, Rousseau wrote that Emile should not be taught to read until about adolescence when Emile demonstrated an interest in it. Richard Edgeworth of Ireland, referred to later, educated his oldest son according to Rousseau’s ideas, and he reportedly later acknowledged the results were bad. As shown under 1899, below, the early psychologists, John Dewey and G. T. W. Patrick, came close to agreeing with Rousseau on the teaching of reading.

1768 On the Manner of Teaching Languages [De la maniere d’apprendre les langues], by the Abbe de Radonvilliers, Academie Francaise, Paris.

The Abbe de Radonvilliers in France recommended a pure Code 1 sight-word smethod for teaching beginning reading to children, most probably inspired by de l’Epee’s work with the deaf, which had begun about 1760. Presumably his brief comments inspired the more lengthy ones making the same recommendation which appeared in the 1787 book by Nicolas Adam [1716-1792], The True Manner of Teaching Any Language Whatever, Living or Dead, by the Means of the French Language. The article, “Lecture,” page 1541 of the Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire, quoted both de Radonvilliers and Adams’ comments. The probable relationships between these works on language, and Jacotot’s later work, have been sdiscussed in this history. However, it is astonishing that Adam’s basic 1787 work recommending a pure sight-word approach is no where to be found in our reading experts’ literature, nor is any reference ever made to the Abbe de Radonvillier’s brief 1768 comments which did the same thing.

1780 A General Dictionary of the English Language. One main object of which, is, to establish a plain and permanent standard of pronunciation. To which is prefixed a rhetorical grammar, by Thomas Sheridan, Jr. London, J. Dodsley, C. Dilly, and J. Wilkie. Listed by Alston.

This is a remarkable and extremely interesting work, particularly its discourses. Sheridan’s command of phonetics and his understanding of its relation to English spelling was extraordinary. It is curious that Sheridan’s enormous contribution to the English language is virtually unknown, and that reference to it is virtually never made today, although Alston, that ultimate authority from the British Library, certainly recognized the value of Sheridan’s work.

Thomas Sheridan, Jr.'s, clever and witty son, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the playwright and member of Parliament, has been treated far better by our "intellectuals." Yet, objectively, the son's achievements are minor compared to those of the father. Thomas Sheridan, Jr., was concerned with elocution as early as 1756. He had apparently completed the foundation of his highly original work on the phonetic principles of English spelling and pronunciation (true synthetic phonics) by the time he started to give his highly popular lectures on elocution in 1758-59 at Oxford and Cambridge, and in 1761 and later in Edinburgh and Dublin.

Sheridan published his idea for the first phonetic pronouncing dictionary in the world in 1761 (see Alston, Volume VI, page 72), received a pension from Lord Bute to proceed with it and published the finished work in 1780. Meanwhile, an Edinburgh, Scotland, resident, William Perry, who was obviously exposed to Sheridan's lectures in Scotland on phonics, published a dictionary with a phonetic key in 1775. From a title in Alston's Volume V, *The English Dictionary*, it appears that William Kenrick also did more than show the customary accented syllables in *A New Dictionary of the English Language; Containing Not Only the Explanation of Words ... but Likewise their Orthoepia or Pronunciation*, London: 1773. After Sheridan's dictionary was published, a fellow actor, Walker, also published a "pronouncing" dictionary which was widely used. It is very peculiar that this clear and uncomplicated history of the development of our "pronouncing" dictionaries is to be found nowhere in general reference works.

Alston's chronological listing of dictionaries, along with information from other sources on Sheridan's life, confirms that Sheridan was the first who conceived the idea of a pronouncing dictionary using Pascal synthetic phonics. The prefaces to Sheridan's 1780 dictionary are impressive documents of the most astounding scholarship and originality but were obviously the culmination of years of study. Yet, as has been mentioned, since Sheridan had been lecturing on phonics since 1758, some of Sheridan's imitators preceded him in the publication of pronouncing dictionaries.

1781 *A Rhetorical Grammar of the English Language. Calculated Solely for the Purposes of Teaching Propriety of Pronunciation....* Thomas Sheridan, Jr.; Dublin: Messrs. Price, W. & H. Whitestone, (et al). Listed by Alston in his section on "Pronunciation." Alston wrote that it concerned pronunciation and elocution. and was reprinted in *A General Dictionary* (1780), reviewed in Alston's volume V, no. 312.

1786 *Elements of English: Being a New Method of Teaching the Whole Art of Reading, Both with Regard to Pronunciation and Spelling. Part the First.* Thomas Sheridan. London, C. Dilly, 1786. It was reprinted in facsimile by Menston, Alston's press, in 1968. Listed by Alston in his section on works on pronunciation. Alston wrote that it concerned pronunciation and spelling and was cited in *Critical Review*, LXI, 1786, 156-57. Alston stated that the second part was apparently never published. That was probably because Sheridan died in 1788.

1787 *Neues... zum Lesenlehren....*, by Johann Bernhard Basedow, Leipzig, Germany.

A copy of this primer for teaching beginning reading in German is held by the U. S. Department of Education library in Washington. Its heavy, old-fashioned German lettering makes it almost undecipherable to someone unfamiliar with such lettering, so I am incapable of reproducing its whole title. Its contents are presumably of great interest, although his book was never successful. Yet his disciples (Campe, Gedike, etc.) who wrote books on the teaching of reading were obviously inspired by Basedow's original work.

Basedow was the first openly to move the teaching of beginning reading up from the syllable to the word, although the French 1744 Quadrille method obviously did so implicitly. However, the method he

used to teach words was Pascal phonics. His famous school, the Philanthropinum which he founded in 1774, and his use of his phonics method on whole words (not syllables) with his own three-year-old daughter in 1770, is described in an article on Basedow in Barnard's nineteenth-century American Journal of Education. The description concerning the way Basedow had his daughter taught in 1770 was given by Campe who was involved in the lessons. Campe later took over the Philanthropinum school after the erratic Basedow left.

In Basedow's use of whole words instead of syllables at the beginning of reading instruction, he was very possibly inspired by the German use of the French Quadrille method of 1744, which has been described earlier.

1791 Friedrich Gedike , Johann Bernhard Basedow's disciple, published a primer in German using whole words to teach letter sounds. Gedike's 1791 work was based on an earlier book he wrote. Gedike's work is mentioned by Mitford Mathews in his 1966 book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, and in Rudolf Flesch's 1981 *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read*.

1798 Essays on Practical Education, Richard Lovell Edgeworth and Maria Edgeworth. This was written at the Edgeworth estate in Ireland and was a very influential work in its day. Portions concerning the teaching of reading were quoted in the article, "A-B-C Books and Primers," in an 1863-1864 edition of Henry B. Barnard's American Journal of Education, Volume XI, p. 593-604. Maria Edgeworth, whose father, Richard, had once been a Rousseau enthusiast, was a prolific and widely read author of children's books. In the portion reprinted by Barnard, Richard Edgeworth denigrated the use of the syllabary in teaching beginning reading and endorsed phonics. Yet Edgeworth specifically denied that his phonetic method was based on Sheridan's. Edgeworth stated he had developed his phonic method before he saw Sheridan's. It appears probable that Edgeworth in Ireland in the 1700's, like Sheridan in Ireland in the 1700's, was acquainted with the Irish Spelling Book of 1740 which used Pascal phonics.

As discussed in Appendix B, the title page of Josiah Bumstead's *My First School-Book* quotes Edgeworth, and establishes that it was he who made the astonishing remark that learning to read is "the most difficult of human attainments." Edgeworth's remark probably appeared in his 1798 book, at a time when children were learning to read easily and quickly by the syllable method that he was denigrating and proposing to replace with his phonic method. Since Edgeworth also promoted government schools, as reported elsewhere in this history, and also down-graded the "sound" syllable method, his remark sounds like change-agent propaganda meant to smooth the way for the "meaning" method that was soon to be promoted so successfully in the English-speaking world.

1801 The Method of Educating the Deaf and Dumb, Confirmed By Long Experience.... Translated from the French...., of Charles Michel de l'Epee (1712-1789), Printed by George Cooke, Dunstan's Hill, London. This London edition has an anonymous "Preface of the Translator," dated July 13, 1801, which is discussed in the French portion of this history. The book was based on the 1776 edition by the Abbe de l'Epee, entitled *Institution of the Deaf and Dumb by the Way of Methodical Signs*. It includes the exchange of letters between the Abbe de l'Epee, endorsing the teaching of sign language as the beginning step in deaf education, and Samuel Heinecke of Germany, who promoted the teaching of normal speech to the deaf as the beginning step. This English translation of 1801 certainly should have been available in the United States for some thirteen years or so before Gallaudet became involved in the teaching of the deaf.

1814 Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, by Dugald Stewart of Scotland, the philosopher/psychologist whose work has been discussed in this history. Brougham and Birkbeck had been his students in the University of Edinburgh at the end of the eighteenth century. Stewart's popular book was published first in Great Britain in 1814.

1816 A Textbook of Psychology, by Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841)

According to William S. Sahakian, (History of Psychology, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., Itasca, Illinois, Revised Edition, 1981, page 451), the first textbook on psychology became available in 1816 in Germany. In Sahakian's section, "Landmarks in the History of Psychology," he showed the publication in 1816 of A Textbook of Psychology, by Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841). Sahakian considered Herbart to be the founder of experimental pedagogy and mathematical psychology.

In the May, 1926, issue of Teachers College Record of Columbia Teachers College, New York, Charles H. Judd wrote the following concerning Herbart's 1831 Letters Regarding the Application of Psychology to Pedagogy:

"It is almost a century since Herbart wrote his volume entitled, Letters Regarding the Application of Psychology to Pedagogy. This treatise appeared in 1831.... The culture epoch's theory, the five formal steps, the teachings of Jena came to America in the 80's in the persons of De Garmo and the McMurrays. [Ed. Charles E. and Frank M. McMurry]. Through these men the practical pedagogical precepts of Herbart, refined by a half century of unpsychological but highly energetic cultivation, were imported into a new world. The laboratory methods in psychology came to America at about the same time in the persons of Hall and Cattell. Both of these Herbartian movements profited greatly by their immigration.... The 80's saw psychology and educational methodology vigorously at work on American soil."

1821 Intellectual Arithmetic, Upon the Inductive Method of Instruction, by Warren Colburn Early American Textbooks wrote on page 204 concerning Colburn's text:

"Published first in 1821, Colburn's initial arithmetic textbooks, based on the 'Plan of Pestalozzi,' were used in American schools for over 75 years. The texts followed the inductive approach wherein pupils memorized tables and rules and then applied them to actual numerical problems."

The foregoing is an inadequate explanation, but it would probably be necessary to study the book itself fully to understand its approach. The method was obviously very successful when Colburn's original 1821 version was used. However, the record powerfully suggests that with each revision over the years the Colburn material became less effective.

The Primary Teacher, Vol. IV, 1880-1881, page 143, published in Boston, showed a list of books for the use of primary teachers. Included in this list was Child's Book of Arithmetic, by "Colburn," sold for 18 cents by Cowperthwait & Co. of Philadelphia. This is the only reference I have found to any Colburn material published by Cowperthwait, but its title makes it clear it was not the original 1821 basic text, nor a revision of that text. The probability is that this circa 1880 text was a completely new book which incorporated approaches used in Colburn's original 1821 material. Its title makes it clear that it was unconnected with the texts published by the principal publishers of Colburn's various editions, all of which used the Colburn title in its original form. To judge from the copies listed in Early American Textbooks, the first publisher of Colburn's basic work with the original 1821 title was Hilliard of Boston, the second was Reynolds of Boston and its successor, Brown, and the third and last publisher was the Houghton company of Boston.

Early American Textbooks - 1775-1900, published by the U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., in 1985, listed on pages 204 and 205 seventeen copies of works in the U. S. Department of Education Library which carried Colburn's name. Eleven had the title Intellectual

Arithmetic, Upon the Inductive Method of Instruction (with presumed publishing dates of 1836, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1863, 1863, 1884 and 1891). Three had the same title with the addition, "Being a Sequel to Intellectual Arithmetic" (with publishing dates of 1827, 1836 and 1849). Three carried the title, "A Key, Containing Answers to the Examples in the Sequel to Intellectual Arithmetic" (with publishing dates of 1826, 1830 and 1845). The sequel and key are not discussed except in passing in the following comments on the Colburn basic text of 1821.

The publishing dates given in Early American Textbooks have not infrequently been wrong, as is evident from other sources. Therefore, all of the above dates have to be taken with reservations. What they do clearly indicate, however, is that the publishers of Colburn's materials changed over the years. The earliest text listed above (1826) was published by Hilliard, Gray, Little & Wilkins of Boston, and they were the probable publishers of Colburn's original work, which Early American Textbooks said had appeared in 1821 (but for which date they showed no existing copy). The Hilliard company (under a revised name, Hilliard, Gray & Co.) published two Colburn texts in 1836. By 1846, William J. Reynolds of Boston appeared as the next publisher of Colburn's basic work (but not the sequel or the key) and Early American Textbooks listed further editions by Reynolds in 1847, 1848 and 1849. Harvard's 1857 copy of Rensselaer Bentley's *The Pictorial Primer* advertised Colburn's basic text, sold by Brown, Taggard & Chase of Boston, who were shown as the "Successor to W. J. Reynolds and Co." Therefore, as late as 1857, the Colburn material was still being handled by the Reynolds/Brown sequence of companies. (Concerning the Sequel, Benjamin B. Musey and Co. of Boston published a copy in 1849, and concerning the Key, Edward J. Peet of Boston published a copy in 1845. Very probably the rights to these two supplemental works passed to other companies than Hilliard, at the same time that Reynolds acquired the rights to the basic Colburn work from Hilliard, which rights then passed to Reynolds' successor, Brown, some time before 1857.) However, it appears probable that the original publisher was Hilliard, probably from 1821 until some time after 1836, under the names Hilliard, Gray, Little & Wilkins in 1826 and 1827, and Hilliard, Gray & Co. in 1836. The next publisher of the basic Colburn text, from 1846 or before until at least 1857, was William J Reynolds and its successor company, Brown, Taggard & Chase. The final publisher of the basic Colburn text, from about 1862 or 1866 and later (not from 1849 as shown in Early American Textbooks) was the Houghton company.

Starting in 1849, four of the Colburn basic textbook entries in Early American Textbooks clearly are wrong. Early American Textbooks showed an 1849 copy and an 1850 copy published as follows: New York: Hurd & Houghton; Boston, H. O. Houghton & Co.; Cambridge [Mass.] The Riverside Press (1849). According to a reference librarian at the Houghton Library at Harvard, Henry O. Houghton (a printer) had not yet acquired the assets of Ticknor & Fields as early as 1849 and would not therefore have begun publishing under his own name as early as 1849. Furthermore, the New York branch, Hurd & Houghton, as indicated elsewhere, was only in operation from 1862 to 1866, during which period it took over Putnam's New York publishing operations at Putnam's request while he was in Government service during the Civil War. Therefore, the inclusion of a New York office in the Colburn title demonstrates that those two copies had to have been published between 1862 and 1866, not in 1849 and 1850.

However, Early American Textbooks then showed an 1863 copy published by Houghton, Osgood & Co. of Boston, and The Riverside Press, Cambridge. That also is apparently impossible, because the company name of Hurd, Houghton still appeared in the 1876 American Catalogue, while the name of Houghton, Osgood & Co. did not turn up until the March, 1880, Appendix to the American Catalogue. The name change from Hurd, Houghton to Houghton, Osgood & Co. must have occurred after 1876, not by 1863.

Early American Textbooks then showed a "Rev. ed." by Houghton, Mifflin & Co, Cambridge, Mass, and The Riverside Press in 1863. Clearly, that also is impossible, since Houghton, Osgood & Co. was the

name in 1880, and the first occurrence I have seen of the final and long-lasting name, Houghton, Mifflin was in their 1883 advertisement in *The American Teacher* (which is in Harvard's collections). Early American Textbooks then showed two more copies of the "Rev. ed." by Houghton, Mifflin, in 1884 and 1891, and those most probably are correct.

Early American Textbooks listed the total pages on all of these copies. It is that information which makes it possible to separate out the various revised editions they listed. The original Colburn material was probably the same as the 1836 Hilliard copy which covered 172 pages. Reynolds' 1846 and 1847 copies covered 140 pages (which clearly indicated they were copies of a new edition). Reynolds' 1848 and 1849 copies covered 160 and 158 pages. They probably were actually the same new edition, which would make it the third version of the Colburn materials (1821, 1846, 1848). Houghton's wrongly-dated 1849, 1850, and 1863 copies all covered 176 pages, which obviously means they were the same edition, and the fourth version of the Colburn materials, A second "1863" Houghton version, marked "Rev. ed." had 216 pages, and the remaining two copies (1884 and 1891) also had 216 pages. That was the final edition, and the fifth version of the basic Colburn materials (1821, 1846, 1848, circa 1862-1866, and circa 1883). The Colburn material published under a different title by Cowperthwait of Philadelphia in 1880, which was referred to above, was probably unrelated to these main Colburn editions.

All this data shows that the original edition probably had 172 pages and was probably published by the Hilliard company from 1821 until after 1836, and possibly to about 1846. A revised edition by the Reynolds company of 140 pages was published from 1846 or before and in 1847. Another revised edition of 160 pages (or 158) was published by Reynolds from 1848, probably until after 1862. (It may have remained unrevised by Brown, Reynolds' successor, who was advertising the Colburn text in 1857 in the back of a copy of Rensselaer Bentley's *The Pictorial Primer as Colburn's First Lessons, Intellectual Arithmetic, Upon the Inductive Method of Instruction*). Reynolds/Brown probably continued to publish the material until 1862 or later. That is because two copies of another revised edition by "New York: Hurd & Houghton; Boston: H. O. Houghton & Co.; Cambridge (Mass), The Riverside Press" appeared with 176 pages and they obviously had to be dated to between 1862 and 1866. Then a third printing of that 176-page text appeared under the name Houghton, Osgood & Co. which had to have appeared between the years 1876 and 1883. Finally, the "Rev. ed." by Houghton, Mifflin appeared had to have come out some time after 1880 and continued to be published until at least 1891.

Revised editions of textbooks are commonly promoted as having been "improved," which is rarely the case. The unparalleled Webster speller was "improved" by its publishers in the same time frame that the above edition dates indicate the Colburn arithmetic text was being "improved." The probability is that the worth of the original Colburn text degenerated with each one of the four "improved" new editions. Surviving comments on the Colburn text, given below, certainly suggest that was the case.

The probable reason that upper-grade 1845 children outscored their 1919 counterparts on arithmetic texts, as discussed in Chapter 50 of this history, is that the 1845 upper-grade children had most likely been taught their arithmetic as outlined in Colburn's original text. (As shown above, the first probable revised "improvement" of that Colburn text had not appeared until about 1846, and no earlier than 1836).

There is a wealth of confirmation in materials from the nineteenth century concerning the value of Colburn's "mental arithmetic," whatever that was. This writer has no information on his method, but only a collection of the most extraordinary testimonies concerning its utility, which are very hard to discount. Some will be quoted. For instance, on pages 84 and 85 of the 1883-1884 volume of *The American Teacher*, appear the following comments from an October, 1883, letter from Iola Rounds of Wellesley, Massachusetts, who was a teacher:

"Dear Editor:



“Moses, Jr., speaks feelingly of Warren Colburn’s mental arithmetic. As I read his earnest appeal in behalf of that good old book, memories come to me of days long gone by, when through suffering and tears I was drilled through it. In later years the sorrow has changed to a feeling of joy and exultation, for I am constantly reminded of my superior education as I see my friends laboriously “reckoning” small bills with pencil and paper. It is painful, but amusing to me when, in one of our large stores, having reached the end of a long shopping-list, I proceed to pay my bill. “I owe you this amount,” I say, handing out a bill to be changed. The clerk takes his pencil from behind his ear, looks at me as if I meant to cheat him, and after a prolonged “ciphering” which takes the time I had allowed to catch a train, comes to the conclusion that I am right. My ability in that direction is not in the least due to quality of brain. Colburn’s Arithmetic deserves the whole credit, detestable as the book seemed when I studied it.”

“‘Well,’ many a teacher will say, ‘we have daily exercises in that very book, but the children dislike it; they are not at all quick in mental arithmetic, and for all of us it is the most irksome exercise of the day.’ Yes, I know it. I well remember a school of bright girls whom I taught for a few months....”

This teacher went on to say that the problem with those “bright girls” and with the classes about which “many a teacher” complained was poor initial teaching. She apparently never considered that the revised Colburn textbooks might be at fault, nor did she reflect on the fact that Colburn’s original textbook could never have achieved the fame it did after its introduction in 1821, unless it had been, to a large extent, immune from the effects of less-than-perfect teaching.

Some months later in the 1883-1884 volume of *The American Teacher*, on page 278, the following appeared:

“Mental Arithmetic - We believe that no book has ever been printed, a careful study of which will add half so much to the mental power and grasp of the pupil as Colburn’s First Lessons. The earlier part of the book has been made as elementary as possible (1) for the use of young pupils, and (2) to show the proper development of the subject from the beginning.

“The correct use of Warren Colburn’s book always developed the faculty of ready and sharp logic that is required in the applications of arithmetical processes to the business of common life. A mental habit of readiness and accuracy in the processes of exact reasoning is of the highest value. We need this kind of mental drill, and greatly lament its absence in the daily work of the common schools of today.

“We earnestly urge upon teachers and school officers the necessity of restoring the thorough drill in mental arithmetic not only for beginners, but we advise its continuance to some extent throughout the entire course of a public school education....

“In the new edition the editors have made the Colburn Method so evident and attractive, that no teacher can fail to be pleased with it from the start.

“We take great pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to the advertisement on page 285, which announces a new edition of Warren Colburn’s Intellectual Arithmetic upon the Inductive Method of Instruction.”

Unfortunately, I do not have a photocopy of page 285 from *The American Teacher*. However, considering the information from *Early American Textbooks* on their copies of Colburn texts, it seems probable that it was published by Houghton, Mifflin in Boston in 1883.

On a copy of *The Pictorial Primer* by Rensselaer Bentley, published in Boston in 1857 by Brown, Taggard & Chase, successors to W. J. Reynolds and Co., appeared a full page of endorsements on Colburn's *First Lessons, Intellectual Arithmetic, Upon the Inductive Method of Instruction*, which they were then publishing. One was the following:

“Dr. Azell P. Ladd, the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Wisconsin, in his Annual Report for 1852, to the Legislature of that State, said: ‘Colburn’s *Intellectual Arithmetic* is a work that has been long and extensively used in nearly every State in the Union. There are many works of more recent issue, upon this subject intended to supply the place which this little volume has so successfully occupied; but none, I think, equal to its merit.’”

The following 1835 comment was made:

“‘No man among us has contributed as much to a correct method of studying mathematics as the lamented Colburn. I have no hesitation in saying, that this book is not only the best in this country but, so far as my information extends, the best in the world. The *First Lessons* are above all praise.’ Extract from an Address delivered before the American Institute, 1835, by Thomas Sherwin, Esq. of the Boston High School.”

This 1835 quotation’s use of the term, “the lamented Colburn,” indicates that Colburn had died by 1835.

It is obvious that the Colburn material, in its original version or versions, was extraordinarily effective. However, in education, nothing fails like success. The evidence suggests that the material was “revised” into near uselessness, and is now totally forgotten by the American educational “establishment.”

A corresponding failure of superb beginning mathematics materials occurred in Europe in the 1970’s. Extraordinarily effective Belgian texts for teaching mathematics with the use of the *Cuisinaire* rods did not meet with the acceptance in European schools which they so clearly deserved. (*Cuisinaire* rods are one-centimeter-wide and one-centimeter-high wooden sticks, going from one to ten centimeters in length. Each centimeter length is in a different color and stands for a different number: white = 1 centimeter long, red = 2 centimeters long, green = 3, purple = 4, yellow = 5, dark green = 6, black = 7, brown = 8, blue = 9, and orange = 10. White is therefore also 1 cubic centimeter, red is 2 cubic centimeters, and so on to 10 which is 10 cubic centimeters. ). In Brussels in October, 1977, I was astonished by the achievements in basic arithmetic from the use of the *Cuisinaire* rods that I personally observed one morning in a first-grade class of girls and a second-grade class of girls in a public school. My visit had been arranged only the previous afternoon, so the oral performances had hardly been staged. I saw a beginning second grade class easily answer, orally, such problems as the following without at that time either the use of the *Cuisinaire* rods to help them or even pencil and paper. I still have copies of two duplicated worksheets handed out to the class later to do as individual written work, but with the use of the rods. One of those worksheets had these two sets and two similar sets on it.

$13 = (\_ \times 2) + \_$	$19 = (\_ \times 2) + \_$
$13 = (\_ \times 3) + \_$	$19 = (\_ \times 3) + \_$
$13 = (\_ \times 4) + \_$	$19 = (\_ \times 4) + \_$
$13 = (\_ \times 5) + \_$	$19 = (\_ \times 5) + \_$

$$13 = (\_ \times 6) + \_ \qquad 19 = (\_ \times 6) + \_ \\
19 = (\_ \times 7) + \_ \\
19 = (\_ \times 8) + \_ \\
19 = (\_ \times 9) + \_$$

The second worksheet handed out had ten examples to be answered true or false, with M standing for a missing multiplication factor, and with an equal sign or a crossed-out equal sign where words are shown instead below. (My keyboard lacks the does-not-equal sign). After marking each example true or false, the child was then supposed to fill in the “Because” space following it, just as I have shown for the expected answers. The child was expected to use the rods in doing this work, for which work the Cuisinaire rods are perfectly suited.

21 equals M3	_____	Because 21 = (Answers: true, 7x3)
19 equals M3	_____	Because 19 = (Answers: false, 3x6+1)
19 does not equal M2	_____	Because 19 = (Answers: true, 9x2+1)

While in Brussels, I purchased copies of the teacher’s guides for the programs I had observed in a first grade and a second grade. The titles were A La Decouverte de la Mathematique et Les Reglettes Cuisinaire, Book I (1970) and A La Decouverte de la Mathematique et Les Reglettes Cuisinaire, Book II (1973), by Louis Jeronnez and Isabelle Lejeune, who were teachers in Waterloo, Belgium. The books were published by Editions Calozet, 40, Rue des Chartreux, Brussels. The notes I took in the first grade class on October 19, 1977, suggested it had reached pages 70 and 71 of Book I. The notes I took in the second grade class suggested it had reached pages 106, 107 and 108 of Book II. Despite the complex material, the classes were obviously moving very quickly since they had covered so many pages in only about six weeks of school since the beginning of the school year.

Those Belgian texts were far superior to, and very different from, the texts published by the Cuisinaire Company of America (which was unconnected to the Calozet company). Yet, so far as I know, the fantastic success of those Belgian texts are as unknown to most teachers today, either in Europe or America, as the fantastic results of the original Colburn text (which, however, may or may not have been very different in its approach from the Belgian materials). When I returned from my 1977-1978 half-year sabbatical leave, I offered to translate the Belgian materials for trial use in the Wayne, New Jersey, school system in which I taught. The assistant superintendent of schools, to whom I made this offer, showed no interest in it whatsoever, and nothing was ever done about it. (These books are also entered in this appendix under date of 1970.)

1822 Jean Joseph Jacotot: His works carried the common title, Enseignement Universel. The first was Langue Maternelle published in Louvain in 1822. The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913 (Volume VIII, pages 265-266) gave a brief biography of Jacotot (1770 - 1840):

“A member of the House of Representatives during the Hundred Days, he expressed his preference for the empire, and, at the time of the Second Restoration, his hostility to the Bourbons made it necessary for him to leave France.”

The article said that Jacotot had taught in the college of his native city since 1789, and, after leaving France for Belgium, “taught privately at Mons and Brussels, and in 1818 was appointed professor of the French language and literature in the University of Louvain. The Revolution of 1830 allowed him to return to France.” Jacotot believed that knowledge in any area was a key to other subjects, and said “All is in all.” His philosophy emphasized “wholes” and affected his ideas on teaching reading.

Jacotot was the first true “whole language” advocate, with his recommendation that children learn to read by dealing with the “whole” of Fenelon’s *Adventures of Telemaque*. Jacotot had taught his Dutch-speaking students at the University of Louvain in 1818 to speak French by having them simultaneously memorize a French book while reading its Dutch translation. (As discussed in this history, in doing this, Jacotot was only adapting an approach that had been in use in France when he taught there.) According to Mitford Mathews, Jacotot and his method became famous with the publication of Jacotot’s *Universal Instruction and The Mother Tongue*. Jacotot explained that he believed children should also begin with a “whole” just as his Dutch students at the university had done. Mathews had stated that Jacotot expected children to go through the whole of *Les Aventures de Telemaque* and then probably to repeat it in order to learn to read, but an 1887 article in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie* reported otherwise, saying that Jacotot wrote that a child need cover only six lessons and fifty lines of text to learn to read, analyzing them phonetically as he progressed.

Obviously, Jacotot was a charlatan, but he was a highly successful and very famous one. Jacotot certainly was one of the principal subjects of Russell’s 1826 remarks concerning teaching by meaning, in the newly published journal of which Russell was editor, listed under 1826 below. Another probably was Gedike, Basedow’s disciple. Jacotot’s work concerning teaching beginning reading is described at length in the *Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d’Instruction Primaire*, Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris: 1887, in the article “Lecture”, by J. Guillaume, page 1545. The third person that Russell meant was almost certainly John Wood of the Edinburgh Sessional School. Concerning Wood, see the 1829, 1836 and 1838 entries referring to his work.

1826 American Journal of Education, William Russell, Editor. Became American Annals of Education with William Channing Woodbridge and William Andrus Alcott, as the second and third editors, as discussed in this history, and ceased publication about 1840, under a fourth editor. Apparently it had no connection with the journal later founded by Henry B. Barnard using the same name, *American Journal of Education*. However, Barnard’s biographical article on Russell included the following comments concerning the original journal which make it obvious that Russell in 1826 was at first only someone’s hireling as an editor, as Barnard’s article recorded, concerning Russell’s move to Boston from New Haven:

“Soon after this change of occupation, he was invited to take the editorial charge of the *American Journal of Education* published in Boston, first by Mr. Thomas B. Wait(sp?), in 1826, and next by Mr. S. G. Goodrich, and subsequently by Messrs. Carter and Hendee. Mr. Russell continued to conduct this periodical for nearly three years from the date of its publication.”

Russell’s editorial comments in 1826, quoted elsewhere in this history, clearly promoted “meaning” and demoted “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading. In 1826, Russell praised at least two of the three pivotal 1826 beginning reading texts which moved from “sound” to “meaning”: the *Franklin Primer* and the *Worcester Primer*.

This journal founded in 1826 was vehemently pro-government schools and pro-meaning in the teaching of beginning reading to hearing children, both ends for which Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet worked for years. It is therefore interesting that there are close ties between Gallaudet and three of the men mentioned above in connection with this journal, Goodrich, Woodbridge, and William Andrus Alcott. Some of the details of those connections are given below.

About 1800, a play was written about the Abbe de l’Epee’s work in France with a foundling deaf-mute. De l’Epee had unsuccessfully claimed that the deaf-mute foundling was the heir of a rich family. The play, called *The Abbe de l’Epee* by Jean Nicolas Bouilly (1763-1842), was apparently performed on stages all over Europe from about 1801 until the 1820’s and later, since it had editions not

only in French but in English, German and Italian, as can be seen from the New York Public Library card catalog, and perhaps in other languages. This certainly suggests continued promotion of de l'Epee's inferior work by his enthusiasts over a vast area and over a long period of time. Yet de l'Epee's work, despite his claims to the contrary, left his students forever mute and unable to take part in general society, while de l'Epee's opponents taught their students to speak and made it possible for those deaf students to join general society. However, the superior work of de l'Epee's opponents received no such vast puffing-up of importance as this play gave to de l'Epee. An English adaptation of the play was *Deaf and Dumb, or the Orphan Protected*, by Thomas Holcroft (1745-1809), and another English adaptation was by Benjamin Thompson from a German edition, both of which have 1801 dates listed in the New York Public Library catalog, along with the surprisingly numerous foreign editions mentioned above.

The Thompson version about the education of deaf-mutes by the de l'Epee method also had an 1818 edition, and that 1818 edition was published by young S. G. Goodrich of Hartford, who was just starting out as a publisher, with a preface by Laurent Clerc, the deaf-mute assistant Gallaudet had brought with him from France just two years before. The fact that Goodrich published Clerc's preface certainly associates Goodrich with Gallaudet at the very early date of 1818. The approximately twenty-year-old play in 1818 probably had other connections with movers-and-shakers, besides Gallaudet, who could promote careers, because young Samuel G. Goodrich soon became a famous and rich publisher and was also for a time publisher of the change-agent *Journal of Education in America*. Publication of the play also identified Goodrich, like Gallaudet, as one of the widespread promoters of de l'Epee's "meaning" work, and in Goodrich's own reading books for beginners published in the 1830's, Goodrich used "meaning," not "sound."

William Channing Woodbridge, the *Journal's* second editor about 1830, was working in Gallaudet's school for the deaf by 1818 when Goodrich published the play with the preface by Clerc, Gallaudet's assistant. Gallaudet had founded the school in 1817 after returning from France with the deaf-mute Clerc who had been trained by Sicard, de l'Epee's successor, and Gallaudet then taught sign language and sight words, not speech, to his deaf-mute students, leaving them forever mute. After assuming the editorship of the journal in 1830, taking over from William Russell, Woodbridge almost immediately published a pro-meaning article by Gallaudet concerning teaching beginning reading to hearing children.

William Andrus Alcott, the third editor, recounted in a brief biography of Gallaudet (referred to in this history) that Gallaudet and he had been close friends ever since about 1825 or 1826. (William Andrus Alcott was also a close friend of his own cousin, Amos Bronson Alcott.)

1829 Letters Addressed to the Parochial Schoolmasters of Scotland, Concerning the New Method of Tuition. Containing Strictures on Professor Pillans' "Principles of Elementary Teaching".... By a Schoolmaster, Edinburgh: 1829.

The anonymous Scottish Schoolmaster's marvelous 1829 book is a collection of letters published between November 30, 1827, and August 15, 1828, with additional material after that written by the Schoolmaster. The Schoolmaster was responding to Pillans' remarks in his lectures and book vilifying the Church of Scotland's parish schools and promoting monitorial schools such as John Wood's famous Edinburgh Sessional School. The Schoolmaster's convincingly debunking material has been discussed at length in this history. (The Schoolmaster's 1829 work is also listed in Appendix D, as well as John Wood's 1828 *Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School* and some other books on education which refer to that hugely publicized school.) The school's claims of success were enormous, as shown by the remarks in the 1838 pamphlet concerning Wood, quoted below under that 1838 entry. Yet the Schoolmaster's account establishes that those claims were fraudulent.

In Letter VIII (pages 35 and following), the Schoolmaster discussed “Wood’s Method of Exercising his Advanced Classes....”

“...it affords the very best specimen of the attainments of the pupils of Mr Wood in grammar and verbal criticism. Now, what is there in all this that deserves the epithet new? Is it not the mode of questioning practised by every teacher of English in exercising his farthest advanced classes....? O, but, says Mr Pillans, all this instruction is imparted merely by viva voce communication, without having recourse to grammars and dictionaries. So much the less does it tend to the improvement of the learner, as it precludes the necessity of any application on his part.... If this observation be just, as I verily believe it is, it follows that the new method is the least useful in training boys to habits of diligence and activity that has ever been devised. Instead, therefore, of its deserving the epithet intellectual, its application should be the parrotical method of teaching; for certainly, no plan of communicating instruction to the young can be more mechanical or superficial; and, I am firmly persuaded, that had a poor dominie, instead of John Wood, Esq., Advocate, and Sheriff of Peebles-shire, attempted to bring such a scheme into general practice, both he and his plan would have been treated with contempt by the learned and influential classes, and would have been laughed to scorn by the very vulgar....”

As can be seen from the comments above, the move was away from establishing conditioned reflexes (learning), by real teaching and real study of objective subject matter from books, and towards replacing it with endless wheel-spinning conversational activities concerning “meaning” which were called “intellectual.”

From the Schoolmaster’s identifying description, John Wood was obviously a man of some social standing in Edinburgh, and presumably a lawyer (being referred to as an “advocate”) as the famous Scot, Lord Brougham, was. Since Wood had worked at the Sessional School since at least 1819, as indicated elsewhere, he was possibly in the same age-group as Brougham and Birkbeck, two famous Scottish activists in education in England after 1818 who have been discussed at length in this history. Had Wood also gone to the University of Edinburgh, studied under the famous philosopher, Dugald Stewart, and possibly met Brougham and Birkbeck there when both were students of Stewart? Was Wood a participating member in an organized education “reform” that had started its work about 1818 and which included Brougham and Birkbeck? As quoted elsewhere in this history from Brougham’s 1825 book published in London, Brougham had specifically referred to the existence of such a group of activists in education in the “north.”

At the very least, both Stewart and Brougham are quoted by a contemporary as having given “approbation and patronage” to Wood’s Edinburgh school. One of the letters the Schoolmaster included was by someone who had defended John Wood’s Sessional School, written apparently shortly after November 30, 1827:

“...(the school’s) practical results have commanded for it the approbation and patronage of such men as Professor Stewart, Brougham, Malthus, and Hume.”

Very possibly Malthus was Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834), the English economist who invented the theory that population is supposed to outstrip resources. Professor Dugald Stewart was a famous philosopher from the University of Edinburgh and the Scot Brougham, a member of the British Parliament, had been Stewart’s student, and a close friend of Birkbeck.

Professor Dugald Stewart of Edinburgh University had written in the 1790’s that he was concerned with reading for understanding, as discussed in this history. Stewart was one of those who gave the Edinburgh Sessional School his approval and patronage. However, that Brougham was more closely

associated with the Edinburgh change-agents than the other “greats” quoted is suggested by the mocking answer to the Schoolmaster by his opponent in Letter IV, when this time the Schoolmaster’s opponent brought up only Wood’s and Brougham’s names:

“Yes, Sir, Wood is a quack, and Brougham is easily gulled, their names are a shadow - their philanthropy is a dream - “

The Scottish parochial Schoolmaster had made the following statement in his first letter of November 30, 1827, “On the Announcement of Professor Pillan’s Lectures to Teachers” and the remark certainly suggests the lectures were connected with organized activity for educational “reform”:

“...first, it may be necessary, for the information of those of you who do not visit Edinburgh annually, to remark, that there has sprung up, in that city, a new species of illuminati, who entertain notions concerning the instruction of children that, I fear, can never be realized, till the order of nature be reversed, and the ‘infant of days’ exceed, in mental capacity, the bearded man - in short, till old heads grow upon young shoulders.... I believe, their intentions are in the highest degree laudable.... The fact is, that this band of worthies includes in it several of the most respectable public men in the city, almost all that portion of the clergy who style themselves par excellence Evangelists, and many of their followers. One of the chief agitators in this respectable body is Professor Pillans....”

See the 1836 and 1838 entries on Wood concerning his books for beginning students, the religious content of which aroused heated opposition from clergymen, and the history of Wood’s work at the Sessional School. See also the 1883-1887 entry, The Works of Orestes A. Brownson, concerning Brownson’s testimony on a secret society in New York State in 1829 and 1830 to which Brownson had belonged. Its purpose was to organize government schools with mandatory attendance laws, in which religion could be removed from education, but without making a direct attack upon religion.

1830 Lessons in Enunciation, by William Russell. Richardson, Lord & Holbrook, Boston. This is listed in The New York Public Library catalog under call number RNR, although I have not seen it, but have seen some of Russell’s later works listed in Appendix B. An 1843 copy is listed on page 36 of Early American Textbooks, which copy was published by two companies, Charles J. Hendee, and Jenks & Palmer, Boston, who were then also the publishers of the Code 1 Worcester readers. The Scot, William Russell, was a teacher of elocution.

Russell’s activist undertakings in America have been discussed at length in this history. As stated elsewhere, Russell was the first editor of the American Journal of Education in 1826, apparently as someone else’s hireling since Barnard said Russell had been “invited” to become its editor. Along with the founding of that education journal, the drives to establish government schools in America, and to replace “sound” with “meaning” in beginning reading, began in earnest in 1826, as has also been discussed elsewhere.

Concerning Russell’s 1830 Boston publisher, Richardson, Lord & Holbrook (and there were many other publishing companies in Boston at the time), it is of interest that the same company was one of the two Boston publishers of another 1830 book, The Child’s Picture Defining and Reading Book by Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Principal of the American Asylum for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb. That book, although not a beginning book, was specifically written for both deaf and hearing children. The principal publisher of that book was H. & F. J. Huntington of Hartford. The other Boston publisher was Carter & Hendee, and the New York publisher was Jonathan Leavitt. As can be seen from Appendix B, all those companies published important pro-“meaning” beginning reading texts. As

indicated in the 1826 entry for the American Journal of Education, Carter & Hendee became the publishers of that activist work after Goodrich no longer was the publisher.

As shown in the listings in Appendix C for the Worcester and Hillard readers, both Richardson, Lord & Holbrook and the Hendee company were long-standing publishers of the Code 1 Worcester readers, and the record strongly suggests that the Richardson company was one of the two original 1826 publishers of the watershed 1826 Worcester Primer. Furthermore, the Richardson company were publishers of the low-code 1828 Boston Reading Lessons for Primary Schools, widely used at the time, and the Hendee company was a later publisher. That book specifically endorsed the “meaning” method for beginning reading used in John Wood’s Edinburgh Sessional School. In addition, it had that curious element found in many activist works for little children: horrid, upsetting stories, presumably recited for their “morals.”

The Richardson company, later succeeded by the Jenks & Palmer company, was also the publisher of other activist and low-code materials. Listed in Early American Textbooks on page 64 is the Infant School Manual, or Teacher’s Assistant, which the Richardson company published in 1831. Infant schools, for children from two or three to about seven years old, had been the late eighteenth-century invention of the famous Scottish socialist, Robert Owen. With Owen’s cooperation, infant schools had been promoted by Brougham and others in London since 1818. Infant schools had become a major enthusiasm of activists in America by the late 1820’s. In 1832, the Richardson company published Peter Parley’s Book of Curiosities, Natural and Artificial, by Samuel Goodrich, whose pseudonym was Peter Parley. That book is listed in Early American Textbooks on page 84. Goodrich was the second publisher of the American Journal of Education. Russell had been the first editor and Gallaudet’s one-time employee in his school for the deaf, Woodbridge, had been the second editor. William Andrus Alcott was the third editor. As discussed in this history, Goodrich went out of his way in one of his children’s books to belittle Noah Webster’s Code 10 speller, while Goodrich himself wrote very low-code beginning reading books, which were astonishingly long-lived, still being published in a revised edition by the Morton company of Kentucky in 1928.

Therefore, the record clearly demonstrates that a small group of closely associated people (and publishers) formed the nucleus of the 1826 American movement both for government schools and for displacing “sound” in beginning reading with “meaning.” The movement had ties to the very same movement in that same period of time which was taking place in Scotland and England. Gallaudet was one of the most influential American activists in the promotion of government schools and “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading. Though possibly of no importance concerning any connection to eighteenth-century practices in France, Gallaudet’s father was a French Huguenot who had emigrated to America, apparently after the mid-eighteenth century. However, through Gallaudet, the movement did have a clear tie to the Abbe de l’Epee’s enormously ballyhooed late-eighteenth-century school for the deaf in France, because Gallaudet had studied there from 1814 to 1816, by which time the Abbe Sicard had become its director. Teaching the deaf by “sound” approaches had been highly successful in France in the mid-eighteenth century and had been carried out by two renowned teachers, as discussed in the section of this history on France. Yet de l’Epee’s late eighteenth century school had rejected the “sound” approach and instead used “meaning,” and then received massive publicity and influential visitors from all over Europe.

1830 and later - American Institute of Instruction reports, discussed in Samuel Blumenfeld’s *Is Public Education Necessary?* and Mitford Mathews’ *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, both listed here later. The record demonstrates that this organization was a national vehicle for promoting government schools and “meaning” in place of “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading. As Blumenfeld pointed out, it was founded by Josiah Holbrook and his associates. When Holbrook began his organized work forming local institutes, which spread through America like wildfire in only about three years and from



which groups the national organization developed in 1830, he had first announced his ideas in 1826 in Russell's American Journal of Education.

1834 Three Primers Put Forth in The Reign of Henry VIII, by Edward Burton, Oxford. Preface: sixty pages, plus additional pages on the history of primers.

1836 "Letter to the Reverend George M. Musgrave, A.M., Chaplain to the Downham Union, Norfolk, from John Wood, Esq., Compiler of the Edinburgh Sessional School Books, Containing Strictures on a Protest and Pamphlet Termed a Justification of the Protest Against the First and Second Books of the Edinburgh Sessional School Being Admitted into the Workhouse of the Dock Union, by the Rev. Kirby Trimmer, Curate of Stanhope, Norfolk."

This pamphlet in the 42nd Street New York Public Library was printed in Edinburgh, Scotland, and contains Wood's letter of May 23, 1836, and a portion of Reverend Trimmer's protest to which Wood was responding. Wood began his denials of wrong-doing by quoting in part from Reverend Trimmer's "Protest." However, Reverend Trimmer's objections to the religious teaching in Wood's schoolbooks were obviously very well-founded, since Wood had obviously not included a real Christian catechism in those books which Wood specifically wrote for church schools, and which Wood claimed taught religion. Some of Trimmer's objections were:

"Because the said books do not contain the doctrine of the Trinity, neither acknowledging the essence of the Holy Ghost, nor the Godhead of the Son....

"Because no allusion is made in them to either (Ed.: in his church) of the Christian Sacraments, no mention of the Resurrection, Christ, or of his coming to judge the world.

"Because though mention is soon made of the 'Evil One' assuring Eve she shall not die, it is no where hinted that the temptations of Satan are continued to the descendants of Eve....

"Because in these portions of Scripture History, which are extended to many pages, a Scriptural style is adopted, and the words of Scripture often borrowed, but the one not distinguished from the other, so that the children will be able to know (which they ought to do) when they are and when they are not reading the words of Scripture.

"Because most of the leading doctrines of Scripture are withheld; that such a system of religious instruction is highly objectionable, and the assurance that the children will be taught the absent doctrines not at all satisfactory.

"Lastly, Because it is absurd to teach pauper children in an agricultural district, and whose occupations are for the most part those of crow keeping, pig minding, and turnip pulling, that minerals are, as the case may be, 'brilliant,' 'opaque,' 'malleable,' 'ductile,' or 'fusible;' and because such a system of education is not suited to that situation in which it has pleased Providence to place the agricultural poor."

Note the teaching of what passed for "science" in Wood's material on geology. Geology was the great enthusiasm of the irreligious change-agents of the period, undoubtedly because they (wrongly) considered geology to be a subject that was in conflict with the Bible and therefore highly suited to their change-agent purposes. The existence of the change-agent war in America against religion is confirmed beyond any doubt by the testimony quoted elsewhere of Orestes Brownson in his autobiography concerning 1829-1830, at which time Brownson was a secret member of just such an American group, with ties to the Scot, Robert Owen. Brownson said the group wanted to abolish Christianity but aimed to do so by an

indirect approach. Of course, Voltaire and the “philosophes” had exactly the same aim in the previous century, at which time the “philosophes” called Christianity, the “Infame.”

Wood answered with his “letter,” dated “Edinburgh, May 23, 1836.”

“...I observe it stated by my opponent, much to my surprise, that he has actually succeeded in inducing other clergymen of the district to subscribe his Protest.”

Wood then attempted to show that he, himself, was in very good standing with the Church of Scotland. Yet all that is certain from his remarks is that he was in good standing with a small Committee of that church. Change-agents, then as now, could insinuate themselves into such positions of influence. Wood continued:

(Page 9) “Among the other measures resorted to by the Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for the diffusion of religious Education, they have very lately availed themselves of an advantageous opportunity of acquiring from its former directors the Edinburgh Sessional School with a view of converting it into a seminary for the training of teachers. Among the inducements to this arrangement, they have paid me the compliment to include a desire to obtain my services in the superintendence of that establishment.... They (refer to) what appears to them ‘the unspeakable importance of having such an establishment in connection with the religious institutes of the country, and of its operations being commenced under the inspection of an individual of Mr. Wood’s ...qualifications.’”

This quotation gives background information on what was happening to the Edinburgh Sessional School in 1836, only about eight years after it had become famous on both sides of the Atlantic, which fame certainly suggests massive advertising by its promoters. John Wood referred to a Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Activists always operate through grabbing control of organizations at the top through committees, and activists know how to get themselves appointed to run the committees. Note that this “Committee” was interested in “the diffusion of religious Education,” and “diffusion” was an activist buzzword at that time. Wood mentioned “an advantageous opportunity of acquiring” the Edinburgh Sessional School “from its former directors,” so that teachers could be trained, obviously in Wood’s methods, as he said the committee “desire to obtain my services in the superintendence of that establishment.” Furthermore, it would influence all Scotland, as “an establishment in connection with the religious institutes of the country....” However, Trimmer’s comments establish the worthlessness of the kind of religious teaching that Wood was doing in the schoolbooks he wrote. It was so worthless that it resulted in clergymen signing a formal protest to Wood’s books.

See also the 1829 and 1838 entries concerning Wood’s school. See also the 1883-1887 entry, The Works of Orestes A. Brownson, concerning Brownson’s testimony on a secret society in New York State in 1829 and 1830 to which Brownson had belonged. Its purpose was to organize government schools with mandatory attendance laws, in which religion could be removed from education, but without making a direct attack upon religion.

#### 1836-1839 The Common School Assistant, J. Orville Taylor.

C. W. Bardeen, the publisher of The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York, reported on this periodical in his 1893 paper at the world’s fair in Chicago, discussed later. Taylor formed the American Common School Union, New York City, to show and to sell school goods, in March, 1837. Included were Town’s Spelling Book & Analysis; Sigourney’s Girl’s Reading Book and Boy’s Reading Book; Taylor’s District School (on which Taylor had won a prize); Burton’s District School As It Was; Wittich’s Essay on the Method of Teaching in Prussian Schools; Lord Brougham On Education; and several anonymous books:

Prussian and New York School Systems Compared; Satirical Hits on the People's Education; "etc." It is of interest that Taylor was selling "Lord Brougham on Education," whatever that volume was, in New York in the 1836-1839 period.

Bardeen made fun of Taylor's journal, copies of which I have seen, I believe in the New York Public Library. Bardeen was discussing Taylor on page 8, and then all pages of Bardeen's 1893 paper, reported below under 1893, were missing until page 17. On page 17, Bardeen mentioned a Mr. McKeen born in Antrim, Vermont, in 1792, who became principal in 1848 of #5 Mott Street School in New York, after having arrived in New York in 1818. McKeen was reportedly superintendent of schools in New York in 1854.

1838 "Account of the Proceedings Connected with the Testimonial Presented to John Wood, Esquire, on 23d December, 1837; With the Speech of Mr. Wood.... and A Preface Containing An Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School, and of Mr. Wood's Connection with that Institution," published by William Whyte and Company, Edinburgh, Scotland.

This 1838 pamphlet has a short Preface with remarkably little biographical information on John Wood, even though it concerned a testimonial in his honor. Wood had been referred to in the Schoolmaster's 1829 work as John Wood, Esq., Advocate, and Sheriff of Peebles-shire, but nothing else has been available on his background. However, this 1838 Preface does give a kind of chronology on Wood's activities in the Edinburgh Sessional School, and quotes from Wood's 1828 paper. Those remarks establish that Wood originally did voluntary work at the Sessional School dating from at least 1819. Whether it was full-time work is not clear, but it seems unlikely that it was full-time.

Parochial Sabbath schools for the poor had been established in Edinburgh in 1812, and soon after day schools to teach reading and writing. The Preface to the 1838 pamphlet said:

"An institution of this description, accordingly, was opened in Leith Wynd, under the name of the Sessional School, from its connection with the different kirk-sessions. This was on the 29th April 1813. In this school, the system known by the name of Lancastrian was chiefly followed.... At a subsequent period, many valuable suggestions were received from Dr. Bell, which were carried into effect by Dr. Brunton and the late Dr. Andrew Thomson, both of whom, for some time, gave daily attendance in the school-room."

A footnote said, "Dr. Brunton has all along acted as secretary to the parochial institutions, and his zealous services have been eminently useful." The material continued:

"It was about this period that Mr. Wood's connection with the Sessional School commenced. The account of this we think it right to give at full length, in Mr. Wood's own words, as forming an era in the history of education: -

"The author's first acquaintance with the Sessional School arose from his connection with the Society for Suppression of Begging, who had placed at that seminary the children that were under their care. It was at that time in its first stage, and was taught by a Mr. Brown. The writer's visits at this period, though few, impressed him with a very high opinion of the utility of the monitorial system, if rightly conducted, in furthering the important object of general education. He also paid several visits to the school, after it had received the improvements suggested by Dr. Brunton, on his return from London, when it was under the tuition of Mr. Bathgate, now one of the burgh teachers in Peebles, and was satisfied that it had indeed, in the meantime, undergone very great improvements, which amply compensated the meritorious exertions of its directors. A circumstance soon after this occurred, which rendered his visits to the school daily. In the course

of the winter of 1819-20, he had a particular charge allotted to him of the fund subscribed for behoof of the operative weavers, thrown out of employment by the pressure of the times. By a wise resolution of the managers of that fund, it was determined that the drawboys under their charge should be sent to school; and the very favourable opinion that he entertained of the high stage of order and discipline into which the Sessional School had been brought by the exertions of its directors, induced him immediately to suggest that seminary. Lads of this description, of course, required incessant superintendence. In consequence of the regular visits which he thus found necessary, he had a good opportunity afforded him of becoming acquainted both with the conduct and progress of the pupils under his own immediate charge, and also with the general condition of the whole school.... Mr. Bathgate, whose zeal never allowed him to omit any thing which promised advantage to his school, respectfully requested that he would not confine his attention to these classes only, but would take an interest also in the other classes of the seminary, a wish which was afterwards also communicated in a most liberal and gratifying manner, in a letter from the secretary in name of the directors. In consequence of this request, he did not think himself at liberty to close his labours....

“While he was thus employed, very serious doubts used frequently to come across his mind, whether he was doing all the good, which others were, perhaps, too easily inclined to imagine. The children were taught, indeed, to read, but the doubt was, whether they had been made such masters of their own language, as, in future life, to give them any pleasure in reading, or to enable them to derive much profit from it. They had learned their catechism, but were they much wiser, with regard to the truths which it contained? The Bible was read as a task, but was it not, also like a task, forgotten? The more he inquired into the actual condition of the lower orders, the more he was convinced that reading, together with spelling out the meaning of what they read, was too formidable an attempt to be frequently resorted to by them, and that even of those who did read, few had recourse to the books calculated to give them the most useful instruction, because they were unable to understand their language, while most resorted to works of a lighter and unfortunately less unexceptionable kind, which they found it not so difficult to comprehend. This evil called loudly for a remedy, which the meagre explanation, introduced along with the other practices of the Madras System (however useful to a certain limited extent) did not supply. He therefore felt an extremely strong anxiety to give the school more of an intellectual tone, not only to enable the pupils better to understand what they read there, but also to give them a taste for profitable reading, and make them understand whatever they should afterwards have occasion to read.... Were he to content himself with proposing the scheme to others, it might, and in all probability would be treated as visionary. He therefore resolved silently to do his best. And so silently indeed, and with so little stir did the thing proceed, that neither the directors, nor even the master knew what was going on, till they heard the children of the highest class, to whom he first confined his attempt, answering questions of an unusual nature. In the commencement of the attempt, he received even far stronger proofs than he had at all previously anticipated, of its extreme necessity. He found that he had by no means formed an adequate conception of the gross misapprehensions into which even the ablest children fall, regarding the meaning of what they read. He saw, of course, still more strongly, the necessity of perseverance, and in order the better to accomplish his object, he, with the cordial approbation of the directors, compiled a new schoolbook, better adapted to his purpose than the highest one at that time in use. As soon as it was sufficiently proved that the plan was both practicable and beneficial, a series of works was prepared for the same purpose, and with the like approbation. The result is well known to all who are acquainted with the school. He shall only now remark, that those who imagine that it was from the first anticipated by him in its full extent, pay a compliment to his discernment, to which he feels that he can have no just claim. A far more moderate degree of success was all he then ventured to expect, and an insurance to that extent would have amply satisfied him.’ - Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School, &c., pp. 25, 29.

“Along with the improvements in the reading department new life was given to that of arithmetic. Grammar, geography, and other branches were afterwards introduced, among which was the most important of all, viz., religious knowledge, instruction in which forms a regular part of the daily work of the Sessional School.

“In the particulars mentioned by Mr. Wood, in the very interesting extract which we have quoted, we find a satisfactory explanation of the wonderful success that has crowned his efforts. He came into a school conducted upon the best principles of education then known, and these principles were carried into effect by an energetic teacher, under the personal direction and superintendence of such men as Dr. Thomson and Dr. Brunton. In the Madras system there is much that is truly admirable, particularly in the great principle of mutual tuition, and in the scope which the classification of the children affords for the exercise of the principle of emulation. Along with many fooleries, it must be allowed that Joseph Lancaster had ingrafted various important improvements upon the system which he borrowed from Dr. Bell. And in a school where the combined excellencies of the Madras and Lancastrian method were exhibited, many advantages were enjoyed. Mr. Wood duly appreciated these advantages, and soon carried them to the utmost extent that their authors could have anticipated.

“...The essential defects of the Madras and Lancastrian systems consisted in their attaching too much importance to mere forms, and in their addressing themselves to a limited class of faculties. Their machinery, however, afforded scope for calling forth all the mental power, and of this Mr. Wood fully availed himself.

“...It must be taken into account also, when inquiring into the cause of his success, that he was a man of liberal education, and had enjoyed the benefit of the instructions of Dr. Adam, rector of the High School, one of the most distinguished teachers under the old system. Mr. Wood also engaged in the work, not as a professional schoolmaster, but as a philanthropist. His object was not to establish a high character as a teacher, but to do good to the young persons whom he found in the school. In this way, he was freed from any temptation to aim at singularity or novelty, merely for its own sake. He silently made his experiments one by one, ever following nature as his guide; and it was not till an extraordinary improvement was witnessed in his pupils, that even he himself was led to suppose that there was anything remarkable in the method he was following. To this hour it is not the least honourable trait in Mr. Wood’s character nor the least distinctive feature in his system, that he makes no pretensions to having introduced a method either essentially new in all its principles, or complete in all its parts. The interesting experiments that are continually going on are ever suggesting new views; and, holding by the same great principles, improvements in detail are introduced, we believe, up to the present hour.

“The most remarkable circumstances connected with the Sessional School, are the extent and accuracy of the information of the pupils, the intelligence and wonderful readiness displayed in their answers to the questions put to them upon general subjects - and the life and spirit with which their various tasks are performed. We have been particularly struck with the amount of their scriptural knowledge, and the clearness of their statements upon doctrinal topics; and few visitors, we believe, are present at an examination of any of the classes upon the Scriptures, without being delighted with the views of divine truth that are brought forward, or even without having something new suggested to their minds.”

The author then again quoted Wood concerning the youngest students. Before Wood, Andrew Bell had sharply moved from “sound” to “meaning” in his revised work on his Madras monitorial method. Bell had dropped most of the teaching based on “sound.” In addition, he reduced the amount of text to be

read by beginners to a tiny portion, in order to concentrate on its “meaning,” with an enormous amount of nitpicking questioning on every sentence. (Bell’s work has been discussed in this history.) However, as the author said, even Bell’s work was not sufficient for Wood in his move towards “meaning.”

Wood was the first to throw out the syllabary and all “sound” in the teaching of beginning reading in English, replacing it instead totally with Code 1 whole word “meaning.” All of the elaborate vocabulary in the following quotation from Wood is supposed to explain his lofty motives in doing so. This recalls J. P. Morgan’s remark about people having two reasons for doing anything: the good reason and the real reason. Wood’s verbiage below is his good reason. However, his real reason appears to have been to move totally from “sound” to “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading.

In reading Wood’s work, it should be remarked that the “questioning” approach, mentioned by the Scottish Schoolmaster and seen in many change-agent works of the period, was exceedingly boring and tiresome in the form used for little children. (The “questioning” approach was NOT the ancient catechetical system, in which the memorizing verbatim of specific questions and answers is used in teaching specific subject matter.) One such change-agent work of the period has already been described in this history, and it had enormously elaborate questioning which was probably not only exquisitely boring to little children but actually harmful.

Wood certainly seems to have reached the “overkill” level in the elaborate verbiage below, which was meant to establish the lofty and disinterested motives for his work at the Edinburgh Sessional School. This material, taken from Wood’s 1828 book, is then followed by further remarks of the editor of the 1838 material.

“In all their arrangements, they have regarded their youngest pupil, not as a machine, nor an irrational animal that must be driven, but as an intellectual being who may be led, endowed not merely with sensation and memory, but with perception, judgment, conscience, affections, and passions; capable, to a certain degree, of receiving favourable or unfavourable impressions, of imbibing right or wrong sentiments, of acquiring good or bad habits; strongly averse to application, where its object is unperceived or remote, but, on the other hand, ardently curious, and infinitely delighting in the display of every new attainment which he makes. It has accordingly been their anxious aim to interest, no less than to task - to make the pupil understand (as much as possible) what he is doing, not less than to exact from him its performance - familiarly to illustrate, and copiously to exemplify, the principle, no less than to hear him repeat the words of a rule - to speak to him, and by all means to encourage him to speak, in a natural language, which he understands, rather than in irksome technicalities, which the pedant might approve - to keep him, while in school, not only constantly, but actively, energetically employed, to inspire him with a zeal for excelling in whatever is his present occupation (whether it be study or amusement,) and even where he is incapable of excelling others, still, by noticing, with approbation, every step, however little, which he makes towards improvement, to delight him with the consciousness of excelling his former self.’ Ibid. pages 2 and 3.

“Mr. Wood has now for upwards of twenty years devoted himself to the labour of gratuitously instructing the children of the lower classes. In the Sessional School his success has been complete. But the fruits of his labours have by no means been confined to that seminary. He has given a powerful and general impulse to the cause of education throughout Scotland, and indeed in many other parts of the world. Many of his pupils are now conducting extensive seminaries of education upon his principles. All the teachers employed by the Committee of the General Assembly in their schools in the Highlands and Islands, undergo a course of preparatory training under the care of Mr. Wood; and teachers from all quarters visit the Sessional School, and carry many of its plans along with them. In consequence of them, more enlarged views are

generally entertained on the subject of education, higher qualifications are required in teachers, and views of incalculable benefit open on the intellectual and moral condition of future generations.

“The Sessional School has long been considered as one of the institutions of which the citizens of Edinburgh have most reason to be proud; and... it was generally known, that Mr. Wood sought no other recompense for his generous sacrifices and devoted labours than the unexampled success that crowned his efforts....”

All of the above verbiage established the following facts: A church charity school was formed in Edinburgh in 1813 under directors, and with a permanent teacher. In 1819 Wood began what was almost certainly part-time teaching there, but immediately concerned himself with “meaning” in the reading of the top students (who could apparently already read fluently). That almost immediate work concerning “meaning” in reading was carried on without telling the full-time teacher, or, if you can believe Wood, the directors who had apparently appointed him. Great publicity then followed at some unspecified time on that work with the oldest students on “meaning”, which work by Wood the Schoolmaster personally observed. The Schoolmaster said that, in its good aspects such as in the meaning of vocabulary, Wood was merely imitating the standard practices already followed by teachers such as himself. Yet Wood was also introducing very harmful practices, by omitting any effort on the part of the students in the use of dictionaries and the personal study of books such as grammars.

Wood then composed a book, either at the behest of the directors, or at least with their warm approval, to teach such students who could already read, so that they would be sure to read for “meaning.” Because of his great concern for meaning, he then composed a series of books, including one for beginners. However, the beginning book taught beginners to read, not FOR meaning, but BY “meaning,” since it totally dropped “sound” for beginners, concentrating instead on whole-word “meaning.” Wood’s verbose explanation, given above, is that he wrote that material for beginners because of his loving and great concern for the welfare of little children.

Despite the reference in 1838 to Wood’s 20 years of teaching (which would have begun in 1818), the fact is that it really began in the winter of 1819-1820. Wood had said of himself, “This was at first done only at intervals, but as his interest in their improvement increased, became more and more frequent, and at length daily.... Mr. Bathgate... requested that he... should take an interest also in the other classes... also communicated in a letter from the secretary in name of the directors....” He then claimed he silently intended to promote “meaning” in reading, without telling anybody, not even “the master” or the directors. His success was so wonderful that, “with the cordial approbation of the directors” he wrote a book for the higher classes, and then for the lower ones, with “the like approbation.”

Wood wrote that account in 1828, and the Scottish Schoolmaster first wrote his criticism of Wood’s work in late 1827. Therefore, Wood’s books, including his Code 1 primer, were written between 1819 and 1828, most likely in the period from 1821 to 1825, particularly since the 1826 American Journal of Education under its Scottish editor, William Russell, referred to “improvements” in reading moving toward “meaning” that had already occurred elsewhere. As indicated in Part 4 of this history, the period from 1819 to 1825 in America showed a similar move from “sound” to “meaning” in several spelling texts, and also work promoting “meaning” in beginning reading by activists such as Keagy from 1819 onwards. However, it was only in 1826 that the major American drive to “meaning” occurred, and “meaning” rapidly became the American norm, with whole-word “meaning” primers replacing “sound” spellers for beginners.

See also the 1829 and 1836 entries concerning Wood’s school, and the 1883-1887 entry, The Works of Orestes A. Brownson, concerning Brownson’s testimony on a secret society in New York State in 1829

and 1830 to which Brownson had belonged. Its purpose was to organize government schools with mandatory attendance laws, in which religion could be removed from education, but without making a direct attack upon religion.

1839 Common School Journal, Horace Mann, Editor. Discussed in this history. Horace Mann was a major proponent of “meaning” in beginning reading, and a major figure in the history of government schools.

1843 The School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York, C. W. Bardeen, Editor, in May, 1876, reproduced a circular which had advertised in 1843 what was probably the first teachers’ “institute,” which was held on October 18, 1843, at Wethersfield Springs, New York.

1844 Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, Vol. II, page 311?. Refers to the massive destruction of manuscripts in Ireland during the Viking period.

See also Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Second Series, Volume II, pages 280 and 281, Dublin: 1879-1888, for the May 12, 1884, letter from the Right Reverend Charles Graves, Lord Bishop of Limerick. This letter concerns Egyptian contacts mentioned in the ancient Litany of Aengus and concerns other evidence of Egyptian-Irish contacts about the seventh century.

See also the article, “On the Geography of Ros Ailithir,” by Rev. Thomas Olden, on pages 219 and following of Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Second Series, Volume II, 1879-1888, concerning the content of geography lessons in the 900’s.

See also the entry under 1892.

1844 Seventh Annual Report of the Board of Education Together with the Seventh Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board, by Horace A. Mann, Boston, 1844. This brought on a violent answer, the “Remarks” of 31 schoolmasters. It was followed by Reply to the “Remarks” of Thirty-one Schoolmasters, by Horace A. Mann, Boston, 1844. Mann’s answer then brought on the “Rejoinder” from the 31 schoolmasters, resulting in Horace Mann’s Reply to the Rejoinder to the “Reply” of the Hon. Horace Mann, in 1844. Finally, following this, the Boston schoolmasters published Penitential Tears, or a Cry from the Dust by the Thirty-One Prostrated and Pulverized by the Hand of Horace Mann, 1845. Horace Mann, who is so highly praised in histories, was anything but a hero to the local schoolmasters of the period. Samuel Blumenfeld published much of this material in his book, The New Illiterates. It is also discussed in an appendix to Walcutt-Lamport-McCracken’s text, Teaching Reading, a Phonic/Linguistic Approach to Developmental Reading, listed in Appendix D. The Boston schoolmasters objected to many of Mann’s programs, one of which was the promotion of Code I “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading.

1854 Biographie Universelle, edited by J. F. Michaud. Republished by Adademisch Druckverlagsanstalt, Graz, Austria.

1856-1866 American Journal of Education, Henry B. Barnard, Editor. This periodical, apparently with no connection to the earlier journal with the same name, appeared both before 1856 and after 1866. The following pertinent articles appeared between those years. (Many others published during the life of the journal, of course, are also of interest.) - Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, May, 1856; Cyrus Peirce, 1857; Johann Bernhard Basedow and the Philanthropinum, translated from the original of Karl von Raumer, 1859; Pestalozzi, 1859; Quintilian, 1863-1864?; A-B-C Books and Primers, 1865, p. 593-604, Vol XII; “Catechism on Methods of Teaching,” translated from Diesterweg’s Almanac for 1855 and 1856, printed in the 1865-1866 American Journal of Education; and Primary Instruction by Object Lessons of the City



of Oswego, New York, 1865 (which establishes that was called “phonics” there was only partial, supplemental phonic analysis of sight words). On page 277 of the September, 1860, issue appeared Pilan’s [sic] First Letter on the Principles of Elementary Education. Also covered in 1860 was Subjects and Methods of Early Education, Scotland Training College, Edinburgh, by James Carr. The Scotland Training College was presumably the successor to John Wood’s famous Edinburgh Sessional School.

1857 A Volume of Vocabularies... from the Tenth Century to the Fifteenth, by Thomas Wright (1810-1877). In Chapter XIV, Wright listed Latin words for fifteenth century English words, including those for beginning reading books, part of which material is quoted in this history. Wright also published in 1862 A History of Domestic Manners and Sentiments in England in the Middle Ages, which is an excellent reference work.

1860 Concerning an Excerpt from a Springfield, Massachusetts Editorial on Walt Whitman. The following notes on a New York Public Library display about 1982, quoting from a nineteenth-century newspaper, were taken hurriedly in shorthand on scraps of paper. The notes were not transcribed for twelve years, so undoubtedly there is some inaccuracy.

Whether Walt Whitman did or did not have talent has nothing to do with the issue discussed below. Garbage in a crystalline vase is still garbage. Furthermore, culturally speaking, it has not been primarily the talent (the package) with such writers as Whitman that has been marketed over the years, but the messages inside their packages of “talent.”

Manifestly, it is a silly argument to say that a package matters more than its contents. Yet the 1860 Springfield editor quoted below did not succumb to that argument. His article was reproduced in the New York Public Library’s exhibit, but it was obviously meant to amuse the 1980’s public because of its “outmoded” point of view and its attempt to impede the march of cultural “progress.” The article sounded anything but ignorant to me. In contrast, I considered the New York Public Library’s exhibit on children’s literature some time later to include some remarkably ignorant and downright silly comments.

However, that is anything but surprising, since the reigning literati are an astonishingly ignorant group, as they are continually demonstrating in their widely publicized books and articles. They apparently practice self-censorship, limiting their reading to the output of their canonized “experts.” For instance, it would be interesting to learn how many of the virulently anti-religious have ever read any appreciable part of the Bible. It is almost a “given” that they have never read any appreciable part of the Lives of the Saints, which the wounded and worldly soldier, Ignatius Loyola, found so moving in the 1500’s that he abandoned the military when he recovered from his wounds and founded the Jesuit order.

The following appeared in the January 16, 1860 Springfield (Mass.) Republican concerning Walt Whitman’s Leaves of Grass:

“Some weeks or months ago, we remarked upon a poem in the Atlantic Monthly from the pen of Walt Whitman... about as much like poetry... as paring one’s corns. Recently the author has appeared in a large volume... and a more scandalous volume we never saw. We had not intended to notice it, but... men and women indiscriminately have conceived that it is a pure book....

“Nothing is more notorious than the fact that when an individual claims to have some light superior to that revealed in the Bible, whether that light be the ‘light of nature,’ simply, or the light of new and direct revelation or inspiration, than that individual almost invariably develops himself toward libertinism... as in the various accounts that spring up from time to time. William Dorrel who, seventy-five years ago, proclaimed himself the Messiah up in Franklin County,

counseled promiscuous intercourse of the sexes and taught as vile stuff as our very nature-prone Walt Whitman does now....

“Spiritualism, whenever it has cut loose from the Bible as the only authoritative revelation from heaven, has gone just as naturally into free-love as water runs down hill. The very first social institution that falls into [trouble] after Christianity as a revelation is discarded, is Christian Marriage, and of all the ‘teachings’ in the world, we know of none that so inevitably lead to impurity as those attributed to ‘nature’.... Now Walt Whitman is par excellence the ‘poet of nature.’ In his pure taste, there is nothing unclean because nothing seems unclean. Nature has free course in him, and runs and is clarified in all its issues. Those passions which degrade men and lead to nine-tenths of the crime of the world, he exalts. Those appetites which only a pure, true and life-long love can hallow, are with him appetites to be cherished and fed... no matter about the love. It ought to be enough for Walt Whitman, if he honestly thinks his book a pure one, to know that the pure in society will shun it.”

The post-Christian pantheist and friend of the James family, “Reverend” Ralph Waldo Emerson, said in a letter to Walt Whitman quoted at the library exhibit, “I greet you at the beginning of a great career.” The Springfield editor despised Whitman, but Emerson applauded him. A letter in the James McKeen Cattell manuscript files in Washington tells of Cattell’s walking out, as a young man some thirty years later, along the railroad tracks to Whitman’s home to meet with him. Cattell also obviously endorsed Whitman. The people in cultural control of our American society for many years have been people like Emerson, Cattell, and Walt Whitman, but they promoted a world view that America, as a whole, has always rejected.

Culturally speaking, America is still a captive nation of the Vocal Minority. The exaltation of Whitman is another case of cultural water running uphill, without its being visibly pumped, just as has been happening in Western culture ever since before the French Revolution, with the advent of Voltaire’s “philosophes.” The Vocal Minority has been in control of American culture for a very long time. The fact that they have succeeded, against enormous numerical odds, in capturing and maintaining that control is, at the least, a seeming cultural mystery to which attention is almost never directed.

1861-1879 The Monks of the West, 7 vols., by Count de Montalembert. London translation from the French. This is an exceedingly important historical work, although it is virtually never cited by so-called “experts” on education.

1865 Methods of Instruction, by James Pyle Wickersham of Millersville, Pennsylvania, teachers college, published by J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia. This is an unparalleled, unself-conscious reporting of the standard, as well as the most-approved, teaching methods in use in 1865. Wickersham seems to have been a very balanced and reasonable educator, as well as a highly respected one, along with his contemporary, Philbrick of Boston. Philbrick and Wickersham met and apparently became very friendly with Ferdinand Buisson of France during the 1876 Philadelphia Exposition, as reported, I believe, in Philbrick’s biography. See the 1886 entry on Wickersham’s excellent history of education in Pennsylvania.

1866 Les Ecoles Episcopales et Monastique de l’Occident, 769-1180, [The Episcopal and Monastic Schools of the West, 769-1180] by Leon Maitre. Paris. Like Montalembert’s 1861-1879 work listed above, this is an important historical source.

1867 Christian Schools & Scholars, 2 Vols., by Augusta Theodosia Drane, London. This unparalleled history by an English nun filled a great void. Yet it has been almost totally ignored, apparently never

being cited in today's bibliographies, although it was cited by Albert Parry in his 1920 book, listed later. Crumbling copies of Drane's two volumes are available in the New York Public Library.

1868 English Visible Speech for the Million; For Communicating the Exact Pronunciation of the Language to Native or Foreign Learners and For Teaching Children and Illiterate Adults to Read in Few Days, by Alexander Melville Bell, Lecturer on Elocution in University College, London. [He was the father of Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone]. Simpkin, Marshall & Co, London; London and New York: N. Trubner & Co.

On the first page of this work, Bell wrote:

“... in the Inaugural Edition of Visible Speech, it was stated that by means of the self-interpreting Universal Alphabet which constitutes the system, a person of ordinary capacity would LEARN TO READ in a few days. It might have been added, that an ILLITERATE person may even be HIS OWN INSTRUCTOR! This little work affords the means of experimentally establishing both of these facts. Any person who can merely pronounce the NUMBERS 1 to 8 in the ordinary way and name the objects represented in the Alphabet Table (page 9) may be immediately taught to READ or may easily TEACH HIMSELF..... The object of visible speech is not - as some have supposed - to supercede ordinary letters. No revision in ... orthography is aimed at. The system simply furnishes a key to all letters....”

The elder Bell and his work on speech were famous in his day. In the movie, *My Fair Lady*, a musical version of George Bernard Shaw's play, *Pygmalion*, based about 1900 in England, Eliza is told to improve her speech using “Bell's charts.” That detail probably appeared in Shaw's original work. Shaw must have learned of those charts in the late nineteenth century.

Another of Alexander Melville Bell's papers is his Address to the National Association of Elocutionists, published by the Volta Bureau, Washington, D. C., in 1895. In this, he referred to his visit to the Boston schools in 1868. The association of his son, Alexander Graham Bell, with the Boston city school for the deaf as an instructor of its teachers has been discussed in this history. The Boston city school at that time taught the deaf by lip-reading “sound” and not by signs and sight-word “meaning.”

1868-1880, and before and afterwards - Annual Reports of the Quincy School Committee. John Quincy Adams served on the Committee starting in 1870, and Charles Francis Adams in 1872. Colonel Francis Wayland Parker commenced as Superintendent of Quincy in April, 1875, and left in 1880.

1868-1880, and before and afterwards - Annual Reports of the Boston School Committee. These are very large and impressive printed volumes, far more impressive than the Quincy, Massachusetts, annual reports and those like them. I did not see the 1873 Boston report, although it may have been in the Harvard library with the other reports which I did see. However, a note in a later volume referred to the report of Dr. George F. Bigelow, “former Chairman of the Committee on the Schools,” which had been printed in that Annual Report for 1873. The following comment was made concerning Dr. Bigelow's report:

“A full account of the history, organization, and method of instruction of the [Boston city] school [for the deaf] is contained in [that] report.”

That article by Dr. Bigelow in the 1873 Annual Report of the Boston School Committee should be of real historical interest.

1873 Rapport sur l'Instruction Primaire a l'Exposition Universelle de Vienne en 1873, by Ferdinand Buisson, Paris. This reports briefly on current American reading materials exhibited at the 1873 Exposition in Vienna, Austria, and also reports on the European reading materials.

1873 Journal of the Proceedings of the National Educational Association. Contains articles by Dr. Edwin Leigh on Leigh phonetic print, and by Farnham on his sentence method. It was in 1873 that Leigh print was at the height of its success. Yet the “psychological” article by Farnham promoting his sentence method implicitly condemned Leigh’s phonic print, and Leigh’s article immediately followed Farnham’s. The placement of those two articles in the widely read NEA Journal appears to have been deliberate by Leigh’s opponents, because it was immediately after their publication that Leigh print almost went out of use. Farnham’s faulty “science” enshrining “meaning” must have sounded very convincing to many school superintendents.

According to Dr. C. C. Fries in his May, 1964 article, “Linguistics and the Teaching of Reading,” in the May, 1964, *The Reading Teacher*, the 1873 Journal also contained an article on Pitman phonetic print on pages 207-219, but that is in error. When I contacted the NEA Archives, they could find no entry in that publication for Pitman print. They did send me copies of Leigh’s and Farnham’s articles from the 1873 Journal. Apparently, Dr. Fries had learned that the 1873 Journal had an article on pronouncing print, and assumed that it was Pitman print, most probably because he had never heard of Leigh print. That would hardly have been surprising, because the fact that Leigh print had ever existed largely disappeared from the literature after about 1880.

1874 Agassiz and Spiritualism, Involving the Investigation of Harvard College Professors in 1857. Allen Putnam (1802-1887). 70 p. Colby & Rich, Boston. This is listed in The New York Public Library catalog under call number \*Cpv 3260. A passing reference to the existence of this material has been made in this history, although I have not seen it. Since this 1874 material by the 72-year-old Putnam, published a year after the famous Agassiz died in 1873, concerned a very old 1857 investigation, it conceivably was intended as a debunking response to the highly favorable publicity that Agassiz received after his death.

1874-1920 The School Bulletin and New York State Educational Journal, Syracuse, New York (from September 17, 1874 to 1920) Published monthly by C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York. It is shocking that no copies at all of this historically enormously important periodical are at present in the Syracuse library (Onondago County Library), even though it had been published for 46 years in the city of Syracuse and had been sent for 46 years not just to New York State but all over the United States. It is also shocking that no copies were at the Syracuse University library, until a large number of incomplete volumes turned up about 1960 in the basement of the building that had been occupied by its publisher, Bardeen, until 1920, which copies were then donated to the university. Spotty, incomplete collections are at various libraries in the country. Yet no complete collection is apparently in existence, even though Bardeen had advertised that complete collections were available for libraries who wished to order them as historical documents. Nevertheless, the Syracuse public library has the 1932 “nostalgic” McGuffey editions donated by Henry Ford, which serve to support the outrageous McGuffey Myth!

1875 Dictionnaire Biographique et Bibliographique, by A. Dantes, Paris.

1878 Rapport sur l'Instruction Primaire a l'Exposition Universelle de Philadelphie en 1876, by Ferdinand Buisson. Imprimerie Nationale, Paris. This is a gold mine of information on American reading methods at that period. The English translation of part of Buisson’s report, available in some libraries, is of little use, however, omitting most of the information concerning reading instruction.

1876 The American Catalogue Under the Direction of F. Leypoldt. Subject Entries of Books in Print and for Sale (Including Reprints and Importations), July 1, 1876. Compiled by Lynds E. Jones. (Also supplements in later years, as indicated, reprinted by Peter Smith, New York: 1941.)

1876 The Invention of Printing by Theo. L. De Vinne, New York: Francis Hart & Co., 1876. This is a remarkable history.

1870's to 1900's New York School Journal, published weekly by E. L. Kellogg & Co., New York, New York. Although this publication dating from perhaps the 1870's until after 1900 was heavily biased towards the activists, it is nevertheless a useful source of information. It is difficult to locate copies, however.

1877 and earlier, and 1889 Sonnenschein's Cyclopedia of Education, Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., London, and C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York.

1877-1883 The Primary Teacher, A Monthly Magazine. The New-England Publishing Co., No. 16 Hawley Street, Boston, Massachusetts, Thos. W. Bicknell, Publisher; also, from 1880, William E. Sheldon, Editor. Volume No. 1 of The Primary Teacher was dated October, 1877. Magazine later claimed it had 10,000 subscribers, nationwide. The company also published the more important New-England Journal of Education. The Primary Teacher largely reflected "expert" opinions (Mrs. Rickoff, S. S. Greene, etc.) In September, 1883, merging with two other publications, it became The American Teacher, with editors Thos. W. Bicknell, Wm. E. Sheldon, and W. N. Hailmann (the promoter of kindergartens), with its publishing offices still at No. 16 Hawley Street, Boston, Massachusetts. How long The American Teacher continued to be published is not known. Copies of The Primary Teacher and The American Teacher are in the Harvard libraries.

Nineteenth-century journals such as this are of particular interest for the advertisements they carry, reflecting current practices and materials. For instance, one of the advertisers from 1879 to 1883 was Milton Bradley & Co., Springfield, Massachusetts, who offered its catalogue, saying they were manufacturers of kindergarten materials, primary school aids, and elementary apparatus. Such a catalogue would be illuminating concerning actual practices being promoted in the late 1870's. Milton Bradley is still, today, an important producer of school supplies, and might have copies of its old catalogues available for reference.

About 1877, possibly until well after 1900 - The New-England Journal of Education, Thos. W. Bicknell, Publisher, Boston, Massachusetts. This should be comparable to the School Bulletin published by C. W. Bardeen in Syracuse, New York, and presumably also has real historical value.

1878 Paris Universal Exposition, 1878, John Dudley Philbrick. (New York Public Library has this material on film, under the catalog number \*368. Although I have not seen it, some of its comments may be of interest, because of the date of 1878 and the fact that its author, Boston Superintendent of Schools Philbrick was fired in 1878 in a power play which particularly concerned methods to teach beginning reading).

1880 The Spelling Reform, Francis A. March, U. S. Bureau of Education, Circulars of Information. This is listed in the Library of Congress catalog under L111.A5, 1880, No. 7. My request for it in 1988 or 1989 was returned with the note, "Not on Shelf." I was given permission to check the shelves myself, and it and many other volumes of U. S. Bureau of Education materials were missing: 1871, 1872, 1875, 1876, 1878, 1880, part of 1884, 1895, 1896, 1897 and 1901, (However, I did find, either before or after that time, 1878, No. 2, Elementary Education in London.) Considering the facts that the renowned philologist March had been a student of Noah Webster, and had been James McKeen Cattell's favorite professor at

Lafayette College before Cattell's graduation in 1880, anything March wrote on the topic of spelling should be of great interest. Naturally, many of the other missing volumes would have been of interest, such as L111.A5 1884 No. 3, Illiteracy in the United States 1870-1880, by Charles Warren; and U. S. Office of Education, American Education in the Exposition to Be Held in Vienna in 1873. I specifically checked for this one myself. It is conceivable that the missing volumes are elsewhere than on the proper shelves with the existing volumes, because of a "glitch" in the filing system, since I did receive one for 1878 on another occasion. See the two Circulars of Information listed below under 1885.

1881 L'Instruction Primaire en France Avant la Revolution, [Primary Instruction in France Before the Revolution], by L'Abbe E. Allain. Librairie de la Societe Bibliographique, Paris. Contains important source material.

1882 Tracts for Teachers - No. 1, Spelling. Colonel Francis Wayland Parker, Boston. Colonel Parker was the enormously influential first superintendent of schools in Quincy, Massachusetts, hired when the Adams brothers were on the school committee. He then went on to the Board of Supervisors of the Boston schools from 1880 to 1883, after which he became in January, 1883, head of the experimental Practice School at the Cook County Normal School, Chicago, and of the Normal School itself, both of which he made famous. Parker wrote very little himself, which makes this pamphlet and a few others of particular importance. Although this pamphlet concerns spelling, it also contains Parker's ideas on beginning reading, and he emphatically endorsed teaching beginning reading by "meaning."

See also the Quincy, Massachusetts, annual school reports from 1875 to 1880, while Parker was superintendent there, which include the reports Parker actually wrote himself. See also the 1895 entry, Course of Study at the Cook County Normal School, Chicago, Illinois, which was available at the University of Chicago Library in the summer of 1996, and which included a report written by Parker. (By 1896, Cook County Normal School was publishing and selling a considerable list of materials written by other staff members.) The University of Chicago library had, in the summer of 1986, a copy of a master's degree thesis written in 1914 by Mary Agnes Riley, A History of the Chicago Normal School (1856-1906) which includes a considerable amount of background material on Parker and the Normal School. It includes a biography of Parker, part of it actually autobiographical, taken from "an appendix to a book entitled 'School Days of the Fifties' by William M. Giffin, Dept. of Mathematics, Cook Co. Normal." The Course of Study mentioned above was, I believe, filed with that thesis at the time I saw it, as it is listed in its table of contents as part of its Appendix. See also the 1883 and 1894? materials concerning Parker.

1882 Vier Seltene Schriften des Sechzehnten Jahrhunderts, by Heinrich Fechner (1845-?). "Mit einer bisher ungedruckten Abhandlung uber Valentinus Ickelsamer, von Friedrich Ludwig Karl Weigand." (F. L. K. Weigand: 1804-1878) Reprinted by Hildesheim, New York 6 Olms. 1972. Reprint of the edition published in Berlin by Weigandt und Grieben in 1882. Library of Congress call number PF 3109.C45 1972. This was not available when I requested it from general circulation, but I received a message "Check CCF," although I did not do so. For those who read German, this should be helpful on reading history. G. Stanley Hall stated that H. Fechner's Die Methoden des ersten Leseunterricht, pp. 304 (or 314), Berlin, 1882, was "very valuable historically, based on careful extensive study of original [authors]." Possibly Hall was referring to a chapter of the 1882 material listed above.

1882 Les Ecoles et Colleges en Province, by Mateau. Dijon, France.

1882 Boston School Committee, Supervisors' Board. Report on the Subject of a Spelling Book - 1882. (School Document No. 13).(This is listed in the New York Public Library catalog under the call number RNE. Although I have not seen it, it should be of interest in connection with the Boston schools material already quoted.)

1882 Monumenta Ecclesiae Anglicanae, Vol. III, by Edward Maskell. This is concerned almost totally with the history of the primer before the printing press was invented. The primer, of course, originally was the layman's prayerbook, and not a child's beginning reading text.

1883-1887 The Works of Orestes A. Brownson, 1883-1887, Detroit, and AMS Press, Inc., New York, 1966, a collection of the writings of Orestes Augustus Brownson (1803-1876). Samuel L. Blumenfeld's book, *Is Public Education Necessary?*, 1981, 1985 (pages 95, 96, and 113) quoted from *The Works of Orestes A. Brownson*, Volume V, p. 62, and Volume XI, p. 442-443. Those quotations establish that Brownson had been involved in 1829 and 1830 with Robert Owen's son and other activists who were attempting to establish government schools with mandatory attendance laws, from which all religious teaching was to be excluded. That 1829-1830 American group of Owenites had been associated with Robert Owen's short-lived socialist colony at New Harmony, Indiana, that had been founded in 1826. Some of Brownson's comments which Blumenfeld quoted are given below. However, to understand the extent of the organization to which Brownson referred, it is necessary to read all of Blumenfeld's book, which contains many other quotations from original sources. The following remarks by Brownson are from Blumenfeld's book, although the order of Brownson's remarks has been rearranged in the following.:

“The great object was to get rid of Christianity, and to convert our churches into halls of science. The plan was not to make open attacks on religion... but to establish a system of state, - we said national - schools, from which all religion was to be excluded, in which nothing was to be taught but such knowledge as is verifiable by the senses, and to which all parents were to be compelled by law to send their children.... The first thing to be done was to get this system of schools established. For this purpose, a secret society was formed, and the whole country was to be organized somewhat on the plan of the carbonari of Italy, or as were the revolutionists throughout Europe by Bazard preparatory to the revolutions of 1820 and 1830. This organization was commenced in 1829, in the city of New York, and to my own knowledge was effected throughout a considerable part of New York State. How far it was extended in other states, or whether it is still kept up I know not, for I abandoned it in the latter part of the year 1830.... It would be worth inquiring, if there were any means of ascertaining how large a share of this secret infidel society, with its members all through the country unsuspected by the public, and unknown to each other, yet all known to a central committee, and moved by it, have had in giving the extraordinary impulse to godless education which all must have remarked since 1830....

“How far the secret organization extended, I do not know: but I do know that a considerable portion of the State of New York was organized, for I was myself one of the agents organizing it.”

Brownson went on to become a well-known lecturer and editor, and was an associate of people like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Elizabeth Peabody, and the Transcendentalists, before Brownson himself became a Catholic convert. The point is that, although Brownson was a colorful man, he does not appear to have been an unreliable man, so his testimony may be taken at face value: He testified that “movers and shakers” in 1829 and 1830 were consciously trying to shape American education secretly, and to establish government schools and mandatory attendance laws in order to remove religion from American society. There were obviously many members of this secret society, but his is the only known testimony to its existence. It would therefore appear that such activist groups leave little trace in the records. His personal knowledge of such a secret group, which clearly emanated from the Scottish and English Owenites, dated from 1829. That group may well have had an older parent group in the Owenite circle in England or Scotland. The record suggests that the sudden switch in America from the “syllable” (“sound”) method in 1825 to the “word” (“meaning”) method by about 1830 was very

likely one of the achievements of such a group, as was the eventual establishment of government schools in America and in Great Britain. The “word” method for English has been the siamese twin to the movement for government schools in English-speaking countries: Wherever government schools arrived in those countries, the “meaning” method for learning to read in English has always arrived attached to them.

See also the 1829, 1836 and 1838 entries concerning Wood’s school in Edinburgh, Scotland, possibly supported by the same kind of activists as those Brownson described.

1883 Method of Teaching Reading in the Primary Schools, Board of Supervisors for the Public Schools of Boston. This critically important document, available in the files of the Boston city schools, has been discussed in this history. Mitford Mathews discussed it in his 1966 book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, listed later. This 1883 publication endorsed the “meaning” method, thereby implicitly outlawing the use of Leigh print phonics (the “sound” method). For ten years before Superintendent Philbrick was fired in 1878, Leigh print phonics had been increasingly adopted in the Boston schools because of its great success. Yet the use of Leigh print phonics was implicitly outlawed only a few months later in 1878 by the new published curriculum. However, the 1883 material is far more elaborate concerning the teaching of beginning reading than the 1878 material. The 1883 material describes in essence the “meaning” methods that have been used in American schools ever since. Yet it is certainly not widely known nor in constant use as a fundamental reference in “reading instruction” texts promoting “meaning,” though it certainly should be. The fact that it is not is a good index of the hopeless inadequacy of “reading instruction” history.

1883 Notes of Talks on Teaching, Given by Francis W. Parker, at the Martha’s Vineyard Summer Institute, July 17 to August 19, 1882, Reported by Lelia A. Patridge, Fourth Edition. New York: E. L. Kellogg & Co. This was quite famous in its time. Parker had already left as a Boston Supervisor (where he had been from 1880 after having been in Quincy as Superintendent from 1875 to 1880). Parker took over in Chicago in January, 1883, as head of the Cook County Normal School and Practice School. See also the 1882, 1894?, 1895 and 1914 entries concerning Parker.

1884 The BAC (sic) bothe in latyn and in Englysshe... Col.: Thus endeth the ABC translated out of Laten to to (sic) Englysshe with other deuote Prayers. Imprynted at London in Paules Chyrche yarde at the sygne of the maydens heed by Thomas Petyt. (c. 1538), 8 leaves. Reproduced in facsimile by Shuckburgh in 1884 from a copy in the library of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Andrew Tuer reproduced the first page of the Shuckburgh c. 1538 “BAC” ABC book on page 378 of *The Horn Book*, and a copy is in Appendix A of this book.

H. Anders described it in his article “The Elizabethan ABC with the Catechism,” published in the publication of the Bibliographical Society, *The Library, A Quarterly Review of Bibliography*, Fourth Series, Volume XVI, Oxford University Press, London, 1936. Anders said this circa 1538 sixteen-page book was the first surviving printed ABC book in English or at least partly in English. He said its contents include the ABC and syllables, Pater noster, Ave Maria, Credo (the preceding both in Latin and English), and the Confiteor. This is followed by graces (prayers), all in English, the book concluding with the Ten Commandments in an abbreviated and rhymed form in English, and a few more short English prayers.

The “BAC” that the printer, Thomas Petyt, accidentally set up in the title about 1538, instead of the proper “ABC,” is rather amusing, because it constitutes possibly the longest-living and best publicized misprint in history

1885 Uber Aphasie und Ihre Beziehungen zur Wahrnehmung, by H. Von Grashey, in *Arch. f. Psychiatrie u. Nerven Krankheiten*, 12. Per Franz Biglmaier of Germany, in John Downing’s 1973 book,



Comparative Reading (listed later), Grashey “maintained on his authority as a psychiatrist concerned with aphasia that the letters successively pass the macula lutea, or yellow spot of the eye, and successively provoke relevant sounds.”

In contrast to American sources ignoring both Grashey’s 1885 work and Messmer’s 1903 work, Bigmaier also mentioned Messmer’s conclusions briefly, besides quoting from Grashey’s.

1885 Uber die Zeit der Erkennung und Benennung von Schriftzeichen, Bildern und Farben,” by the American, James McKeen Cattell, while Wilhelm Wundt’s graduate psychology student in Germany, published in *Philosophische Studien* 2 (1885), pp. 635-650. (“On the Time Required for Recognizing and Naming Letters and Words, Pictures and Colors,” translation by Robert S. Woodworth, in *Man of Science: James McKeen Cattell, 1860-1944*, (2 volumes), A. T. Poffenberger, Ed., Science Press, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1947. Cited in Michael M. Sokal’s 1981 book, *An Education in Psychology, James McKeen Cattell’s Journal and Letters from Germany and England, 1880-1888*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1981.

Cattell’s sight-word experiments were begun at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore in the evening of March 17, 1883, (St. Patrick’s Day, and the same day that the Brooklyn Bridge was finished), at which time G. Stanley Hall and John Dewey were among his subjects. Cattell’s sight-word experiments have been wrongly cited ever since as “proof” for the desirability of teaching sight-words. Yet Cattell is supposed to have lost his interest in his reading experiments after the 1880’s. This seems highly unlikely, since most of the major reading “authorities” and promoters of the “meaning” method from 1900 to 1960 were his intellectual “descendants,” having been associated either directly with him, or with someone who was very closely associated with him, such as Thorndike or Gates.

Although Sokal did not emphasize the importance of Cattell’s reading research, he nevertheless reported chronologically on its development, which is very helpful. G. Stanley Hall arrived as an instructor in the January, 1883 term at Johns Hopkins, and set up a psychological laboratory. On March 17, 1883, Cattell reported on his reading experiments with Cattell’s newly devised equipment, recording in his journal:

“I have discovered some work in the psychological laboratory that may be of interest.”

Sokal reported that Cattell’s subjects for his reading experiments included Hall, Dewey, and Joseph Jastrow.

On December 30, 1883, Cattell wrote his parents from Leipzig, where he was studying with Wundt:

“I am getting a piece of apparatus made, which I have invented in order to carry on the work I began at Baltimore. I have written to Dr. Hall, hinting that I would like to have my notes and papers. I am not anxious that he should publish a paper, which would give him credit, which he does not deserve. If magazine editors do not see fit to print my work under my name, it need not be published at all.”

In a letter to his parents on June 14, 1884, from Massachusetts, Cattell wrote:

“When we came to talk of that paper, we had some trouble. Dr. Hall wanted to print it in a way not satisfactory to me, and so I asked him to give me back my papers & notes. I do not know what the end of the affair will be....”

Cattell wrote his parents from Germany on August 13, 1884:

“Dr. Hall even when provoked at me, told me my work is the best that has been done in England or America...”

Hall may, of course, have also been referring to Cattell’s later work in Germany. Cattell wrote his parents from Leipzig on October 27, 1884:

“I received my papers from Dr. Hall today without a word of comment or explanation.... Dr. Hall knew that the fellowship [Ed.: at Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, for 1883-1884] would not be given to me (he had already recommended that it should not) when he got my papers from me. He therefore got them under false pretenses. He said my work ought to be printed immediately, less some one else should anticipate it, and promised to print it in *Mind* for Sept. ‘83. But he really wanted to get possession of the papers, knowing that I could not finish the work at Baltimore. He wanted half the credit for work to which he had contributed nothing, and in the end was not satisfied with this, but tried to get it all... His suggestions to me when I was working at Baltimore were most silly.... if he improperly uses my notes, I will bring suit against him.”

In a letter to his parents from Leipzig on March 15, 1885, Cattell wrote:

“I am going to have a paper in the next number of Wundt’s ‘*Philosophische Studien*’.... This paper contains about the work they did not give me my fellowship on, and which Dr. Hall wanted to appropriate....”

Cattell was referring to the 1885 paper listed above. Cattell wrote his parents from Cambridge on February 18, 1887:

“I read tonight at the meeting of the Moral Sciences Club a paper on *The Time it Takes to Think*.”

Cattell later wrote:

“The same paper metamorphosed to ‘Recent Psychophysical Researches’ I read at the Aristotelian Society next Monday.”

On February 21, 1887, Cattell wrote his parents from London:

“I... read my paper at the Aristotelian Society. They seemed to like it better than I had expected, and the discussion was kept up until nearly eleven.”

Cattell wrote his parents again from Cambridge on May 24, 1887, about “a paper I have just finished....”

Sokal’s footnote said the paper was “*The Way We Read*,” a revision of Cattell’s February 21, 1887, paper before the Aristotelian Society. Cattell wrote his parents on May 28, 1887, stating:

“You will be glad to hear that the ‘*Nineteenth Century*’ will print a paper of mine. Mr. Knowles, the editor writes ‘the M.S. on “*The Way We Read*,” which you very kindly offer me for my review, I gladly accept it.’ He also makes the unusual request, ‘I should feel most grateful to you if you could and would kindly expand it a little’!”

Cattell wrote his parents again on November 15, 1887, from Cambridge, saying:

“I am pleased to get tonight a letter from the editor of the Nineteenth Century. I sent him a second MS long ago asking him if he preferred it to the first. He replied to Tyrol and I did not get his letter. Now he writes inter al, ‘I shall lose no time in sending you proofs of both your extremely interesting papers, which I shall hope to publish at the earliest possible date.’”

Sokal’s footnote identified the second MS as “The Time It Takes to Think,” an abstract of Cattell’s experiments on reaction time. Sokal said “The Time It Takes to Think” was published in 1887 on pages 817-830, volume 22, of The Nineteenth Century, but “The Way We Read” was not published..

Cattell’s paper, “The Way We Read,” which is critically important historically, is now lost, since it was never published and only the first page of his typed four-page paper is in the Cattell manuscript files at the Library of Congress. What ever happened to those last three pages?

However, the sequence of events listed above suggests that Cattell certainly considered his reading experiments to be of real importance, and that he may well have carried out his interest in them through his students and associates. After all, Cattell’s research results have been cited for years as “proof” of the “necessity” to teach whole words to beginning readers.

As discussed in this history, Cattell concluded that people read words as wholes faster than by considering their individual letters. (Cattell obviously had not heard originally anything about reading by syllables, or anything about the ancient belief that reading is done by syllables, not by whole words or by isolated letters.) Apparently, Cattell based his conclusion on the fact that his subjects pronounced aloud the letters they were reading at about the same speed as the whole words they were reading. Unless there was more to his experiment than the report of it, his conclusion was an extraordinarily stupid one, because letter names are themselves words. After all, there should be no appreciable difference in pronouncing “dee” (“d”) and “cat,” or the digit “8” and the printed word, “eight.”

1885 Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education, No. 1 - 1885, City School Systems in the United States, Government Printing Office, Washington, by John Dudley Philbrick, former Boston Superintendent of Schools.

1885 Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education, No. 2, 1885, Teachers’ Institutes, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. Reports on teachers’ institutes dating from 1880.

1886 A History of Education in Pennsylvania... from the Time the Swedish Settled on the Delaware to the Present Day. James Pyle Wickersham. Published for the Author. Lancaster County. Inquirer Publishing Company, 1886. Copyrighted James Pyle Wickersham, 1885. This very important history is also very ignored.

1886 Bibliography of Education, G. Stanley Hall and J. M. Mansfield, Boston.

This should provide an overview of what the “expert,” G. Stanley Hall, considered important in 1886.

1886 Poison Drops in the Federal Senate, by Zach Montgomery. I have not seen this reprinted book which was out of print when I attempted to order it, but it may be of historical interest. It was reviewed some time ago by The Barbara M. Morris Report, Upland, California, as follows:

“First published in 1886! This study of the legal and moral implications of universal compulsory schooling is an education for those who still believe ‘public education’ can be improved. It could have been written today.”

1886? John Dudley Philbrick, 1818-1886, by Larkin Dunton, a biography of the former Boston Superintendent of Schools, fired as a result of activist influence in 1878, as discussed in this history. Library of Congress call number LA 2317.PP5508. That Philbrick was fired as a result of activist influence is clearly confirmed by the following excerpt of January 8, 1881, from *The Standard*, a morning paper in Syracuse, New York:

“Superintendent Philbrick has written an ugly letter in criticism of the public schools of Quincy, Massachusetts. These schools owe their present fame to the successful efforts of Superintendent Parker, who was... supported by John Quincy Adams, Jr., and by other intelligent and influential gentlemen. The marked success at Quincy did much to throw a shadow over the Boston schools which were then under the supervision of Mr. Philbrick. In the subsequent efforts made to advance the schools of Boston, a number of changes were made, in the midst of which Mr. Philbrick lost his place....”

The fakeries of the so-called “marked success at Quincy” and the “efforts made to advance the schools of Boston” have been discussed in this history.

Circa 1887 and later - Public School Journal, Bloomington. Rudolph R. Reeder, who wrote the 1900 history of reading listed elsewhere, had been one of its editors before he joined Columbia Teachers College. This publication reflected “expert” opinion.

1887 The Old Irish Glosses at Wurzburg and Carlsruhe, Edited With a Translation and Glossarial Index by Whitley Stokes, D.L.L., Correspondent of the Institute of France and Honorary Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford. Part I: The Glosses and Translation. Printed for the Philological Societies of London and Cambridge by Stephen Austin & Sons, Hertford, 1887 (NYPL Cat. # RPF 1887, Old Irish Glosses. Stokes).

Also, Thesaurus Paleohibernicus, A Collection of Old Irish Glosses.... Date not known. Edited by Whitley Stokes and John Strachan.

Reference has been made in this history to such glosses. These glosses are the marginal notes in Gaelic written by scribes on works they were transcribing, usually Latin works. They are a curious window on that period, over a thousand years ago.

1887 Schools, School Books and Schoolmasters, by W. C. Hazlitt, London.

1887 Dictionnaire de Pedagogie et d'Instruction Primaire, Ferdinand Buisson, Editor. Librairie Hachette et Cie., Paris. This is a gold-mine of information, particularly the article, “Lecture.”

1887 The Tripartite Life of Patrick, Edited by W. Stokes, Rerum Britannicarum Medii aevi Scriptores, Vol. 89, London.

1887 The Time It Takes to Think, James McKeen Cattell. Published in *Nineteenth Century [England]*, 22 (1887). Also see notes under 1885.

1887 The Way We Read, James McKeen Cattell, May 28, 1887, described in Sokal’s book as a revision of Cattell’s talk at the Aristotelian Society, London, on February 21, 1887, which Cattell said had aroused considerable interest at that meeting. The revision was never published in the *Nineteenth Century* periodical as Cattell had expected. Only the first page of Cattell’s four-page paper remains in the Library of Congress Cattell manuscript files, so what Cattell’s original thesis was can only be surmised. Also see notes under 1885.

1888 Blessed J. B. de la Salle, by Armand Ravelet. Paris. This is a biography of the founder of the Christian Brothers. J. B. de la Salle founded the order, meant to teach poor boys, in late-seventeenth-century France. Ravelet also wrote *L'Instruction Primaire Dans les Campagnes Avant 1789*, Troyes: 1875, on primary instruction before 1789, according to Brother Azarius, whose book, *Essays Educational*, is listed later under 1896. Azarius cited Ravelet's latter work along with others in his chapter, "Primary School." One of the others Azarius mentioned, which has not been obtainable, was Babeau's *L'Instruction Primaire*, published in 1875.

1889 La Reforme de l'Education en Allemagne au Dix-Huitieme Siecle, Basedow et le Philanthropinisme, by Auguste Pinloche, Armand Colin et Cie., Editeurs, Paris. This very long volume in French on the work of Johann Bernhard Basedow and on his school was probably Pinloche's doctoral dissertation, and it is a source of detailed historical data. The erratic Basedow is of critical importance for an understanding both of reading instruction and of general education. Basedow's once-famous school, founded in Germany in 1774, and supported financially by many of the "great" in Europe, was built on both John Locke's and Rousseau's ideas on education. Basedow's school was a forerunner of Pestalozzi's, and many later important German educators had some early association with the school. An excellent brief source in English on Basedow is the 1859 article in Barnard's *American Journal of Education*, Johann Bernhard Basedow and the Philanthropinum, translated from the original German of Karl von Raumer.

1890 Lives of the Saints from the Book of Lismore, edited with a translation, notes and index by Whitley Stokes, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press. A portion of this material has been quoted in this history.

1890 Ireland's Ancient Schools and Scholars, by Archbishop J. Healy, London. This is helpful concerning education in ancient Ireland.

1890 Banbury Chap Books and Nursery Toy Literature of the 18th and Early 19th Century, With Impressions from Several Hundred Original Woodcut Blocks, by Edward Pearson. Pearson's book had first been published in 1890 and was republished in Burt Franklin Research and Source Works Series, No. 98, Burt Franklin, New York, a copy of which is now in the Williamsburg foundation library in Virginia. Jonathan Swift's name was associated with a 1770 Dublin edition of a Royal Primer, presumably a variant of Newbery's, to judge from an entry in this book.

1890 The Principles of Psychology, by William James, Published by Henry Holt and Company, Inc. Republished by Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago, 1952.

On pages 172 through 174, James quoted at length the memories of Mr. Ballard, a deaf-mute instructor at the National College in Washington, concerning Ballard's very deep thoughts before he began to learn language at the age of eleven.

Ballard's remarks had originally appeared in an article by Samuel Porter, "Is Thought Possible Without Language?" in the *Princeton Review*, 57th year, pp. 108-12 (Jan. 1881?). Ballard's memories supported James' ideas on the "stream of consciousness," which James thought consisted of a stream of units, each of which were equivalent to a meaningful "sentence." (Yet James also quoted M. G. Tarde on page 171, to show that words could be used totally divorced from meaning: "... on the whole, nothing is commoner than trains of words not understood.") "The pack of cards is on the table," was the example James gave of a sentence that could be a meaningful unit of the stream of consciousness (page 181).

The subject of teaching language to those born deaf or who were deaf from infancy had, of course, been prominent in Cambridge and Boston ever since 1864, when James attended Harvard, as discussed in

this history. Superintendent Philbrick had started America's first city day school for the deaf in 1869 (perhaps the first such city day school in the world), which apparently used the "sound" not "sign" method from its inception. As outlined elsewhere in this history, through his years of residence in Cambridge, James had excellent reasons to be well informed on arguments about methods of teaching for the deaf.

1891 An early 16th century A B C in Latin after the Use of Sarum. Reproduced from the original in the Library of Lanhydrock. With a few Introductory Notes on the A B C and its History. "Privately printed for Lord Robartes (1891)", by W. H. Allnutt. Foster Watson reported on Allnutt's rare paper in his book, *The English Grammar School to 1660* (First edition 1908; Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., London, 1968) in Chapter IX, "The A B C and the Horn-Book A B C." This has been discussed in this history in Part 2, Chapter 3.

On page 380 of *The Horn Book*, Tuer reproduced the first page of the Allnutt ABC which was all in Latin, a copy of which is in Appendix A. Tuer discussed on page 383 Allnutt's paper. Only 25 copies of Allnutt's June, 1891, paper were printed which included "many valuable notes on the ABC and its history by Mr. W. H. Allnutt of the Bodleian Library, Oxford..." Tuer said the ABC reproduced by Allnutt "is printed on four leaves of vellum, with rubricated capitals, and was found imprisoned as binder's waste in the covers of an old book, where it had remained undisturbed for something like three and a half centuries..." If Tuer is correct in his description, Allnutt's ABC reproduction of what is probably a pre-1534 Latin edition is only eight pages long, not sixteen like Shuckburgh's c. 1538 reproduction of the first surviving English ABC.

1892 Christian Education in the Dark Ages. by Rev. Eugene Magevney. S. J., New York. Cited in a bibliography in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913. It also appeared as one of the pamphlets in a series of pamphlets by Rev. Magevney entitled the Pedagogical Truth Library, The Cathedral Library Association, New York, 1903. However, it is possible that his whole series dated to 1892 and that the 1903 material was a reprint.

Another pamphlet in Rev. Magevney's series was entitled *The Reformation and Education - 1520-1648*. On page 17 of that work, Rev. Magevney wrote, "In every parish, in well nigh every village, parochial schools were flourishing. There were 30 such schools for girls alone in Paris as early as the 14th century, and, be it remarked that these schools had been established... by a series of synodical ordinances stretching from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries..."

Those latter comments support the supposition that basic literacy was far more general before 1500 than has been generally reported.

1892 "The Knowledge of Greek in Ireland Between A. D. 500 and 900," by Rev. Dr. Geo. Stokes, in Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy for 1892, Dublin, Ireland. (Some of the articles in these R.I.A. volumes, which date from before 1840, are a remarkable source of information on ancient Ireland. See other entries listed under 1844.)

1892-1893 Nine articles, Forum, New York, October, 1892, to June, 1893, possibly including another in 1894, by Joseph Mayer Rice, M. D., on his extensive visits to American schools in 1892. Republished in book form, The Public School System of the United States, Century Company, New York: 1893, and reprinted by Arno Press, New York, in 1969.

1893 Enseignement Primaire a l'Exposition Colombienne de Chicago, Benjamin Buisson. Librairie Hachette et Cie, Paris. This was of little importance concerning reading, and was in no way comparable to Benjamin Buisson's earlier materials, but the long report may be of interest for specialized purposes.

1893 History of Early Scottish Education, by J. Edgar, Edinburgh.

1893 Educational Journals in the State of New York, by C. W. Bardeen, C. W. Bardeen, Publisher, Syracuse, New York. Missing pages 9-16 in the volume presently in Onandago County Library, Syracuse, New York. The binding showed no sign that pages had been ripped out. This was a paper read July 28, 1893, before the Department of Educational Publications of the International Congress of Education at the World's Columbian Exposition, Syracuse, New York. See comments from this paper reported under the 1836 entry for Orville Taylor.

1893 A History of the Schools of Syracuse, From Its Early Settlement to January 1, 1893. Edward Smith (Dec. 20, 1817-March 26, 1909) C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse, Publishers, 1893. Teachers' Library, Vol. 1, E. L. Kellogg & Co., New York and Chicago.

1893 (?) "Spelling," - An article by Miss A. E. Wyckoff, in Pedagogical Seminary, Vol. II, p. 450, Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts. Cited in E. L. Thorndike's article, "Spelling," entered later under 1901, its probable date. The probable 1893 date was given in Jean Chall's bibliography in Learning to Read. Pedagogical Seminary was published at Clark University where G. Stanley Hall was President. Thorndike quoted Miss Wyckoff and then commented on her remarks concerning spelling failure, which remarks have been reproduced in this history.

1894? Talks on Pedagogics, An Outline of the Theory of Concentration, by Francis W. Parker, Kellogg's Teachers' Library, Vol. 1, E. L. Kellogg & Co., New York and Chicago. See also the 1882, 1883, 1895, and 1914 entries concerning Parker.

1895 Course of Study at the Cook County Normal School, Chicago, Illinois, by Colonel Francis Wayland Parker. I saw a copy of this in the summer of 1996 at the University of Chicago Library, and it included a report by Parker. This publication was attached, I believe, to the 1914 master's thesis listed later, entitled A History of the Chicago Normal School (1856-1906) by Mary Agnes Riley. See also the 1882 entry for Parker's Tracts for Teachers - No. 1, Spelling, Boston, and the 1883, 1894? and 1914 entries concerning Parker.

1895 The Heart of Oak Books, Edited by Charles Eliot Norton, Second Book, D.C. Heath & Co., Boston: 1895 (1902). According to "Notes" on pages 165-166 of this book, the authorship of the anonymous The History of Little Goody Two Shoes of 1765 was attributed to Oliver Goldsmith by Washington Irving, William Godwin and the engraver Bewick. Goody Two Shoes is very specific in its references to teaching reading by the syllable method in a dame school. A portion of the Goody Two Shoes story is reproduced in The Heart of Oak Second Book, and a part of that has been quoted in this history.

1896 English Schools at the Reformation, A. F. Leach, Westminster. Leach was an academic Jekyll and Hyde, because he was an excellent researcher but a very bigoted author. However, because he was an excellent researcher, his factual data concerning pre-Reformation schools is invaluable. See the 1963 entry by W. E. Tate of York, England, for a reasonable and learned critique on Leach's work.

1896 Essays Educational, by Brother Azarius (P. J. Mullany), D. H. McBride & Co., Chicago. The depth of the learning of this author, a member of the Christian Brothers, was very remarkable. As mentioned elsewhere, he took the time in the chapter, "M. Gabriel Compayre as an Historian of Pedagogy," to comment on the many scholarly shortcomings of the renowned French educational "expert" of the period, Gabriel Compayre. Compayre was a very fallible French authority on higher education, accepted by American "experts," about the same time that Ferdinand Buisson was accepted by

them as a French authority on primary education. Commenting on the influence of these two men, Brother Azarius said on page 280: "Will the Buissons and the Compayres continue to write our histories, and formulate our theories of pedagogy? Children of the Revolution, they find all excellence, all modern progress, all educational reform growing out of that terrible upheaval. Inimical to the Church, they can see nothing good come out of Nazareth."

1897 "On Some Waxed Tablets Said to Have Been Found at Cambridge," by

T. M'Kenny Hughes, published in Volume LV of *Archaeologia: or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity*, Published by the Society of Antiquaries of London, Printed by Nichols and Sons, London, England, Pages 257-282. This is a remarkable article tracing a host of historical references to wax tablets and their use. It was prompted by a Cambridge workman's unearthing and bringing to Hughes some circa 1300 A. D. waxed tablets.

1897 "Problems in the Psychology of Reading," by J. A. Quantz, *Psychological Review*, Monograph Supplement Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 1-51. Cited in W. S. Gray's bibliography to his 1917 *Studies of Elementary School Reading*.

Quantz was at the University of Wisconsin, where Joseph Jastrow was located. Jastrow had been a fellow graduate student of Cattell's at Johns Hopkins in 1883 and had been one of the subjects along with John Dewey, G. Stanley Hall, and others in Cattell's reading experiments when they were begun on March 17, 1883.

G. Stanley Hall had received his doctorate from William James at Harvard in 1878, after having studied with Wundt in Germany in 1877 where he had been a subject in Wundt's reaction time and perception experiments. Cattell's initial perception experiments at Johns Hopkins in 1883 were obviously inspired by the reports on Wundt's work given by Cattell's instructor, G. Stanley Hall. Cattell devised a rotating drum on which letters were pasted, and the drum was placed behind a screen with slits in it so that the letters were very briefly exhibited when the drum was rotated. Cattell timed his subjects' speed and accuracy in reading the material.

Jastrow, one of Cattell's subjects in 1883, was later at the University of Wisconsin, where Quantz was located in 1897. In 1914, Starch was at the University of Wisconsin when his work on reading was published, listed later. Jastrow's possible continued interest in Cattell's experiments may have instigated the 1897 and 1914 work at the University of Wisconsin, since before 1915 only a very small amount of reading research had been done, according to Gray's list.

Gray wrote in 1917 about Quantz's 1897 work:

"Reports the results of an investigation with 50 Juniors and Seniors of the University of Wisconsin to determine the normal and maximum rates of oral and silent reading, and to determine some of the factors and conditions upon which rate of reading depends."

The first work in the literature on reading rate was G. J. Romanes' in England. Gray stated that on pages 136-37 of Romanes' *Mental Evolution in Animals* (1884), Romanes had reported:

"the results of an investigation with 'practiced readers' to determine the speed of silent reading and the factors conditioning it..."

Sokal recorded that Romanes had given a talk on some unstated topic to the Aristotelian Society in London shortly before Cattell gave his talk in 1887. Gray also listed Adelaide M. Abell's 1894 study done



under Mary Calkins, who had been William James' solitary 1890 psychology student at Harvard, as discussed in this history.

In Sokal's 1981 book on Cattell, *An Education in Psychology*, he quoted Cattell's letter of March 22, 1885 to his parents from Leipzig:

"...there was this special work to be finished. I had to make a few simple experiments - what you did last year when you read as fast as you could - on ten persons, and this was a great bother."

Sokal said this work was reported in Cattell's first paper, "Über die Zeit der Erkennung und Benennung von Schriftzeichen, Bildern und Farben," *Philosophische Studien* 2 (1885): 635-650. Whether Cattell's reading speed experiments with his own parents in 1884 were on both silent and oral reading is unknown, but Cattell's interest by 1884 (or 1883) in reading speed on connected text, not just on his test apparatus, is obvious. Quantz's and Abell's studies were done under the influence of Cattell's fellow psychologists, Joseph Jastrow and William James, so they also very probably shared Cattell's interest in perception and speed in reading.

1897 *The New-England Primer, A History of Its Origin and Development*, by Paul Leicester Ford, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York. This famous book is enormously misleading. It promotes The New England Primer myth.

1897 *New York School Journal*, June 26, 1897. This issue lists popular reading series in 1897. Although this publication dating from perhaps the 1870's until after 1900 was heavily biased towards the activists, it is nevertheless a useful source of information. It is difficult to locate copies, however.

1897 Three articles, *Forum*, New York, on testing of spelling and arithmetic carried out over 16 months from February, 1895 by Joseph Mayer Rice, M. D. Two articles were entitled "The Futility of the Spelling Grind," April and June, 1897, Volume XXIII, p. 163-172 and p. 409-419. Rice's third (1897?) article in the series was presumably on his arithmetic tests. The articles were the basis for Rice's *Scientific Management in Education*, Publishers Printing Company, New York, 1913.

1897 *History of the Horn-Book*, by Andrew W. Tuer. First published in England in 1897 and republished by Arno Press, A New York Times Co., New York, 1979.

This is a chaotic assemblage of very useful information on materials for teaching beginning reading. Its disorganization is so great that it seems to suggest that Tuer's file drawers had been emptied at random and then just bound in book form. Because of its hopeless disorganization and the fact that Tuer showed almost no understanding of beginning reading methods, his book is probably of little use concerning the teaching of beginning reading except for people who already learned a great deal about the topic.

1899 *Child Life in Colonial Days*, by Alice Morse Earle, The Macmillan Company, New York.

1899 "The Primary Education Fetich," by John Dewey. *Forum*, Vol. XXV, p. 315, 328. Dewey opposed using the period from 6 to 8 years of age to learn to read and write. On pages 382-391 of *Popular Science Monthly*, January, 1899, the magazine owned by Dewey's long-standing friend, J. McKeen Cattell some time after 1900, G. T. W. Patrick wrote an article, "Should Children Under Ten Learn to Read and Write?" in which he concluded, "No." I believe Patrick was a member from Iowa of the still very small American Psychological Association, but I have lost my source for that data. Dewey, who was also a member of APA along with Cattell, G. Stanley Hall and William James, had already given the

same general opinion in New York Teachers' Monographs, November, 1898, for children up to eight years of age.

1890's? The Education of Chaucer, George A. Plimpton. The exact date of the original publication is unknown, but it was republished in 1935 by Oxford University Press. Plimpton also compiled The Education of Shakespeare, republished by Books for Libraries Press, Freeport, New York. Plimpton reproduced materials which he considered to have been used by Chaucer and Shakespeare as beginning texts. As discussed in this history, Plimpton was almost certainly wrong about Chaucer, as the material reproduced, in English and not in Latin or French, was most probably only a Lollard catechism, and not an ABC book.

Rudolph Reeder, in his 1900 history listed later, referred on page 92 of his bibliography to a collection of "New England Primers and Early School Readers," in New York City. On page 36 of Reeder's book, in a footnote, Reeder referred to Mr. George A. Plimpton's Collection, New York City, apparently the same material. It seems very probable that the George Plimpton of the Ginn publishing company about 1930 was not the same man, but was very possibly a relative.

Susan Steinfirst, in her interesting unpublished dissertation, The Origin and Development of the ABC Book in English from the Middle Ages through the Nineteenth Century, University of Pittsburgh, 1976, referred to an article in 1916 which is of interest concerning Plimpton's collection. She said that the Proceedings of the Antiquarian Society for 1916 included this material: "The Marks of Merit, with an Article by G. A. Plimpton on Hornbooks and Their Use in America." That reference reportedly made the claim that G. A. Plimpton owned "an early 16th century Mexican hornbook, believed to be the first on this continent." If Plimpton were correct in his identification of that material, perhaps it was from the output of the first Mexican press, discussed elsewhere in this history.

1890's to recent date: Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois; and Teachers College Record, Columbia University, New York. Microfilms of these two journals are at most major libraries. I do not know the precise dates on which these journals were founded, but after apparently 1890. Of greater historical use are the School Bulletin, Syracuse, New York, the School Journal, New York, New York, and the Public School Journal which was published, I believe, in Bloomington, (Illinois?). Spotty collections of these other nineteenth and early twentieth century journals are at many libraries, including the Library of Congress, and should be consulted as well as Barnard's American Journal of Education, already mentioned.

1900 "Teaching Deaf-Mutes, Experience of the Institution at Mount Airy in Changing from Sign Speech to the Oral Method," by Supt. A. L. E. Crouter, LL.D., The School Journal, New York, July 28, 1900. This article by Superintendent Crouter reported on his school's twenty years of experience in teaching deaf children in Pennsylvania with different methods. It was an abstract of a paper he gave before the N.E.A. Department of Education of Defectives. Superintendent Crouter wrote:

"From 1820 to 1870 the Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb employed the sign or French method, signs being the basis of all mental development and the principal means of communication. In 1870 articulation teaching was introduced, from thirty to forty-five minutes' instruction daily being given by a special teacher to such pupils as it was thought might be able to learn to speak and read the lips, the rest of the time being devoted to instruction by signs. Experience demonstrated the impossibility of securing the desired results under this method, and in 1881 there was opened a branch school where instruction was given by oral methods exclusively. At the same time two oral classes were formed in the main institution, the pupils of which were taught by oral methods but were permitted to mingle freely with the sign-taught pupils out of school. Practically all approved methods of instructing the deaf were then in

operation under the observation of the same officers, by whom comparative tests were made at stated intervals.

“In no instance were orally taught pupils found inferior to the manually taught, and their progress in language was notably better. The work under separate oral instruction was found to be greatly superior to that done in the oral classes whose pupils were allowed to mingle with manual pupils. The speech and lip-reading of the half-hour articulation classes was less and less satisfactory the longer it was compared with that of pupils taught by purely oral methods, and such instruction was finally discontinued in 1888. On the removal of the school to Mt. Airy in 1892, the two oral classes of the main institution were merged with those from the Oral Branch, and since then only two methods have been employed, the pure oral and the pure manual.

“The oral method has won its way in competition with the manual by sheer force of merit, so that since the establishment of the separate oral department in 1881, when nearly ninety per cent were under manual instruction and only a little over ten per cent, under oral, the conditions have gradually reversed themselves until the enrollment for 1899 showed over ninety per cent. in the oral department and less than ten per cent. in the manual. Since 1892, only 20 of the 493 pupils entered under oral instruction have had to be transferred to the manual department because of inability to learn by speech methods, and their subsequent progress has proved that their failure was due not to the method but to defective mental powers.

“After twenty years’ experimentation with and comparison of methods the school has arrived at the conclusion that proper oral methods - meaning the use of speech and speech-reading, writing, pictures, and the free use of books - are fully adequate to the best education of the deaf, and that when a deaf child cannot be so educated it is useless to hope for any marked success under any other method.”

Supt. Crouter’s comments speak for themselves concerning the appalling fact that in America today the vast majority of deaf children are not taught by the oral method. Furthermore, a great, emotional promotion of the sign method as the “right” of the deaf child has recently been launched, very like the current fevered promotion of the “whole language” reading method for hearing children. Unfortunately, it is undoubtedly true that once the conditioned reflexes underlying the sign method have been firmly established, it must be difficult to use the oral method, just as it is difficult to turn a “subjective” reader into an “objective” reader, because of conditioned reflexes which have become firmly established to regard print as “meaning” bearing and not “sound” bearing. Superintendent Crouter specifically said the two approaches, the oral and sign method, gave poor results when mixed, just as Rebecca Pollard commented in the 1880’s about mixing “sound” (phonics) and “meaning” (sight-words) in teaching beginning reading.

1900 Three Score and Ten in Retrospect, by J. W. Hooper, published by C.W. Bardeen, Syracuse, New York, quoted in Edgar W. Knight’s and Cliifton L. Hall’s Readings in American Educational History, 1951, Appleton-Century-Crofts, and 1970, Greenwood Press, New York. On pages 500-501 is Hooper’s anecdote on a rural New York State school in 1847, which has been quoted in Chapter 24 of this text.

1900 Histoire du Catechisme, Depuis La Naissance de L’Eglise Jusqu’a Nos Jours (The History of the Catechism Since the Birth of the Church Until Our Days), by M. le Chanoine Honoraire Hezard, Cure de St. Pierre de Sens, Published by Victor-Retaux, Libraire-Editeur, Paris. This is a very long and exceedingly scholarly work. Yet this kind of painstakingly researched and fact-studded work has rarely been published since World War I. In my opinion, that is one more indication of our accelerating cultural degeneracy.

1900 American Public Schools: History and Pedagogics, by John Swett, published by American Book Company, New York. Swett was the author on a Barnes/Bancroft reader of 1867 and was a co-author on the Bancroft 1883 series, on which Josiah Royce was also a co-author. That series has been discussed at length in this history. This 1900 history is listed in the Bibliography to Early American Textbooks and is possibly of interest, although I have not seen it.

1900 "Tachistoskopische Versuche Uber das Lesen," by Julius Zeitler. Wundt's Philosoph. Studien, Bd. XVI, H. 3, pp. 380-463, 1900. Discussed by Edmund Burke Huey in his 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*.

1900 The Historical Development of School Readers and of Method in Teaching Reading, by Rudolph R. Reeder, Ph. D., Columbia University Contributions to Philosophy, Psychology and Education, Vol. VIII, No. 2, May, 1900: The Macmillan Co.. New York.

In 1900, the psychologist, James McKeen Cattell, was a professor at Columbia and the psychologist, Edward Lee Thorndike, Cattell's and William James' former student, was an instructor. William James, of course, was the famous psychologist/philosopher and Cattell's very close friend. In 1904, at Cattell's urging, the psychologist/philosopher John Dewey, one of Cattell's subjects in Cattell's 1883 sight-word experiments at Johns Hopkins, left the University of Chicago to join Columbia. Reeder's unsatisfactory 1900 history, belittled by Mitford Mathews in his own reading history of 1966 listed below, should be considered in light of Reeder's likely association with these early psychologists at the small Columbia University of 1900. These men are on record as in some way promoting the use of "meaning" instead of "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading. Reeder apparently also, like Cattell and Dewey, approved of promoting socialism, as he wrote a book of unknown date, *Training Youth for the New Social Order*, listed in The New York Public Library catalog under call number SSL.

1901 (?) "Spelling," Teachers College Record, E. L. Thorndike. See the entry under 1893 by a Miss Wyckoff, whom Thorndike quoted, and comments elsewhere in this history.

Henry Suzzallo, who obtained his Ph. D. at Teachers College in 1905, also wrote an article on spelling in 1911 in the *Teachers College Record*, "The Teaching of Spelling; A Critical Study of Recent Tendencies in Method," TCR V. 12, No. 5. Suzzallo was also one of the authors on the American Book Company spellers involved in the bid scandal in Texas in 1925, referred to elsewhere. In February, 1982, I requested the first book of Suzzallo's *Everyday Spelling* of 1931 from the New York Public Library at 42nd Street. They sent down the second book in a 1936 edition, as they did not have the first. With some exceptions, this was the usual pattern in the New York Public Library and the Library of Congress whenever I tried to get materials concerning beginning reading or beginning spelling. However, Harvard's vast and remarkable collections more than make up for the deficiencies in those libraries.

1901 The Lay Folk's Catechism, published for the Early English Text Society, London, 1901. Includes information on the history of catechesis in general, and on the catechism of John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, England, in 1281, and the catechism of John De Thoresby, Archbishop of York, England, in 1357. The content of Father Gerson's fifteenth century catechism in France, *ABC de Simples Gens*, was similar. Although commonly taught orally and not from a book, the standard material of the catechisms of the time included at least the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, and commonly the seven spiritual works of mercy, the seven corporal works of mercy, the seven sacraments, and other material.

1901 Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis or Sarum and York Primers with Kindred Books and Primers of the Reformed and Roman Use, by Edgar Hoskins. Cited by Charles C. Butterworth in *The English*

Primers (1529-1545). Butterworth referred to its being a “monumental catalogue covering the entire field from 1478 to 1897” on English primers.

1902 Spelling in the Elementary School, Boston, O. P. Cornman. Available at the Library of Congress on microfilm. Cited by Suzzallo and elsewhere.

1903 “Zur Psychologie des Lesens bei Kinder und Erwachsenen,” by Oskar Messmer, Archiv fur die Gesamte Psychologie, December, 1903, Bd. II, H. 2 u. 3, pp. 190-298. In his 1908 book, The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading, E. B. Huey briefly discussed Messmer’s work, and Myrtle Sholty referred to it in her 1911 article in the Elementary School Journal, listed below. In Messmer’s experiments, he found two distinct kinds of readers: the objective who read by syllables and do not guess, and the subjective, who read by whole words and use context guessing. Obviously, the “objective” read by “sound” and the “subjective” by “meaning.” Messmer’s material is discussed in this history.

1904 Old-Time Schools and School-Books, by Clifton Johnson, The Macmillan Company, New York: 1904; Peter Smith, New York: 1935. This is of very limited value. According to the “Bibliography” in Early American Textbooks, it was republished by Dover Publications in 1963.

1904 Histoire Critique des Doctrines de l’Education en France Depuis le XVIIe Siecle, by G. Compayre. Paris: Hachette (7th edition). In Brother Azarius’ book, Essays Educational, he very efficiently “deconstructed” Compayre and his “history,” demonstrating that Compayre was an academic charlatan. Yet, predictably, the literature indicates that Compayre was an “authority” who was given great credence at the time by “experts” such as those at Columbia Teachers College. Compayre was one of the contributors to the Cyclopedia of Education (1911-1913), and probably still is given great credence today.

1904 “How Words Get Meaning,” by Will Grant Chambers. Pedagogical Seminary, XI, March, 1904 - 30-50. Tests to 2,922 pupils to determine vocabulary development. The literature indicates the “experts” had a wealth of objective data by 1920 from such critical experiments and surveys as this. However, I have not seen Chambers’ article.

1906 “The Hygiene and Psychology of Spelling,” Pedagogical Seminary, Volume XIII, 1906, 477-501, by Wm. H. Burnham. Cited by Henry Suzzallo in the bibliography to his article, “Spelling, Teaching of,” in the 1913 volume of A Cyclopedia of Education. Burnham was at Clark University, where G. Stanley Hall was president.

1906 Articles by Edith C. Barnum on Reading in January and September in Teachers College Record, Columbia University, New York.

1908 “A Pragmatic Substitute for Free Will,” by Edward Lee Thorndike, in Essays Philosophical and Psychological in Honor of William James, pp. 585-610, 1908, according to Thorndike’s bibliography in the honorary issue of Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, devoted to Thorndike, February, 1926. When Thorndike denied the existence of free will, he obviously necessarily denied the existence of voluntary attention, as in reading. The baleful influence of that conclusion on the teaching of beginning reading has been discussed in this history.

1908 The English Grammar Schools to 1660, Their Curriculum and Practice, Foster Watson, First Edition 1908, Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., London, New Impression 1968. This is a very useful historical source. Watson discussed beginning reading materials in this work. On pages 182-183, he discussed Charles Hoole’s primer, written before 1660 but published in 1660, which he said had as its intent the arousing of children’s interest. Hoole’s comments show why reading difficulties were multiplying in the

mid-seventeenth century: the syllabary and the spelling book were largely being ignored. Hoole said in his *New Primar* (sic):

“The ordinary way to teach children to read is, after they have got some knowledge of their letters, and a smattering of some syllables and words in the hornbook, to turn them into the A B C or Primer, and therein to make them name the letters and spell the words, till by often use they can pronounce (at least) the shortest words at the first sight.

“...the A B C being now (I may say) generally thrown aside, and the ordinary primer not printed, and the very fundamentals of Christian religion (which were wont to be contained in those books, and were commonly taught children by heart before they went to school) with sundry people (almost in all places) slighted, the matter which is taught in most books now in use is not so familiar to them, and therefore not so easy for children to learn.”

Both the ABC books and the primers had contained complete syllabaries, so children who had used these books were introduced to reading by heavy drill on “sound,” not “meaning.” Hoole’s comments establish that there were difficulties in teaching beginning reading in 1660 after that drill on the syllabary had been dropped when the ABC books and primers were no longer in use. Such difficulties probably account for the rash of books which appeared just about that time, described by Watson, which were meant to simplify the teaching of beginning reading, and the renewed interest that appeared at that time in a simplified alphabet, discussed by Mitford Mathews and others.

Foster Watson saw and read Allnutt’s rare 1891 paper, which he reported was titled *An early 16th century A B C in Latin after the Use of Sarum*. Reproduced from the original in the Library of Lanhydrock. With a few Introductory Notes on the A B C and its History. “Privately printed for Lord Robartes (1891). Watson reported on it in his book, as has been discussed in this history.

1908 *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading. With a Review of the History of Reading and Writing and of Methods, Texts, and Hygiene in Reading.* by Edmund Burke Huey, The Macmillan Company, New York and London: 1908, The M.I.T. Press, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Cambridge, England, 1968. See Huey’s bibliography for many reading-related texts not listed in this history.

A letter of June 8, 1897, is in the James McKeen Cattell manuscript files in the Library of Congress which Huey wrote to Cattell. Its content has been quoted earlier in the text of this book, and a photocopy of the original letter is reproduced in Appendix A. The 1897 letter asked Cattell’s help in enrolling for graduate course work in psychology since Huey was almost without funds. It read in part:

“I have finally decided to try to begin in earnest with psychology next fall.... I will only have about \$150 to begin with next fall. If it seems possible for me to earn my way at Columbia I would like to begin there....

“Is it possible for me to get a scholarship at this late day? I did not feel free to apply for one before. Am afraid I cannot enter if have tuition to pay.

“If I am not troubling you too much, would you let me know about the possibilities for a scholarship, and what would be the best (or a possible) means of earning money in the University? Am willing to do anything.”

The letter also referred to a psychology text Cattell had previously lent Huey. Like Cattell in 1880, Huey was a graduate of Lafayette College, and Cattell’s father had once been president at Lafayette. That

letter suggests that Huey, who later became a psychologist, may well have been Cattell's protege, even though he became a student in G. Stanley Hall's Worcester graduate school rather than at Cattell's Columbia. Huey's obvious bias in his 1908 book for "meaning" and against "sound" in the teaching of beginning reading should be considered in light of his close association with the psychologist Cattell, whose 1880's experiments are even today wrongly cited as "proof" of the superiority of the "meaning" method for teaching beginning reading. Cattell obviously had an ego investment in his research. Huey possibly had a debt to Cattell for favors received, and his 1908 book may have been written in final payment of that debt. As many have noted, Huey dropped all work on reading instruction as soon as that 1908 book was published. Huey died in 1913, after having worked since 1908 on unrelated material, which work was unpublished because of a fire shortly before his death which destroyed all his notes.

In Chapter II, Huey discussed his and others' eye movement research in reading, concerning the question of how many stops were made on a line and how many letters were seen in each stop. Huey cited the 1879 research of Professor Emile Javal of the University of Paris, who had concluded that the sweep of the eyes across the page was not continuous, as had previously been thought, but discontinuous, and that every stop took in about ten letters. Huey opposed Javal's findings to his own and others' research which had concluded that there were a varying number of such stops to a line, some stops covering more letters than others, the number of stops for an average line being about five. Yet recent Scottish research indicates that, despite the seeming conflict, both Javal and Huey's group were essentially correct. An almost standard "window" size does exist for every glance, which confirms Javal's finding, although the "window" is larger than Javal thought. Huey's and others' earlier research had demonstrated a varying number of stops to a line, and an irregularity in the distance between them. It is obvious that since the "window" size does not vary, some glances must overlap with other glances to varying degrees, while other glances must skip past unread portions of the print. The Scottish finding therefore also can be used to confirm the research of Huey and others concerning the varying numbers of stops the eye makes on a line, and the irregular distances between such stops.

The new research was reported in an October, 1993, one-page article, "Words of Wisdom," a copy of which I received from the English phonics author, Mona McNea. (The original British source was not specified.) The article concerned a study by Professor Simon Garrod and a team of researchers at:

"ESRC's Human Communication Research Centre in Glasgow.... Using an electronic eye-tracker which was originally designed by NASA to help space shuttle crews control their instrumentation by eye contact, the researchers monitored the reading processes of over 300 people. They found that the human eye fixes on each word in a story and about three or four characters of the next word, an area known as a 'text window', confirming US research findings. In addition, the size of the window, which was typically 18 characters, remained the same regardless of the predictability of the text or the reader's skills. Even speed readers had a text window of 18 characters. 'If expectations were as important as the holistic book method suggests, the text window would have been much larger for more predictable stories and people would have scanned the words, not identified each one,'" says Garrod. 'Our research shows this isn't the case.' Word recognition, however, isn't the only factor that determines an individual's ability to read. A further HCRC study found that the ability to identify grammatical structures also has an impact. Readers presented with an ambiguous sentence structure, for example, had to slow down to disentangle it, even though previous passages they had read had explained it.... His work has also led to a commercial spin-off. Hewlett-Packard, one of the world's top computer companies, is considering developing a 'flick-through' system for its word processing packages based on the HCRC's and other researchers' findings. The system, which uses the research on the amount of information an individual can take in at a glance, will allow you to flick through entire pages on a screen in the same way that you can leaf through sheets of paper."

Therefore, it appears that both Professor Javal in 1879 and Huey in 1908 were essentially correct. However, the “window” is not ten letters as Javal surmised, but 18 letters. The numbers of stops on a line must be dependent on the individual reader’s attention, some overlapping more than others, while, in other cases, some stops must be made in a skimming fashion, jumping over portions of the text.

It is of interest that the present-day Scottish test subjects were shown to be reading whole words. That may or may not indicate they were identifying those words by their syllables. With his research methods, Oskar Messmer in Germany in 1903 distinguished between two types of German readers: “objective” accurate readers of syllables, and “subjective” inaccurate readers of whole words who were also dependent on guessing. It would be of interest to see if this new equipment can turn up syllable readers in those Latin-language countries where teaching by the syllable method is still in wide use. However, unlike Messmer’s more primitive methods, this equipment which measures only the movement of what is apparently an organically-based and automatic visual “window” may make such a distinction impossible.

1909 Laggards in Our Schools, by Leonard Porter Ayres. The Russell Sage Foundation, New York. Ayres published a graph concerning the promotions of 14,762 children in 28 cities in the United States about 1909. The great majority of the children, the graph showed, were in the right grade for their age or only a year lower or higher. Few were more than one year behind, and very few more than two years. City children in America had to stay in school till at least 14 in 1914 and 1915 when Ayres made his spelling tests on which his spelling scale was based. That meant the scores at fifth grade (when the normal age was 11) were representative of at least the minimum spelling ability of almost all American children who had attended school for five or more years.

Ayres’ scale was nothing more than the statistical averages from the written spelling tests of 70,000 children in grades two to eight in 84 American cities in 1914 and 1915, and the scores obtained from city to city (and even from school to school) were remarkably uniform. That scale showed that virtually 100 per cent of 1914-1915 American fifth-graders could correctly spell 137 of the highest frequency words, and 99 per cent of American fifth graders could correctly spell 200 of the highest frequency words. (Also, 98% could spell 283 of the highest frequency words, 96% could spell 365 of the highest frequency words, and so on, until 50% of American fifth graders could spell 929 of the 1,000 commonest words correctly in 1914 and 1915, which appears almost unbelievable today.) The Ayres spelling scale is therefore statistical proof that virtually all American city children who were capable of attending school for at least five years in 1914-1915, including Blacks and foreign-born, could also read at least simple material, since it is obvious that they could read far more words than the words they had learned to spell correctly.

The New York Public Library has reprinted material of February, 1912, from a periodical called *Educator*, entitled “The Relation Between Entering Age and Subsequent Progress Among School Children.” The table showed that the percentage of slow pupils was greatest among the children entering at five and that the pupils making more rapid progress were those who entered at the advanced ages. Whether this was based on Ayres’ work on “laggards” is unknown but appears probable. However, Ayres’ later work demonstrates that the topics of overage and repeated grades are complex. If valid, that table provides an argument against early entrance ages and against the teaching of reading in kindergarten.

1910 Hiberniae Partim Hactenus Ineditae, Compiled by C. Plummer, Oxford, England. See also C. Plummer’s *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, of earlier date. These are compiled from ancient Latin manuscripts of Irish saints’ “lives,” which contain some comments concerning education and the teaching of beginning reading. The English introduction by Plummer is of interest. See also the 1965 edition, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, edited by W. W. Heist, Societe des Bollandists, Brussels, Belgium. Its English Preface is also of interest.



See also the bibliography to Parry's 1920 history, *Education in England in the Middle Ages*, for many other European pre-Reformation source materials. Parry's book is listed in this appendix under the 1920 date.

1910 The Epistles on the Romance of the Rose and Other Documents in the Debate, by Charles Fredrick Ward. This was Ward's Ph. D. Dissertation at the University of Chicago, and it was reprinted in *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Section II*, 1910, VIII. It is a history of the fifteenth century debate on the fourteenth-century neo-pagan literary work, *Roman de la Rose*, and a history of Father Jean Gerson's and Christine de Pisan's part in that debate. It is of real general interest concerning that period in history. For further information on Christine de Pisan, see the 1405 entry in this appendix on *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, by Christine de Pisan, translated by Sarah Lawson, Penguin Classics: 1985.

1911 A History of the McGuffey Readers, by Henry H. Vail, published by The Burrows Brothers Co., Cleveland, Ohio. Vail had worked for the McGuffey publishers from shortly after the Civil War until after 1900. He had been the editor of the 1879 phonic revision and had written its book one himself. Furthermore, he eventually obtained the copyright to that book, and apparently to others in the 1879 series, so that he obviously was receiving royalties on it for many years, since it was still on sale in 1928, according to the *American Catalogue*. However, so was the 1901 sight-word "meaning" series still on sale in 1928 by American Book Company. The curious history of those editions has been discussed at length in this history.

The original sight-word series begun by William Holmes McGuffey in 1836 was replaced with a truly phonic series in 1879, on which Henry H. Vail himself had been the editor. That new series was almost totally different except for retaining many of the original selections from the highest readers. The 1879 series was replaced with the final series in 1901, which once again was a sight-word series and which once again was largely new. The higher readers in all three of the major editions did contain a considerable number of the original selections, but it was the lower readers which were most widely used, and the lower readers were almost totally different in each of the three major editions: 1836-38, 1879 and 1901. (There had also been minor editions at various times on the first series before it was replaced by the 1879 series.)

1911 A Study in Reading, Newark, New Jersey. 32 pages. Eldo L. Hendricks. Silver Burdett. I have not been able to locate this study by the publishers of the Ward phonic materials. It might be of real interest.

1911 "Learning to Read," by Josephine Horton Bowden, *Elementary School Journal*, University of Chicago, September, 1911. Among her other interesting comments concerning her attempts to teach a few rank beginners straight sight-words (learning to read by "meaning") was her remark that some did not even notice if they were shown the words upside down.

1911 Educational Problems, by G. Stanley Hall, Appleton and Co., New York.

1911 Forgotten Books of the American Nursery, by Rosalie V. Halsey, Boston.

1911-1913 A Cyclopedia of Education, Edited by Paul Monroe, New York. See in particular *Teaching Beginners to Read*, in the 1913 Volume 3, and *Spelling, Teaching of*, in the 1913 Volume 4, both by Henry Suzzallo, then at Columbia Teachers College, who had received his Ph. D. there in 1905.

In the former article, Suzzallo drew and discussed the "reading triangle" (my term), establishing that by 1913 there was a clear awareness that there are two different kinds of reading, direct (subjective), and

indirect (objective), the terms Oskar Messmer had used to summarize his experimental data in 1903, and that the two kinds were, quite literally, contradictory and mutually exclusive.. Suzzallo felt that “meaning” was impaired by the longer, indirect route (visual to sound to meaning) but protected by the subjective route (visual direct to meaning, with sound appearing last, as an afterthought). The direct route, of course, is the deaf-mute sight-word method, where “sound” does not have to appear at all. Gallaudet’s students all read that way, picking up sight-word meanings, but never producing any sound. Suzzallo said in the 1913 encyclopedia article on reading, probably written a year or two earlier, in 1911 or 1912:

“The most active battleground in the reform of school teaching is found in the primary grades, particularly in the first school year where beginners are taught to read.... A discussion of the problem of teaching beginners to read is, therefore, crucial.”

Similar diagrams to the “reading triangle” had appeared in 1890 in William James’ psychology text to illustrate other reactions. The origin of the 1913 “reading triangle” obviously lay with the early psychologists such as James, Cattell, Dewey and Thorndike, all of whom had been closely associated for years. Suzzallo had been Thorndike’s admiring student, as he told in the February, 1926, Teachers College Record issue honoring Thorndike. James of Harvard had died in 1910, but Cattell, Dewey and Thorndike were all at Columbia in 1913.

Others of the many articles of interest in the Cyclopedia are: Vol. 1, 1911, Basedow, Campe, Heinecke, Education of the Deaf, and an article on Gallaudet by Will S. Monroe of Montclair State Normal, New Jersey, possibly related to the Cyclopedia’s editor, Paul Monroe, who was a professor at Columbia.

1911-1912 Some additional references cited by Henry Suzzallo in his Cyclopedia article on spelling are: Henry C. Pearson’s, “The Scientific Study of the Teaching of Spelling”, Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. II, No. 5, May, 1911, pages 241-252; Suzzallo’s The Teaching of Spelling, Boston: 1912; Pearson’s and his “Comparative Experimental Teaching in Spelling,” Teachers College Record, January, 1912, Vol. XIII, No. 1,; and J. C. W. Wallin’s Spelling Efficiency in Relation to Age, Grade and Sex, and the Question of Transfer, Baltimore: 1911.

1912 Scientific Management in Education, by Joseph Mayer Rice. Publishers Printing Company, New York. This is discussed in this history. Rice’s 1912 book was based on his spelling and arithmetic tests in American schools in 1895 and 1896, which had been reported in three articles in Forum magazine, two in 1897, and probably the third also in 1897. See also Rice’s 1893 book, first published as articles in Forum, reporting on his extensive visits to American schoolrooms in 1892.

1912 The United States Catalog, Edited by Marion E. Potter. Third Edition. This lists all the books in print in the United States in 1912.

1912 “A Study of the Reading Vocabulary of Children,” by Myrtle Sholty, Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, February, 1912. In this oral accuracy reading study on three second grade girls, Sholty found proof of Messmer’s objective and subjective types of readers, which had been described by Messmer in 1903. Huey’s 1908 book, above, described Messmer’s work more fully. Yet the 1912 awareness of two different types of readers was later buried. Gray very curiously “reviewed” Sholty’s research in 1917 and 1925 in a manner which totally obscured her findings: that readers can be either “objective” or “subjective.”

1912 “Methods of Teaching Reading: A Comparison of Results,” by Edmund J. Gill, Journal of Experimental Pedagogy, (Probably in England) Vol. I (March 1912), pp. 243-248. Cited by W. S. Gray in

his 1956 book, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, and he also cited Valentine, Dumville and Winch, below.

1912 “The Methods of Teaching Reading in the Early Stages,” Benjamin Dumville, School World, (Probably in England), Vol. XIV, November, 1912, p. 408-413. This is discussed in this history.

1913 “Experiments on the Methods of Teaching Reading,” by C. W. Valentine. Journal of Experimental Pedagogy, II (Probably in England) (June, 1913), pp. 99-112. This is discussed in this history.

1913 “Educational Measurements of Fifty Years Ago,” based on a communication from E. L. Thorndike, Journal of Educational Psychology, 4:551 (November, 1913.)

In a footnote on page 18 of his book, *Introduction to Educational Measurement*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston: 1951, Victor Noll listed the above 1913 citation. It had reported that an English schoolmaster, Reverend George Fisher claimed to have constructed by 1864 what he called a Scale Book. Fisher’s Scale Book included a scale of handwriting to grade samples of children’s handwriting, a standard list of spelling words, and questions in mathematics, navigation, Scripture knowledge, grammar and composition, French, general history, drawing, and practical science. Noll listed the 1913 citation and its original source as follows:

“E. B. Chadwick, “Statistics of Educational Results,” *The Museum, A Quarterly Magazine of Literature and Science*, 3:429-84 (January, 1864). Original not seen. Taken from a report entitled “Educational Measurements of Fifty Years Ago,” based on a communication from E. L. Thorndike, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 4:551 (November, 1913.)”

It seems likely that the American, Thorndike, would have learned of that obscure 1864 English citation from his close friend and fellow-professor, J. M. Cattell, who may have learned of it from Galton (Darwin’s cousin) while Cattell was living in England in the late 1880’s. Galton, with whom Cattell associated in England but who was considerably older and so may have seen the Fisher material when it first came out in 1864, shared Cattell’s interest in measurements. See Michael Sokal’s book on Cattell, *An Education in Psychology*, concerning that period in Cattell’s life.

1913 City of New York School Survey. This is a massive collection of data available in the New York Public Library. However, it was collected in a hothouse climate of political pressure, for which see Chapter XII of the autobiography of Paul Hanus of Harvard, *Adventuring in Education*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1937. Hanus was appointed director of the proposed survey in 1911, and told in his autobiography of the many outrageous obstacles he met in trying to complete that assignment.

1913 A Contribution to Experimental Psychology, by Hermann Ebbinghaus, originally published in Germany in 1885. English translation published by Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York. This included a study on the difference in speeds in learning meaningful material and meaningless syllables (and other studies).

1913 The Catholic Encyclopedia, The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., New York. Among the very great number of useful articles are Education of the Deaf and Dumb, and Port Royal. The high intellectual level of this reference work, and others like it in that period, is in sharp contrast to reference works available today. I believe that difference reflects a sharp drop in our general intellectual level since 1913, caused by the curriculum in our benighted government schools, including the “meaning” method to teach beginning reading.

1913 Educational Psychology (three volumes), by Edward L. Thorndike, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

1914 A History of the Chicago Normal School (1856-1906), by Mary Agnes Riley. This includes a considerable amount of background material on Colonel Frances Wayland Parker and the Cook County Normal School. It includes a biography of Parker, part of it actually autobiographical, taken from “an appendix to a book entitled ‘School Days of the Fifties’ by William M. Giffin, Dept. of Mathematics, Cook Co. Normal.” The 1895 Course of Study listed earlier was, I believe, filed with that thesis at the time I saw it, as its title appears in thesis’s table of contents as part of its Appendix. See also the 1882, 1883, and 1894? entries concerning Parker.

1914 School Subjects as Material for Tests of Mental Ability,” Clara Schmitt, Elementary School Journal, XV, Nov., 1914, p. 150-161. Tested Gr. 1-5 and a group of children with below normal intelligence on speed and errors in oral reading, and ability to reproduce and interpret written material. She found the defective children “guessed” unknown words by meaning (berries instead of grapes, for instance) but children of normal intelligence relied on letter sounds and visual data. Therefore, Goodman and Smith’s promotion of “psycholinguistic guessing” amounts objectively to an attempt to turn the children of today into readers like the mentally defective Chicago children of 1914.

1914 “The Measurement of Ability in Reading,” E. L. Thorndike, Teachers College Record XV, September, 1914. Reports on Thorndike’s reading comprehension tests of 1913-1914 and William Scott Gray’s 1913-1914 oral reading tests prepared under Thorndike’s direction. Although this is a watershed document, I have never seen it referred to in any “establishment” literature on reading instruction. Nor have I ever seen any reference to any kind of tie between the famous “expert” Gray, of the University of Chicago after 1914, and the famous “expert” Thorndike of Columbia Teachers College. So far as available literature is concerned, a reader might assume that the men did not even know each other, and certainly could not guess that the famous Gray was the famous Thorndike’s protege. See the comments below under Herbert Austin Brown concerning their possible testing in Franklin, New Hampshire, and possible association with Currier and Duguid, listed later.

1914 “The Measurement of the Efficiency of Instruction in Reading,” by Herbert Austin Brown, Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, June, 1914. Brown was Deputy State Superintendent of New Hampshire in 1914. He had received his master’s degree from Columbia Teachers College on June 13, 1912. He made some very intemperate remarks concerning the current teaching of reading in 1914, when most beginning reading instruction was strongly “sound” oriented:

“The data which have grown out of these tests suggest emphatically that the prevailing pedagogy of primary reading is in need of thoroughgoing reconsideration in important particulars.... A new and more correct pedagogy of primary reading must be constructed, based upon the known laws of the learning process.”

Yet Brown also stated that children could read orally at that time with speed and great accuracy! His concern was with that oxymoron, “reading comprehension.” As already stated, Brown had received his master’s degree at Columbia on June 13, 1912, where he almost certainly would have known Thorndike, and Brown worked for the education department of New Hampshire until 1916 or so. Thorndike’s reading comprehension tests of 1914 include an item concerning a snowy town called Franklin, and Franklin, New Hampshire is snowy. The women teachers listed below under 1916, Currier and Duguid from Franklin, whose “testing” endorsed teaching without real phonics, taught in nearby Tilton. These associations suggest that Brown, Currier, and Duguid possibly were involved in the 1913-1914 oral reading and reading comprehension testing being carried out by Thorndike and Gray. When I called the New Hampshire state library trying to get information on such possible testing in 1913-1914, I was

referred to someone in the state office which had the annual volumes on New Hampshire education. The woman in that office to whom I spoke checked the shelves where the annual volumes were located, but found that the two volumes for 1912-1913 and 1913-1914 were missing from those shelves.

1914 to 1949 and later - Yearbooks, National Society for the Study of Education. Specific issues of these critically important materials are listed in Appendix D. Particularly see sections by W. S. Gray.

1914 The Measurement of Efficiency in Reading, Writing, Spelling and English, by Daniel Starch, College Book Store, Madison, Wisconsin. Joseph Jastrow, who had been one of Cattell's subjects in his 1883 experiments at Johns Hopkins, was at the University of Wisconsin. See also the 1897 entry on Quantz of the University of Wisconsin.

1914 Life of St. Declan of Ardmore and Life of St. Mochuda of Lismore, with Introduction, Translation and Notes by Rev. P. Powers, London: Irish Texts Society. Portions of this work have been quoted in this history.

1915 A Manual of Primary Teaching Prepared by Grace M. Shields for Use in the Public Schools of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Published by the Board of Education, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. 20 pages. New York Public Library SSD pv.92 #8. I have not seen this, but Dr. Orton found rampant reading disability in Iowa by the early 1920's. This may outline what caused it. Grace M. Shields was co-author with the spelling "expert," Ernest Horn of Ginn's 1924 The Learn to Study Readers. Horn had written his thesis at Columbia Teachers College in 1914.

Circa 1915 and later - School and Society. This educational journal was originated and published by James McKeen Cattell. Its title was taken from a book by Dewey's fellow psychologist, John Dewey. It is an important reference work.

1915 "Religious Instruction of the Young in the Sixteenth Century," by M. Reu, Dubuque, Iowa, in Lutheran Church Review, Volume 34, No. 5, October, 1915, pages 566 to 585. Although sectarian in interpretation, this article is a scholarly collection of source material on medieval and slightly later education, and its bibliography should be of great interest to historical researchers who can read German.

1915 A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling, By Leonard P. Ayres, The Russell Sage Foundation, New York. This has been republished by Mott Media of Milford, Michigan.

The Ayres' scale was based on tests given to 70,000 children in 84 American cities in 1914 and 1915. The scores were astonishingly high in comparison to achievement today.

In American cities of 1915, mandatory attendance laws kept children in school until age 14 or older, and Ayres had shown in his 1909 text, Laggards in Our Schools, that few children were more than two years behind the proper grade level for their age. Therefore, Ayres' city scores at fifth grade represented scores for all children, and not just the "successful" ones, because all city children would at least have completed fifth grade before the school-leaving age of 14 or older. Ayres' fifth-grade spelling scores provide statistical proof, in contrast to today, that virtually 100 per cent of city children, including Blacks and foreign-born, could read at least simple material in the America of 1915. (However, as referred to elsewhere, there is some indication, in contrast to today, that not only could virtually all Black children learn to read before the introduction of the deaf-mute-method readers in 1930, as proven by the 1915 Ayres' scale, but they actually did better in school at that time than other children.)

When I called the Russell Sage Foundation in New York for information on the spelling scale some years ago, about early 1981, I was told they no longer had copies. The note I made at the time read, "Her list showed Laggards in Our Schools, 1909, but not spelling scale." They had dropped their educational

section some thirty years before. I was told that the education library they once had was divided between the New York Public Library and Columbia University, but the bulk of it went to Columbia University. The difficulty I had in locating copies of the spelling scale at some libraries has been discussed in this history. The only thing that the Library of Congress had in early July, 1981, was the cover of the spelling scale, with an Ayres handwriting scale inserted instead.

However, in the summer of 1986, Harvard had two copies. In the back of one, publishing dates and quantities were shown. From April, 1915, to January, 1918, 85,000 copies had been published, with 25,000 during 1915 and 30,000 during 1916. In May, 1917, 15,000 were printed, a month after World War I began, and 15,000 in January, 1918, right in the middle of the war and despite the pressure of wartime shortages. Those numbers suggest a large increase in use probably occurred after the war ended on November 11, 1918.

Below are the norms shown on the 1915 Ayres spelling scale for some words which also appeared on the 1954 Iowa spelling scale. The 1954 Iowa words were taken from *Spelling and Writing Patterns, "A,"* The Follett Spelling Program, Teacher's Revised Edition, by Morton Botel, Cora Holsclaw, Gloria Cammarota, and Aileen Brothers, published by Follett Publishing Company, Chicago, Illinois, in 1975. This second-grade spelling book listed 90 words for testing, and showed next to each the percentage of beginning second graders who could spell it, according to the Iowa Spelling Scale, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, which was based on tests to 30,000 second graders in 1954. (The Iowa scale also covered massive tests to other grade levels, which would be of interest to compare to other grade levels on the 1915 Ayres scale.) Of the 90 test words in the Follett speller, 67 were also on the Ayres list of 1,000 words in 1915. However, the probability is that the Iowa tests were multiple choice tests, and not dictated, written tests like those reported by Ayres in 1915, in which case the 1954 children would have been drawing only on recognition, and not recall memory, a lower form of memory. Therefore, the achievement the Iowa scores reflected can be presumed to be correspondingly weaker. (The Iowa scores were beginning second-grade scores, and the Ayres scores were mid-second grade scores. However, I have seen the beginning third-grade Iowa scores on the third-grade Follett speller, and they were still far worse than the mid-second grade Ayres scores.)

The Ayres scale of the relative difficulty of the one thousand commonest words in English is divided into 26 sections of increasing difficulty, from A for the easiest to Z for the hardest. Only two words appear under section A, 4 words under B, and 7 words under C. The lists under subsequent letters generally become progressively longer until about the middle when they generally decrease again in size, with only 8 words under X (convenient, receipt, especially, etc.), two words under Y (decision, principle), and three words under Z (judgment, recommend, allege.) Each of these lettered headings showing the words in each section is preceded by the percentage of correct answers on that particular word list for each grade level from second to eighth.

The 67 words in the 90 test words in the Follett speller which are also on the Ayres 1915 scale are shown below, under the headings used on the Ayres scale. The first of the Follett-Iowa 67 words appears under C, and others until L, at which point 50% of second graders spelled the words correctly in 1915. However, Ayres did not bother to list the percentage of correct spellings at grade levels for any words scoring less than 50%, so the numerical reporting for scores at second grade ended at L. However, three words on the Ayres list which are also on the Iowa list did score lower than 50% in 1915 at the mid-second grade level: "took" at level M, "beg" at level P, and "too" at level S. (Yet the homonym "to" scored at level H, with 79% of second graders spelling it correctly, and the homonym "two" at level K, or with 58% of second graders spelling it correctly.)

It is of great interest that of the 67 words on both the 1915 Ayres and 1954 Follett-Iowa list, Ayres in 1915 scored only three below 50%, ("took," "beg," and "too"). Yet the Follett text, reporting the 1954

Iowa scores on the 90 Follett test words, showed 80 of the total 90 words scoring below 50% accuracy in 1954, a level which Ayres in 1915 did not think worth reporting, even at as low a grade as mid-second!

In 1915, 50% of mid-second graders spelled 447 of the 1,000 commonest words correctly, and 50% of eighth graders spelled all 1,000 correctly. Even at fifth grade, 50% spelled 929 of the 1,000, correctly, so it is not surprising that Ayres did not bother to show any scores below 50% accuracy! The 1954 Iowa spelling scores are a disgraceful (and ignored) contrast to beginning 1915 second-grade and other grade level Ayres scores!

1915 Mid-Second-Grade % Accuracy on Sections of the 1915 Ayres Spelling Scale, compared to 1954 Iowa % Accuracy at Beginning Second Grade on Some Words from Those Sections.

Ayres Sect. C 7 Words at 96% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. D 9 Words at 94% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. E 17 Words at 92% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. F 18 Words at 88% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. G 28 Words at 84% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>
see 98% (Iowa)	the 83% (Iowa)	up 73% (Iowa)	like 52% (Iowa)	come 79%
can 69%	-	but 46%	of 38%	had 50%
run 51%	-	your 36%	him 41%	play 61%
-	-	-	out 46%	let 28%
-	-	-	-	are 34%
-	-	-	-	say 30%

Ayres Sect. H 52 Words at 79% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. I 63 Words at 73% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. J 83 Words at 66% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. K 82 Words at 58% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>	Ayres Sect. L 82 Words at 50% <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Gr. Accuracy</u>
for 47% (Iowa)	foot 12% (Iowa)	room 35%(Iowa)	first 8%(Iowa)	fell 12%
led 11%	cut 20%	with 17%	they 39%	stop 39%
get 42%	give 19%	made 14%	sent 5%	wish 5%
some 38%	told 19%	rest 4%	could 3%	right 4%
has 28%	got 27%	want 21%	where 12%	-
stand 8%	put 31%	from 12%	-	-
bring 9%	sick 10%	fill 16%	-	-
that 30%	back 39%	fine 10%	-	-
how 38%	take 16%	here 41%	-	-
was 49%	gave 21%	down 36%	-	-
eat 41%	very 19%	read 16%	-	-
-	white 19%	-	-	-
-	far 37%	-	-	-

The only words scoring above 50% accuracy on the 1954 Iowa scale, out of the 90 shown in the Follett speller, were “see, can, run, the, up, like, come, had, play.” These are obviously all basal reader high-frequency words, the kind the beginning 1954 second graders had been drilled on over and over again in their first grade so-called reading instruction, so children retained some correct visual memory of the words. It is no accident that the ONLY 1954 Iowa list word which outscored ANY words on the 1915 Ayres scale at second grade was the word, “see.” That scored 96% in 1915 but 98% in 1954! With the addition of the “name” words, “Dick” and “Jane,” a little “story” can be constructed from this tiny 1954

list of words scoring at 50% or higher. It is the kind of “story” in the 1954 first-grade basal readers. With such a “story,” it is easy to see why the one word, “see,” was so outstandingly successful in 1954, and why a few other words were relatively more successful than others: “See (98%) (Dick). See (98%) (Jane). See (98%) (Dick) run (51%). See (98%) (Jane) play (61%). (Jane) can (69%) see (98) (Dick). Come (79%) see (98%) (Dick) run (51%). (Jane) can (69%) run (51%) like (52%) (Dick). Up (73%), up (73%), (Dick)! (Dick) had (50%) run (51%)!”

It is a national disgrace that, for over sixty years, such silly and irritating “meaningful” prose as that above has been permitted to masquerade as reading instruction. After 1930, first-grade children were no longer taught quickly and efficiently to read print by its “sound.” The sight-word phony-phonics “meaning” approach, and the dropping of true phonics, has resulted in the catastrophic (AND IGNORED!!!!) drop in ability that is demonstrated by comparing the 1915 Ayres spelling scale norms to the 1954 Iowa norms. The “sound” of print had been effectively ignored when the 1954 second-grade children had first been taught to read, when their conditioned reflexes in reading were probably being established for life. That is proven by the unbelievably low 1954 beginning second-grade scores on some phonically regular words, in contrast to the unphonetic “come” which scored at 79%: led 11%, stand 8%, bring 9%, rest 4%, sent 5%, wish 5%. Yet most phonically taught first graders can spell these phonetic words correctly in written spelling tests after only three or four months of first grade instruction, but would spell the unphonetic “come” incorrectly.

In 1922, Arthur I. Gates, who had been Thorndike’s student and was Thorndike’s and Cattell’s associate, wrote *The Psychology of Reading and Spelling*, at Columbia Teachers College, New York. Dr. Burdette Ross Buckingham had written *Spelling Ability, Its Measurement and Distribution*, published at Teachers College, Columbia, University in 1913, and it presumably was his doctoral dissertation. It was in 1919 that Buckingham wrote the Buckingham Extension of the Ayres Spelling Scale, published in Bloomington, Illinois. Buckingham’s “Extension” added words to the Ayres’ list which he claimed were common in spelling books, while presumably duplicating Ayres’ original list and the original scores to which Buckingham appended his rather pointless extra words. Yet Buckingham altered Ayres’ original material and original scores in several ways when he did this, without acknowledging that he had altered it, and his alterations effectively lowered Ayres’ very high scores to some degree. When I called Columbia Teachers College Library in 1996 to see if they had a copy of the Buckingham Extension of the Ayres scale, I was told that they had no copy, although they had copies of other materials by Buckingham. I later obtained a copy elsewhere.

1915 “Tests in Reading in Sycamore Schools,” by Karl Douglas Waldo, Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, January, 1915. This article contains the “silent reading comprehension” test results reported individually on children from Miss Middleton’s combined third- and fourth-grade class, from the fall of 1913 and the spring of 1914. The tests made it possible to compare each child’s fall score to his score in the spring, and vice versa. Children could read orally with great accuracy at that time, as shown by the extraordinarily high spelling scores the Ayres’ scale registered in 84 American cities in 1915. Yet Miss Middleton’s silent reading comprehension scores gyrated wildly, with individual children sometimes scoring very high in the fall and very low in the spring, or vice versa.

What these scores demonstrated was the presence of automaticity and voluntary attention when the children were reading, actually the correct and healthy state of affairs. Children have to be motivated to read with voluntary attention, and “silent reading comprehension tests” are certainly not very motivating to third- and fourth-grade children. I have labeled such widely varying “silent reading comprehension scores,” which can sometimes be obtained from children with healthy automatic conditioned reflexes in reading, the “Miss Middleton Effect.” However, the record suggests the “experts” interpreted the scores very differently, as discussed in this history.



1916 “Measuring the Value of First Grade Readers,” by Fred L. Whitney, American School Board Journal, LIII, September, 1916, 24, 77-78. (Investigation on relative merits of nine first-grade reading books. This should be historically of interest.)

1916 Measuring Primary Reading in the Dubuque Schools, by J. H. Harris and H. W. Anderson, Boston: Ginn & Co. Listed in W. S. Gray’s 1925 research summary. An article also appeared on page 17 of the Elementary School Journal in September, 1916. The material concerned tests on results from the Beacon, Aldine and Horace Mann readers, the phonic Beacon outscoring the sentence-method “meaning” Aldine and Horace Mann series. This material based on actual tests has dropped out of sight, while the following unscientific “study” by Currier and Duguid is still quoted in “expert” reference works.

1916 “Phonics or No Phonics,” by Lillian Beatrice Currier and Olive C. Duguid, Franklin, New Hampshire, in the Elementary School Journal, Volume XVII, December, 1916, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. Without any real data, this “study” on two first-grade and two second-grade classes in Tilton, New Hampshire, one-half learning with phonics and one-half only by “meaning,” promoted the “meaning” approach. On pages 108 and 109 of his 1956 book, The Teaching of Reading and Writing, Gray said the phonics groups concentrated on letter sounds and were bored and confused on ideas, while the “meaning” groups enjoyed reading and got the story sense, but were “less careful and less correct... with regard to pronunciation. Keeping the sense in mind, they often substituted words from their own vocabulary for difficult or unfamiliar words.... They read more swiftly and with more expression.... Fatigue was reduced, because the story held their interest and they were intent on the outcome.”

Gray apparently really believed in that kind of reasoning, when the truth is that phonics-trained children are far more likely to enjoy reading. Yet Gray virtually never admitted in print, as he finally did in this excerpt from his 1956 book, that “meaning”-trained children were usually helpless when reading unknown words.

Currier had another article in the Elementary School Journal in February, 1923, entitled, “Phonics and No Phonics,” in which she identified the 1916 test group as a Tilton group, which she had not done in her 1916 article. As indicated previously, there is reason to believe that Thorndike’s and Gray’s 1913-1914 testing of reading comprehension and oral reading was done in part in Duguid and Currier’s school system in Tilton, New Hampshire.

1916 “The Measurement of Achievement in Reading: Word Knowledge,” by Edward L. Thorndike, Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, November, 1916, pages 430-54.

1916 “A Study of the Emphasis on Various Phases of Reading Instruction in Two Cities,” by William Scott Gray, Elementary School Journal XVII, November, 1916, pages 178-186. A comparison of achievements in oral and silent reading in St. Louis, Cleveland and other cities.

1916 “A Co-Operative Study of Reading in Eleven Cities of Northern Illinois,” by William Scott Gray, Elementary School Journal, XVII, December, 1916, pages 250-265. “Points out differences... discusses probable courses.” (This comment is from Gray’s 1925 research summary.)

1917 “The Psychology of Thinking in the Case of Reading,” by Edward Lee Thorndike, Psychological Review, May, 1917. This was one of three famous articles that Thorndike wrote in 1917 on “reading comprehension,” and the other two follow this entry. Thorndike (correctly) concluded that “reading comprehension” is a function of inborn intelligence.

1917 "Reading as Reasoning: A Study of Mistakes in Paragraph Reading," by Edward Lee Thorndike, Journal of Educational Psychology, June, 1917.

1917 "The Understanding of Sentences: A Study of Errors in Reading," by Edward Lee Thorndike, Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, October, 1917.

1917 Indianapolis School Survey. This was a massive survey, reported in many volumes, on which Leonard Ayres worked. W. S. Gray carried out oral testing of reading in connection with this survey, but his manner of reporting results obscured their nature.

1917 Studies of Elementary School Reading Through Standardized Tests. Supplementary Educational Monographs, Vol. I, No. 1, by William Scott Gray. Department of Education, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. (From his Ph. D. Dissertation, which work he began with Thorndike at Columbia in 1914. His relatively short 1917 bibliography concerning previous reading tests and experiments up to that date is of great interest, as it includes most American research on reading to that date, but curiously excludes Messmer's, Cattell's and other research done in Europe. It is, however, too lengthy to include all of its items here. However, note that on the University of Chicago Supplementary Educational Monographs, Gray's is Vol. 1, No. 1! The material I saw from Gray's 1917 thesis was the portion that was reproduced in Judd's 1918 book below. It may or may not have included all of Gray's 1917 material. However, I did obtain from Columbia Teachers College a copy of Gray's 1914 thesis prepared under Thorndike which was, of course, complete.

1917 Preliminary Study of the Reading Attainments of College Freshmen, by M. E. Haggerty and J. M. Thomas, School and Society, VI, August 25, 1917, pp. 230-238, "Results of reading tests to college freshman in the University of Minnesota." This note is from Gray's 1925 research summary.

1917 "Recitation as a Factor in Memorizing, by Arthur I. Gates, Archives of Psychology, No. 40, September, 1917, Columbia University Contributions to Philosophy and Psychology, Volume XXVI, No. 1, The Science Press: New York. This very interesting work concluding that oral recitation is a great aid to learning has been discussed in this history. Gates' later work promoting silent reading seems directly to contradict his 1917 conclusion.

1918 Developmental Alexia, Congenital Word Blindness, or Inability to Learn to Read, by Clara Schmitt, Elementary School Journal, May, 1918. Also see Clara Schmitt's 1914 article listed previously, in which she said her tests showed that guessing words from the context was a hallmark of the mentally deficient.

1918 "Educational Writings - Current Tendencies in the Construction of Spelling Books for Elementary Schools," Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois. (Issue number was not noted.)

1918 Reading: Its Nature and Development, Supplementary Educational Monographs Vol. 2, No. 4, Charles Hubbard Judd et al, The University of Chicago Press, 1918. This is obviously a watershed book, and includes Gray's oral reading test material which was the basis for his 1917 doctoral thesis. This work was funded by the General Education Board. In 1917, an investigation was begun in Congress concerning what were considered to be the illicit activities of such foundations, but the investigation foundered because of the advent of World War I in 1917. This is discussed in The Leipzig Connection, referred to elsewhere in this history.

1919 "Principles of Method in Teaching Reading, as Derived from Scientific Investigation," by William S. Gray, p. 26-51, Eighteenth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Part II.

“Summarizes investigations relating to methods of teaching reading and to growth period in the development of reading ability.” This note is from Gray’s 1925 research summary. In the Twentieth Yearbook in 1921, an article appeared, “Factors Affecting Results in Primary Reading,” by W. W. Thiesen and Ernest Horn. These yearbooks are a source for such “expert” thinking of the period.

1919 “Principles of Method in Teaching Spelling As Derived from Scientific Investigation,” by Ernest Horn, in National Society for the Study of Education, Eighteenth Yearbook, Chicago, Part II, p. 52-77. Horn had written his thesis at Teachers College, Columbia, in 1914: Distribution of Opportunity for Participation Among the Various Pupils in Classroom Recitations. Concerning Horn’s later work, Ernest Horn and Ernest Ashbaugh wrote Horn-Ashbaugh Spellers for Grades One to Eight, Lippincott, Philadelphia and London, 1928. Ernest Horn and Grace Shields, both apparently at the University of Iowa, wrote The Learn to Study Readers, Book 1, Ginn and Company, Boston, 1924.

Horn also wrote 5,000 Most Used Short Forms, the 5,000 Words of Highest Frequency as Compiled by Ernest Horn, Classified According to the Lessons in the Gregg Shorthand Manual, Anniversary Edition, The Gregg Publishing Company 1931. In 1927, Horn wrote 1,000 Most Used Forms, also concerning shorthand. A Gregg shorthand manual I saw published before 1920 taught both long and short vowels. Yet when I learned shorthand in 1942, no distinction was made between long and short vowels. That increases dependence on context-guessing when transcribing notes, but only gives a slight increase in speed when taking notes. Possibly Horn had some influence on that unfortunate change. Horn apparently was very influential concerning spelling, considering the fact that the Iowa Spelling Scale very possibly grew out of his work at the University of Iowa.

1919 “Reading in the Elementary Schools of Indianapolis,” W. S. Gray, Elementary School Journal, XIX, January, February, March, April, 1919, pages 336-353, 419-444, 506-531, 608-627.

1919 “Vocabulary of Grammar Grade School Children,” by F. T. Vasey, Journal of Educational Psychology, February, 1919, pp. 104-107. Tested 25 children, grades 5 through 8.

1919 “A Study of Oral and Silent Reading in the Elementary Schools of Evanston, by Elmer E. Jones and A. V. Lockhart, School and Society X, November 15, 1919, pp. 587-590. Gray’s 1925 research summary stated after this item, which was No. 195 on his list, “Present correlations between oral and silent results, Grade III - VIII inclusive.” Although this was listed in the numbered summary of research at the end of his 1925 book, Gray made no mention of this undoubtedly interesting material in the body of his 1925 text. Information on achievement of oral reading accuracy, except in individual testing and in Gates’ 1924 article, effectively disappeared from the literature after 1920, until the arrival of Gilmore’s oral reading test in the 1950’s. The body of Gray’s text, before his numbered summary at the end, was Gray’s lengthy commentary on existing research.

1919 Some Phases of Reading in the Elementary School, by R. H. Lane, Los Angeles Division of Educational Research, Los Angeles City School District, California. This is listed in Gray’s 1925 research summary under No. 228, with the comment, “Describes an oral reading test and presents results, Grade II - VIII.” Obviously this historical document may be of interest, if it could be located. Also on Gray’s 1925 list was No. 226, R. H. Lane’s Reading, First Year Book of the Division of Educational Research, School Document No. 13, Los Angeles School District, 1918.

1920 “Wooden Book with Leaves Indented and Waxed Found Near Springmount Bog, Co. Antrim,” by E. C. R. Armstrong, F. S. A., Vice-President, and Professor R. A. S. Macalister, Litt. D., Fellow, [Read 24 February 1920], Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Vol. 50, 1920. These waxed tablets dated to the sixth century contain portions of the Psalms in a pre-Vulgate version. They have been discussed in

this history, and presumably were written for a child to study, in the manner described in Irish saints "lives" of that period. Such books of waxed tablets were customary at that time.

These wooden tablets and the wax on them survived incredibly for almost one thousand, five hundred years. That fact can probably be attributed to their probably having fallen into a lake which then predictably evolved into an acid bog, where material cannot decay.

1920 A History of the Art of Writing, by William A. Mason. The Macmillan Company, 1920, 1928.  
Mason wrote:

"The early Greeks also may be credited with other substantial contributions to the alphabet. At the time when the earliest known Thera inscriptions were written there already had been evolved out of the Phoenician characters five true vowels: alpha, epsilon, iota, omicron, and upsilon...."

As I. J. Gelb explained in his writings, (as in his article "Logogram and Syllabary," page 334A of Volume 14, in the 1963 Encyclopedia Britannica), the Egyptian "consonant" signs which evolved into the Phoenician alphabet should not be considered as true consonants, because they were really an abbreviated syllabic system ("b" standing for ba, be, bi, bo, bu, ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, etc.). However, since that system lacked vowels it could only be used to write meaning-bearing words, as in "Th cw jmped vr th mn." Yet, when the Greeks invented the vowels, probably between 800 and 700 B. C., that reduced their newly completed alphabet to a purely "sound-bearing" syllabic system.

The right side of the brain handles pictures ("meaning-bearing" symbols), but the left side of the brain deals with language ("sound"), Therefore, the ancient Greeks now had to be using the left side of the brain to read their sound-bearing syllabic print, instead of the right side which had been used to read the meaning-bearing Phoenician print. Eye movements dominated by the right side of the brain move from right to left, but eye movements dominated by the left side move from left to right. (See Two Sides of the Brain, by Sid J. Segalowitz, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1983, pages 80-81, "Lateral Eye Movements [LEMs]".) The direction of ancient Greek writing showed the great puzzlement caused to these ancient Greeks by that totally unsuspected "pull" from their brains (the "LEM's"). Therefore, the ancient Greeks stopped writing consistently from right to left as the Phoenicians had done but showed great initial confusion. As William A. Mason said in his book, page 340:

"Strange as it may seem to us today many queer experiments were tried by the early Greek scribes before they finally adopted the consecutive left-to-right writing of each succeeding line. A strong predilection was manifest for continuous and uninterrupted writing. This was carried out in a variety of ways before the writing became standardized. Sometimes the writing was boustrophedon (Ed.: meaning as the ox plows) with the letters reversed in the alternate lines, sometimes the boustrophedon lines were written in inverted characters, and sometimes the writing proceeded spirally from the middle, at times rightward, again leftward."

However, Mason pointed out that the use of a left-to-right direction for alphabetic writing very soon became the standard. (The explanation for the change in the direction of writing, from right-to-left to left-to-right, is my own, based on Segalowitz's comments on "LEM's" or lateral eye movements.)

1920 "The Psychology of the Half-Educated Man," by Edward Lee Thorndike, Harper's Monthly Magazine, April, 1920. This offensive article has been discussed in this history. It actually counseled people to stop thinking, and instead to let "experts" do their thinking for them. It is amusing that some people who oppose the idea that the Pope can make infallible pronouncements on faith and morals, which the Pope only does about every three or four hundred years or so, anyway, nevertheless want everyone

meekly to accept as infallible all the murky pronouncements made daily by secular “experts” like Thorndike.

1920 The Correlation of Oral and Silent Reading Ability in Four Public Schools of Evanston, [Grades 3 and 4], by Clarence H. Riggs, Unpublished Master’s Thesis, Northwestern University. This may be of great interest.

1920 Education in England in the Middle Ages. Thesis Approved for the Degree of Doctor of Science in the University of London, by Albert William Parry, Principal of the Training College, Carmarthen, published in London by W. B. Clive, University Tutorial Press, Ltd. Dr. Parry stated in the Preface that he had been a student of Professor Foster Watson, D. Litt. See the 1908 entry on one of Watson’s important historical works, The English Grammar School to 1660.

Dr. Parry’s history is of remarkably high quality and prime importance. Quoting materials written in the periods in question, it establishes that widespread educational facilities were available without charge for the unprivileged classes in pre-Reformation England, which fact is diametrically opposed to the usual “expert” statements.

While this book is listed in the New York Public Library catalog, it is not available there, but it is available at the Library of Congress. It is particularly useful for its lengthy bibliography of many works which are omitted in standard “expert” writings, presumably because they were in conflict with the “experts” biases, just as any reference to Parry’s scholarly history has been routinely omitted. Many “experts,” who are often very vocally and self-righteously opposed to open censorship, routinely practice an extremely distasteful hidden censorship by ignoring and burying their opposition, which behaviour should be labeled “unthink.”

1920 The History of Education by Ellwood P. Cubberley, Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston - New York - Chicago- Dallas - San Francisco. Cubberley wrote another history specifically on American education. Cubberley was a member of the early- twentieth-century academic clique which enormously damaged American education. The contrast between the value of his history published in 1920 and that of Parry, also published in 1920, is marked. Cubberley’s is, objectively speaking, very inferior. Nevertheless, Cubberley’s 1920 work does demonstrate how enormously American intellectual life has declined since 1920, since it is unlikely that any book published today for American teachers’ colleges reaches anything like the level of difficulty or of competence of Cubberley’s work.

1920 The Present Status of the Teaching of Phonics, as Shown by an Analysis of Eighteen Reading Manuals, Unpublished Master’s Thesis, by Mabel Lucile Ducker, Department of Education, University of Chicago. This should be an interesting historical document, if competently and fairly done.

1920 Picture Story Reading Lessons, Stuart A. Curtis and Nila Banton Smith, 1920, World Book Company, Yonkers/Chicago, 1926. This work done originally in 1920 was the first to use Thorndike’s list of the commonest words. Curtis, who had been an “expert” from about 1911 and who worked on the New York city school survey, became a middle-aged graduate student and worked with Thorndike on arithmetic tests in 1919. That work was reported in the 1926 Teachers College Record issue in honor of Thorndike.

1921 “Word Knowledge in the Elementary School,” by Edward Lee Thorndike, Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, September, 1921. Thorndike’s Teacher’s Word Book, with 10,000 of the highest frequency words based on his personal word counts over a period of about ten years, was published in 1921. It was later increased to the 20,000 commonest, and finally The Teacher’s

Word Book of 30,000 Words by Thorndike, with Irving Lorge, was published in 1944 (and 1972) by Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

1921 “The Effects of Kinaesthetic Factors in the Development of Word Recognition in the Case of Non-Readers,” by Grace M. Fernald and Helen Keller, Journal of Educational Research, Volume IV, pp. 355-377. Cited by W. S. Gray in his 1956 book, The Teaching of Reading and Writing. This has been discussed in this history.

1921 The Story of the Irish Race, by Seamus MacManus, First copyright in 1921. Published in 1969 by The Devin-Adair Company, New York. This provides useful information on ancient education in Ireland, both Druidic and clerical, as well as its historical background. MacManus’s useful comments on the Viking period in Europe have been quoted in this history.

1922 The Psychology of Arithmetic, by E. L. Thorndike, Macmillan Co., New York.

1922 “Educational Writings - Reviews and Book Notes - Arithmetic and the New Psychology,” by Frank N. Freeman. Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, June, 1922. The article contained a not-altogether-approving review of Edward L. Thorndike’s The Psychology of Arithmetic. Freeman was an “expert” from the University of Chicago who was an author on a Lyons & Carnahan reading series in 1927-1928.

1922? Silent Reading: A Study of the Various Types, Judd, Charles H. Judd and Guy T. Buswell, University of Chicago Press.

1922 Fundamental Reading Habits: A Study of Their Development. Supplementary Educational Monographs, No 21. Department of Education, University of Chicago Press, 1922.

This was Buswell’s material which concluded there are different paths to reading ability. Yet Buswell skirted and avoided Messmer’s conclusion that there are actually two different types of readers, objective and subjective. Instead, Buswell implied that there is instead just one ultimate goal to be reached in whole or in its parts: the goal of “reading ability.” However, even Messmer himself seemed to think the subjective readers might eventually become objective readers.

In The Teaching of Reading and Writing, on page 108, Gray said in part concerning Buswell’s tests of pupils who had “sound” emphasis or “meaning” emphasis:

“The pupils who had been taught with the emphasis on word recognition read the words more accurately than the other group, followed the lines more regularly, and read the page more faithfully. However, they tended to read in a more mechanical fashion, with less expression and with less show of interest. The pupils who had been taught by the story method read less accurately and followed the lines less faithfully, but they read in a much more animated manner and gave every appearance of enjoying the passages read.”

“Gave every appearance” is hardly scientific testing data. However, concerning such “interest” which is presumed to be the fruit of teaching reading by “meaning” and one of the major reasons for promoting the “meaning” method, the remarks made by Dr. R. Orin Cornett in The Reading Informer of The Reading Reform Foundation, Scottsdale, Arizona, in October, 1979, should be considered. Dr. Cornett of the Gallaudet College for the deaf in Washington said that born-deaf Gallaudet College students who were brilliant but who had learned to read by the “meaning” method almost never read for pleasure!

On page 110 of his 1956 book, Gray said Buswell “showed” that phonics children had no “concern for the content or interest or enjoyment in reading” but methods which emphasized content produced pupils with an active interest in meaning but unable to recognize words. Gray said tests comparing global (“meaning”) programs which used some phonics (undoubtedly only deaf-mute-method phony phonics) to straight phonetic programs in Puerto Rico in 1931-32 and 1932-33 produced high silent comprehension scores and speed on the “meaning” programs, which he seemed to think settled the matter. Gray cited the Puerto Rico scores on speed of first grade reading, and referred to comprehension tests, but on the Puerto Rico program NO tests were made on reading accuracy!

As mentioned elsewhere, in a Bloomfield “sound” method classroom about 1940, as reported by Mitford Mathews in his book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, Gray heard first graders read with remarkable ease and accuracy. Instead of being impressed, Gray said experts had LONG known it was easy to teach children to read accurately and quickly, but they were heading for real trouble in “reading comprehension.” Gray obviously knew far more about the effect of “sound” or “meaning” in teaching beginning reading than he told in his written works, and he obviously knew that different and opposite kinds of readers result from the way in which beginning reading is taught. Buswell at the University of Chicago was later and very probably also at that time an associate of the psychologist, Judd. As a member, like Gray, of Judd’s group, Buswell also must have known far more about the effects of the initial teaching method than he expressed in this 1922 work. Yet Gray and Buswell buried that knowledge. Gray apparently did so because of his erroneous convictions about “reading comprehension” which he must have acquired when working with Thorndike in 1914.

The point is that no researcher has ANY business making value judgments on his data, and then burying the part he does not like! That is propaganda, not research.

1922 Learning Literacy and the Development of Speech by the Montessori System, V. I. Fausek, Moscow: Gosizdat. Although the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, listed later, indicated the sight-word method was in use in the Soviet Union until 1932, this 1922 Montessori material obviously must have concerned phonics. Ot Asbukilvana Fedorovado Sovremennaug Bukvaria (Russian Primers, 1574-1974), by V. P. Bogdanov, published in 1974, reported on primers in use in Russia since the sixteenth century and reproduced pages of some primers from the 1920’s. Those reproductions suggest that the versions of the sight-word method, when and if used in the Soviet Union, may have been very weak, depending also on phonics.

1922 The Psychology of Reading and Spelling with Special Reference to Disability, by Arthur Irving Gates, Teachers College Contributions to Education #129, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. Gates had received his Ph. D. at Columbia Teachers College in 1917 on a work on recitations, discussed elsewhere in this history.

1922 Tendencies in Primary Education, Florence C. Fox. This was listed in the Library of Congress catalog, but in 1989 I was given material for 1920 instead, not her 1922 material. I eventually located the 1922 material. In September, 1922, Florence C. Fox wrote this four-page Teachers’ Leaflet No. 10, *Tendencies in Primary Education*, published by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, Washington. It reflected the current “expert” thinking..

Fox said on page 8 of her 1922 leaflet:

“Silent reading. - Perhaps the most notable innovation in methods of teaching is the universal emphasis which is being placed on silent reading. Every effort is being made to encourage the child to read silently and to form a habit which will serve him better than any other in his later life, the ability to interpret the printed page rapidly and intelligently and to enjoy the process.”

As shown in Appendix C, Fox wrote a 1918 reading series for Putnam, and the Indian Primer for American Book in 1906, both of which probably emphasized “meaning” more than “sound.”

1923 “The Reading Vocabularies of Third Grade Children,” by C. A. Gregory, Journal of Educational Research, February, 1923.

1923 The Teaching of Spelling, by Daniel J. Beeby, Principal of the Oglesby School, Chicago, Modern Education Series, Edited by James E. McDade, The Plymouth Press, Chicago, Copyright by The Plymouth Press, 1923. (From a copy in the University of Chicago Libraries)

“Table of Contents:

Chapter I, The Course of Study in Spelling, Page 3;

Chapter II, Determining the Writing Vocabulary, Page 6;

Chapter III, The Psychology of Spelling, Page 12;

Chapter IV, Teaching Pupils to Spell, Page 15;

Chapter V, Graded Word List, Page 23”.

Obviously, the chapter, “The Psychology of Spelling, was very short, covering only pages 12, 13, and 14. In this University of Chicago Libraries’ copy, however, it was considerably shorter than intended by its author, since pages 13 and 14 had been cut out of the book, and none too tidily, with scraps of the missing sheet still showing on my photocopy. Yet it would have been of great interest to hear what Beeby had to say about the “psychology of spelling” in 1923, which remarks someone at the University of Chicago saw fit for some reason in the change-agent period after 1923 to remove from Beeby’s book.

In Chapter II, Beeby referred to Dr. Wallace Franklin Jones’ 1913 book, Concrete Investigation of the Material in English Spelling (published by the University of South Dakota). Dr. Jones had received his master’s degree at Columbia in 1908, on “The Problem of Grading and Promotion.” (Concerning the backgrounds on those who wrote on spelling and reading between 1900 and 1930, whose materials were anointed as “expert” and then widely promoted, almost all those background roads do seem to lead back to Columbia or the University of Chicago.)

Beeby said that Jones reported in his 1913 work on a study of 75,000 themes by 1,050 pupils in the United States, which were supposed to have used only 4,700 words in a total of 75,000,000. That claim is easily misunderstood, if the nature of low-frequency words is misunderstood (and if Jones REALLY counted that massive 75,000,000 words, instead of just sampling them, which is far more likely) . Three thousand of the highest frequency words compose about 98 per cent of most simple written material, and the rarer words in the half million or so words in English are squeezed into that remaining two per cent. The rarest words that Jones’ pupils used would have varied for each pupil and each theme, but would simply have appeared in his total count as in no way distinguished from the 3,000 or so commonest words that they all used. Therefore, all those 4,700 words cannot be considered highest frequency words, and therefore simply the equivalent of the first 4,700 words on Thorndike’s list of the 10,000 commonest words. Certainly some were among the more rare and possibly even the rarest words, and as such they represented only random samplings from the rest of the half-million words or so in English. Such rare words, or such samplings, naturally vary in each study.

Beeby also reported on the Cook and O’Shea list, “The Child and His Spelling,” published in 1914. Taken from the family correspondence of thirteen adults, the vocabulary totaled 2,970 different words. He also referred to Ayres’ list, stating only ten words made up twenty-five percent of writing, and 400 made up more than 80 per cent. However, he said, “Ayres also attempted to arrange the 1000 words in groups



of equal spelling difficulty and to assign a percentage grade value to each group. Extensive use of the scale proves to the writer that this part of the study was not a complete success.”

Beeby’s last comment in 1923 is of great interest. Ayres’ 1915 statistics cannot be doubted. He did produce the spelling scores shown on his scale, by absolutely massive testing of American students in 1914-1915. But Beeby, obviously in step with all the latest developments in 1923 (such as the curriculum of the Lincoln School in New York, where one of America’s very richest children, Nelson Rockefeller, was learning how to be dyslexic) stated he was NOT getting the kind of scores in 1923 that Ayres got in 1915. If Beeby was teaching reading “silently” for “meaning” in his 1923 school as recommended by the “experts,” and giving pure sight words to little beginners as recommended by the “experts,” it is certain he would NOT have been getting the scores Ayres got, any more than we do today. Ayres had produced a total averaged score for the tests given from grade 2 to 8 of 70 percent, and referred to that total average in his 1914 report, *The Public Schools of Springfield*, published by the Russell Sage Foundation, New York. Concerning his work in Springfield, Illinois, Ayres wrote, “In all, 3,612 children were tested with words that children in other cities on the average spell 70 per cent correctly, and the result was that the final average for the Springfield children was also 70 percent. It was found, however, that there was variation in the results for the different grades and schools.” Yet the variations, which he described, were not extreme.

In the 1918 *Elementary School Journal* of the University of Chicago, Joseph P. O’Hern, Assistant Superintendent of Schools of Rochester, New York, reported on scores obtained in various cities on the Ayres tests using the same reporting method that Ayres had used in Springfield in 1914: one total summary statistic was given to cover all grades and all schools in a city. In comparison to Ayres score of 70 for Springfield and other cities in 1914, O’Hern reported in 1918 that his city of Rochester had averaged 82; Butte, Montana, 80; Oakland, California, 77; and Salt Lake City, Utah, 86. The use of supplemental phonics had been constantly increasing ever since the turn of the century. The improvement in scores from 1914 to 1918 is quite believable, since spelling accuracy is the best single indicator of reading accuracy. Yet, after 1920, not only was “silent reading” greatly emphasized because of “expert” influence, but the “best” schools also taught heavy sight words, like the Lincoln School in New York City associated with Columbia Teachers College. Probably Beeby’s private Chicago school was also rather “advanced,” so his spelling scores might be expected to have dropped accordingly in comparison to Ayres’ 1914-1915 scores. Beeby strongly implied that they had dropped.

1924 *Pedagogie Experimentale*, by Dr. Theophile Simon, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris. Simon had worked with the famous psychologist, Alfred Binet, who by 1908 had invented intelligence tests of the type used today. Contains interesting matter, though Simon endorsed “global” (sight-word) reading. Helpful concerning titles of other books on education.

1924(?) *La Methode Decroly*, by Adele Hamaides, a collaborator with Dr. Ovide Decroly. Collection des Actualites Pedagogiques. An English translation of Hamaide’s work, which is possibly this same material, is *The Decroly Class*, E. P. Dutton, New York, also shown in a library catalog as “1924?”. It concerns the work of the Belgian promoter of global sight-words, Dr. Ovide Decroly. However, as Hamaides described the approach, it was closer to the German analytic-synthetic method than to a true sight-word approach.

1924 *A Test of Ability in the Pronunciation of Words*, by Arthur I. Gates, Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. These oral tests on a very large number of children confirm that American schools had almost no literacy problem in 1924. These tests should be re-done today BUT ONLY WITH THE SAME STATISTICAL ‘AVERAGES,’ NOT ‘MEANS,’ to confirm the drastic decline in literacy that has taken place since the arrival of the two deaf-mute-method reading series in 1930. Macmillan’s was written by Gates; and Scott, Foresman’s was written by Gray. Both Gates and

Gray were ex-graduate-students who had worked very closely with their Columbia Teachers College psychologist professor, E. L. Thorndike.

1924 Then and Now in Education, Stuart A. Courtis and Otis W. Caldwell. This compares testing done in Massachusetts about the mid-nineteenth century with tests carried out in the twentieth century. Both men were members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in which W. S. Gray and other reading “experts” were also active. Cattell was the head of AAAS for many years.

1925 “Education in Ancient Egypt,” by Warren R. Dawson, Science Progress, A Quarterly Review of Scientific Thought, Work & Affairs, pages 109-119, No. 77, Vol. XX, July, 1925, London, England: John Murray, Albemarle Street, W. The following excerpts are from this very interesting article:

“In the written language of ancient Egypt - the hieroglyphs - over three thousand signs are known, and whilst it is true that many of them are very rare, several hundreds were in common use;. And whereas all our letters have one value only, namely alphabetic, the Egyptian signs might under various conditions be alphabetic, syllabic, ideographic, or determinative.. and may in addition have more than one phonetic value.... The man who could read and write was called a scribe.... The scribe’s profession was held to be one of the greatest dignity and importance... We know, moreover, that definite schools existed... antiquity has spared to us a considerable quantity of school exercise-books...”

However, when Christianity arrived in Egypt, Greek letters were adopted, with six additional letters, to represent the sounds of Coptic, the Egyptian language. This article reproduced a badly scrawled but complete alphabet and syllabary in Coptic letters which had been found on the walls of the Beni Hasam Tomb No. 12. The existence of that Coptic syllabary demonstrated that beginning alphabetic reading was taught by the syllabary in early Coptic times.

However, as the author of this article commented, no one knows what methods were used to teach the far more forbidding ancient Egyptian characters.

1925 “The Royal Primer” by Edward Percival Merritt in BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS; A TRIBUTE TO WILBERFORCE EAMES, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, Copyright 1925 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. In 1924, (Edward) Percival Merritt wrote a history of The Royal Primer as a contribution to the volume, Bibliographical Essays, A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames, Harvard University Press, Cambridge. Merritt’s essay was then reprinted separately, with illustrations, in 1925 by Harvard University Press. The essay is a history of the eighteenth-century Royal Primer, which was published first by John Newbery. The Merritt reprint with illustrations is in the Art Print Room of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Street New York Public Library. Portions have been quoted in this history by permission of the publisher.

1925 “Teaching Beginners to Read in England: Its Methods, Results and Psychological Bases,” W. H. Winch, Journal of Educational Research Monographs, No. 8, Chapter V, Bloomington, Illinois, Public School Publishing Company. This material is discussed in this history.

1925 Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, by William Scott Gray. Supplementary Educational Monographs No. 28, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois. Gray’s 1917 bibliography had listed the relatively few reading tests and experiments that had been done to 1917. This material listed the tests and experiments that had been done to 1925, only eight years later. There had been an absolutely massive explosion in numbers! Gray’s 1925 “Summary” was periodically brought up to date for many years afterward, with the help of others. The summaries demonstrate the near worthlessness of most reading “research.”

1925 "Standard Test Lessons in Reading," by William A. McCall and Lelah Mae Crabbs, Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. This was based on earlier work McCall did on reading comprehension with E. L. Thorndike, so the original inspiration very possibly came from Thorndike. Short paragraphs are followed by questions, and children score themselves. As children monitor their own results and find they missed answers, their scores rise on later lessons. Therefore, the use of such lessons was supposed to "teach" reading comprehension. What really happens is that children pay better attention on subsequent "lessons" when they find they have not scored well.

The make-up of this "reading comprehension" material anticipated the SRA reading comprehension kits some thirty years later which have been so massively used in American classrooms. However, since reading comprehension cannot be taught, as discussed elsewhere, since it takes place in that part of the brain, the higher brain mechanism, which cannot be conditioned or "taught," all that such kits really do is to foster good attention habits on subsequent reading comprehension materials. Yet there is absolutely no reason to think that the habits of attention fostered on those classroom exercises transfer to other reading materials. Classroom time would be far better spent on teaching real subject matter, instead of on such wheel-spinning, time-consuming exercises as reading comprehension "lessons."

1925 Problems in Beginning Reading, by Arthur Irving Gates, Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, March, 1925. Lists 21 widely-used beginning reading series, which Gates had selected randomly out of a longer list of widely used American series. Yet, less than ten years later, almost the only readers in principal use in American first grades from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean were Gates' 1930 deaf-mute-method Macmillan readers and Gray's 1930 deaf-mute-method Scott, Foresman readers! That was hardly a "natural" development! In this article, Gates stated that the use of large amounts of supplementary phonics at first grade was almost universal.

1925 The Supplementary Device Versus the Intrinsic Method of Teaching Reading, by Arthur Irving Gates, Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, June, 1925. This officially introduced the idea of Gates' baleful "intrinsic" phonics, which was used as an excuse to remove all the supplementary phonics charts from American classrooms. The historical records suggest that by 1934 most supplementary phonics charts had dutifully been removed from the rolled-up window shades and from the bulletin boards of American classrooms. Harris's article in the 1943 Encyclopedia of Modern Education, cited later, demonstrates that the "intrinsic" phonics method was unchallenged by that year. This 1925 article is a reprint of a speech Gates gave at the February, 1925, Cincinnati meeting of the National Society for the Study of Education, at which Part I of its 24th Yearbook was discussed, "The Report of the National Committee on Reading," whose committee chairman was, it should be noted, William Scott Gray. Both Gray and Gates had been graduate students and close associates of of Thorndike.

Arthur Irving Gates indicated in a letter of November, 1965, he wrote to Dr. Jean Chall, quoted in her book, Learning to Read: The Great Debate, that he believed that most teachers were using very heavy phonics in the decade 1920-1930. So the vast numbers of American schools that were in existence in 1930, from coast to coast, and from the Canadian border to Mexico, shifted from the very heavy phonics that was in use in 1930, by Gates' own testimony, to almost exclusive use of his newly invented "intrinsic" phonics some very considerable time before Albert J. Harris's 1943 encyclopedia article. That elapsed time was a great deal less than 13 years. The fact that such a geographically enormous change was made in such a very short period of time proves the existence of the absolutely huge influence of the circa 1920's and 1930's clique which had installed Gates and Gray as America's reigning "reading experts" and which then massively promoted their unscientific and disastrous theories.

1926 "In Honor of Edward Lee Thorndike." Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, February, 1926. Contributors included S. A. Courtis, James McKeen Cattell, Arthur Irving Gates, Henry Suzzallo, and others. The issue also included an annotated bibliography of E. L. Thorndike's publications to that date. Another address given at the program honoring Thorndike on his 25th anniversary as a professor at Teachers College was by Charles H. Judd of the University of Chicago, but Judd's address was not included in the honorary issue in February, not being printed until three months later, in the May issue.

The fact that all these men were invited to contribute articles or talks confirms a close tie between them and Thorndike: Cattell, Courtis, Suzzallo, Gates, and Judd. Yet Gates, who wrote in 1930 one of the first two deaf-mute-method reading series, strangely made NO reference in his article on Thorndike to reading instruction. Elsewhere, Gates quoted notes on reading he had taken as a graduate student during Thorndike's lectures, confirming that Thorndike had indeed discussed reading instruction. The long delay in printing the address by Judd of the University of Chicago was apparently unexplained. William Scott Gray of the University of Chicago, who wrote the other 1930 deaf-mute-method reading series, and who had worked so closely with Thorndike at Columbia in 1913-1914 directly under Thorndike's supervision, preparing his oral reading tests which were massively used until 1918, was not listed as a contributor in the honorary issue.

The enormously influential psychologist, Thorndike, is described in the literature as having had no interest in beginning reading instruction. The historical record suggests that was untrue, and that the impression was deliberately fostered that Thorndike lacked such an interest in beginning reading instruction.

1926 Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad. 1475-1640. Compiled by Alfred William Pollard and G. R. Redgrave (With help of... others). London, The Bibliographical Society.

This is obviously an enormously important reference work. Among others of interest, it lists, under the date of 1514, item STC 1596 (in printer's spelling and printing format of the time, v for u, etc.) Horae beatae mariae virginis ad usum sarum (pro pueris) Paris...imp. [presumably imported by] F. Byrckman, London. This had been cited by Charles C. Butterworth on page 6 of The English Primers (1529-1545). Butterworth referred to its being listed in Edgar Hoskins' 1901 "monumental catalogue covering the entire field from 1478 to 1897 of English primers, Horae Beatae Mariae Virginis or Sarum and York Primers with Kindred Books and Primers of the Reformed and Roman Use." As discussed in this history, the 1514 book printed in Paris was probably only an ABC, not a true primer.

1926 The Ars Minor of Donatus, For One Thousand Years the Leading Textbook of Grammar Translated from the Latin, with Introductory Sketch, by Wayland Johnson Chase, Associate Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin. In his Introduction, Chase made the following interesting comments:

"Learning and education, throughout the Middle Ages, survived because of the fostering care taken by the Christian church. Originating in the days of The Roman Empire, this church had recruited its membership from people of many and diverse races, bound together by the might of Rome's power and the universal use of the Latin language. From this universality of Latin it had resulted that for centuries before the Roman Empire came to an end Latin had been both the spoken tongue of all churchmen, whether in the British Isles or on the Continent, and the literary language in which church records and church doctrines were written. Far into the period which followed the overthrow of Rome's power Latin continued to be the language of both speech and writing among ecclesiasts, and also the literary tool of scholarship and officialdom. Indeed, it is

safe to assert that until about the twelfth century there was practically no writing done in Western Europe except in Latin.

“In those Middle Ages the church-fostered education existed not for priests alone, for from the ranks of those trained in church schools were drawn ministers of state, secretaries of feudal nobles, diplomatists, lawyers, and physicians, architects, and musicians. The bailiff of the manor and the merchant required Latin for their accounts, and the town clerk and the gild clerk, for their minutes. Today we have the Latin books in which Columbus studied navigation and geography, and it was in Latin that the captains of his day and later studied military tactics. Indeed, proceedings in law were recorded in Latin in England as late as 1730. The common use of it among all educated men made and kept it, throughout the Middle Ages and far into modern times, a truly international speech. This gave to authors like Erasmus a public comprising the whole civilized world, and rendered scholars cosmopolitan in a sense almost inconceivable to the student of today....

“In this widely extending area, knowledge of Latin, therefore, was indispensable. So the schools everywhere were Latin schools and learning to read was learning Latin, and the study of the grammar of this tongue was the recognized route to mastery of the power to read, speak, and write.”

Chase pointed out that the grammar book that was overwhelmingly the most common from 400 to 1500 A. D. was the *Donati De Partibus Orationis Ars Minor* (Lesser Study of Donatus About the Parts of Speech). The title was commonly shorted to *Ars Minor*, *Donatus*, *Donat*, or *Donet*.

Chase said its author taught rhetoric in Rome about 350 A. D. and his name possibly also included “Aelius.” The very little that is known about Donatus is the result of about two references made by his renowned pupil, the Church Father, Jerome, who translated the Bible into the Vulgate.

Chase said that the complete grammar was broken into two sections, and the *Ars Minor* is the first, and the *Ars Major* is the second. The *Ars Major* is about five times as long, and its complete title is *Donati Grammatici Urbis Romae Ars Grammatica*. Chase commented that the grammatical treatise of Priscian from Constantinople, appearing around 515, became a serious rival to the *Ars Major*, but the *Ars Minor* was never surpassed although it had many rivals. Chase wrote that for more than a thousand years the *Ars Minor* was the dominant text for beginners in Latin.

1926 “Old and New Methods of Teaching Primary Reading,” by Edith M. Peyton and James P. Porter, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. X, June, 1926, pp. 264-276. Cited by W. S. Gray on page 103 of his 1956 book for UNESCO, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, as reporting on test results at first and third grades which sharply favored “meaning” methods over “sound.” Since I spent 13 years at third grade and almost four at second grade teaching children who had overwhelmingly learned to read by “meaning,” either from Gray’s Scott, Foresman series or the equivalent Ginn series, and since I saw astonishing disabilities caused by the “meaning” method at second and third grades, I know from painful personal experience that Peyton and Porter’s conclusions are flatly wrong.

1926 *A Series of Tests for the Measurement and Diagnosis of Reading Ability in Grades 3 to 8*, Arthur Irving Gates, Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, September, 1926.

1927 “Le Role du Phenomene de Globalisation dans l’Enseignement,” by Dr. Ovide Decroly, *Bulletin Annuel de la Societe Royale des Sciences, Medicales et Naturelles*, Brussels, pp. 65-79. Cited by W. S. Gray on page 83 of his 1956 book, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*.

1927 “That Guy McGuffey,” by Hugh Fullerton, Saturday Evening Post, November 16, 1927. The article’s title is repugnant. It was an attempt to be “folksy” by the public relations associates of the “experts” who were apparently launching the McGuffey Myth with the publication of this article in a massively read and highly respectable national publication of the period. It is well to refer here to a remark made by James McKeen Cattell in 1929, quoted at length elsewhere:

“It is the object of psychology to describe, to understand, and to control human conduct...”

In being fed the McGuffey Myth, American thinking was apparently being “controlled.” In his 1927 article, Fullerton said:

“For year’s McGuffey’s system and his books guided the minds of four-fifths of the school children of the nation in their taste for literature, in their morality, in their social development, and next to the Bible in their religion.”

Westerhoff said (page 16 of his 1978 book listed later):

“It was such convictions, repeated countless times, that prompted Mark Sullivan in 1929 to chastise historians and scholars for ignoring McGuffey, the ‘most popular, most affectionately remembered person in the nineteenth century, a national giant to be ranked with George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.’”

In a footnote, Westerhoff cited Mark Sullivan, in the third volume of his *Our Times* series, New York: Scribner’s, 1929, p. II. In Sullivan’s second volume, copyrighted in 1927 and first published in 1928, Sullivan had referred on page 15 to the presumably massive use of the McGuffey Readers. That second volume was entitled, *America Finding Herself*. According to Lawrence A. Cremin, in *American Education: The National Experience, 1783-1876*, page 538, Sullivan’s series of six books were all entitled, *Our Times: The United States, 1900-1925*, New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1926-1935.

Dr. Cremin referred to the belief that the McGuffey Readers had shaped the mind of America, and referred to it as:

“...the so-called McGuffey myth, propagated above all by Mark Sullivan in the second volume of *Our Times: the United States, 1900-1925*...”

However, the McGuffey Myth should not be defined primarily as the belief that the series shaped the mind of America, but instead should be defined primarily as the delusion that McGuffey’s were the readers used by eighty or ninety percent of American children in the nineteenth century.

What Westerhoff did not realize was that Vail’s 1911 book in praise of the readers really made no such claims. Vail’s work and these sources are discussed at length in this history.

1928 *New Methods in Primary Reading*, by Arthur Irving Gates, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York.

1928 *The United States Catalog - Books in Print January 1, 1928*, Edited by Mary Burnham, Managing Editor - Carol Hurd, Fourth Edition. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1928.

1928 *Our Times: The United States, 1900-1925, Volume II, America Finding Herself*, by Mark Sullivan, published by Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York. This was the second volume of Sullivan’s

otherwise entertaining and nostalgic series, *Our Times*, the first volume of which was published in 1926 and the last reportedly in 1935. It is referred to above in the 1927 entry on the *Saturday Evening Post* article by Hugh Fullerton. In this second volume, Sullivan thanked “experts” for their “help” on historical details. The McGuffey Myth, apparently launched with the *Saturday Evening Post* article of 1927, appeared in Volume II, presumably because of the “help” of those “experts.” Nila Banton Smith quoted Sullivan’s version of the Myth on page 109 of her “history.” Her “history” was her doctoral dissertation at Columbia Teachers College about 1932, and was published in 1934 (and revised in 1965). Incredibly, Sullivan in his 1928 book increased the number of American children using the McGuffey series in the nineteenth century from the eight-out-of-ten in Fullerton’s 1927 *Saturday Evening Post* article to nine-out-of-ten!

1928 “William Holmes McGuffey and the Peerless Pioneer McGuffey Readers. pa 25c ‘28 Miami University,” by H. C. Minnich. The date of Minnich’s original text was 1928, not 1936 when American Book Company published *William Holmes McGuffey and His Readers* by Minnich. At the end of the section, “Readers,” in the *Cumulative Book Index, 1928-1932*, appeared “About Readers” and it contained this entry.

1929 *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland, an Introduction and Guide.* James F. Kenney, Ph. D., Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, in Two Volumes. Columbia University Press, New York.

The Preface states, “The period treated is prior to the Anglo-Norman invasion and terminates about A. D. 1170...”.

This is an extraordinary and very large bibliography of ancient Irish texts. In the New York Public Library, 42nd Street main branch, a copy is on the open shelves under call number \*RB CS. Presumably printed in 1929, it is in terrible condition. However, this work was republished in Dublin, Ireland, in 1979.

On page 187, Kenney said:

“The two Irishmen who had the greatest effect on the course of development of West-European civilization in the Middle Ages were two name-sakes and contemporaries of the sixth century, Columba of Iona and Columba, or, as he is now usually designated, Columbanus, of Luxeuil and Bobbio...”

Therefore, with original source material on which to draw, Kenney confirmed the influential position of the sixth-century Irish monks. The educational practices which the Irish monks followed in the teaching of beginning reading in the sixth century have been discussed in this history. From Kenney’s comment it is reasonable to conclude that the same practices in the teaching of beginning reading were followed in Western Europe since it was under the cultural and educational influence of the Irish monks. It is reasonable to assume that these methods which required the use of wax tablets for beginners remained essentially unchanged for many centuries, until the use of wax tablets for beginners was replaced by the use of ABC books in Western Europe. That was about the middle of the fourteenth century. The increased availability of paper by that time may have contributed to the change.

1930 and Later: *A History of Psychology in Autobiography* [multi-volumes], Edited by Carl Murchison. Originally published by Clark University Press, Worcester, Massachusetts, and republished by Russell & Russell, New York, 1961. This very worthwhile material includes many historical anecdotes from many famous, early, psychologists.

1930 Articles on Celestin Freinet in *L’Eclaireur de Nice*, France (approximate date).

Freinet, from France, became famous in Europe for promoting the “global” sight-word meaning method and “progressive” education, where some schools have been named after him (and after Dr. Ovide Decroly of Belgium, another promoter, who died in 1933).

Freinet wrote a booklet about 1926, *Un Mois Avec Les Enfants Russes*, after his group’s 1925 trip to Russian schools and its visit with Nadezhda Krupskaja (1869-1939), USSR Minister of National Education, and Lenin’s widow. The material was discussed in a book by Elise Freinet (Freinet’s widow?) *Naissance d’une Pedagogie Populaire*, Library of Congress call number LB775.F76F7. In her book, Elise Freinet referred to *L’Eclaireur de Nice*’s number of July 6, 1926, which carried a favorable article and photo on Freinet’s school at Bar-Sur-Loup, France. She then said on page 51:

“Some years later, at the time of the affair of Saint Paul, we would have the occasion of refinding in *L’Eclaireur de Nice* some daily articles on Freinet but specialized this time in defamation and calumny the most base.”

Most surviving educational references contain only data that is favorable to such change-agents as Freinet. Therefore, the articles opposing him in that Nice newspaper might have some interesting and otherwise unavailable data. (Freinet’s school is discussed briefly in this history.)

1930 Notes on Epistemology, by Walter F. Cunningham, S. J., Fordham University Press, New York. This is a very heavy but fine refutation of the idea that “reality” cannot be perceived objectively, but only subjectively. It was the textbook in a very stimulating evening course I took in 1944 at Fordham University’s downtown branch under brilliant Father Bowen, S. J., when I was eighteen. It has been a fine antidote ever since to such “pragmatic” philosophies as those of William James and John Dewey.

1930 Elementary Education in Shantung, China, by Harold Fred Smith (Doctoral dissertation at Columbia University) In recent years, the Chinese have been using the Pinyin sound-bearing alphabet in combination with their meaning-bearing characters, so their present data on reading comprehension would presumably be comparable to Japanese data, since the new script would also use both sides of the brain, just as Japanese script does (the left for “sound,” and the right for “meaning”) However, it would be of great interest to obtain reading comprehension scores in China before the advent of the Communists, who installed the Pinyin sound-bearing alphabet to be used along with the meaning-bearing Chinese characters which had been in use in China for over two thousand years.

According to the above doctoral dissertation of Harold Fred Smith at Columbia University in 1930, on page 20, reading comprehension tests were given in China before the use of the Pinyin alphabet. Harold Fred Smith cited reading tests of Dr. McCall, apparently E. L. Thorndike’s student, Dr. William A. McCall. Although Harold Fred Smith referred only to Dr. McCall without the use of a first name, since the Thorndike-McCall Reading Scales for Grades 2-12 were prepared at Columbia Teachers College in 1921 and the McCall he discussed helped to write reading tests in China in 1922-1923, it is highly likely that the Dr. McCall he mentioned was the same man. Dr. Harold Fred Smith said:

“The tests used were those constructed with the assistance of Dr. McCall on his visit to China in 1922-23. They were published by the National Society for the Advancement of Education. Two and more forms were available for each test. The tests were given at the beginning and at the close of each period of the experiment so that the advance of each pupil and each grade could be determined.... Although the experimental work was carried on in various schools during the years 1923, 24, 25, 27, 28, and 29, the only results of value were obtained in 1927. Various surveys of schools during these years showed very poor conditions.”



The reports of “various surveys” in the 1920’s is also of interest, paralleling the many American school surveys, such as that in Cleveland, made between 1911 and 1919, all of which have also fallen into virtual oblivion, and most of which used Thorndike’s reading comprehension tests or some like them, Gray’s oral reading paragraphs and Ayres’ or Buckingham’s spelling scales. Gray’s oral reading scores, however, after his original 1914 Master’s material prepared under Thorndike, were so “treated” in his 1917 version that scores from Gray’s later oral tests are relatively meaningless.

Harold Fred Smith stated that the reading tests forms used in China were “published by the National Society for the Advancement of Education.” Since the tests were in use in 1923, that means that the “National Society for the Advancement of Education” most probably was in existence by 1923. See the reproductions at the end of Appendix D on two sheets from the James McKeen Cattell manuscript files at the Library of Congress. They were obviously draft forms on proposed memberships in “The American Society for the Advancement of Education” (apparently the first draft) and “The Educational Corporation” (apparently the second draft). Both were undated. From the above, it appears likely that the name chosen eventually was “National Society for the Advancement of Education” and that it was in existence by 1923. That would place the probable dates of the draft copies shown at the end of Appendix D to about 1921 or 1922. It was in 1922 that James McKeen Cattell founded The Psychological Corporation (with other people, although he was the principal founder) and he had long been a member by 1922 of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and from about 1924 to after 1940 was the Chairman of its Executive Committee. The parallels of those organization names with the organization names on the Cattell draft copies are obvious.

As of June, 2000, according to the Manhattan telephone information operator, no listings appear in the Manhattan or nearby directories for the National Society for the Advancement of Education, for the American Society for the Advancement of Education, or for The Educational Corporation. Nor are they listed in the Washington, D. C., directory, according to the Washington, D. C. telephone information operator.

Yet the “National Society for the Advancement of Education” was apparently already in existence by 1923 and it was underwriting the cost for the very curious testing of the “reading comprehension” of people who used meaning-bearing Chinese characters. Those tests results could then presumably be compared to the test results from students who were taught pure meaning-bearing sight-words, with no use at all of phonic “sound.”

See also the 1933 entry below, Leaders in Education.

1930 Interest and Ability in Reading, by Arthur Irving Gates, The Macmillan Company, New York. This book discusses the teaching of beginning reading from the viewpoint of Gates’ opinions on the topic.

1931 Irish Monasticism, Origins and Early Development, by Rev. John Ryan, S J., M. A., Longmans, Green and Co., London, New York, Toronto. This history is based on original documents.

1932 Notes on Children’s Books in England - Five Centuries of Social Life, Third Edition, by F. J. Harvey Darton, Revised by Brian Alderson, Cambridge University Press: 1982, First Edition 1932.

1933 Early American Children’s Books. A. S. (or A. W.) Rosenbach. Portland, Maine: The Southwell Press. Mary F. Thwaite in From Primer to Pleasure in Reading said this work contained descriptions of the books in Rosenbach’s own collection, which books are now in the Philadelphia Public Library. The dates of those books range from 1682 to 1836. Rosenbach’s summary volume, available at the New York Public Library and undoubtedly other major libraries, is very important and useful.

1933 Leaders in Education, James McKeen Cattell, Editor. Revised Edition in 1941. This was a “Who’s Who” type of guide for the field of education. It appears likely that a listing in this directory could have had a strong influence on a man’s career in education, so its editor obviously was in a powerful position.

The entry on E. L. Thorndike in the 1933 edition confirms Thorndike’s interest in the subject of reading. While it gave a date of 1912 for Thorndike’s being President of the [American] Psychological Association, no date was given for Thorndike’s being President of its Section on the Psychology of Reading. However, since Thorndike was President of that section on reading, he obviously had an interest in the psychology of reading!

According to Gates’ article in the February, 1926, honorary issue on Thorndike of the Teachers College Record, the academic year of 1911-1912 was the first time Thorndike gave his course, “Psychology of the Elementary School Subjects,” and the year Thorndike began his approximately ten-year-long job of searching out the 10,000 commonest words in English. To do this, Thorndike HIMSELF counted three and a half million running words in selected literature. That certainly demonstrated an interest in reading! Thorndike also wrote three famous articles in 1917 on the psychology of reading, listed in this appendix, as well as other materials on reading listed here.

The entry on Thorndike in Leaders in Education (1933) also confirms Thorndike’s very close relationship with Arthur Irving Gates during the period that Gates was preparing his deaf-mute-method readers of 1930. The deaf-mute-method readers used whole sight words to be read by “meaning” like Chinese characters, instead of by the “sound” of their individual letters. Thorndike was Director of the Division of Psychology at the Institute of Educational Research at Columbia Teachers College from 1922 to 1940, and Leaders in Education shows that Gates was Director of Section D of that Institute from 1922 to 1930. Gates remained at the same time, like Thorndike, a Professor at Columbia Teachers College.

Further in connection with the work on whole sight-words being done before 1930 by Thorndike’s one-time student, Arthur Irving Gates, another professor at Columbia Teachers College in the 1920’s, who was probably also a former student of Thorndike, was Dr. William A. McCall. McCall had been the co-author with Thorndike on the Thorndike-McCall Reading Scales in 1921, which were used to test so-called “reading comprehension.” A 1930 Columbia doctoral dissertation by Harold Fred Smith was entitled Elementary Education in Shantung, China. In that thesis, Smith said “Dr. McCall” was in China in 1922-1923, and made a 1922 adaptation of the 1921 Thorndike-McCall Reading Scales for Grades 2-12. Smith said those adapted reading comprehension tests were given in China in the years from 1923 through 1929. Therefore, it seems probable that some Columbia Teachers College personnel in the 1920’s were collecting data to observe possible differences in results from the two different kinds of reading by “meaning:” Chinese characters in comparison to whole, alphabetically written, sight words. Reading by sight-words results in “psycholinguistic guessing,” and, as my research data showed, very different statistical curves are produced when comparing group scores of such “psycholinguistic guessers” who are incapable of reading automatically to group scores of those who can read automatically without guessing. Unlike whole sight-words which require two or more fixations of the eyes for beginning readers, Chinese characters can be “read” automatically with one fixation of the eyes, and should not result in “psycholinguistic guessers.” Therefore, the 1920’s graphed results from China should have demonstrated to those at Columbia who knew how to interpret such statistical graphs that the Chinese students had achieved automaticity in reading, something which would be impossible for the “psycholinguistic guessing” sight-word readers to be produced by the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method readers of 1930. See the further comments on Smith’s thesis the 1930 entry above, under his name.

Leaders in Education showed that Thorndike’s first honorary degree was an LL.D. at the University of Iowa in 1923 and his next honorary degree was at the University of Chicago in 1932. This suggests

Thorndike had a strong, early tie with Iowa, where Dr. Orton found rampant reading disability from the use of the “meaning” method by the early 1920’s. Thorndike’s close ties with Judd (his ex-classmate at Wesleyan, according to Judd’s May, 1926, Teachers College Record article) and with Gray, both of the University of Chicago, are known facts. Gray had prepared his master’s thesis on oral reading tests at Columbia in 1913-1914 under Thorndike’s direct supervision. In Cattell’s contribution to the February, 1926, Teachers College Record honorary issue on Thorndike, Cattell referred with amusement to an incident on the Twentieth Century Limited railroad train that used to run from New York to Chicago. A porter on that train delivering a telegram confused Cattell with Thorndike. That porter obviously must have been used to seeing Cattell and Thorndike travel frequently and together from New York to Chicago where Judd’s, Gray’s, and Buswell’s University of Chicago was located. Otherwise, that porter would hardly have known Cattell and Thorndike well enough, out of the thousands of people traveling on that overnight train throughout the year, to mix up their names.

1933 The Cumulative Book Index - A World List of Books in the English Language, 1928-1932, Supplementing the United States Catalog, Fourth Edition, Edited by Mary Burnham, Managing Editor - Carol Hurd. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1933.

1934 (Revised in 1965) American Reading Instruction, “Its development and its significance in gaining a perspective on current practices in reading,” by Nila Banton Smith, Silver, Burdett and Company: 1934, 1962; International Reading Association, 1965 (Fifth printing, 1974).

The following appeared at the beginning:

“Introduction. The first edition of American Reading Instruction by Nila Banton Smith was one of those rare books that became a standard work and a classic upon its publication.... The author presented the only complete and insightful treatise on the history of reading instruction in the United States.... The first edition, published by Silver Burdett in 1934, was an outgrowth of Dr. Smith’s doctoral dissertation [Ed.: at Columbia Teachers College, in 1932 or 1934, entitled A Historical Analysis of American Reading Instruction....] and was printed in only one small edition. The book was soon out of print and available only through libraries.... During the late 1950’s when we began to assess more critically our position in reading, the value of the first edition was evident to all thoughtful persons concerned with reading instruction. Many of us began to urge Dr. Smith to up-date and reissue the book....”

Yet Smith’s book is misleading and incorrect, as has been discussed at length elsewhere in this history of reading instruction.

Smith obtained her doctorate in 1932 or 1934, reportedly based on her “history,” at Columbia Teachers College, at which both Edward Lee Thorndike and John Dewey were still professors, as well as the famous reading “expert,” Arthur Irving Gates. The psychologist/publisher Cattell had been fired from Columbia in 1917 for opposing the World War I draft but continued to be greatly influential. For instance, he was Chairman of the Executive Committee of American Association for the Advancement of Science for many years, and owned its journal, Science, apparently until his death in 1944.

Rudolf Flesch’s famous and best-selling book, Why Johnny Can’t Read, opposing the reading establishment of which Nila Banton Smith was a high-ranking member, was published in 1955. The New Illiterates by Samuel Blumenfeld, 1973; The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho: 1988, states on page 120:

“...the International Reading Association (IRA)... was founded in January 1956 at a meeting in Chicago by a merger of two organizations: The International Council for the Improvement of

Reading, headed by Dr. William S. Gray, and the National Association of Remedial Teaching, headed by Dr. Ruth M. Strang...”

That co-founder of the International Reading Association, Gray of the University of Chicago, who wrote the Dick and Jane sight-word, deaf-mute-method readers which blanketed America from about 1930 to almost 1970, had worked closely with Thorndike of Columbia in 1913-1914 as Thorndike’s graduate student. Arthur Irving Gates of Columbia Teachers College, who wrote the other 1930 deaf-mute-method reading primer, published by Macmillan, had been a graduate student at Columbia a year or so after Gray left in 1914. Gates had been a very close associate of Cattell and Thorndike for many years. Nila Banton Smith’s “history” was written by 1932 at Columbia Teachers College while both Gates and Thorndike were still associated with it. Smith’s “history” should be evaluated in light of that fact. The increased interest in its “scholarly” content in the late 1950’s appeared when the uproar over Flesch’s book was still rocking the “establishment,” during which period, as stated above, they “began to assess more critically [their] position in reading.”

1934 “Improving the Ability to Read,” by Edward Lee Thorndike, Professor of Education and Director, Division of Psychology, Institute of Educational Research, Teachers College, Teachers College Record, October, 1934. In this article, Thorndike made no mention of beginning reading.

1934 The New England Primer Issued Prior to 1830 [Bibliographical Check-list of the New England Primer], Charles F. Heartman, a bookman and a prolific writer on books. Also in earlier editions in 1916 and 1922. Heartman’s excellent research material has been widely quoted and widely used in this history. It was in his 1934 edition of the Bibliographical Check-List of the New England Primer that he remarked on the “most curious fact” that some primers could no longer be located:

“...probably due to the crime wave which spread, a few years ago, over all the libraries in the country.”

Similar disappearances of library books had not, however, registered as a crime in the Soviet Union. In Robert H. McNeal’s biography of Lenin’s wife, Krupskaya, *Bride of the Revolution*, The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan: 1972, he told of her penchant for carrying out such periodic sweeps of Soviet libraries in the 1920’s to remove “objectionable” books.

See the 1935 entry below, on Heartman’s American Primers, Indian Primers, Royal Primers....., which has been of help in compiling this history.

1935 How People Look at Pictures, A Study of the Psychology of Perception in Art, Dr. Guy Thomas Buswell, Professor at the University of Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois. Buswell said (page 9):

“Ordinarily a person is entirely unconscious of the characteristics of these tiny movements of his eyes and it is entirely impossible for him to describe them accurately even when he gives his close attention to them. Eye movements are unconscious adjustments to the demands of attention during a visual experience.”

Since before 1922, Buswell had studied eye movements in the act of reading. Not surprisingly, he found “the demands of attention” were vastly different when reading than when looking at pictures. Eye movements in reading alphabetic print move from left to right, and then drop to the beginning of the next line, repeating the left to right movement. This left-to-right movement is rhythmic for a good reader, with fixations at a few points along the line. The time spent at each pause is also fairly rhythmic. Good adult readers grasp a little more than an averaged-size word in each fixation. But eye movements when

examining a picture are random: up and down, left and right, from one corner to another, with long fixations in one spot, but short in another. Such movements, of course, have no pattern and no rhythm and are obviously not automatic conditioned reflexes but are dependent on the wanderings of attention.

Dr. Hilde Mosse in *The Complete Handbook of Children's Reading Disorders*, Human Sciences Press, New York: 1982, Volume I, pages 132-139, referred to the rhythmic movement in reading as a conditioned reflex. She said "linear dyslexia" could be the result when young children were obsessed with comic books, because the comic-book pictures with their randomly placed text in balloons interfered with acquiring the automatic movements needed in reading.

1935 A History of the Teaching of Beginning Reading, by Harold Boyne Lampont. Ph. D. Dissertation, Department of Education, University of Chicago.

In a footnote on page 76 of his 1956 book, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, Dr. W. S. Gray said that Boyne's unpublished dissertation had been prepared under his supervision. Mitford Mathews referred to it in his 1966 book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*. In the Library of Congress, it is listed as call number LB 1573.L25. My request slip was returned to me with the note, "special format, other location." I did not try further to get it, and regret that I have not seen a copy since it may contain some interesting details. However, it obviously agrees in general with Gray's 1956 comments since it was prepared under Gray's supervision in 1935.

1935 American Primers, Indian Primers, Royal Primers And thirty-seven other types of non-New-England Primers Issued prior to 1830, by Charles F. Heartman. Printed for Harry B. Weiss, Highland Park, N.J.... Three Hundred Copies. This has been discussed in this history. See the 1934 entry above, on Heartman's check-lists on the New England Primer in 1916, 1922, and 1934.

1936 "The Elizabethan ABC with the Catechism" by H. Anders, in The Library, the publication of the Bibliographical Society, Oxford University Press, London, 1936, Series IV, Volume XVI, page 38 and following. This has been discussed in this history. It contains much useful information on beginning reading materials in the sixteenth century. It also reproduces the surviving fragments of *The ABC with the Catechisme* which has been dated to about 1585.

1937 "The Primer in English," by Edwyn C. Birchenough, Esq., The Library, Series IV, Vol. XVIII, p. 177 and following, London. This very valuable article has been discussed at length in this history. See also the 1971 entry for the book by Charles C. Butterworth, *The English Primers (1529-1545)*, Octagon Books, New York.

1938 Un Livre d'Ecolier du IIIe Siecle Avant Jesus Christ. By O. Gueraud and P. Jouguet. (A Book of a Schoolchild from the Third Century Before Jesus Christ) Publications de la Societe Royal Egyptienne de Papyrologie, Textes et Documents, II, Cairo, 1938. Discussed in the 1948 book, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, by H. I. Marrou. The 1938 material concerns an elaborate Greek syllabary on a papyrus roll found in the sands of Egypt just before World War II, which syllabary has been dated to the third century, B. C. Marrou presumed it was a teacher's guide for teaching reading by the syllable method, instead of a child's text, as the authors' 1938 title suggests.

1938 Psychology of Elementary School Subjects, by William Henry Gray, (not William Scott Gray), Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York. It was from a copy of this book in the New York University Bobst Library that I first learned in the spring of 1980 of the existence of Leonard P. Ayres' 1915 *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling*. William Henry Gray mentioned it more or less casually, and very briefly. Yet, if I had not seen that book with its very brief comments on the nature of the Ayres' scale, I doubt that I ever would have known, not only of the significance of the Ayres' scale, but of its very existence. The

remarkable significance of the Ayres' spelling scale is that it provides uncontrovertible evidence on the spelling ability (and therefore the reading ability) in 1914 and 1915 of 70,000 American children in 84 cities from grades 2 to 8. My ink comment on the photocopy I made at that time of the page mentioning the Ayres' scale reflected my astonishment at what I had found. My comment was the simple exclamation: "Wow!" I have found no printed discussion on the nature of the once-famous and nationally-used Ayres' scale dated later than this 1938 book.

However, I eventually did see Ayres' spelling scale at least listed by name in a bibliography of test materials published in 1945, but with no explanation of its nature. Gertrude Hildreth who prepared the third edition of *A Bibliography of Mental Tests and Rating Scales* wrote that the second edition had come out six years previously (which would have been in 1939). The first appeared in 1933. Whether Hildreth had prepared all three is not known, but she obviously had not included Ayres in the earlier ones, as she stated that the only pre-1939 entries she listed in 1945 were those that had been omitted earlier. Therefore, someone must have told Hildreth that Ayres' scale had been omitted, or she had stumbled across some reference to it herself.

The 1945 material was entitled *A Bibliography of Mental Tests and Rating Scales - 1945 Supplement*, Gertrude H(owell). Hildreth, Ph. D., Teachers College, Columbia University, N. Y., N. Y., published by The Psychological Corporation, New York, N. Y. A note on this material stated:

"During six years since the Second Edition of *A Bibliography of Mental Tests and Rating Scales* was published, more than a thousand additional test items have been printed. The list includes tests published prior to 1939 which were not included in the Second Edition as well as those published since then.

"As in previous editions of *Bibliography*, no attempt has been made to rate these new test materials in terms of their value to psychologists and educators, a feature that appears in Buros' 1940 Yearbook (November, 1942)."

Therefore, Hildreth could very well have included the Ayres material in 1945 with no real knowledge of its nature, but only the bare facts concerning its publication.

Although Hildreth, herself, was an author on a sight-word American reading series, she was obviously fair minded since she later reported very objectively on the reading methods in use in the Soviet Union, as mentioned in the entry on her 1959 article in *The Reading Teacher*. Considering the fact that she was apparently open-minded, it is very interesting that the name and address, "G. Hildreth, 415 W. 118th NYC" appeared on January 12, 1948, on a check-out card in the sole surviving copy of the Ayres scale at Columbia Teachers College. That "G. Hildreth" may well have been Gertrude Hildreth, since she had listed the Ayres' scale in 1945 in the bibliography she prepared, a third edition, but, as she noted, made no evaluation of any of the entries. It would be interesting to learn what made Hildreth go to the trouble to look up the Ayres scale and to find out what it really was, a long three years after she had put its name back, at least officially, in the literature as a test that had been "overlooked" in the earlier 1933 and 1939 *Bibliography* editions.

1938 "Types of Materials, Vocabulary Burden, Word Analysis, and Other Factors in Beginning Reading," Arthur I. Gates and David H. Russell, *Elementary School Journal*, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, p. 27-35, 119-128, Vol. 39. Russell later became a leading author on the vastly used Ginn "meaning" reading series. When I began teaching third grade in 1963, the school used two series: an earlier Scott, Foresman edition on which William Scott Gray was still the principal author, and the Ginn sight-word "meaning" series, on which David H. Russell was a leading author. Yet, in Flesch's 1955 book, he referred to some other research by Russell which seemed to support phonics, or "sound," instead

of “meaning” in beginning reading. That certainly seems to conflict with Russell’s having been an author on a “meaning”-approach series..

1939 Methods of Determining Reading Readiness, Arthur I. Gates, David H. Russell, and Guy L. Bond, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. Dr. Guy L. Bond later became the principal director of the very large 1967 United States Office of Education studies on beginning reading, and the author of a “meaning” reading series and a teacher’s college reading instruction text which effectively endorsed “meaning” in the teaching of beginning reading.

1939 La Psychologie de la Lecture et l’Initiation a la Lecture par la Methode Global, by J. E. Seegers. Anvers, De Nederlandsche Boekhandel. Cited by W. S. Gray on pages 107 and 109 of his 1956 book for UNESCO. Seegers stated that different methods of teaching produce different kinds of readers, at least initially, and quoted Simon (probably from Simon’s 1924 book, listed above):

“As already pointed out by Simon, the results of children who have learned to read by the global method are completely different from those who learn to read by the synthetic method. We even admit that we have frequently been most embarrassed to evaluate these results....”

Seegers did not imply the results were permanent. Some of his comments are quoted in this history.

1940, 1948 - L’Education Nouvelle, by Angela Medici, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, France. Of real interest concerning the history of what is usually called “progressive” education. What is particularly interesting is that she apparently was unaware that the term, “The New Education” was used in connection with Parker’s 1875 and later “Quincy Movement.”

1941 American Bibliography by Charles Evans. A Chronological Dictionary of All Books, Pamphlets and Periodical Publications Printed in the United States of America from the Genesis of Printing in 1639 Down to and Including the Year 1820 With Bibliographical and Biographical Notes. Volume I: 1639 - 1729 [also later volumes], New York: Peter Smith, 1941.

1941 Current Biography. H. W. Wilson, Co., New York. Article on E. L. Thorndike.

1942 “The Migration of Manuscripts from the English Medieval Libraries,” by Neil R. Ker, The Library, Fourth Series, Vol. XXIII, No. 1, June 1942.

1943 Encyclopedia of Modern Education, Philosophical Library, Inc., Printed by F. Hubner & Co., Inc., New York. Editor: Harry N. Rivlin, Department of Education, Queens College, New York; Associate Editor: Herbert Schueler, Department of Education, Queens College. The Advisory Board included Dean Harold Benjamin, University of Maryland; Dean Francis M. Crowley, Fordham University; Prof. William F. Cunningham, University of Notre Dame; Dean Frank N. Freeman, School of Education, University of California [formerly at the University of Chicago]; W. H. Kilpatrick, E. L. Thorndike and Professor I. L. Kandel of Teachers College, Columbia University; and Paul Klapper, President of Queens College. Klapper’s 1914 guide for teaching reading, mentioned by Nila Banton Smith in her “history,” had still been in print when the 1928 United States Catalog was published.

Comments by Albert J. Harris, in his article in the Encyclopedia, “Reading - Methods of Teaching,” indicate that “intrinsic” phonics (Code 3 whole-word phony phonics) was the prevailing and unchallenged method by 1943, even though the concept of “intrinsic” phonics had only been introduced in 1925 in Gates’ article, referred to earlier. Harris said:

“Systematic phonic methods have also fallen into disfavor for teaching beginners because they tend to emphasize the mechanics of reading at the expense of comprehension and promote habits of excessive vocalization which later interfere with the development of speed and fluency in silent reading. Phonics (q.v.) is generally taught as a supplementary rather than as a basic technique in word recognition.”

Under “Phonics,” also by Harris, this appeared:

“Phonic readiness is usually developed by giving practice in finding words that rhyme, words that begin with the same sound, etc. Letter sounds and phonograms are introduced by pointing out similarities and differences in words that have already been learned as wholes.”

With this description, Harris had given a classic definition of Code 3, whole-word, phony phonics. A. J. Harris also contributed the following articles of interest: Phonics, Reading, Eye Movements, Reading Interests, Reading - Methods of Teaching, Reading Readiness, Reading Vocabulary, and possibly others. Harris became the author of the widely used Macmillan reading series, in an edition which apparently replaced Gates’ 1930 and later Macmillan editions. He was also the author of the widely used teacher textbook, *How to Increase Reading Ability*, appearing in the original edition in 1940, and in revised editions for many decades following. It is listed in this bibliography under its 1975 revision.

1943 William Shakspere’s Petty School, by T. W. Baldwin, The University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Illinois.

This is a source of much material on the Elizabethan period. Baldwin opens Chapter I by quoting from William Kempe’s 1588 book, *The Education of Children*. It is painstakingly exact on teaching the initial steps of reading by the syllable method, but curiously seems to imply that open syllables should be pronounced with short vowel sounds. Of course, it is true that in English, unlike many other languages, open syllables very commonly are short, as in “pa-nel,” although dictionaries do not show the true syllabication of such short-vowel words, only showing that syllabication on long-vowel words (“la-bel”).

Also, after a child had learned the syllabary and the spelling of words by sound, Kempe said:

“...when he shall have ended his first booke the Catechisme, he wil be able to pass through the Primer commendably without spelling; some harde words here and there excepted.”

This statement from 1588 is further confirmation that the primer was not to be the first book.

Baldwin discussed at length the authorized books in the sixteenth century, the background on their development, and much more of great interest concerning that general period. He also included on page 122 a reproduction of a fragment from an ABC printed by John Day, c. 1551, from the original at Ushaw College, Durham. It contained the alphabet in black English letters and in regular letters, both capital and small, an almost complete closed syllabary (ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, ec.) but no open syllabary (ba, be, bi, bo, bu, etc.) and “In the name of the Father and of the sonne, and of the holy ghoste, so be it.” I have seen this reproduction no where else, although it certainly differs from the usual beginnings for hornbooks and ABC books.

See also the entry under 1936 for an article by H. Anders, “The Elizabethan ABC With the Catechism.”



1944, 1972 The Teacher's Word Book of 30,000 Words, by Edward Lee Thorndike with Irving Lorge, Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. Based on Thorndike's original Teacher's Word Book (of the 10,000 highest frequency words) of 1921.

1945 The Story of Language, by Dr. Mario Pei, Professor of Romance Philology, Columbia University, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia: 1945, and Mentor Books, New York: 1960. This work and others by the brilliant linguist, Dr. Pei, are invaluable guides to an understanding of language. See also the 1958 entry by Dr. Pei, Getting Along in French,

1946 The Psychology and Teaching of Reading, by Fred J. Schonell, London: Oliver and Boyd. Schonell was a very well-known, pro-“meaning,” English “expert” comparable to Gates and Gray in America, and his other published material dates back at least to 1932.

1946 Foundations of Reading Instruction, American Book Company, Emmett Betts, 1946 and later revisions. This is a very large, pro-“meaning,” teacher-training book. Betts was also the co-author of the Betts Basic Readers of 1948 and later, and was a major American “expert” of the post-World-War-II period.

Betts was also the author in the 1940's of an oral-reading-accuracy scale with a cut-off below 90 per cent as the “frustration” level. W. S. Gray had also used the below-90-per-cent failing level in his 1914 oral reading accuracy scales prepared under E. L. Thorndike's personal direction, so both Gray and Thorndike in 1914 had to have known of the existence of some kind of a “frustration” level below 90 per cent accuracy in reading words or they would not have used it in the preparation of these oral reading accuracy scales. As discussed at length elsewhere, so did Gallaudet generally use a 90 per cent frustration level for introducing new words in his 1835 *The Mother's Primer* written for hearing children, which I found by doing a word-analysis of that text. Although Gallaudet in no way drew attention to the fact that he was generally introducing only ten per cent of “new” words in his selections, he obviously had to be doing it because he knew of the existence of some kind of frustration level when the memorized sight-words were less than 90 per cent of a selection. That “frustration” level obviously had to have been identified while Gallaudet was teaching his deaf-mutes to read solely by memorized sight-words and context-guessing. Gallaudet obviously must have found that the deaf-mutes could not context-guess the meaning of unknown words if the bed of memorized sight-words was less than 90 per cent. Since the Thorndike/Gray/Betts armada were promoting the deaf-mute reading method for hearing children ever since 1914, it was only reasonable that they would also have promoted the below-90-per-cent deaf-mute-method “guessing” frustration level for the correct reading of words. It is obvious that they knew of its existence, at least since 1914, and probably earlier.

See A. J. Harris's book listed later, which was a comparable “expert” text.

1947 Methode Naturelle de Lecture, by Celestin Freinet, Cannes. (Alp.-Mar.), Editions de l'Ecole Moderne Francaise. (Brochures d'Education Nouvelle Populaire, No. 30, May, 1947.) This citation was given by W. S. Gray on page 92 of his 1956 book for UNESCO, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*. Gray said:

“Freinet discusses what he calls the natural principles of learning and ways of preparing children to participate effectively in the plan. Two points which are much emphasized are the importance of writing in early learning activities, and the utility of printing presses, magazines, and exchanges as incentives to accurate work. A Manual which accompanies the Dutch reading materials prepared by Evers, Kuitert and Van der Velde describes the global method in detail and explains how it contributes to all-round development. (Evers, F., Kuitert, R. and Van der Velde, I. *Naar Onze Moedertaal*, Groningen, Wolters, 1952).”

Gray is, again, misleading concerning the truth, in his obvious approval of these European materials. If their “global” method (called the sight-word “meaning” method in America) “contributes to all-round development,” why, then, do we have such massive “functional illiteracy” in America?

See the previous entry under 1930 on Freinet, and the 1949 entry on Elise Freinet. The resemblance between the “whole language” approach of today, and Freinet’s approach, is self-evident.

1948 Psychologie de l’Enfant Normal et Anormal d’Après le Dr. O. Decroly, by J. E. Seegers. Brussels: C. Stoops. Cited by W. S. Gray on page 83 of his 1956 book, The Teaching of Reading and Writing.

1948 Teaching the World to Read, by Frank C. Laubach, United Society for Christian Literature. Cited by W. S. Gray on page 87 of his 1956 book, The Teaching of Reading and Writing.

1948 A History of Education in Antiquity, by H. I. Marrou, Professor of Early Christian History at the Sorbonne, Paris, translated by George Lamb. 1956 edition by Sheed and Ward, Inc., New York; 1967 edition by Mentor Books, New York. Although based on others’ research, this is a worthwhile book up to about 400 A. D. but is misleading after that date. An anti-clerical bias on the part of Marrou appears probable as it has been so common among French intellectuals since before the French Revolution. For instance, even though he was Professor of Early Christian History, he seemed to credit only ancient Greece and ancient Rome as the sources out of which Western civilization grew!

Marrou’s post-400 A. D. material is generally unsatisfactory. On page 578, Marrou cited *Revue du Moyen-Age Latin*, Vol. I, 1945, p. 221-236. The material concerned an article by A. Lorcin and its rebuttal by Father Grosjean, *Analecta Bollandia*, Vol. LXIV (1946), p. 323. Grosjean cited pages 200-216 and 360-383 of the 1931 book, *Irish Monasticism, Origins and Early Development*, by Rev., John Ryan, S. J., which had been based on original documents..

Marrou’s treatment of these materials can be cited as an example of “The Footnote Fallacy,” which is the assumption that footnotes can provide corroboration for an author’s otherwise unsupported conclusions. Yet, obviously, in practice, a defect can quote a defect. In this fashion, Marrou quoted Lorcin’s conclusion, but rejected his opponent Grosjean’s argument, which the reader can only know from the label attached by Marrou and his “footnote” authority, Lorcin. In this particular case, the intellectual nonsense is even greater because Marrou identified Lorcin as his very own student! Therefore, Lorcin was Marrou’s probable intellectual clone, and that almost put Marrou in the position of “footnoting” himself!

1948 An Introduction to Critical Thinking, A Beginner’s Text in Logic, by W. H. Werkmeister, Director, School of Philosophy, University of Southern California, published by Johnsen Publishing Company, Lincoln Nebraska, in the 1957 revised edition of the original edition of 1948. This book taught the specific, dead, “subject matter” of logic, which material has nothing to do with attitudes or emotions. In fact, by its very objectivity, it may trample on some students’ illogical attitudes and emotions. The title of this book demonstrates that the label, “logic,” and the label “critical thinking” were once considered to be synonymous. Yet “critical thinking” today in our government schools has instead become a label for programmed efforts to change attitudes (and therefore, emotions). Such efforts were once described by a far clearer label, “brainwashing.”

1949 Twelfth International Conference on Public Education, Geneva, 1949. Apparently discussed in the book, The Teaching of Reading, Paris, Geneva, International Bureau of Education, 1949. These references were cited by W. S. Gray on page 88 of his 1956 book, The Teaching of Reading and Writing.

1949 Naissance d'une Pédagogie Populaire, Elise Freinet, Francois Maspero, Paris, in a 1978 edition. This book has been discussed in this history. The publisher's exceedingly long list of its books in La Petite Collection Maspero was noteworthy: Che Guevara, Castro, Marx, Trotsky, etc.

This book was meant to promote Celestin Frienet's much published "improvements" in elementary school teaching, which included the sight-word (global) method, and non-directive, "child-centered" teaching. On pages 48-50 of her 1949 book, *Naissance d'une pédagogie populaire*, Elise described how Celestin's class looked when she arrived in 1926. She described the room as "beautiful disorder" but floating on top of it was an "inextinguishable enthusiasm." Books were strewn everywhere. The room had a "biological laboratory" containing tadpoles, snails, slugs, "innumerable insects," butterflies, a "garden of plants" and brook water with vegetables and rose petals in which the insects could "frolic." The "altar" was the printing press. (Translation: the place was a noisy, probably dirty, mess. Worthwhile open classrooms are NEVER "disordered," dirty or noisy.)

1950 Religion and the Rise of Western Culture, Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh 1948-1949, by Christopher Dawson, Sheed & Ward, Inc. 1950, Image Books, Doubleday: New York, 1958. This enormously valuable book is a true classic.

It is a very important source for information on the period from about 400 to about 1400, particularly since that thousand-year period is, incredibly, rarely covered in other works, and then often fleetingly, very incompletely, or very incorrectly. The fact that it was a solidly Christian period very possibly accounts for those thousand years being slighted by so many "intellectuals," and for the fact that they have been labeled the "Dark Ages." In contrast the eighteenth-century period of that arch-villain, Voltaire, is the so-called "Age of Enlightenment." However, note the reference to "light" in both cases, which tends to recall the name of Milton's most famous character, Lucifer.

1950 "Etude de Quarante Cas de Dyslexie d'Evolution," by Madame Roudinesco, J. Trelat, and Madame Trelat. *Enfance*, No. 1 (Jan.- Feb.), Paris, France. The statement was made that global sight-word ("meaning") programs produced 20% dyslexics, but "sound"-based programs produced only 2% dyslexics.

1951 *Les Troubles du Langage dans les Dyslexies et les Dysorthographies*," by Suzanne Borel-Maisony, *Enfance*, Paris. On page 402 in her discussion of reading disability, she used the term "psycho-linguistique," some years before Kenneth Goodman and Frank Smith made the term "psycholinguistic" reading as familiar to teachers as "Dick and Jane" had been. The appearance of this article, the following article, and other articles in *Enfance* supporting "meaning" in beginning reading, appears to have been the result of the 1950 article, above, which reported acute failure from the "meaning" method and which therefore recommended the use of "sound."

1951 "Troubles de l'apprentissage de la lecture." by Ajuriaguerra, *Enfance* - No. 5 (Nov.-Dec.).

1951 *How They Read*, by Helen R. Lowe. Mrs. Lowe published this study to demonstrate the harm that resulted from teaching beginning reading by "meaning" instead of by phonics, or "sound." Some years ago, I obtained a copy of the late Mrs. Lowe's copyrighted paper from Mrs. Bettina Rubicam of Scottsdale, Arizona, who was then president of the Reading Reform Foundation. Mrs. Lowe's paper contained misreadings like "horse" for "pony," and "pot" for "pan," based on more than 10,000 reading errors she had recorded over many years in her work with readers aged six to twenty-six. She also found such misreadings as "Switzerland" for "Massachusetts," "absence" for "attendance," "noodles" for "mill bells," "twelve onions" for "the travelworn paper bag," and "molasses and radishes" for "masses of

reddish gold clouds.” Mrs. Lowe’s paper has never been published, but she did have a short magazine article published, which I believe was in the Atlantic Monthly.

1952 “The ‘Term Lord’s Prayer’ Instead of ‘Pater Noster,’” by C. C. Butterworth, The Library Chronicle, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: 1952, vol. XVIII, p. 24. Except for one isolated instance, the prayer was uniformly known by its Latin name in England until after the Reformation, as C. C. Butterworth pointed out in his article. The Lord’s Prayer was the only text on the hornbooks and was also the first text at the beginning of the ABC books which were used to teach beginning reading. Therefore, the fact that the name of that prayer was almost uniformly “Pater Noster” until the Reformation is a confirmation that beginning reading had to be taught in Latin until the Reformation.

1952 Gilmore Oral Reading Test, by John V. Gilmore, World Book Company. It would be useful to compare the carefully obtained and clear norms on this 1952 test to the clear norms that W. S. Gray showed first on his Ph. D. thesis in 1917, before he statistically treated his oral test scoring procedure to such an extent that the results amounted only to undecipherable gobble-de-gook.

What is most notable about Gilmore’s 1952 norms, unlike Gray’s untreated 1917 norms, is that they produce a bell curve, not a curve with scores piled up at one end. That kind of piling-up should be the case when “taught” material is being graphed, and Gray was only testing accuracy in oral reading, a “taught” skill. Bell curves are only produced if an in-born quality is being measured, and they are produced on reading comprehension tests, which indicates Gilmore’s oral reading, presumably testing only “accuracy,” was actually being done by using “comprehension.” Those 1952 test-takers were reading by “meaning,” and not by “sound.”

What is being measured with “reading comprehension tests” is native intelligence, not reading ability. That is certainly true for that portion of the test population which has succeeded in learning the 1,000 highest frequency words that compose more than 90% of most texts (or at least the 300 which compose 75% of most texts). With the matrix of high frequency words to guide them, such test-takers who are actually disabled readers can use their intelligence to guess orally at missing words or to guess the answers to test questions, “psycholinguistically,” even when they cannot read some of the major words in the selections and the questions. Binet and Simon some ninety years ago in France observed the astonishingly successful “guessing” ability of disabled readers taking intelligence tests that used oral reading comprehension, as noted elsewhere.

1952 “The Founding of the APA,” American Psychologist, 7, 1952, 95-97, according to the reprint entitled “Edward Wheeler Scripture, 1864-1945,” from the section, “Notes and Discussions,” of the American Journal of Psychology, June, 1965, Volume 78, No. 2, pp. 314-317. The founding of the APA took place in 1892 in the study of G. Stanley Hall at Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts, where Hall was the university president. Present were the psychologists William James, James McKeen Cattell, John Dewey, and others.

1952 “Reading: The Alphabet and Phonics,” by Monsignor Clarence E. Elwell, Catholic Educator, May, 1952. This was cited by Rudolf Flesch in his 1955 book, Why Johnny Can’t Read, page 15. Monsignor Elwell was Superintendent of Schools in the Diocese of Cleveland. After a four years’ experiment, he concluded:

“The experimenter finds teachers convinced and children apparently happier in their success.”

However, just as Madame Roudinesco's *Enfance* article in 1950 in France, endorsing phonics, resulted in a spate of articles endorsing the global method, only a year later another Catholic clergyman reported a study of "silent reading" which endorsed the sight-word approach. The rarity of such Catholic schools studies in the literature should be considered along with the fact that the only two usually cited occurred almost back-to-back (May, 1952 and October, 1953). I suspect the second clergyman may have had "expert" help in setting up his simple "study" relying on "silent reading tests," which implicitly seemed to cancel the results from the first four-year-long study. See the comments below concerning that 1953 study by Rev. John B. McDowell.

1953 "A Report of the Phonetic Method of Teaching Children to Read," by Rev. John B. McDowell, The Catholic Educational Review, Vol. L, October, 1953, p. 506-519. As stated above, the timing of this brief study favoring "meaning" in teaching beginning reading strongly suggests it was meant as a rebuttal of Monsignor Elwell's extensive study favoring "sound." However, unlike Elwell's study, it was not based on long-term teacher observation of children's routine class achievement, but instead was based on one-time statistical results from standardized silent test forms. One test compared 77 matched pairs of boys and 55 matched pairs of girls at fourth grade on their Iowa Silent Reading scores. One group of boys and girls was from the "phonic" classes and the other group of boys and girls from the "regular" classes. The "regular" group was reported to have had higher scores and speed, but the "phonic" group superior scores on spelling. In addition, the Metropolitan test was given to 128 matched pairs. The "phonic" group were slightly superior in intelligence. Higher, but not statistically significant scores were obtained for the "regular" group.

In reporting this study, W. S. Gray said, "In spelling, the phonetic group was clearly superior," which Rev. McDowell attributed to the "mental set." He said, "The child was attentive to pronouncing the word, to getting anything that rhymed with the original word... and to spelling the word. But the 'mental set' of looking for meaning was not there." In reality, the slightly superior scores for the "regular" group on "silent reading comprehension" are accounted for by the fact that they read with forced attention, and were incapable of letting their forced attention wander when reading. Yet any unmotivated readers from the fourth grade "phonic" group were capable of going through the motions of "reading" (silently reciting) the test even if their disinterested free attention chose to wander to pleasanter fields, which resulted in their getting lower scores, and lowering the class average. Classes whose individual "reading comprehension" scores fall in a narrow band of moderately good achievement should always be suspected of being incapable of reading automatically. Yet classes whose individual scores fall in a wide band, from very low to very high, have probably demonstrated automaticity in their reading.

The fallacy of using silent reading comprehension tests as indicators of reading achievement has been discussed in this history and in my 1981 unpublished book (of which I gave out over a hundred copies about 1981), *The Case for the Prosecution, in the Trial of Silent Reading Comprehension Tests, Charged with the Destruction of American Schools.*

1953 Early Moravian Education in Pennsylvania, by Mabel Haller, The Moravian Historical Society, Nazareth, Pennsylvania. The author listed other historical studies on education in Pennsylvania besides her own.

1953 The English Primers (1529-1543), by Charles C. Butterworth. Copyrighted and published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1953, and reprinted by Octagon Books in 1971. This is the authoritative guide to the subject. It contains material from and references to other texts which have been invaluable in preparing this history.

1954 The Life of Henry James, by Leon Edel, A Discus Book/Published by Avon Books, A Division of the Hearst Corporation, New York, New York. This justly-famous multi-volume work is a superb piece of scholarship and fine writing.

1954 The Spans: Perception, Apprehension, and Recognition, by E. A. Taylor. American Journal of Ophthalmology, 44, p. 501-507. Data was given in this article on regressions in reading of 5,000 U. S. readers from Grade 1 to College. When recording eye movements in reading, 23% regressions were found at first grade and 15% at college. Yet in E. B. Huey's 1898 work with American adults, reported on pages 27-29 of Huey's 1908 book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, he cited "retrocals," presumably regressions, which work out to only 3% when analyzed. Huey's subjects, presumably 1898 American university undergraduate or graduate students, would probably have been exposed to heavy phonetic drill in spelling and become competent readers, like those Rice tested in spelling in 1895 and 1896. The two sets of data demonstrate an enormous decrease in automaticity in reading, which was to be expected after the 1930 wholesale adoption of the "meaning" method for teaching reading.

1954 "First Steps in Reading: Phonics the Key," letter from Hunter Diack, The Times Educational Supplement, London, England, 7 May 1954, No. 2036, p. 441. Diack and J. C. Daniels were the authors of the semi-phonetic, semi-linguistic Royal Road Readers published by Chatto & Windus, Ltd., London, and opponents of the prevalent English sight-word methods. This and the two letters below were cited by W. S. Gray in his 1956 book for UNESCO, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, in a footnote on page 84. See the British section of this history concerning the promotion of the "meaning" method in England starting again about 1930, where it had largely fallen into disuse in the early twentieth century. The "meaning" method was also promoted after 1930 in France, Germany, South America and elsewhere, as briefly discussed in this history, resulting in widespread reading disabilities, but the "sound" phonic method was uniformly used in Communist countries since 1932 at the latest.

1954 "First Steps in Reading: Present Practice," letter from J. C. Gagg, The Times Educational Supplement, London, England, 14 May 1954, No. 2037, p. 477.

1954 "Rival Reading Methods: Question of Timing," letter from Frank Whitehead, The Times Educational Supplement, London, England, 21 May 1954, No. 2038, p. 503. In his citation of this letter and the two preceding it, Gray did not quote these remarks from this third letter: "...At first it is easy to know the words by the shapes. Bits of the shapes do not seem to do much. Other bits seem to do one thing one time and another thing another time. Look-and-say helps at first. Soon the boys and girls go mad...."

1954 The New Iowa Spelling Scale, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. This material was prepared from actual tests of spelling by 30,000 American children at different grade levels. When words on this 1954 scale are compared to the same words on the 1915 spelling scale of Leonard Ayres, which had also been prepared by extensive tests of 70,000 American children in 1914 and 1915, an absolutely monumental drop in achievement is demonstrated. For instance, when a particular six of the words scored by Ayres at the second grade level were compared to the same six words on the New Iowa Spelling Scale at the second grade level, the 1915 average for those words was 73%, but the 1954 average was 25%. (See the 1915 entry on Ayres scale for scores on such individual words on each scale.)

The Iowa material was tested at the beginning of second-grade; the Ayres material was tested at mid-term. Of course, some appreciable drop must be assumed from the difference in the time of testing, but it should not be overly large. The astonishing, mind-boggling drop from spelling test averages like 73% in 1915 to averages of 25% in 1954 has never been publicly alluded to, so far as I know. That fact should be considered along with the fact that the once-famous spelling scale of Ayres has dropped into education history's "black hole."

To show how bad things are today in comparison to 1915, at that time in mid-fourth grade, 99% of American city children (which included Blacks and foreign-born) could correctly spell these 85 words, which are in descending frequency from Lists A through G on the Ayres scale of the highest frequency words: me, do, and, go, at, on, a, it, is, she, can, see, run, the, in, so, no, now, man, ten, bed, top, he, you, will, we, an, my, up, last, not, us, am, good, little, ago, old, bad, red, of, be, but, this, all, your, out, time, may, into, him, today, look, did, like, six, boy, book, by, have, are, had, over, must, make, school, street, say, come, hand, ring, live, kill, late, let, big, mother, three, land, cold, hot, hat, child, ice, play, sea. We know that now great numbers of fourth graders, particularly Blacks and foreign-born, cannot even READ these 85 words!

At mid-fourth grade, 98% could also spell List H, another 52 words, 96% could also spell List I, an additional 63 words, and 94% could spell List J, an additional 83 words. That meant that at mid-fourth-grade, 94% of children in 1915 could spell a total of 283 out of the thousand highest frequency words in English. It is self-evident that the children must also have been able to spell many more words of lower frequency on which they were not tested. Furthermore, all of the children would have been able to read correctly many, many more words than they could spell correctly! Therefore, America had no reading problem in 1915, which fact I believe has not fallen, but has been pushed, into education history's "black hole."

Presumably the "New" scale with 1954 norms has had more recent revisions since 1954.

The first Iowa Spelling Scale appeared about 1919, to judge from a brochure entitled, "To A Critical Audience" which is in the Harvard libraries, which brochure announced a new series of spelling books based on what was probably the original Iowa Spelling Scale. The background on that original Iowa Spelling Scale is given in that undated brochure of Ginn and Company. The fact that the brochure had to have been published by 1923 or earlier is shown by the "Received" stamp it bore from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education dated March 17, 1923. It was then stamped by Harvard as having been received by them on April 24, 1928.

The pamphlet's first page was headed, "The Place of Experiment," and stated:

"...Since its first appearance about two years ago the piece, entitled The Common-Word Spellers, has enjoyed an uncommonly successful run upon all sorts of educational stages, large and small.

From this advertising blurb which was already in print some unstated time before the March 17, 1923, of the first library stamp, and which used the tiresome literary device of audiences in front of stages for two years, the new spelling books can be presumed to have been in trials since before March, 1921. Those spelling books, which were based on what was probably the original Iowa Spelling Scale, should have taken a year or two to prepare, so presumably the work on those spelling books was under way by or shortly after March, 1919. Therefore, what was probably the original Iowa Spelling Scale would have had to have been completed or at least under way by about 1919 since it was used in the preparation of these spelling books. The year of 1919 is also the year that Buckingham published his "Extension" of the Ayres spelling scale, in which Buckingham misrepresented and lowered Ayres' extremely high norms, as discussed elsewhere.

Therefore, the 1915 Ayres Spelling Scale was under attack by two opposing scales either shortly before 1919 or probably no later than 1919: by Buckingham's so-called "Extension" of the Ayres scale which was finished and published by 1919, and by the probably far worse and probably original Iowa Spelling Scale which was possibly finished by 1919 but which was at least underway by about 1919. The

fact that the Iowa Spelling Scale of about 1919 was probably far worse than the 1915 Ayres scale is certainly suggested by the appalling norms on the 1954 “New” Iowa Spelling Scale.

Although this circa 1920 or 1921 spelling series was based on the early Iowa Spelling Scale, no mention whatsoever was made of the famous 1915 Ayres spelling scale which had preceded the Iowa scale only five or six years earlier. That certainly was a careful application of the “Unthink” principle.

Using that tiresome literary device of a stage and an audience, the brochure went on to say on page 2:

“ACT ONE

“Scene 1. W. N. Andersen, a student at the University of Iowa, working for his doctor’s degree under Professor E. E. Lewis and others, tabulates the vocabulary of 3723 business and social letters, and from this tabulation determines the 3000 words most frequently used.

“Scene 2. These words are pronounced to 200 or more pupils in each of the grades above the first, and by the results of this test are arranged in an ascending scale of difficulty known as the Iowa Spelling Scale.

“ACT TWO

“Scene 1. Dr. Lewis secures from Dr. Andersen the right to use this word list as the basis of a vocabulary for a modern spelling book.

“Scene 2. Dr. Lewis compares 16 additional word lists compiled from various sources, and from this comparison and extensive original investigation selects an additional 1500 words to be added to the Andersen list, making a scientifically selected writing vocabulary of about 4500 words.

“ACT THREE

“Scene 1. The results of experiment and research are organized by Dr. Lewis into a carefully graded, logically developed teaching scheme.

“Scene 2. The Lewis Common-Word Spellers are published and meet with widespread and increasing approval as evidenced by their use in a large number of schools, of which those listed at the back of this booklet are but a small number.”

The brochure went on to say that Dr. E. E. Lewis, the author, was “at present Superintendent of Schools in Rockford, Illinois.” Yet the original Iowa scale was prepared by Andersen under Lewis’s personal direction in Iowa, and it is highly probable that it was Lewis who gave his student, Andersen, that circa 1919 “inspiration” to do what was actually only a copycat job on Ayres’ 1915 work. Yet Andersen’s undoubtedly lengthy and tiresome word-counting and word-scoring work in preparing the Iowa scale under Lewis’ direction was apparently not going to enrich Anderson. Instead, any money that was going to be made from Anderson’s hard work would come to Lewis, from the royalties on Lewis’s wonderful new spelling books (on which Lewis probably also had the unpaid “assistance” of graduate students.).

On page 5, the following appeared concerning the original gradation by Andersen when he had prepared the Iowa Spelling Scale:



“The words were given as a test to two hundred or more children in grades two to eight inclusive. The results of this test established the relative difficulty of each word. This is the well-known Iowa Spelling Scale, commonly conceded to be the standard today, to the findings of which Dr. Lewis has added the results of his comparison of other recognized gradations.”

Therefore, this 1923 brochure establishes that the “experts” had succeeded by 1923 in replacing Ayres’ remarkable 1915 work with something more palatable to them: the Iowa Spelling Scale. In the 1970’s the New Iowa Spelling Scale was being used, with 1950’s norms, in a spelling series in the school system in which I taught. So far as I know, the New Iowa Spelling Scale may still be in use.

Furthermore, the vague reference to 3,000 of the highest frequency words, which I saw in one other source and which I mentioned earlier, may well have been to those 3,000 words in the original Iowa Spelling Scale of about 1919 or 1920.

1955 Why Johnny Can’t Read - And What You Can Do About It. Dr. Rudolf Flesch, Harper & Row, New York. This book created an uproar when it was published and became a best-seller. It is a watershed text and is still of great value, as is his 1981 text listed below. That 1981 book, however, was not only not a best seller, but it was very difficult to buy in book stores.

In Blumenfeld’s *The New Illiterates* (1973), he quoted from *Time Magazine’s* 1955 Review of the Year:

“If 1955 was notable for anything as far as the U. S. public schools is concerned, it may be that it will be remembered as the year of Rudolf Flesch.... American education closed ranks against Flesch.... [Why Johnny Can’t Read] remained on the bestseller list for thirty-nine weeks.... In Louisville, a mother reported on her third-grader’s typewriting: ‘He typed the letters very easily.... But after typing the letters B-O-W-L across the page about ten times, he called it pot.’ To such parents, Flesch’s book touched a sensitive nerve.”

That anecdote confirms that the little boy’s school had established a conditioned reflex in his brain so that he read words by their “meaning” instead of by their “sound.”

1956 The Teaching of Reading and Writing: An International Survey, by William Scott Gray. Scott, Foresman and Company, Chicago. Prepared in connection with UNESCO. Also listed in Appendix D. After citing research studies, Gray stated on page 110:

“The foregoing examples supply clear evidence that different methods of teaching reading develop different groups of attitudes and skills. This finding is supported by practically all detailed comparative studies made among both children and adults. The attitudes and skills developed may vary all the way from those that aid in word recognition to those that promote keen interest in the meaning of what is read. Or, again, they may include most, if not all, those that characterize an efficient reader.”

A subheading at the bottom of page 110 for a new section read, “Good Initial Progress in Reading Results from Emphasis on Both Meaning and Word Recognition.” Gray’s emphasis, of course, in his Scott, Foresman readers was on Code 3 phony phonics, not real phonics. Gray’s “word recognition” mentioned above had nothing to do with real, sound-based phonics. It was only the deaf-mute-method’s visual jig-saw-puzzle exercise of taking pieces off different remembered, “meaningful” sight words and then putting those broken pieces together so that they matched a new, “meaningful” unknown word, to help the poorly taught deaf-mute child to remember that new word the next time he saw it. The child had already figured out the “meaning” of the word from the so-called story’s context. However, for children

who were not deaf and who therefore may have known the sounds of all those jig-saw-puzzle pieces, the complicated “intrinsic phonics” exercise helped (sometimes!) in pronouncing the new word, not just in remembering what it looked like.

In his comments above, Gray had gone part-way towards admitting that different kinds of readers are developed because of different beginning methods, but he limited his comments to “skills” of the reader, implying there is, in effect, only one kind of reader - accomplished or unaccomplished.

Yet Gray’s spoken comments in a classroom about 1940, quoted by Mitford Mathews in his book, *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*, were far more direct. Gray made it clear at that time that he believed children who learned to read by “sound” would be permanently damaged in their “reading comprehension.” Obviously, he thought such children would all become a different kind of reader than those who learned to read by “meaning.” Gray was certainly aware of the existence of two different types of readers, which types are developed because of differences in beginning reading methods. Gray apparently really believed in the “meaning” approach used by his readers, as late as 1956, even though by that time they had produced a sea of functional illiteracy in America, which fact certainly must have filtered through to his consciousness.

After 1956 (Exact date unknown) George Birkbeck, Pioneer of Adult Education, by Thomas Kelly, At the University Press, Liverpool, England.

1957 Introduction to Educational Measurement, by Victor H. Noll, Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston. This is a great help in following the reasoning behind the analysis of experimental data.

1958 Reading, Chaos and Cure, by Dr. Charles Child Walcutt, with Sibyl Terman, McGraw Hill Book Company, New York. Dr. Walcutt promoted “sound” in beginning reading and was a co-author on the 1963 Lippincott phonic series, and the principal author on its later revisions.

1958 Getting Along in French, by Dr. Mario Pei, Professor of Romance Philology, Columbia University, Bantam Books, New York. This work and others by the brilliant linguist, Dr. Pei, are invaluable guides to an understanding of the theory and history of language. See also the 1945 entry on Dr. Pei’s book, *The Story of Language*,

1959 Education and Freedom, Vice Admiral H. G. Rickover, U. S. N., E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York. This is a challenging and disturbing book, whose title makes its content obvious.

1959 Conclusion de Notre Enquete Sur l’Apprentissage de la Lecture. Rene Zazzo, in L’Ecole et la Nation, 60, July, 1959. Zazzo was apparently a psychologist. I was not able to get this article, which presumably concerns the publicity in France at that time in opposition to the “global” sight-word method.

1959 “Education in the U.S.S.R., by Mary E. Owen, The Instructor, 68, No. 5 (January, 1959). This contains some interesting comments on the teaching of reading in Russia in 1959.

1959 How Russian Children Learn to Read, by Gertrude Hildreth, in the December, 1959, issue of The Reading Teacher. Gertrude Hildreth was herself a reading expert and an author on an American sight-word basal reader series, so her open-mindedness in reporting what she saw is notable. An excerpt from her article follows:

“Vocabulary selection is not based on word-frequency counts or even primarily on child interest. Instead, words are introduced for the specific purpose of illustrating sounds in words and giving practice in letter sounds.... In the 1930 edition of this same book, hyphenation was

indicated by spaces left between the syllables of a word.... In the Russian ABC primer, there is virtually no systematic word repetition. Instruction is primarily oral, conducted with the class as a whole. Russian educators are apparently not much worried about 'silent reading for meaning' in this early stage; they assume that the children know the meaning of the [words] and phrases they are reading."

The Great Soviet Encyclopedia article on primers, referred to elsewhere, stated that the Soviet Union switched from the sight-word method to the analytic-synthetic method in 1932. Yet the fact that the 1930 primer seen by Hildreth had separated syllables indicates the switch was done earlier, and that the emphasis by 1930 was on syllable sounds. Actually, a review of the illustrations in the book on the history of Soviet primers, referred to elsewhere, suggests that the Soviet Union made little use of a pure "meaning" approach in reading, even before 1930.

1960 John Dewey. His Thought and Influence. By John Blewett, S. J., New York: Fordham University Press.

1960s? (Date not obtained) Geography in the Middle Ages, by George H. T. Kimble, New York: Russell & Russell. Kimble demonstrated that geographical knowledge had deteriorated in the late Roman empire, and it was these texts that were used in the Middle Ages. They nevertheless still contained much of value.

1960? (Date unknown) History of the Hornbook, Leslie Shepard. (This is listed in the Library of Congress catalog as Z 1033.H 8553 but my request slip was returned with the too-familiar notation, "Not on Shelf," on at least two occasions, one in September, 1988, and the other (blurred) apparently on July 19, 1989. It is not listed in The New York Public Library Catalog. Because of the almost non-existent reference materials on this topic, the fact that one of the few existing reference works is not available in these two major American libraries is inexcusable.)

1960 The Story of Language, by Dr. Mario Pei. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia: 1945, and Mentor Books, New York: 1960. This extraordinary work by a true expert, and the other works of Dr. Pei, are fundamental texts for an understanding of language. Characteristically, some of today's so-called "intellectuals" belittle or pass over the great works of that master linguist, Dr. Pei. Yet his works will last long after their gnat-like publications have fallen into a well-earned oblivion.

1961 Tomorrow's Illiterates, the State of Reading Instruction Today. Charles C. Walcutt, Editor. Little, Brown & Co., Boston. Walcutt was a principal author on the 1963 Lippincott phonic series.

1961 Old Textbooks - Spelling, Grammar, Reading, Arithmetic, Geography, American History, Civil Government, Physiology, Penmanship, Art, Music - As Taught in the Common Schools from Colonial Days to 1900. John A. (Ifred) Nietz, Emeritus Professor of Education, University of Pittsburgh. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (So far as I know, this is one of only two usable and generally reliable works in print on this topic, the other being Early American Textbooks, 1775-1900, of the U. S. Department of Education, published in 1985. Some other materials do discuss textbooks up to 1830.)

1961 "These Children Love to Read," by Frances V. Rummell. Saturday Evening Post, November 9, 1961. Based on Rummell's then-proposed book, Rummell's article concerned Mae Cardin's opposition to sight words and the success of Cardin's phonic method, despite massive hostility to it and attacks by the "establishment."

1961 Literacy Primers, Constructio. Evaluation and Use, by Karel Neijjs, UNESCO. Paris (111 pages). Described some phonic primers but also atrocious “meaning” primer from Mysore, India in 1954-1955. (p.37). The author quoted from many sources, but from W.S. Gray’s 1956 UNESCO book in 15 places.

1961 Donat et La Tradition de l’Enseignement Grammatical, by Professor Louis Holtz, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris. Seventh century Latin grammars written by the Irish are discussed in this book, and show a Spanish influence. Spain was heavily influenced by Mediterranean trade, and Ireland was heavily influenced by Spain.

1962 The Dispute on Reading Methods (English translation of Spanish title), Berta Perelstein de Braslavsky. Editorial Kapelusz, Buenos Aires, Argentina, pages 10 to 17. Concerns the use of the global “meaning” to teach beginning reading in South America. See the 1973 Downing entry.

1962 or Before - Key Words to Literacy, Schoolmaster Publishing Co., Ltd., London. By J. McNally and W. Murray. Discussed in The Ladybird Key Words Reading Scheme - Notes for Teacher, 1969, Wills & Hepworth, Ltd., Loughborough, Leicestershire, England. The Ladybird reading series was enormously popular in England. Key Words to Literacy was reportedly also reviewed in “Educational Psychologist,” Teachers World (obviously published in England), May 25, 1962. The material stated that about 300 words compose about 75 per cent of the words used in simple materials. Therefore, those words were presumed to be the “keys” to literacy. The “phonics” that was used in the series was two-step, whole-word phony phonics (Code 3). The material obviously implicitly endorsed context guessing.

1962 The Word Recognition Ability and the Reading Vocabulary of Second and Third Grade Children, by Arthur Irving Gates, The Reading Teacher, May, 1962. The article demonstrated that, after almost fifty years of promoting reading disabilities with his “guessing” method, Gates of Columbia Teachers College still expected children to use context for word identification.

1962 The Turning of the Tides, by Paul W. Shafer and John Howland Snow, The Long House, Inc., Publishers.

This book documents the attempts of activists to control American education over a very long period of years and their very successful efforts to propagandize American students to accept the “truth” of the “need” for socialistic, one-world government.

The book stated (page 1) that on September 12, 1905, the Intercollegiate Socialist Society was formed by Upton Sinclair, Clarence Darrow, Jack London, Morris Hillquit, and others and had permanent headquarters in the Rand School of Social Science in New York in 1908. It stated (page 2),

“By 1917 chapters had been organized in 61 schools of higher learning and in a dozen graduate bodies. From the very start the society actively observed the socialist movement in German universities... The I.S.S. was in close intellectual contact with the Fabian Societies which were flourishing in the rarified air of Britain’s cloistered halls.”

In 1883, the first Fabian Society had been organized in Britain by Beatrice and Sidney Webb, George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells and other “intellectuals,” its named derived from the Roman general, Quintus Fabius Maximums, who successfully defeated Hannibal by a strategy of “delay, attack, delay.” The text stated (page 3) that “method of patient, steady procedure” became known as “gradualism.” The text stated further, “In 1946, the Fabian Society’s Sixty-third Annual Report announced the establishment of an International Bureau ‘To prepare the ground for an international socialist policy in international affairs.’”

Using the enormous tax-free moneys of certain well-known foundations, such activists have promoted the concept of world government and a presumed “need” for centralized control of the whole world, while denigrating patriotism. For many years, they have also worked for the demise of the American Constitution, which stands in the way of their plans, by attempting to call a new constitutional congress. That attempt, so active before this 1962 book was published, is still very much alive today, more than thirty years later, and is perilously close to realization (only the votes of two more states’ legislatures needed to bring it about).

Paul W. Shafer of Michigan was a Member of Congress from 1937 until his death in 1954. A portion of this text is a copy of remarks Shafer made in the House of Representatives on March 21, 1952. The sad thing is that the tide has not “turned.” Activists are more successful than ever before in promoting centralized government control of education and the movement toward a one-world government.

1962 “Why Ivan Can Read,” page 191(?) Elementary English, March, 1962. This would be of possible interest. When I checked the New York Public Library for it, the copy was ripped out of the publication.

1962 Linguistics and Reading, by Charles C. Fries. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York. Linguistic programs, which veer heavily toward “meaning” despite some use of “sound,” did not do well on the 1967 USOE first-grade studies in comparison to the heavily “sound” programs, Lippincott and ITA.

Fries also wrote an article, “Linguistics and the Teaching of Reading” for the May, 1964, The Reading Teacher. In it, he outlined some of the history of the teaching of beginning reading. He said that Alexander J. Ellis in his 1845 book, The Alphabet of Nature, listed 27 previous special phonetic alphabets that had been made before Isaac Pitman, with the help of Ellis, published his special alphabet in 1842, in a book entitled Phonotopy. Fries said the use of the Pitman alphabet for teaching reading was reported in The Massachusetts Teacher, VI (1853), pages 25-28, and in Journal of the Proceedings of the National Educational Association for 1873. Fries was wrong. The 1873 article was on Leigh print, not Pitman print. See also the 1964 entry on Dr. Fries’ work.

1963 “Logogram and Syllabary,” by I. J. Gelb, page 334A, Volume 14, in the 1963 Encyclopedia Britannica. Gelb stated that the Egyptian “consonant” signs should not be considered as consonants, because they were really an abbreviated syllable system. “B,” for instance, stood for any syllable formed with b: ba, be, bi, bo, bu, etc.

1963, Revised 1972 From Primer to Pleasure in Reading, by Mary F. Thwaite, The Horn Book, Inc., Boston. First British edition, 1963, revised edition 1972. This contains very little on reading instruction but is a superb guide to children’s literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

1963 A. F. Leach as a Historian of Yorkshire Education, with an Index of the Yorkshire Schools (c. 730 to c. 1770) referred to in his works, etc., and some corrigenda, by W. E. Tate, B. Litt., F. S. A., Sometime G. W. Medley Senior Research Scholar in the University of Oxford; Reader in the University of Leeds and Curator of the Leeds University Museum of the History of Education, St. Anthony’s Press, York, England, 1963. Shortly before and after 1900, A. F. Leach performed some magnificent research work in England on sources for the history of education, but his reports on this work were very badly marred by his extreme bigotry. W. E. Tate’s mild-mannered commentary on Leach’s work makes some of it more usable and reliable.

See the 1896 entry on A. F. Leach’s English Schools at the Reformation.

1963 Encyclopedia Britannica, William Benton, Publishers, Chicago. The edition which was available in this year is particularly useful for biographies on those concerned with education, such as Basedow, Condillac, Diderot, Melchior Grimm, Locke, Rousseau, Cattell, James, Judd and Thorndike, as well as the articles on Accent, Alphabet, Consciousness, Logogram-Syllabary, Pragmatism, Psychology, and a great many other topics. However, it is very lacking concerning the history of reading instruction.

1963 A Bibliography of Children's Books Printed Prior to 1821, d'Alte Aldredge Welch, American Antiquarian Society Proceedings, V. 73, (April, 1963), p. 121-324. Reprinted in book form in 1972 as A Bibliography of American Children's Books Printed Prior to 1821, by d'Alte A. Welch, American Antiquarian Society and Barre Publishers, Worcester, Massachusetts.

Although this work intentionally omitted most textbooks, it has nevertheless been of real use in compiling this history. It is of great importance as a reference work.

1963 Educational Psychology in the U. S. S. R., edited by Brian Simon and Joan Simon, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California. This book contained a translation of the important article, "The Psychology of Mastering the Elements of Reading," by D. B. Elkonin, Institute of Psychology, Academy of Educational Science, page 165 and following. Among other important comments, Elkonin stated

"In the present paper we start from the proposition that reading is a reconstitution of the sound forms of a word on the basis of its graphic representation. Understanding, which is often considered as the basic content of the process of reading arises as a result of correct recreation of the sound forms of words. He who, independently of the level of understanding of words, can correctly recreate their sound forms is able to read."

1963 Ireland, Harbinger of the Middle Ages, by Ludwig Beiler, Oxford University Press, London. (Translated from the original German, 1961). This scholarly book has much information on the ancient Irish monks, who brought culture back to the European mainland in the 600's, after its decline following the fall of Rome in the early 400's. By the 700's, Anglo-Saxon monks had joined the Irish monks in founding monasteries, which were centers of learning and culture, all over the European mainland.

1963 Irish Monks in the Golden Age, Edited by Rev. Professor John Ryan, S. J. Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, Ltd.; London: Burns and Oates. This is a collection of biographies, by various authors, of once-famous Irish monks in the general period from about 450 A. D. to about 800 A. D..

1964 "Linguistics and Teaching of Reading," by Charles C. Fries, page 594 and following of The Reading Teacher May, 1964. Fries said:

"The discussions in English concerning the methods and materials for the teaching of reading began at least four hundred years ago. John Hart finished the writing of his The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of Our English Tongue in 1551....

"Hart's Orthographie of 1569 developed much more completely the principles set forth in his manuscript of 1551 and proposed the use of an 'augmented' Roman alphabet as a consistent spelling of the 'sounds.'"

Fries also wrote Linguistics and Reading, Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc., N. Y. 1962, listed above under 1962. On page 8, he referred to Hart's 1570 book, A Methode or Comfortable Beginning for All vnlearned whereby they may bee taught to read English, in a very short time with pleasure..... Fries said that John Hart wrote in the preface:

“This manner of teaching is after the manner of the excellent Latin rhetorician Quintilian who died above xiC years past.”

Fries also referred on page 8 to Hart's 1551 *The Opening of the Unreasonable Writing of Our English Tongue*, and to Hart's 1569 *An Orthographic containing the due order and reason how to write or print the image of man's voice, most like to the life of nature*. See also the 1962 entry above on Dr. Fries' 1962 book.

1965 *Au Seuil de la Culture*. Robert Dottrens. Les Editions du Scarabee, Paris. This concerns the “global” sight word controversy in Europe, written from the viewpoint of a defender. On page 56, Dottrens mentioned a Monsieur de la Palisse who wrote in opposition to the global method. Articles by that man would be of interest, but I have not been able to locate them.

1966 *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered*; Mitford M. Mathews. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London. Copyright 1966 by The University of Chicago. All rights reserved. Published 1966, Phoenix Edition 1976. Excerpts in this history have been reproduced with permission from The University of Chicago Press. Mathews' book is very valuable, despite the fact that, although sincerely attempting to clarify the history, Mathews was misled on many points.

1965 *Reading in a Nutshell*, by Martin D. Brennan and George J. Ameer. Colfax Press, Inc., Wayne, New Jersey. This very simple phonics program was of great use to me when teaching third grade. I used it to teach synthetic phonics to children who had been taught to read by the “meaning” method and phony phonics in first grade.

1966 *Annals of Printing*, by W. Turner Berry and H. Edmund Poole, London: Blandford Press. This is an extremely useful book. A portion from page 86 was quoted in this history, concerning the founding of the first printing press in North America in Mexico City in 1539.

1967 “A Psycholinguistic Guessing Game,” by Kenneth S. Goodman, *Journal of the Reading Specialist*, 4, (May, 1967). When Gates and Gray faded from the scene as the leading reading “experts,” Goodman and Frank Smith took their place. Goodman claimed that “psycholinguistic guessing” is the way people read, and therefore children should be taught to read by guessing words from the context. Yet Clara Schmidt had demonstrated in 1914, as listed previously, that only feeble-minded Chicago children in those days depended on “psycholinguistic guessing” in reading. Based on her tests of normal and feeble-minded Chicago children, she concluded in 1914 that “psycholinguistic guessing” is a hallmark of mental deficiency.

However, Clara Schmidt did not use the term, “psycholinguistic.” I first saw the term, “psycho-linguistique,” on page 402 of the article, “Les Troubles du Langage dans les Dyslexies et les Dysorthographies,” by Suzanne Borel-Maisonny, in *Enfance* magazine, published in Paris, France, in 1951, month not noted. (Its pages in the New York University Library were already crumbling into pieces by 1980 because of the inferior paper used in publishing. Such materials self-destruct.) Goodman was therefore not the first to employ the exceedingly harmful “psycholinguistique” nonsense to the teaching of beginning reading. It would be of interest to know if any contact existed between the French cadre of reading “experts” who seem to have banded together to write a series of articles in *Enfance*. Another, besides Borel-Maisonny, was Ajuriaguerra, who wrote an article in the *Enfance* issue No. 5 (Nov.-Dec., 1951, under the title, “Troubles de l'apprentissage de la lecture.” Those articles served to contradict the conclusions in an earlier article in the Jan.-Feb., 1950, (No. 1) issue of *Enfance* by Madame Roudinesco, J. Trelat, and Madame Trelat, which stated that “meaning” (“global”) programs produced 20% dyslexics, but “sound” phonic programs only 2%.

1967 Learning to Read: the Great Debate, Jeanne S. Chall, Ph. D., Harvard University, McGraw Hill Book Company, New York, second and third editions 1983 and 1996, Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace. This is an exceedingly important and fair-minded book. However, as an example of the mindlessness bred into so many people taking government-“certified” graduate courses in reading instruction, a certified reading specialist in an elementary school quite innocently told me that I should read the reviews of Chall’s book instead of the book itself! Naturally, the “expert” reviews (though Chall, herself, is a true expert and needs no quotation marks around the word) were scathing. Blumenfeld quoted many of the reviews in his 1973 book, *The New Illiterates*. While I was enrolled in William Paterson College in Wayne, New Jersey, from 1977 to 1978 taking graduate courses in reading instruction, it was impossible to get Chall’s book in the library, despite my long-term requests and though it was listed in the card catalog. Nor was her book a reference work in any of the reading courses. I finally bought my own copy from McGraw Hill in New York. Yet Rudolf Flesch’s 1955 book, so important to an understanding of reading instruction, was not even in the William Paterson College library’s card catalog!

I dropped out of the program for a master’s degree in reading instruction half way through because of my disgust with its slanted content. (I already had a master’s degree in natural history.)

1967 Sources for the History of Education. C. W. J. Higson, Editor, Library Association. A list of material, including school books, contained in the libraries of the Institutes and Schools of Education, and including children’s materials from the 15th century. I have not seen this material but it may be helpful.

1967 William James, A Biography, by Gay Wilson Allen, Rupert Hart-Davis, Upper James Street, London, W. 1, England.

1967 Bond, Guy L. and Robert Dykstra. “The Cooperative Research Program in First-Grade Reading Instruction.” Reading Research Quarterly, Summer, 1967, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware. This research was supported by the U. S. Office of Education and concerned 27 programs, which used basal, basal plus phonics, i.t.a., linguistic, language experience, and phonic/linguistic (Lippincott’s) methods. Dr. Bond was Director of the Coordinating Center for the First-Grade Reading Studies. He had received his advanced degrees from Columbia University and had taught there as a visiting professor in the summers of 1940 and 1951, and was retired from the University of Minnesota. He had been the principal author on the “meaning” approach reading series of 1950-58 (revised in 1962), published by Lyons and Carnahan, Chicago, *The Developmental Reading Series*. That series was reviewed by Samuel Blumenfeld in *The New Illiterates* on page 302, Dr. Guy L. Bond was also a co-author with Miles A. Tinker of the University of Minnesota of a textbook on the teaching of reading. It was entitled *Reading Difficulties, Their Diagnosis and Correction*, and was published in 1973 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Dr. Bond’s work, both on his reading series and on his textbook on the teaching of reading, favored the “meaning” approach in teaching beginning reading. Also working on the U.S.O.E. project was Dr. Robert Dykstra, Associate Professor of Education at the University of Minnesota, but Dr. Dykstra was a proponent of true phonics in beginning reading, which Bond was not.

The research was concerned almost totally with “silent reading comprehension.” As has been discussed in this history, that is a largely meaningless evaluation of reading competency. See the comments in the 1968 entry below on the small section of the research which concerned oral reading. The first-grade scores on oral reading in March of first-grade were too early to be significant. As noted below, the second grade oral reading scores for all programs which had been “treated” to give all beginners the same handicaps were reported to have been accidentally erased.

See the 1968 entry below.



1968 “Summary of the Second-Grade Phase of the Cooperative Research Program in Primary Reading Instruction,” by Dr. Robert Dykstra, Director of the Coordinating Center for the follow-up of studies in the USOE-supported Cooperative Research Program in First-Grade Reading. Reported in the Fall, 1968, Reading Research Quarterly, of the International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware. Most of the vast number of tests on the different reading programs were silent reading comprehension tests. Only a few were oral tests. On the oral tests, I was told when speaking by phone with Dr. Dykstra many years ago that someone had accidentally pushed a wrong button on the computer, wiping out all of the statistically-treated oral reading test results at the second grade level. Since the 1967 first-grade oral reading scores were taken about March of first grade and were too early to be reliable, that 1968 second-grade treated data would have been the first large-scale testing data on oral reading since William Scott Gray tested oral reading before 1918. No large-scale testing of oral reading has been done since, except when Arthur Irving Gates developed his norms for his word lists in 1924, and Gilmore developed his oral test norms in 1952. (Gilmore’s test was among the oral tests in the U.S.O.E. studies.) That means that the last such general tests were done before World War I, almost eighty years ago. Yet oral reading tests and dictated spelling tests are the only two sure ways to show the enormous failure that results from teaching beginning reading by “meaning” instead of by “sound.”

Dr. Dykstra has been on record for many years in support of a “sound” approach in the teaching of beginning reading. His conclusions based on the research in the U.S.O.E. studies endorsed “sound” in beginning reading. Dr. Dykstra wrote the chapter on research and evaluation for the 1974 book, *Teaching Reading, A Phonic/Linguistic Approach to Developmental Reading*, by Charles Child Walcutt, Joan Lamport, Glenn McCracken, with Robert Dykstra, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York.

See also the 1967 entry on the first grade studies, listed above.

1968 What Ivan Knows That Johnny Doesn’t, by Arthur Trace, Jr., McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York.

1968 “The Rarity of Reading Disability in Japanese Children,” by Kiyoshi Makita, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, p. 599-614, July, 1968. Japanese children are taught their meaning-bearing Code 1 Kanji symbols as strictly meaning-bearing, and their Code 10 Kana symbols as strictly sound-bearing. Therefore, they develop few conflicting conditioned reflexes, which is undoubtedly the reason that failure is so rare. Our reading failures result from teaching sound-bearing symbols (alphabetically printed words) as largely meaning-bearing.

1968 A History of Children’s Reading and Literature, by Alec Ellis, Pergamon Press, Oxford. This is an invaluable source book on factual historical material concerning Great Britain, although Ellis interprets that material very differently from this author. Ellis views the spread of government-controlled education since 1800 as a cultural boon instead of the cultural disaster that it has actually been, world-wide (although no recognition is ever given to that demonstrable fact).

1968 The Penny Histories, A Study of Chapbooks for Young Readers Over Two Centuries, by Victor E. Neuburg. Oxford University Press, and Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., New York: 1969. A delightful and useful study of chapbooks and their era.

1968 The Sane Positivist, by Geraldine S. Joncich (Clifford), Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut. This is a very useful biography of Edward L. Thorndike.

However, on page 134 is an anecdote on Thorndike and Cattell's predecessor in England, George John Romanes, which is very illuminating concerning the kind of men who founded experimental psychology:

“...the first important comparative psychologist, George John Romanes (1848-1894)... Of a wealthy Scottish family, Romanes traveled in England's foremost scientific circles, meanwhile devoting himself entirely to his animal studies.... He also put cats in sacks and released them far from home to check on the 'homing instinct'; he reared animals in isolation to study their cries....”

If Romanes with his astonishingly inhumane “experiments” was typical of the kind of people in nineteenth-century “England's foremost scientific circles,” then the men in those circles certainly were suitable models for those horror “science” movies that Hollywood has been grinding out since the 1930's. Yet William James' 1890 psychology book is full of far worse inhumane horror stories from the best “scientific circles” in European countries. The hideous Russian experimenter, Pavlov, was certainly not the first to torment helpless animals in the name of “science.” However, knowledge obtained in such a fashion in the long run usually does very little good and often has done great harm. (Consider the use of psychological torture in recent warfare.) At the very least, the kind of men who can casually do such things to animals are hardly the kind of men most people would like to have as visitors to their homes, not unless the family's cats and dogs are locked safely away in an upstairs bedroom and the visit is going to be extremely brief.

The foregoing comments most desperately need saying, to counter the glowing reports that are usually found in the literature concerning the behavior of such “scientific” creatures as George John Romanes and his ilk. However, when the scores are totaled in a century or so about who learned the most about animal behavior, those experimenters who respected animals and who used them compassionately according to their natures are going to be seen as the only real accumulators of such knowledge.

1968 The Waysiders, by R. M. N. Crosby, Delacorte Press, New York, 1968. Dr. Crosby wrote of his work with dyslexic patients. In a footnote on page 103, he told of an early nineteenth-century case of transient dyslexia, which is quoted in this history.

1969 A Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800 - A systematic record of writings on English, and on other languages in English, based on the collections of the principal libraries of the World, Compiled by R. C. Alston - Volume IV, Spelling Books, Printed For The Author By Ernest Cummins, Bradford. 500 Copies. [Ed.: Alston's astonishing series which began to be published in 1965 has 11 other volumes, including three on grammar, one on the English dictionary, and others of great interest. Alston was associated with the British Library in London, England.]

1969 The First 120 Years, An Historical Narrative of the Syracuse Public Schools, 120th Anniversary, 1848-1968, Copyright 1969 by George W. Fowler, Published by Syracuse City School District, Syracuse, N. Y. I was told on April 16, 1984, that there was a gap of missing volumes of the Syracuse board minutes, from March 29, 1862, to April 1, 1886, and from March 5, 1895 to August 5, 1897. When researching the Board minutes, on which Fowler largely depended for his history, he also found a gap of two years (apparently the same for 1895-1897) in the Board records during Blodgett's term as Superintendent. Yet Fowler implied that there was one other gap, when he said on page 57, concerning “The Missing Minutes,” that it extended from 1855 to 1881. Yet, in 1984, I saw the Board minutes from 1855 to 1862, and Fowler must have seen those from 1881 to 1886 which were missing when I was there in 1984! So the book 1855-1862 had reappeared, but the minutes for 1881-1886 had disappeared!

1969 Literacy and Development in the West, by Carlo M. Cipolla, Penguin Books, Baltimore, Maryland. This contains very useful statistics for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, it has little information before those dates, since reliable records before that time are apparently very scarce.

1969 "Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900," by Professor Lawrence Stone of Princeton, in the journal, Past and Present. Stone's article contains the following citation on page 84 from John McFarlan, *Inquiries Concerning the Poor*, Edinburgh, 1782, page 245, and S. M. Elkins, *Slavery*, New York 1963, p. 60:

"Some societies have tried to prevent reading altogether. In America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries slaves were kept illiterate by law on the grounds that 'teaching slaves to read and write tends to dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion.'"

Stone added on pages 85 and 86:

"In England after the Restoration, many of the propertied classes followed Hobbes in blaming the horrors of the Civil War on excessive education in the prewar years. Between 1660 and 1790, most men were convinced that a little learning for the poor is a dangerous thing, since it encourages them to aspire beyond their station, and so threatens social stability and the domination of the elite...."

Stone cited Christopher Wase, who wrote *Considerations Concerning Free Schools*, Oxford, 1678, as the source for this appalling statement: "Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion and Obedience." Stone added:

"This was a view which it took a very long time to eradicate, and may be traced through Bernard Mandeville's comment in the early eighteenth century that 'should a Horse know as much as a Man, I should not like to be his Rider' and Soane Jenyn's complacent view of popular ignorance in 1757 as the opiate of the poor, 'a cordial administered by the gracious hand of providence', right down to the opinion of Bishop Beilby Porteous of London in 1803 that 'men of considerable ability say that it is safest for both the Government and the religion of the country to let the lower classes remain in that state of ignorance in which nature has originally placed them.'"

Stone had referred on page 85 to literacy in England in the eighteenth century:

"In 1726 a continental visitor observed, perhaps with a touch of exaggeration, that 'All Englishmen are great newsmongers. Workmen habitually begin the day by going to coffee-rooms in order to read the latest news. I have often seen shoe-blacks and persons of that class club together to purchase a farthing newspaper.' Fifty years later, this news-hungry literate working class... had begun to turn to political radicalism nurtured on Tom Paine: 'Our peasantry now read the Rights of Man on mountains and moorside and by the wayside.' The close connection between literacy and radicalism is brought out very clearly in an apprehensive letter from Dr. Currie of Liverpool in 1792. 'The cause why Paine takes so much in Scotland is simply because the bodies can all read. Among the manufacturers of Manchester and Birmingham, not one in a hundred of whom know their alphabet, Paine has hitherto done little harm, though I am told he now begins to operate.' In the words of Professor Plumb, 'the terrible spectre of a literate, politically minded, working class began to stalk the land'. Thus the French Revolution, like the English Revolution before it, reinforced the suspicion of the propertied classes towards the

education of the poor, and by 1800 we find the bishop of Rochester denouncing both Sunday Schools and Charity Schools as ‘schools of Jacobinical rebellion.’

“Moral revulsion at the arrogance, complacency and cruelty that lie behind these notions of social control via ignorance should not blind one to the fact that they contain a basic truth: literate people are far harder to govern and to exploit than illiterate, for the simple reason that it is extremely difficult to make sure that they never develop a taste for subversive literature....”

Therefore, Stone produced historical proof of the desire of “elites” to control others by withholding literacy, and he had produced concrete proof of this desire as late as 1803.

1969 La methode naturelle, I. L'apprentissage de la langue, by Celestin Freinet, published by Delachaux & Niestle, Neuchatel, Switzerland, under the auspices of the Institut J. J. Rousseau in Geneva. This exceedingly boring and useless book has been discussed previously. Some other books containing Freinet’s exceedingly boring but highly ballyhooed writings were published by Delachaux & Niestle, Neuchatel, Switzerland, and some were published by other companies. As mentioned previously, Celestin Freinet’s most interesting publisher was probably the Francois Maspero company in Paris, because it also published a massive list of books by Communist authors from all over the world. Elise Freinet, most probably Celestin Freinet’s wife, wrote Naissance d’une pedagogie populaire in 1949. It was being published in 1978 by that Francois Maspero company, which also published La Sante mentale de l’enfant by Celestin Freinet. A 1978 copy of the latter book, published after Celestin Freinet’s death, has a foreword by Elise Freinet. In her foreword, she said:

“The health of the child was the fundamental end of the change in teaching to which [Freinet] was consecrated since 1923.”

She said it had been the theme proposed by Freinet at the 16th Congress of the Modern School in Avignon in 1960.

1970’s? “A Psycholinguistic Model of Reading,” by P. David Pearson, Language Arts Magazine.

1970’s? “The Psycholinguistic Guessing Game,” by Duane R. Tovey, Language Arts Magazine.

1970’s? Printing in the Americas by John Clyde Oswald. Information on the products of the first Mexican press is given. On page 529, Oswald lists a 1544 edition of Doctrina Cristiana, crediting Juan Zumarraga as the author, and stating the 1544 copy is in the New York Public Library, along with Tripartito by Jean Gerson (“Sr. Juan Gerson”). Oswald stated that Doctrina is the first complete volume published in the Western World (presumably because the Mexican ABC, mentioned elsewhere, was begun in Spain). Oswald said Tripartito contains a picture, “Adoration of the Virgin,” which makes it the first American illustrated book.

1970 The Encyclopedie in Eighteenth-Century England and Other Studies, by John Lough, Professor of French at the University of Durham, Oriel Press, Ltd., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England. This is an excellent source on the Encyclopedie. It contains this comment:

“The Supplement to the 1801 edition of the Encyclopedia contains in the dedication to George III, ‘The well-known denunciation of the Encyclopedie and all its works: The French Encyclopedie has been accused and justly accused of having disseminated, far and wide, the sedition of Anarchy and Atheism. If the Encyclopedia Britannica shall, in any degree, counteract the tendencies of that pestiferous work, even these two volumes will not be wholly unworthy of your Majesty’s patronage.’”

1970 "The Functional Organization of the Brain," by A. R. Luria, Scientific American, 1970, 222, 3.66-78. Reportedly said many spelling errors occurred when subjects were forced to spell with their mouths open. This experiment confirming the close tie between sound and spelling was reported, astonishingly, in Frank Smith's Psycholinguistics and Reading, page 130. According to Leong's article (cited under date of 1971 here) Luria wrote in his Higher Cortical Functions of Man (BasicBooks: 1966). The different bases for writing in different languages must entail a different cortical organization. Leong cited that remark in connection with the observed differences in aphasics reading Kana vs. Kangi, Japanese characters.

1970 Programmed Illiteracy in Our Schools, by Mary Johnson, Clarity Books, Winnipeg, Canada. Concerns the late Mrs. Johnson's long battle with the education "establishment" on mis-instruction in reading, and her oral reading tests of Canadian children, proving the existence of terrible disabilities. The behaviour of the education "establishment" to Mrs. Johnson, as recounted in this book, is shocking.

1970, 1973 A La Decouverte de la Mathematique et Les Reglettes Cuisinaire, Book I (1970) and A La Decouverte de la Mathematique et Les Reglettes Cuisinaire, Book II (1973), by Louis Jeronnez and Isabelle Lejeune, teachers in Waterloo, Belgium, published by Editions Calozet, 40, Rue des Chartreux, Brussels.

Those Belgian texts for the use of Cuisinaire rods were far superior to, and very different from, the texts published by the Cuisinaire Company of America (which was unconnected to the Calozet company). Yet, so far as I know, the fantastic success of the Belgian texts are as unknown to most teachers today, either in Europe or America, as the fantastic results of the original Colburn text, Intellectual Arithmetic, Upon the Inductive Method of Instruction, which is discussed in this Appendix E under date of 1821. See the Colburn entry for further information on the 1970, 1973 Belgian materials.

Early 1970's - Letterstad (with a "Letter Village,") by Dr. H. J. Kooreman, The Netherlands. A multisensory synthetic phonics program to teach beginning reading in Dutch, adapted from programs Dr. Kooreman saw while in Russia. Dr. Kooreman was with Pedagogisch Centrum, Enshede, in The Netherlands in 1977.

1971 Barbarians, Christians and Muslims, The Cambridge Introduction to History, by Trevor Cairns. Copyright 1971 by Cambridge University Press. Published in 1975 by Lerner Publications Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Written and attractively illustrated for high school students, this is one in a series of books giving an "introduction to history." It is extremely interesting for adults as well, because of its simple and wonderfully organized presentation of factual material. Of particular interest in this volume is the map on page 49 showing the widespread monasteries on the European continent founded by Irish monks by the end of the seventh century, and the map on page 61 showing the monasteries founded by English monks on the European continent during the eighth century. The enormous influence of these sixth-to-tenth century Irish and English "insular" monks on European culture is only recently beginning to be acknowledged.

1971 Literacy and Society, Victor E. Neuberg. This is listed in the Library of Congress catalog under BL 2765.G7 N48 but my request for it was returned with the note, "Not on Shelf." Since Neuberg wrote The Penny Histories in 1968, Oxford University Press, a delightful and useful study of chapbooks and their era, this book of his is probably also of real value. He wrote another book which I have been unable to locate, Popular Education in 18th Century England, which should also be of interest.

1971 Encyclopedia of Education, Macmillan, New York. Biography on E. L. Thorndike by Geraldine Joncich Clifford. She also wrote his biography in a book published under the title, *The Sane Positivist*, 1968.

1971 The English Primers (1529-1545), by Charles C. Butterworth, Octagon Books, New York. This is extremely worth while, the primers being, of course, devotional books, not school books, comparable to the present Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. See also the 1937 entry on an article by Edwyn Birchenough, "The Prymer in English," in *The Library*, Series IV, Vol. XVIII, page 177 and following, London.

1971 "Selective Impairment of Phonetic and Non-Phonetic Transcription of Words in Japanese Aphasic Patients: Kana vs. Kanji in Visual Recognition and Writing," by S. Sasanuma and O. Fujimura. Cortex, pages 1-18. Cited in C. K. Leong's article in Dina Feitelson's Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Reading and Reading Research, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1978. The Japanese article provides concrete proof of the existence of two opposite and different kinds of reading, which utilize different areas of the brain, although it did not concern alphabetic print.

1971 "The Hornbook, An Invitation to Learning," by Ellen Schaffer, The Horn Book Magazine, February, 1971.

1972 Bride of the Revolution, Krupskaya and Lenin, by Robert H. McNeal. The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, Michigan. This is an excellent (and very interesting!) biography. Lenin's wife, Krupskaya, concerned herself with education in the Soviet Union, and idolized John Dewey. She had a huge private collection of books and wrote herself a vast number of dull materials. The Library of Congress catalog listed a very great number of her publications. This fascinating biography also mentions several library "sweeps" instigated in the Soviet Union in the 1920's by Krupskaya, "purifying" their content. However, one "sweep" was too enthusiastic, since it removed the literary works of one of Krupskaya's heroes, Tolstoy.

1972 (till after 1980): A History of Book Publishing in the United States, by John Tebbel (1912- ). Volume 1 published in 1972: The Creation of an Industry, 1630-1865. Volume 2 published in 1975: The Expansion of an Industry, 1865-1919. Volume 3. The Golden Age Between Two Wars, 1920-1940. Volume 4 published sometime after 1980: The Great Change, 1940-1980. Published by R. R. Bowker, New York. This remarkable and praiseworthy material did not become known to me until after the completion of my book and most of its appendices. I have, however, now incorporated some of the most obviously helpful material into my book and appendices, and can only suggest that interested readers check Tebbel's volumes for further information.

1973 and later - The Reading Informer. Published by the Reading Reform Foundation from 1973 to about 1989. An unparalleled clearinghouse for information on reading instruction, and dedicated to restoring the teaching of true phonics to beginning reading. Originally published in Scottsdale, Arizona, with the last issues from Tacoma, Washington. These issues are not in most libraries (and possibly not in any libraries) and are very difficult to obtain today. Many years ago while I was enrolled in a graduate program in reading instruction, I had noticed this publication, then unknown to me, cited in an article by Dr. Patrick Groff, "The Topsy Turvy World of Sight-Words." Trying to find out how to locate this publication, I called the International Reading Association office in Newark, Delaware. The comment was made to me by some man there that I should not cite *The Reading Informer* in anything I prepared in my graduate work in reading instruction, as my instructor might not like it!

I started my research on beginning reading instruction in 1976, and in the intervening years until 1998, only one of the various books and articles I have written has ever appeared in print, and it was

published in the March, 1980, edition of *The Reading Informer*. That short paper was written in the fall of 1979, summarizing my 1979 book on my sabbatical research in America and Europe. In my sabbatical research, I had observed reading instruction in first grades and then gave oral reading tests to about 900 second graders in their own languages in America, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Austria, and France, using for my oral test a 144-word portion of a silent reading test from IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) in Sweden with their permission. I had the 144-word English portion translated into German, Dutch, Swedish, French and Icelandic by a commercial translating firm at my own expense. (I also tested the oral reading of sixth graders on a portion of a Bible Psalm in their own languages in the Netherlands and Sweden and virtually all read accurately and well.) My second-grade testing research had indicated that two different types of readers, or various mixtures of those types, are developed as a result of the degree of emphasis on either the “meaning” or “sound” approach in teaching first-grade reading. The “meaning” type reads with the conscious help of context, and so can never read automatically, while the “sound” type reads by the sound of print, not with the conscious use of context, and so can read automatically.

That paper was published in full in *The Reading Reformer* in March, 1980, but aroused no interest. I had also mailed it in the fall of 1979 to about 100 people, but almost the only two who ever replied were Dr. Rudolf Flesch, the author of *Why Johnny Can't Read* (1955) and *Why Johnny STILL Can't Read* (1981) and Dr. Charles C. Walcutt, co-author of the Lippincott reading series and an author of several books on the reading problem. Dr. Flesch was most supportive concerning my research, as well as my later library research, and tried to get my very imperfect 1979 book published (which he thought should be rewritten with the help of an editor). Dr. Flesch spoke himself to the president of Prentice, Hall, early in 1980, asking that they review my book, which they did, rejecting it, and it was indeed very badly written. Dr. Walcutt wrote me in November, 1979, that my research discovery as outlined in my brief paper, that opposite types of readers were developed by teaching beginning reading by “meaning” or by “sound,” was “of the highest importance.” Yet, by contrast, in January, 1980, Dr. Siegfried Engelmann, the author of the Distar phonic program, wrote that I had unnecessarily complicated matters by stating there are two different kinds of readers. When I called him by phone to discuss his letter, he told me that if I would send him my research results showing that there are two different types of readers, he would “shred” my research data.

Engelmann had apparently not heard at that time (nor had I) of Oskar Messmer's 1903 German research which had also shown the existence of two different types of readers of alphabetic print: the objective, who read by syllables, and the subjective, who read by whole words and context guessing. The knowledge that there are two different and opposite types of readers of alphabetic print was effectively dead by 1979, as demonstrated by Dr. Walcutt's and Dr. Engelmann's responses to my paper. This was despite Buswell's 1920's data, in which Buswell said that different paths were used in learning to read but wrongly implied the same goal was reached by both. This was even despite William Scott Gray's comments in his 1956 book, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, describing various “skills” used by “efficient” readers, which were lacking in inefficient readers. This was also despite Gray's quotation of Seegers in Belgium who clearly admitted that for beginners different kinds of reading result from using the “meaning” or “sound” approach. Yet Seegers also implied the differences were only stages of development. Anyway, I seriously question whether many people have ever carefully read Gray's “super-expert” book, although most other “experts” undoubtedly bought it at the time to put on their bookshelves, as it was undoubtedly ballyhooed in “education” magazines as of epochal importance.

In 1979, I wrote my paper announcing my research conclusion that there are two different types of readers, and it was published in *The Reading Informer* of the Reading Reform Foundation in March, 1980. At that time, I had not heard of Messmer's 1903 conclusions based on his research that readers are either the “objective” or the “subjective” type (none of the 1971 Japanese research or Japanese characters, dated earlier). I believe Messmer's conclusions had effectively been totally buried long before 1979 and

1980. However, since 1980, the awareness has been growing very gradually among phonics advocates of the fact that learning to read is not simply a question of efficient or inefficient teaching, but that there are two distinctly different types of readers developed by initial teaching methods.

The frightening reality is that the initial teaching method when used on alphabetical print determines the type of reader a child becomes, very possibly for life. The “meaning” method develops a subjective reader, who is permanently crippled by conscious context guessing, and who is unable to read at all unless he consciously concentrates on decoding the print. That leaves only part of his attention free to concentrate on the message, sharply lowering his “reading comprehension” and seriously interfering with his enjoyment from reading. The “sound” method when used on alphabetic print develops an objective reader, who is able to read as automatically as a computer can, with his whole attention left free to concentrate on the message, if he chooses to pay attention. The objective “automatic” reader can therefore enjoy his reading, without focusing consciously on decoding the print, just as a person who walks “automatically” can enjoy the scenery on his walk, without having to concentrate on where he puts his feet.

The current steamroller operation to put so-called “whole language” into schools all over the English-speaking world, from Australia to Great Britain, is breathtakingly vast, although the ludicrous impression being fostered is that it is a grass-roots development. The so-called “whole language” approach is being adopted mindlessly by a great many school administrators who are disturbingly ignorant of reading instruction history and who refuse to think or to investigate for themselves, apparently finding it less taxing to endorse someone else’s pre-packaged slogans. What is unforgivably vicious about that so-called “whole language” approach is that it promotes the teaching of beginning reading of alphabetic print by “meaning” instead of by “sound.” It therefore results in crippling defenseless little children, probably for life, by turning them into subjective readers. It drafts great numbers of little first-graders into the armies of helpless and unemployable functional illiterates that we already have. The fact that the “whole language” package has a lot of glittering truths in it (the promotion of real literature and composition writing, etc.) should be considered along with the fact that ALL good propaganda has always been inserted in a package that contains 98 per cent truth, and only 2% lies. The 2% lies are the propaganda itself.

1973 Teaching Reading in Early England, by W. J. Frank Davies, Pitman Publishing, London: 1973. This is an excellent source for information on practices until the seventeenth century.

1973, 1988 The New Illiterates by Samuel L. Blumenfeld, The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho: 1988, originally published by Arlington House, New Rochelle, New York, in 1973. This is a remarkable historical source. Among its topics are the founding of the International Reading Association by William Scott Gray and others in the year after Rudolf Flesch’s 1955 Why Johnny Can’t Read became a run-away best-seller, and detailed information on the reading instruction war in Massachusetts in the early 1840’s.

1973 Practical Guide to Functional Literacy, UNESCO, Paris, 1973. Promotes the “meaning” approach, which is guaranteed to produce functional illiteracy (See pages 104-106 and 142-143). The title is therefore Orwellian.

1973 Comparative Reading, John Downing, Editor, The Macmillan Company, New York. Chapters were written by people from various countries. In particular, see the chapters by Franz Biglmaier, Germany; D. B. Elkonin, USSR, and Berta Perelstein de Braslavsky, Argentina. John Downing and Faith Graham had been the authors of The Downing Readers published by Initial Teaching Publishing Co., Ltd., London, in 1964. Despite the “sound” nature of ITA print, Downing did not endorse sounding-and-blending synthetic phonics.



1973 The A B C Books of the Pennsylvania Germans, by Walter Klinefelter, contained in the volume entitled Publications of the Pennsylvania German Society, Volume VII, published by The Pennsylvania German Society, Breinigsville, Pennsylvania: 1973. This is a superb piece of work.

1973 The Age of Arthur, A History of the British Isles from 350 to 650, by John Morris, Senior Lecturer in Ancient History, University College, London; initiated the journal Past and Present in 1952 and was its first editor. Published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York; Weidenfeld & Nicholson, Ltd., London, England.

This painstakingly researched book is of enormous value and is unparalleled. (Morris's heavily researched conclusions on this period should be contrasted to the opinionated, unsubstantiated and invalid comments of Marrou concerning the same period.) Morris extensively commented on the founding of European monasteries by Irish and English monks, and on their effect on European culture. Some of Morris's comments on educational facilities of the period have been quoted elsewhere in this history, as well as some of his more generalized remarks on the period.

The methods used by the cultured Irish and English monks in the seventh and eighth centuries in the teaching of beginning reading must have become the standard methods on the European continent in later years, because of the massive influence of the Irish and English continental monastic foundations on subsequent European culture.

1973 John Newbery and his Successors, 1740-1814, by S. Roscoe, Five Owls Press Ltd., Wormley, England. This is very valuable concerning the children's textbooks and storybooks published by the important publisher, Newbery, and by his successors.

1973 Humanist Manifestos I and II, Edited by Paul Kurtz, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, New York. "Copyright 1973, Prometheus Books. Humanist Manifesto I first appeared in The New Humanist, May/June 1933 (Vol. VI, No. 3). Humanist Manifesto II first appeared in The Humanist, September/October 1973 (Vol. XXXIII, No. 5). Seventh Printing, 1979."

The following is meant to serve as a much-needed critique of a very small, but loosely organized, group which has announced in 1933 and 1973, in writings signed by its members, that it is intentionally and systematically attempting to alter society, which alteration includes, obviously, the education of society's children. The program that they outlined in these 1933 and 1973 signed writings has been successful to a disturbing degree, and it has achieved its great success despite the fact that the humanists' intentions and activities remain unknown to the vast majority of people. When individual humanists are confronted with charges that their loosely organized group has been acting intentionally to change society since at least 1933, they deny the charges as hysterical and demented, particularly since the members are not formally affiliated with each other. Let the reader judge for himself from the written content of the Manifestos of 1933 and 1973, to which so many influential people have signed their names, whether the charges are hysterical and demented.

An article, "Evolution, Secularism and the Attack on the Church," appeared in the Catholic Family News, January, 1995, John Vennari, Editor. M.P.O. Box 743, Niagara Falls, N. Y. 14302. It gave a quotation from a century ago which is very pertinent in considering the stated aims of the Humanist Manifestos of 1933 and 1973. Cardinal Pie of Poitiers said over a hundred years ago:

"Is not the strategy of the enemies of God there to teach us a lesson? They want to destroy the Faith in the hearts of individuals, it is true, but they direct still more vigorous efforts to the elimination of religion from social institutions."

This recalls the testimony of Orestes Brownson quoted earlier, concerning the aims of the secret society to which he belonged in 1829 and 1830. Its purpose was to destroy religion by mandating state education for all children, from which mandatory state education all religious teaching was to be deliberately removed.

Comments quoted below from the Humanist Manifestos of 1933 and 1973 make the following facts very clear. Many twentieth-century humanists aim to obliterate the Constitution and the sovereignty of the United States by burying our country under the dictatorial rule of a world government. They aim to promote mandatory socialism, and other philosophies which are abhorrent to the vast majority of Americans. Judging from their clearly stated aims, it would be difficult to find a more “un-American” group than such humanists. Yet, the primary goal of the twentieth century humanists is far more than an odious dictatorial world government and an odious social “control.” Their primary goal is identical to that of the nineteenth-century groups discussed by Cardinal Pie and Orestes Brownson. Their primary goal is to remove religion, and the influence of religion, from all social institutions. That obviously includes schools and therefore affects the teaching of reading.

One of the signers of the second Humanist Manifesto of 1973 was B. F. Skinner, the psychologist from Harvard. Not long after, Skinner wrote “Beyond Freedom and Dignity.” His thesis was that we can no longer afford either freedom or dignity, and that we must therefore submit to rule by a dictatorial “Big Brother” government which would manage mankind for its own good, whether “mankind” wished it or not. It is true that the two Humanist Manifestos imply (but not too strongly) that the “improvements” they promote should be adopted voluntarily. Yet Skinner’s book raises questions about how “voluntary” such improvements might actually be.

Some of the noteworthy “improvements” being proposed in the Manifestos are quoted below. However, in reading some of the idealistic prose that these Manifestos contain, it is well to keep in mind the overly cynical remark by J. P. Morgan, to the effect that every man has two reasons for doing anything: his good reason, and his real reason. It is also very worth while to remember the Biblical comment that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

Paul Kurtz wrote in the “Preface” to the 1973 edition:

“Humanism is a philosophical, religious, and moral point of view as old as human civilization itself. It has its roots in classical China, Greece, and Rome; it is expressed in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, in the scientific revolution, and in the twentieth century....

“Humanist Manifesto I.. did not and could not address itself to future problems and needs. In recognition of the pressing need for a new, more relevant statement, forty years later Humanist Manifesto II was drafted. This more extensive and comprehensive document addresses itself not only to the problems of religion and ethics, but to the pressing issues of civil liberties, equality, democracy, the survival of human-kind, world economic growth, population and ecological control, war and peace, and the building of a world community. If the starting point of humanism is the preservation and enhancement of all things human, then what more worthwhile goal than the realization of the human potentiality of each individual and of humanity as a whole? What more pressing need than to recognize in this critical age of modern science and technology that, if no deity will save us, we must save ourselves? It is only by assuming responsibility for the human condition and in marshaling the arts of intelligence that humankind can hope to deal with the emerging problems of the twenty-first century and beyond. If we are to succeed in this venture, must we not abandon the archaic dogmas and ideologies that inhibit creative explorations and solutions?”

Note the curious sequence of ideas. The world is plagued with problems, which is undeniably true. Therefore, “humankind” must “solve” the problems. Yet that non-entity, “humankind” has never done anything, ever. It is people (individual men and women with individually different and commonly conflicting ideas) who do things. The author then poses a non-existent problem: “humankind” cannot go about its work of “solving” problems until it gets rid of “archaic dogmas and ideologies” (religion), because religion is supposed to make it impossible for “humankind” to solve those problems. Actually, what is truly impossible is the illogical stew of ideas in the Manifesto. It continues:

“Humanist Manifesto II was first signed by 114 individuals of prominence and distinction. It has since been endorsed by countless numbers of human beings from all walks of life as a document for our time, committed to both human fulfillment and survival. It is truly worldwide in scope. It seeks to express the longings and aspirations of women as well as men and people of different ethnic and racial origins.

“We herein publish both manifestos as working papers, committed to the development of a humanist awareness and an ethical concern. They are presented in a spirit of on-going and cooperative inquiry. They are intended not as new dogmas or credos for an age of confusion, but as the expression of a quest for values and goals that we can work for and that can help us to take new directions. Humanists are committed to building a world that is significant, not only for the individual’s quest for meaning, but for the whole of humankind. Paul Kurtz.”

That was from the 1973 preface, which was followed by a copy of the 1933 Manifesto. Item “Thirteenth” from the 1933 Humanist Manifesto I stated:

“Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.”

Note the use in 1933 of the word, “control,” which I have underlined in the above, and no reference to the obviously contrary wishes of the people in 1933 who were members of those “religious institutions” and who would be subject to such “control.” The anti-religious 1933 statement had a baldly stated purpose. That purpose was to interfere with and to control the behavior of other people. That is certainly in accord with the aims of Brownson’s 1829 and 1830 secret society. The similarity includes the fact that the 1933 statement was made by a tiny, tiny group of people concerning a huge group of other people, just as in 1829 and 1830. The tiny 1933 group wished to impose its will on a vast and unwilling majority, which was also the aim of the 1829 and 1830 secret group.

The Preface to the 1973 Manifesto stated:

“As in 1933, humanists still believe that traditional theism, especially faith in the prayer-hearing God, assumed to love and care for persons, to hear and understand their prayers, and to be able to do something about them, is an unproved and outmoded faith. Salvationism, based on mere affirmation, still appears as harmful, diverting people with false hopes of heaven hereafter. Reasonable minds look to other means for survival.

“Those who sign Humanist Manifesto II disclaim that they are setting forth a binding credo; their individual views would be stated in widely varying ways. The statement is, however, reaching for vision in a time that needs direction. It is social analysis in an effort at consensus.

New statements should be developed to supersede this, but for today it is our conviction that humanism offers an alternative that can serve present-day needs and guide humankind toward the future. Paul Kurtz. Edwin H. Wilson.”

Room for disagreement on certain points, therefore, is possible for the 1973 signers, but not, apparently, on the basic theme of militant atheism.

These comments immediately followed the “Preface:”

“We affirm a set of common principles that can serve as a basis for united action - positive principles relevant to the present human condition. They are a design for a secular society on a planetary scale.

“For these reasons, we submit this new Humanist Manifesto for the future of humankind; for us, it is a vision of hope, a direction for satisfying survival.”

The arrogance of this tiny group of atheists is breathtaking. Unasked by anyone except themselves, they propose “a design for a secular society on a planetary scale.” Not content with imposing their warped ideas only on the United States and its mere two hundred and a half millions or so of people, they intend to impose these ideas on the billions of people inhabiting the entire planet. Yet their atheistic ideas conflict with the convictions held all through human history by the mass of mankind, and they conflict with the convictions held by the mass of mankind today. Nevertheless, without any authority whatsoever, they intend to force their will on the whole of mankind.

In 1973, when the second Manifesto was adopted, Father Schwartz was founding innumerable homes in Korea for abandoned children, with great hardship to himself. Missionaries in Africa, with great hardships to themselves, were working to ameliorate the terrible suffering caused there by famine and war. That was more than a decade before the news of the African horrors finally reached our television screens. The atheistic signers of this 1973 word-stuffed declaration stated they rejected all religion, such as that of missionaries like Father Schwartz, because of their atheistic desire to serve “humankind.” Yet, how many of those atheists were actually serving individual, suffering real people on the real face of the earth, as the religious groups were doing at that precise time? I suspect Zero Per Cent of the signers of the Humanist Manifesto II ever left their convenient surroundings to serve anyone, anywhere, particularly without pay. The truth is that the one theme underlying this 1973 Humanist material, like the one theme underlying the 1933 material, is the burning hatred of religion. It is clear that the theme is not the burning desire to serve some meaningless entity labeled, “humankind.” Anyway, as Bishop Sheen once said (paraphrased), a lot of people who love “mankind” in the general have a great deal of trouble loving it in the particular. Yet missionaries like Father Schwartz (like our good Lord himself) love humanity in the particular, despite all its warts and its maddening and almost infinitely diverse human failings.

Under the heading, “Religion,” the 1973 document stated:

“...No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.

“Second: Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from rectifying social injustices. Modern science discredits such historic concepts as the ‘ghost in the machine’ and the ‘separable soul.’”

Of course, “modern science,” humanism’s religion, does no such thing. However, like the characters in Alice’s Wonderland, humanists can say an uncertain thing in such a certain way.

The 1973 material continued:

“Rather, science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces. As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context.”

Any lingering credibility the “humanists” may have retained disappears under the weight of that last wordy, seemingly scholarly, statement. If they had any competent scientific background, the authors of that statement must have known that evolution lacks any objective scientific confirmation, and that there has not been a single empirical discovery to confirm the theory of evolution since Darwin first proposed it in 1859. The fact that empirical evidence in favor of the theory is lacking, while empirical evidence refuting the theory continues to turn up in vast quantities, is made very clear by Dr. Michael Denton’s highly scientific book, *Evolution, A Theory in Crisis*. The reason that such scientific evidence continues to be ignored by so many “scientists” and by the humanists is a philosophical one, not a scientific one, as is made clear by a remark by Dr. D. N. S. Watson quoted in the Catholic Family News article mentioned earlier:

“The theory of evolution is universally accepted not because it can be proven true, but because the only alternative is special creation (by God) which is clearly incredible.”

Therefore, the humanists’ claim that it is “science” which supports their theory of evolution is flatly wrong. What supports it is their wilful and militant atheism.

Although real scientific evidence is often ignored, procedures or ideas which are wrongly labeled as “scientific” are sometimes used to support such fondly held opinions as that concerning “evolution.” Some such examples are the procedures used to date material. Such procedures are notoriously unreliable, and yet they are often given solemn credence in philosophically loaded, pseudo-scientific articles. In such writings, we continue to hear about such “scientific” procedures as Carbon 14 and Radioactive Dating. This same Catholic Family News article referred to some examples showing the unreliability of such methods. One example was taken from a Science magazine article. It told of Carbon 14 dating being used on the shells of snails which were still alive, but the methods dated those shells to 26,000 years old. Another example was from the geographic periodical, *Antarctic*. A newly killed seal, tested by Carbon 14 methods, was given an age of 1,300 years. A final reference (although the source was not given) was to some volcanic rocks formed in the sea near Hawaii only 200 years ago. Dated by the Potassium-Argon method, they were supposed to be up to 22 million years old, and some other volcanic rocks in Hawaii, known to have been formed in 1803, were supposed to be 160 million to 3 billion years old.

The Catholic Family News article commented further that no new genes are ever created in breeding (micro evolution) but the opposite occurs: genes are lost. Yet macro evolution presumes that new genes are created, despite the fact that laboratory experiments, such as on fruit flies, have never produced a single new gene. Therefore, macro-evolution, which is evolution in the sense Darwin proposed, and which presupposes the creation of new genes, unlike micro-evolution (animal breeding), is clearly an untenable theory. The humanists’ majestic affirmation of faith in “evolution,” because of supposed scientific “proof,” is totally unsupportable.

Manifesto II continued:

“There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body...”

The use of the word, “credible,” should be carefully noted. It only means that humanists automatically discount any testimony that comes from religious sources, even though that religious testimony is vast and deep.

The following was part of the material under the heading, “The Individual,” but its insertion was quite predictable. As butter is commonly paired with bread, sexual licentiousness has commonly been paired with atheism all through history.

“In the area of sexuality, we believe that intolerant attitudes, often cultivated by orthodox religions and puritanical cultures, unduly repress sexual conduct. The right to birth control, abortion, and divorce should be recognized. While we do not approve of exploitive, denigrating forms of sexual expression, neither do we wish to prohibit, by laws or social sanction, sexual behavior between consenting adults. The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered ‘evil.’ Without countenancing mindless permissiveness or unbridled promiscuity, a civilized society should be a tolerant one. Short of harming others or compelling them to do likewise, individuals should be permitted to express their sexual proclivities and pursue their lifestyles as they desire...”

This is rationally inconsistent. On what grounds do they deplore “mindless permissiveness or unbridled promiscuity,” since they do not deplore other aberrant sexual behavior, as religion does? By their own reasoning, aberrant sexual behavior, by itself, cannot be “wrong,” as claimed by religion, if such behavior is between “consenting adults.” Therefore, the AIDS bathhouses which had “mindless permissiveness” and “unbridled promiscuity” should have been perfectly acceptable, according to the ethical guidelines of the humanists.

The following was one of the points which appeared under the 1973 heading, “Democratic Society:”

“The separation of church and state and the separation of ideology and state are imperatives. The state should encourage maximum freedom for different moral, political, religious, and social values in society. It should not favor any particular religious bodies through the use of public monies, nor espouse a single ideology and function....”

One of the items under “World Community” in the 1973 Manifesto was the following:

“We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds. We have reached a turning point in human history where the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to move toward the building of a world community.... Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government....”

“The problems of economic growth and development can no longer be resolved by one nation alone; they are worldwide in scope. It is the moral obligation of the developed nations to provide - through an international authority that safeguards human rights - massive technical, agricultural, medical, and economic assistance, including birth control techniques, to the developing portions of the globe....”

Since one of the signers of the 1973 Manifesto was B. F. Skinner, who wrote the appalling book, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, claiming that we can no longer afford either freedom or dignity in the future but must submit to control by “experts,” it is reasonable to doubt whether “human rights” would be “safeguarded,” as this last paragraph recommends. Skinner’s book certainly puts all the wordy idealism of the Humanist Manifesto II into clearer focus, since the worldwide aims of the Manifesto obviously might be used as an excuse for justifying control of society, worldwide, by Big Brother.

However, given a (happily) theoretical choice between a rule by Big Brother, or a rule by even the most backwoods, under-educated clergyman, I suspect most people would vote for that clergyman. Such a vote would certainly be the wiser choice because, unlike Big Brother, that backwoods clergyman would have the Bible to use as his guide for decisions, instead of these Humanist Manifestos.

One of the most disturbing of the 1973 paragraphs, however, is the following (quoted earlier):

“We deplore the division of humankind on nationalistic grounds. We have reached a turning point in human history where the best option is to transcend the limits of national sovereignty and to move toward the building of a world community.... Thus we look to the development of a system of world law and a world order based upon transnational federal government....”

Anyone who endorses the last underlined portion has obviously disqualified himself for the United States Congress or for the Presidency, because both offices require solemn oaths in which an elected person must swear to uphold and DEFEND the United States Constitution. How can anyone who is looking for “the development of a system of world law” swear to uphold and DEFEND the United States Constitution? Such people have also disqualified themselves for service in the United States military, because their allegiance is clearly NOT to the United States but to a proposed “transnational federal government.” We need to have it spelled out, by an act of Congress, that anyone who chooses to “uphold and defend” the Humanist Manifesto will be disqualified from serving anywhere in the United States Government or in the United States military forces, or in agencies associated with them, because of the “clear and present danger” that such persons may perform seditious acts. Can you imagine George Washington permitting such people to serve in HIS army?

1974 The Victorian Country Child, by Pamela Horn, The Roundwood Press, Kington, England, now published by Sutton Publishing, Gloucestershire. This is a remarkably fine source for factual historical material about education and children in nineteenth century Great Britain.

1974 The Hisperica Famina: I. The A-Text, translated by Michael W. Herren, Associate Professor of Humanities and Classics, Atkinson College, York University, Toronto, published by Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1974. This is a book using a great number of rare Latin words and is presumed to have been used as a student text in Latin in Irish lay schools about 650 A. D., very much in the manner of a glossary. Yet it is a fascinating window on the past since the text concerns many of the routines and daily activities of lay students who were being schooled according to the ancient Druidic tradition.

1974 Insular Latin Studies, Michael W. Herren, Editor, Toronto. This collection which I have not seen includes a paper by John Contreni on the ninth century. I was told that paper might be pertinent to this history.

1974 Ot Asbukilvana Fedorovado Sovremennaug Bukvaria (Russian Primers, 1574-1974), by V. P. Bogdanov. This very large and attractive, heavily illustrated book of 138 pages, covered in white leatherette, has been available at the Library of Congress, untranslated so far as I know and unacknowledged by reading “experts,” for more than twenty years. Its call number about 1980 was Z 1033 H 8073, 1974. It is a history in Russian of beginning reading books in the Soviet Union over the last four centuries. I had small portions translated at my own expense about 1980. Pages from their primers from the 1920’s suggest that a lot of phonics was used, despite some sight-words, and despite the Soviet report that phonics only returned to beginning reading in the Soviet Union in 1932. That report appears in the Great Soviet Encyclopedia listed below.

1974 Great Soviet Encyclopedia, The Macmillan Company, New York. The following appeared in the article, "Primer," on page 423 of Volume 4:

"The first Soviet primers, compiled according to the so-called whole-words method, were replaced in 1932 by primers in which the analytic-synthetic sound method was restored...."

The article was written by P. O. Afanas'ev and N. A. Kostin. However, see the above entry which suggests that phonics had also been used, with some sight-word approaches, before 1932. Also, see later under 1983, in the entry for the article, "But Can Juanito Really Read?" Gertrude Hildreth's comment concerning a 1930 Soviet primer that she saw in which the words had been divided between syllables. That is a clear indication that a "sound," and not a "meaning," method. was being employed in the teaching of that 1930 primer. It would appear that what the Great Soviet Encyclopedia called the "whole-words method" is what we would call a modified but truly phonic approach.

1974 Teaching Reading, A Phonic/Linguistic Approach to Developmental Reading, by Charles Child Walcutt, Joan Lamport, and Glenn McCracken, with Robert Dykstra, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York. In addition to contemporary information, this text reproduces material from the reading controversy in Massachusetts in the 1840's. Walcutt and McCracken also wrote Lippincott's Basic Reading 1963 phonic series, and later revisions, but Dr. Walcutt endorsed only analytic, not synthetic, phonics. Dr. Dykstra, who had worked on the 1967 and 1968 USOE studies listed above, endorsed the use of "sound" in beginning reading in his chapter on research and evaluation in this book.

1974 Methode Boscher de "La Journee des Tout Petits" reprinted by Oberthus at Rennes, 1974, by M. Boscher, V. Boscher, J. Chapron, and M. J. Carre. A note in this child's primer, which I bought in Brussels in 1977, said it had received the Bronze Medal at the Brussels International Exposition in 1958, apparently for excellence as a primer. Mathurin Boscher (1875-1915), wrote Methode Boscher, a 1946 copy of which is listed in the Library of Congress catalog as published by Loudeac, France. It was not available when I requested it in 1980. As mentioned elsewhere in this history, Elise Freinet referred to the apparent contempt in which the French sight-word "expert," Celestin Freinet, held the Boscher phonics charts in 1926.

1975 The British Library General Catalog, London, England. This guide to the holdings in the British Library is available in the Library of Congress, and presumably in other large libraries. It is possible to purchase photocopies of certain materials by mail, which I have done in the case of portions of one nineteenth century book.

1975 The Mystery of the Mind, A Critical Study of Consciousness and the Human Brain, by Wilder Penfield, M. D., Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey. This enormously important book by a renowned neurosurgeon discussed his conclusions concerning what he termed the body's automatic sensory motor mechanism, where all conditioned reflexes or learning is stored, and the higher brain mechanism, where consciousness resides.

On page 67 of her text, The Complete Handbook of Children's Reading Disabilities, Dr. Mosse quoted from another work by Dr. Wilder Penfield, "Engrams in the Human Brain, Mechanisms of Memory" (1968) which is very pertinent concerning the effects of teaching anything, including the skill of reading:

"Only those things to which a man paid attention are preserved in the record or added to the automatic mechanism. The sights and the sounds and the somatic sensations that he ignored are not preserved in any engram form."



Skills can be performed automatically, but, as Dr. Penfield pointed out, in order for the human brain to to acquire any skills, conscious attention must be focused on them during the act of learning (conditioning).

The act of reading is, of course, a conditioned reflex, and should be performed automatically after it has been properly formed. The automaticity of the act is demonstrated by the fact that a computer can be programmed to read printed text aloud with virtually perfect accuracy. Firstby software, capable of reading print aloud and available for less than \$50, can be used on inexpensive computers with almost the same degree of accuracy. However, there is something eerie about hearing your computer turn your typed work into human-sounding speech, with correct intonation at periods and commas, when you know there is almost nothing inside that computer to account for it except a little disk. The fact that computers can turn print into virtually perfect speech (by “sound”) should have made mincemeat out of the arguments for reading “psycholinguistically” (consciously, by “meaning”). Yet that fact apparently has been totally ignored by “reading experts.”

1975 How to Increase Reading Ability, by Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay, David McKay Company, Inc., New York. Original edition in 1940, and revised editions to 1975 (and possibly later). Harris was the principal author of the Macmillan readers in the version which apparently followed Gates’ 1930 version. The series by Harris used a “meaning” approach and was in use for many years. This book, used in teacher training classes, has a strong bias toward the “meaning” approach. See also Betts’ teacher-training book, listed above under 1946 in its original edition. Betts was also a famous “expert,” who endorsed “meaning” in beginning reading and who was the principal author of a “meaning”-approach reading series.

1975 Comprehension and Learning: A Conceptual Framework for Teachers, by Frank Smith. See the entry under 1978 for Smith’s later book, entitled Reading.

1975 Cobwebs to Catch Flies: Illustrated Books for the Nursery and Schoolroom, 1700-1900, by Joyce Irene Whalley, University of California Press, Berkeley, California.

1976 Comment Interesser l’Enfant a l’Ecole: La Notion des Centres d’Interet Chez Decroly, by Valdi Jose Bassan, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. “Centers of interest” were an important part of the “open classroom” movement of the 1970’s.

1976 The Origins and Development of the ABC Book in English from the Middle Ages Through the Nineteenth Century, By Susan Steinfir, Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh: 1976. Unpublished. Copyright 1976 by Susan Steinfir. All Rights Reserved. (I borrowed this material through inter-library loan. It is wryly amusing that this worthwhile material remained unpublished almost twenty years after it was completed, while Nila Banton Smith’s appallingly incorrect “history” is considered a standard reference work!)

1976 Biographical Dictionary of American Educators, Edited by John F. Ohles, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut. 3 volumes. This is an unparalleled source of information on people involved in education. It is based on the original work by that extraordinarily competent and presently unsung publisher, C. W. Bardeen of Syracuse, New York. Bardeen also published a remarkable journal on education, The School Bulletin, from the 1870’s until 1920. Bardeen republished a great number of books on education that had been published in English, up to about 1890. Yet Bardeen and his exceptional contributions have almost totally faded from “expert” literature on education.

1976 Latin Script and Letters, A. D. 400-900, Festschrift Presented to Ludwig Bieler on the Occasion of his 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Edited by John J. O'Meara and Bernd Naumann, Published by E. J. Brill, Leiden. This includes an article by Bernhard Bischoff, "Bannita: 1. Syllaba, 2. Littera." The article in German probably sheds some light on the sense in which "syllable" and "letter" were used in that period.

1976 Nu Laser Vi A, Borrmann Matthis Salminen Wigforss, A. W. Laromedel, Stockholm, Sweden. This is the highly phonic primer I saw in use in my visits to Swedish first grades in the fall of 1977. Its effect was weakened to a greater or lesser extent in some classes by the adoption of what was called LTG. That was an experience-chart approach to reading, where children copied sight words from "stories" that they composed jointly in class. Each child kept his sight words in his own file box, studying the alphabet from the sight words he had chosen from the class experience charts. This is obviously a shift away from "sound" toward "meaning" in beginning reading. Yet the heavily phonic text was still mandatory in all Swedish classes as of 1977.

The LTG method was reportedly greatly praised in teachers' journals at that time. Yet I heard it sharply criticized by several Swedish teachers, although some others used it. One who criticized it said the LTG method "was not good for teaching reading." Another said, "I do not like it at all. I do not use LTG."

I found, where it was in use, a typical profile appeared when comparing second-grade oral reading scores from LTG-emphasis classes to dominantly Nu Laser emphasis classes. The LTG-influenced second grades produced lower accuracy in oral reading, greater reversals, slower speed, and showed the effect on comprehension noted elsewhere: higher than one phonic class, but averaging lower than the two best phonics classes. That narrow band of reading comprehension scores associated with "meaning" emphasis programs demonstrates that the "meaning" method does control comprehension. The narrow band is a statistical function of the decreased accuracy, slower speed, and increase in reversals associated with "meaning" approaches. It therefore also proves that the decoding in the "meaning" emphasis programs cannot be automatic since decoding and conscious "comprehension" are involved in that demonstrable, statistical relationship. Yet the very wide band of "comprehension" scores that results from the "sound" emphasis programs demonstrates that the "sound" approach has no effect on conscious comprehension, either positive or negative. It therefore demonstrates that automaticity in decoding is possible with "sound" emphasis programs.

I tested five second-classes in Sweden: two in schools with some first-grade emphasis on LTG and three in schools with Nu Laser emphasis in first grade. However, all classes had to use Nu Laser to a very large extent, so all were highly phonic classes compared to American basal readers. See the table in Appendix A summarizing my research results.

While in Sweden, I was given the name of a woman to call to discuss the LTG method, but found, when I called, that she had gone to Austria to promote the method there. Yet there was obviously nothing at all "new" about that "meaning" method, including its fevered and enthusiastic promotion. The file-box approach for sight-words from the experience charts was, at that very time, being handled instead in England and elsewhere by individual notebooks each child kept to hold experience chart sight-words. I saw experience charts in wide use in French first grades in the fall of 1977, but they were usually used to teach heavy phonics. Experience charts date back at least as far as Colonel Parker's schools in Quincy, Massachusetts, after 1875, probably as far back as the infant schools in England in the 1820's, and possibly as far back as Robert Owen's infant school in New Lanark, Scotland, in the late eighteenth century. The hallmark of experience charts, of course, is the promotion of "meaning" to teach the reading of alphabetic print, although the French schools I saw managed to use experience charts with a phonic emphasis.

1977 "Teaching and Development," by Professor L. V. Zankov (concerned with curriculum reforms), Soviet Education, M. E. Sharpe, Inc., Vol. XIX, No. 4-6, February-March-April issue. The article discussed Soviet primary curriculum. In the Soviet Union, the teaching of reading (which was by "sound") was completed in the first grade, which children began at age seven. The journal, Soviet Education, contained extraordinarily complete reports on education in the Soviet Union.

1977 Comparison of the Oral Reading Strategies and Comprehension Patterns Developed by... First Grade and Third Grade Students... by Donna E. Norton, University of Wisconsin, Madison. The study's data showed that phonics-trained students made fewer regressions (looking backwards or re-reading) than "meaning"-trained sight-word students. The study specifically stated, "A synthetic-phonics approach developed small numbers of self-corrections." Of course, the study also implicitly confirmed that two distinctly different types of readers were developed: objective (phonic) and subjective (sight words).

Before 1978 - "Exploring the Relations Between Reading and Speech," by D. P. Shankweiler and I. Y. Liberman, in R. M. Knight's and D. J. Bakker's (Eds.) The Neuropsychology of Learning Disorders: Theoretical Approaches, University Park Press, Baltimore. There is no date given in C. K. Leong's reference to this paper in Leong's article in Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Reading and Reading Research, by Dina Feitelson, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware, 1978. Reference is made to a kind of voice print from another article by A. M. Liberman, "The Grammar of Speech and Language," Cognitive Psychology, 1 (1970) 301-323.

1978 La Sante mentale de l'enfant by Celestin Freinet, published by Francois Maspero after Celestin Freinet's death, with a foreword by Elise Freinet, in which she said:

"The health of the child was the fundamental end of the change in teaching to which [Freinet] was consecrated since 1923."

She said it had been the theme proposed by Freinet at the 16th Congress of the Modern School in Avignon in 1960. Other materials of Elise Freinet and Celestin Freinet are listed in this appendix and were discussed in Part 7 of this book.

1978 "Automatic Decoding, Its Role in Comprehension," by S. Jay Samuels, The Reading Informer, Scottsdale, Arizona, October, 1978. Also "Automatic Decoding and Reading Comprehension," Language Arts Magazine, (1978?), by S. Jay Samuels. The concept of automaticity in reading is not new, but was mentioned as long ago as James McKeen Cattell's early work, although Cattell was obviously referring to what he (wrongly) believed could be automaticity in reading whole alphabetic words by their whole appearance as units, with no reference to their letter sounds. (The reasons behind Cattell's error are discussed at length elsewhere.) In The Complete Handbook of Children's Reading Disorders, Volume 1 and Volume 2, by Hilde L. Mosse, M. D., Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York, New York, 1982, Dr. Mosse referred on p. 78, Volume I, pp. 470-471, Vol. II, and elsewhere, to the fact that automaticity is necessary if maximum reading comprehension can take place. That was also Samuel's point.

In my 1979 paper, published in The Reading Informer in March, 1980, I stated that two different types of readers were developed as a result of different beginning reading methods. In the paper, I also referred to Samuel's Language Arts article. The statistical profiles that resulted from comparing scores on my 1977-1978 test results had shown that children who had learned to read by "meaning" were dependent on the conscious "meaning" of context for word identification. They therefore were unable, by definition, to read automatically, since they were using consciousness for word identification. Yet children who learned by phonics were not dependent on context "meaning." They could read therefore automatically and so achieve maximum reading comprehension when they chose to pay attention.

1978 Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Reading and Reading Research, by Dina Feitelson, International Reading Association, Newark, Delaware. Article by Stella S. F. Liu, "Decoding and Comprehension in Reading Chinese," Article by C. K. Leong, "Learning to Read in English and Chinese: Some Psycholinguistic and Cognitive Considerations." Apparently with no knowledge of Suzzallo's material, the Liu article stated in principle the same ideas that Henry Suzzallo did in his 1913 article on reading in the Cyclopaedia of Education, in which Suzzallo used a triangle to show two different and opposite paths in reading. One kind of reading goes from print at the lower right-hand corner of the triangle directly to meaning at the top point, and only possibly goes on down to sound at the lower left-hand corner. This kind of reading is in contrast to that which goes from print at the lower right-hand corner directly to sound at the lower left-hand corner, and only then goes on to meaning at the top. In Messmer's 1903 terms, to which Suzzallo made no reference, the former is subjective reading which guesses meaning directly from the print, but the latter is objective reading which first reproduces the sound of the print and so does not need to guess its meaning. Concerning Leong's article, see the 1971 entry on Kana and Kanji print.

1978 Reading, by Frank Smith. Also see the 1975 entry on one of Smith's other books. He also wrote Psycholinguistics and Reading. Smith's widely ballyhooed theories on teaching beginning reading by "meaning" instead of by "sound" parallel Kenneth Goodman's extraordinarily ballyhooed ideas about teaching reading by what he called the "psycholinguistic guessing game." (See the 1967 entry on Goodman.)

The claim has been made that a rural teacher in New Zealand was the initial inventor and promoter of the current "whole language" approach, and an extraordinarily dull commercial movie was produced in the 1980's which was supposed to establish that she invented it because of her stickily gooey, purported concern for children's educational welfare. Yet it is Smith's and Goodman's so-called "theories" which underlie the current plague of "whole language" for first-graders. It is now in use world-wide in English-speaking countries because of the enormous publicity and promotion that has been given to it. It must be admitted, however, that Smith's and Goodman's recipes for teaching beginning reading would be valid if the intent were to destroy reading ability instead of to develop it.

Joyce Morris of England has stated that Frank Smith makes "extraordinary assertions unsupported by research evidence." Dr. Morris also said the following, as quoted elsewhere in this history:

"For, without any real evidence that Smith's and Goodman's ideas are effective in classroom practice generally, Liz Waterland's translation of their ideas into her own practice (Waterland, 1985) has found widespread acceptance among British teachers, teacher-trainers and LEA." (LEA is the Leicestershire, England, education authority.)

Waterland's secondary material is only one of the glut of books and magazine articles in English pouring from presses all over the world in support of "whole language" as a method to teach beginners to read. Yet, to use such a method to "teach" beginning readers is nothing less than academic child abuse. Considering the massive harm being done to little children by "whole language" gurus, and since legal action can be taken against persons who market harmful medicines and foods, cannot some appropriate legal action be taken against those most responsible for promoting "whole language" to teach beginning reading to defenseless little children?

1978 McGuffey and His Readers, by John H. Westerhoff III. Abington: 1978, Mott Media, Milford, Michigan: 1982. This has been discussed in this history.

1979 The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is another name for the Book of Hours which was the major part of the enormously used Latin primers before the Reformation in England. The Book of Hours alone, in Latin, was widely used all over Europe, and many beautifully illustrated ones have found

their way into museums. The Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary is still in print in English in the United States, and is available from Franciscan Herald Press, 1434 West 51st Street, Chicago, Illinois 60609 (10th printing: 1979).

1979 "Deafness and Reading- A New Approach," by Dr. R. Orin Cornett, Research Professor at Gallaudet College, Washington, D. C., and formerly Assistant U. S. Commissioner of Education and Director of the Division of Higher Education. Published in The Reading Informer of the Reading Reform Foundation, Scottsdale, Arizona, October, 1979. This was a copy of Cornett's talk given at the 1979 meeting of the Reading Reform Foundation held at Princeton, New Jersey, in the summer of 1979. Dr. Cornett discussed his invention, cued speech, which he had also reported in his article, "What Is Cued Speech?", Gallaudet Today, Winter/1974-75, Volume 5, Number 2. Cornett said that, while he was Director of the Division of Higher Education, he saw college reports from Gallaudet College. In one were two statements, "back to back":

"The average IQ of students at Gallaudet College (the world's only separate college specifically for deaf persons) is probably higher than that in any other institution of higher education in the world. The point, of course, is that deaf students have to be brilliant in order to reach college level."

Cornett said the second statement was:

"Eighty percent of the students at Gallaudet College never read for pleasure, and three fourths of the 20% who do were not born deaf."

He commented:

"It was the second statement that aroused my interest in deafness. I was horrified.... Reading is the only hope of the deaf for learning about the world and what is happening in it. The average reading level of 19-year olds in schools and programs for the deaf in the United States is about that of a nine-year-old hearing child. We fail the deaf in their area of greatest need. It was this shocking fact that caused me to begin learning about the problems of deaf persons and in 1965 to accept a position at Gallaudet College. I came to Gallaudet with the avowed intention of doing something about this problem."

Cornett did do something remarkable. He developed cued speech, by which people use eight handshapes in four places near the face to make lip reading absolutely clear - a visual form of phonics. The method has been extraordinarily successful with little deaf preschoolers, who can then learn to read with phonics. A little child born totally deaf in the most isolated part of Australia was able to acquire speech, incredibly with normal nuances and even the rising and lowering of tones, by the age of about three, just from observing her parents' use of Dr. Cornett's cued speech. (It seems obvious that the human brain is pre-programmed in some unknown way so that it can acquire speech. Otherwise, the child's instinctive use of musical tones would have been impossible.)

Cornett's point, of course, was that "sound" is the natural way to introduce children to speech, even totally deaf children, rather than "meaning" or sign language. Yet, some thirteen years after Cornett's talk, when a convention of educators of the deaf was being held in a Washington hotel, all the literature being handed out on a table outside the meeting rooms concerned the old methods. I saw nothing that concerned Dr. Cornett's remarkably successful method.

The deaf have been betrayed for a very great number of years. That betrayal appropriately started in the so-called Age of "Enlightenment" and its city of "light," Paris. The history of that betrayal, not surprisingly, eventually became intertwined with the history of the hideous French Revolution..

However, one point in Dr. Cornett's testimony is of particular interest concerning teaching reading to hearing children. He said that the deaf who learned by "meaning" instead of "sound" almost never read for pleasure. That fact destroys the usual argument for teaching reading to hearing children by "meaning" instead of "sound." That fallacious argument is that "meaning" approaches result in greater enjoyment in reading and a greater desire to read. See the comments under W. S. Gray's 1956 book, *The Teaching of Reading and Writing*, in which Gray said that Buswell had shown in 1922 that children who learned by "meaning" instead of "sound" enjoyed reading more.

1979 Education in Ancient and Medieval Ireland, by Fergal McGrath, S. J., Studies "Special Publications," Dublin, Ireland. This is an excellent reference work.

1980 Inside the Brain, by William H. Calvin, Ph. D., and George A. Ojemann, M. D., A Mentor Book, New American Library, Times Mirror, New York and Scarborough, Ontario.

This book, written for the layman, described on its cover as "An Enthralling Account of the Structure and Workings of the Human Brain," is far clearer and more usable than similar materials written for the layman. Much of its content is based on brain surgery performed on conscious patients, who could instantly report to surgeons the effects that resulted from the stimulation of various brain areas.

A very interesting diagram from a Scientific American article on brain research is reproduced in this book. It shows the areas in the brain that were activated while a subject was reading.

1980 The Leipzig Connection, by Lance J. Klass and Paolo Lionni, Heron Books, Portland, Oregon. This book is historically of great importance. It shows the influence on American education of the psychologists who had trained under the materialist psychologist Wilhelm Wundt in Germany, such as G. Stanley Hall, and James McKeen Cattell (and, very briefly, William James), and their students in America, such as John Dewey and E. L. Thorndike. Such influence was largely made possible after about 1900 by massive amounts of foundation money. The late Lance J. Klass told me in a letter some years ago that in his original book he had been critical of Cattell's interpretation of his sight-word experiments, but his remarks were changed in the rewriting of Klass's original book with Lionni, because of Lionni's interpretation.

1980 American Education - The National Experience - 1783 - 1876, by Lawrence A. Cremin. Harper & Row. This is an exceedingly useful and reliable reference work by a former president of Columbia Teachers College in New York. In this work, Cremin referred to the existence of the McGuffey myth, and his comments have been quoted in this history.

1980 and Before - The Laubach Literacy News. A Quarterly Publication of Laubach Literacy International. Syracuse, New York. Robert Laubach, President.

1980 American Book Publishing Record. Cumulative - 1876-1949, R. R. Bowker Co. (New York Public Library call number \*R-\*GDB 81-91. This material has been discussed in this history. For general research purposes on the teaching of reading, it is exceedingly awkward and of very little use, unless a specific title is already known. Under New York Public Library call number \*R-\*GBO 83-1779 appears Books in Series - 1876-1949, R. R. Bowker Co. On this material, I made the notation, "It did not list Harris's reading books [Appleton series] or the fact that Appleton had a reading series, but lots of other [notations] on Appleton." A 1977 book I saw was published by Jacques Cattell Press, R. R. Bowker & Co., New York and London, 1977, which was apparently by 1977 a subsidiary of Xerox. Jacques Cattell was J. McKeen Cattell's son, and presumably the founder of that press some time in the past. That fact

suggests that at some time in the past there was a possibility of influence from Cattell's associates on the Bowker company.

1981 An Education in Psychology, James McKeen Cattell's Journal and Letters from Germany and England, 1881-1888, Edited by Michael M. Sokal, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Although concerned almost completely with Cattell's early life and early associates, this nevertheless is an invaluable source for understanding the influence of Cattell and his associates on education in general. Sokal discusses Cattell's early reading experiments. Sokal's book is a remarkably scholarly and carefully researched work, and it has been invaluable to me in my own research.

1981 Why Johnny STILL Can't Read, The Scandal of Our Schools, by Rudolf Flesch. Harper & Row, (now Harper Collins), New York. Although Flesch's 1955 book had been a run-away best-seller, it was very difficult to obtain this excellent, carefully researched book in book stores in the year or so after it was first published. It was months before it was reviewed in The New York Times, and then negatively. I tried unsuccessfully to buy it in some book stores in New York, one in Philadelphia, one in Dallas, and one in Scottsdale, Arizona. I was told in one New York book store that they had requested it from the publisher some considerable time before but still had not received it. I read a report of a man who tried unsuccessfully to buy it on a trip coming from the West Coast towards mid-America. However, it is now easily obtainable in a relatively inexpensive paper-bound copy through Barnes & Noble, and so is Dr. Flesch's 1955 book.

1981 Gates-McKillop-Horowitz Reading Diagnostic Tests, Teachers College Press, Columbia University. This is the latest revision of materials which were originally prepared by Arthur Irving Gates. They are not useful materials for objective testing of reading ability, since the current norms were obtained on a population taught by "meaning, not "sound." However, one section contains part of the word lists for oral reading on which Gates tested thousands of students in 1923 and 1924. The current norms on that oral word test are not useful since they are based on median, and not averaged scores like the original materials, thus obscuring actual achievement. As indicated elsewhere, Gates' 1924 material, based on far more useful averaged scores, is available in a 1924 article in Teachers College Record. Those word lists and those averaged norms could be of great use to show the enormous drop in reading ability since 1924.

1981 The Death and Letters of Alice James, by Ruth Bernard Yeazell, University of California Press, Berkeley, California. This has been mentioned in this text.

1981 (1968) History of Psychology, by William S. Sahakian, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., Itasca, Illinois. This is an absolutely extraordinary achievement, and a one-of-a-kind work which nothing else known to me on the topic even begins to approach.

1981, 1985 Is Public Education Necessary? by Samuel L. Blumenfeld, The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho. This very important book traces the history of the highly successful and heavily organized activism for government schools in America from about 1820 to about 1840. The highly literate America of 1776-1830 had almost no true "government" schools before 1820, except for some in New York and Massachusetts. As has been demonstrated at length elsewhere in this history of reading, as soon as government-subsidized schools were installed here and in Great Britain, the "meaning" method to teach beginning reading replaced the "sound" method. The result was rampant functional illiteracy, although that fact has been buried. Functional illiteracy, as opposed to simple illiteracy, was a brand-new disease that had first surfaced in eighteenth-century France, when the "meaning" method to teach the reading of sound-bearing alphabetic print was invented, as has been discussed in this history. It is my contention that the cause of functional illiteracy is the establishment in beginning readers of the Kanji ("meaning") conditioned reflex in reading alphabetic print, instead of the proper Kana ("sound") conditioned reflex.

1981 “Irish Grammarians and the Continent in the Seventh Century,” by Louis Holtz, in H. B. Clarke and M. Brennan (eds.), Columbanus and Merovingian Monasticism, Oxford.

1981 Donat et La Tradition de l’Enseignement Grammatical, by Professor Louis Holtz, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, 1981. The “Donat” grammar and seventh century Latin grammars written by the Irish are discussed by Professor Louis Holtz in this book.

1981 On A Field of Red, by Anthony Cave Brown and Charles B. MacDonald, G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York. This is a fascinating and excellently researched account of Communist influence in the Western World since about 1917. On pages 467 to 470 of their text, they discuss the Soviet-sponsored “peace” rally in the Netherlands in 1932 at which Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, the grandson of the poet, Longfellow, and the journalist, Dana, was a scheduled speaker, as mentioned in Chapter 50 of this book. In 1932, Dana was a professor at Harvard, but in 1917, as a young man, Dana had been fired from Columbia University, along with James McKeen Cattell, for opposing the draft in war time.

1982 The Complete Handbook of Children’s Reading Disorders, Volume 1 and Volume 2, Hilde L. Mosse, M. D., Human Sciences Press, Inc., New York, New York. This is truly an expert work and of enormous value. Dr. Mosse endorsed phonics (“sound”) in teaching beginning reading, and rejected sight-words (“meaning”).

1982 When Hell Was in Session, by Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr., Traditional Press, Mobile, Alabama. Denton was a United States Senator in 1982, and had been a Naval pilot and flight leader when he was shot down and became a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. Denton’s imprisonment lasted from 1965 to 1973, during which long years he was usually in solitary confinement and was subjected to unspeakable tortures. It was under those intolerable conditions that the American prisoners in North Vietnam including Denton invented an efficient alphabetic tapping code with which to communicate, far simpler than the Morse code. That invention shows that new alphabetic “writing” systems, rivaling in efficiency the ancient Ogham and runic alphabets, can still be invented when the need calls for them and when clever men are able to meet that need.

1983 “But Can Juanito Really Read?”, by Tom Bethell, National Review, New York, New York, September 30, 1983 (pages 1196-1199). Since 1919, as Bethell documented in this article, almost the first item on the agenda for newly established governments in every country where Communists have taken over has been a massive literacy drive. It is unreasonable to assume that such governments would have given such drives so much time, money and manpower for sixty-six years (1917 to the date of Bethell’s 1983 article) unless such drives really worked, just as Communism has always “worked” according to the Communist standard of rigid control.

Bethell cited statements from commentators in free Western countries who doubted the claims Communist countries made for huge and almost-immediate successes in their literacy drives. The reason for the doubts of those commentators, as well as for Bethell’s questioning title, is that a key piece of information is missing from the discussion. Bethell and the commentators he cited who doubted the Communist claims are having the same problem in the definition for “reading” that was cited above in the definition for “effective.” “Effective” certainly has a different definition in the case of Communism, but so does “reading.”

Almost no one in the free Western World knows that there is not just one kind of “reading,” but that there are two diametrically opposed kinds (or mixtures of those kinds). The only kind of reading that works effectively for alphabetic print is reading by “sound.” Reading by “meaning” either does not work at all for alphabetic print or works badly.



Yet the Communists obviously knew for a long time that there are two kinds of reading (or mixtures of those kinds), and they knew it since some unknown time before 1932. The Soviet Encyclopedia clearly stated that in that year the Soviet Union threw out any use of the sight-word “meaning” method and installed the phonic “sound” method. That they had only used the “meaning” method in a diluted “sound” form is suggested by illustrations of Soviet primer pages from the 1920’s in *Ot Asbukilvana...* [Russian Primers, 1574-1974], and in Gertrude Hildreth’s description of a 1930 Russian primer she saw which was divided into syllables, a clear “sound” approach. She referred to that 1930 primer in her article on the teaching of reading in Russia, entitled, “How Russian Children Learn to Read,” *The Reading Teacher*, December, 1959.

In contrast to the Soviets, the Free World has been using the “meaning” method, or badly working mixtures of “meaning” and “sound,” in the teaching of alphabetic print almost uniformly ever since about 1930, under the influence of its highly vocal reading “experts.” That was the same time-frame in which the Soviets did the precise opposite: they outlawed “meaning” and mandated the use of “sound.”

Despite huge inputs of teacher time and taxpayer money in the free Western World, the wrong “meaning”-method in the teaching of alphabetic print has resulted in high illiteracy rates and in large numbers of reading disabilities. Therefore, because of their knowledge of widespread reading disabilities in the Western World and because of their false, unconscious assumption that there is only one kind of reading, people in the free Western World have doubted the huge claims for almost immediate success in the literacy drives in newly Communist countries. Their doubts are probably wrong, because there is not just one kind of reading, but two kinds: by “meaning,” or by “sound,” and the Communist world has been teaching the right way: by “sound.” In total contrast to teaching reading by “meaning,” teaching reading by “sound” is astonishingly easy and astonishingly quick, so there is no reason at all to doubt the claims made by newly Communist countries that they have almost wiped out illiteracy.

Bethell’s article was summarized on the table-of-contents page 1171 as follows: “New Communist regimes always begin by eliminating a) illiteracy and b) unauthorized printed matter...”

Bethell’s article included these remarks:

“A big reported increase in the national literacy rate is one of the absolutely predictable aftermaths of all Communist revolutions....

“Always there is this business about literacy rates, and for a long time it puzzled me. The Communists would arrive and wreak their predictable havoc on the economy and in society generally, life would become progressively more militarized; and yet, in the midst of all this wreckage, slogans, queues, billboards, and militarization, there would be the claim, endlessly repeated: More people can read and write - the one undeniable success of the revolution....

“‘The [Nicaragua] revolution’s most significant accomplishment is a campaign to teach reading and writing that has gained widespread international regard,’ claimed Warren Hoge in the *New York Times* two years ago.... The claim of 12 per cent illiteracy had already been loudly triumphed by TASS, the Soviet news agency, and by Xinhua, the shrill Peking radio....

“‘The Soviet Union claims a 99.7 per cent literacy rate. ‘Observers outside Russia are agreed that these figures are a fraud,’ says Robert Pattison in his 1982 book, *On Literacy...*”

I have not seen Pattison’s book, but, since virtually everyone in The Soviet Union attends school for at least a few years, I find no difficulty whatever in crediting at least a 99% claim. The claim of 99%

literacy was made in 1968 by a Japanese researcher, Kiyoshi Makita, concerning literacy in Japan. (His study, "The Rarity of Reading Disability in Japanese Children," reportedly appeared in the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, p. 599-614, July, 1968. Japan uses two-thirds Kana sound-bearing syllable characters and one-third meaning-bearing Kanji characters instead of the alphabet). Nor is it out of keeping with the comment in the early nineteenth century of the French-born scion of the American du Pont dynasty, who conferred with President Jefferson concerning education, and who was himself the author of a beginning reading program in France. Du Pont said flatly, concerning the young Americans about 1800 (obviously not including those held in slavery), that they could almost all read. John Adams, who later became president, said about 1760 that to find a [free] American who could not read was as rare as to be struck by lightning. Of course, in all these cases, except with the Kanji "meaning" characters, all of these people (the Soviets, the Japanese learning the dominant Kana "sound" characters, and the Americans about 1760 and 1800) had learned to read by "sound," not by "meaning."

Bethell referred to the report made by Barbara Bush the previous year that sixty million Americans are either illiterate or functionally illiterate. In my opinion, Barbara Bush's estimate is far too rosy. Almost all Americans who learned to read after about 1931 learned to read by the disabling, deaf-mute-method "meaning" approach, with its phony, "intrinsic" guessing phonics. The disabilities that it has produced are far greater and far more hidden, I believe, than anyone has so far been able to establish. The yardstick being used to judge reading competency is the so-called, utterly fallacious, "reading comprehension test," which only serves to mask disabilities. Until oral tests to adults are given on pronouncing lists of low frequency words, within a normal time limit, and written tests to adults are given on spelling the thousand highest-frequency words, it will be impossible to measure the extent of American disabilities. Those disabilities were caused by the deaf-mute "meaning" method of teaching beginning reading which was introduced in 1930 with the Dick and Jane deaf-mute-method readers, with their phony, "intrinsic" guessing phonics.

Bethell referred to the reports in both Cuba and Nicaragua shortly after their Communist take-overs that illiteracy had been almost wiped out, and the comment of one reporter that teaching to read can be seen as political. Bethell wrote;

"Lenin agreed with this line of reasoning. 'An illiterate man is non-political,' he stated succinctly in 1919. 'First he must be taught to read.'"

Bethell quoted Seymour Hersh who wrote from Communist Saigon in 1979:

' There is heavy emphasis on mass education and ending illiteracy.'

Bethell added was the most recent Communist country with huge anti-illiteracy campaign, but commented that the illiteracy drive had been overshadowed by the increasing famine there.

Bethell wrote:

"It would be appropriate to give [Lenin] the last word. He said in 1922:

"In general, as you probably know, I do not have much sympathy for the intelligentsia, and our slogan "liquidate illiteracy" is in no way to be interpreted as being aimed at the creation of a new intelligentsia. The purpose of "liquidate illiteracy" is only that every peasant should be able to read by himself, without help, our decrees, orders, and proclamations. The aim is completely practical. No more."

Bethell's most interesting article did not include a very curious, almost unrecognized fact: within the Communist world since about 1930, the reading of alphabetic print has been taught initially by "sound," not by "meaning," while in the Free World since about 1930 the reading of alphabetic print has almost always been taught by "meaning" or by "meaning/sound" mixtures in which "meaning" is usually dominant.

Franz Biglmaier of West Germany wrote an article for John Downing's book, *Comparative Reading* (The Macmillan Company, 1973), in which he said that West German "experts" endorsed the global (sight-word "meaning") method, and that 74% of the available sixty-one German primers in 1964 used the global approach. However, he said that the method used in Communist East Germany to teach beginning reading was phonics ("sound").

In China, the emphasis in beginning reading turned to "sound" as soon as the Communists took over. They installed the Pinyin alphabet, which is sound-bearing. It is now taught to children before they are introduced to the meaning-bearing Chinese characters. By contrast, it is disturbing that some Japanese reading "experts" have tried to change reading methods there, introducing kindergarten students to large numbers of meaning-bearing Kanji characters. In the past Kanji characters were only taught later and very slowly, over many years of school. Beginners had learned to read ONLY with the sound-bearing Kana syllable characters.

Since it is so very easy to learn to read when the "sound" method is used, considerably more Juanitos may have learned to read than Bethell suspected. After all, the Communists promoted literacy programs since at least 1919 in the Soviet Union, and since 1945 behind the Iron Curtain. If the Communists' literacy programs had been largely unsuccessful over all those years, does it not seem unlikely that they would have continued to concentrate so many scarce resources on those programs as late as 1980?

Literacy is apparently only promoted by change-agents, or power brokers, when the reading matter can be sufficiently controlled, along with the population itself. When the reading matter cannot be sufficiently controlled, it can contain truths which are unsettling (to the change-agents or power brokers). In the past, when the reading matter could not be sufficiently controlled, and when the population itself could not be sufficiently controlled, power-brokers have sometimes openly promoted illiteracy. Historical instances that can be cited of the desire to control subject populations by openly suppressing literacy are the state laws in the American pre-Civil-War South forbidding the teaching of reading to slaves, which laws were in effect up to about 1865, and the English Penal Laws forbidding the teaching of Irish Catholic children, which Penal Laws were not repealed until after 1800. Is a comparable intent to suppress literacy the real explanation for the massive promotion at present all over the English-speaking world of the "whole language" fakery in the teaching of beginning reading, and is the same intent the real explanation for the move to teach Kanji meaning-bearing characters to Japanese kindergarten students?

1983 Two Sides of the Brain, Brain Lateralization Explored, by Sid J. Segalowitz, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Because of differences in perception depending on which side of the brain is in use, a lot of nonsense has been written lately purporting that every human body is occupied by two distinct personalities - a kind of Jekyll and Hyde syndrome. This nonsense ignores the fact that consciousness is unitary since it can focus on only one thing at a time, and it ignores the fact that consciousness is known to arise at the brain stem, which is itself unitary. In contrast, Segalowitz's book, based on relatively recent research, sheds much useful light on those differences in perception which are real and demonstrable when one side of the brain is compared to the other.

Concerning reading, Segalowitz clearly discussed on pages 91 and 92 the differences in reading Japanese Kanji (meaning-bearing) print and Japanese Kana (sound-bearing print). (Japanese print consists of a mixture of about two-thirds Kana symbols and one-third Kanji symbols.) Segalowitz said:

“In normals, it has been shown that reading Kana, as with English words, produces a right visual field (left hemisphere) superiority while the Kanji forms show a left visual field (right hemisphere) bias.”

Segalowitz cited as an authority for this statement:

“Sasasuma (sic: should be Sasanuma), Itoh, Mori & Kobayashi (1977). See Segalowitz, Bebout & Lederman (1979) for further discussion on reading symbols and lateralization.”

In his bibliography at the end of the book, Segalowitz cited

“Sasanuma, S. 1975, Kana and Kanji Processing in Japanese Aphasics, *Brain and Language*, 2, 369-83; Sasanuma, S., Itoh, M., Mori, K. & Kobayashi, Y. 1977. Tachistoscopic recognition of Kana and Kanji words. *Neuropsychologia*, 15, 547-53; and Segalowitz, S. J., Bebout, L. J. & Lederman, S. J. 1979. Lateralization for Reading Musical Chords: Disentangling Symbolic, Analytic, and Phonological Aspects of Reading. *Brain and Language*, 8, 315-23.”

1984 A Distant Mirror, The Calamitous 14th Century, by Barbara W. Tuchman, Alfred A. Knopf, New York. This very interesting book establishes that the fourteenth century was, in large part, a morally and culturally degenerate period.

1985 Evolution, Theory in Crisis, by Michael Denton, M. D., Adler and Adler, Publishers, Bethesda, Maryland, and Burnett Books, Ltd., The Hutchinson Publishing Group, Great Britain. Dr. Denton's painstakingly, lengthy scientific examination of many categories of evidence on accidental evolution makes it clear that Darwin's theory of evolution, like the famed “emperor,” has no clothes. Dr. Denton, however, does not state that fact in such disrespectful terms. He is at all times calm, objective, and dispassionate.

1985 Visigothic Spain, Byzantium and the Irish, by J. N. Hillgarth. Variorum Reprints, London. Contacts between the Mediterranean and Ireland by way of Spain in the seventh century are discussed at length in this book.

1985 Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading. Prepared by Richard C. Anderson, Elfrieda H. Hiebert, Judith A. Scott, Ian A. G. Wilkinson, with contributions from members of the Commission on Reading. The National Academy of Education, The National Institute of Education, The Center for the Study of Reading. Published by the National Institute of Education, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C. (This is an extraordinarily unsatisfactory, internally contradictory, and very misleading book.)

1985 Back to Basics Reform Or... Skinnerian International Curriculum? by Charlotte T. Iserbyt, Published by The Barbara M. Morris Report, Upland, California. This carefully researched book concerns the current activists' program for controlling education, which obviously includes the control of reading instruction.

1985 and Before (Publishing date unknown) “Webster's Third New International Dictionary, ‘the definitive Merriam-Webster Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language.’ Has over 460,000 entries, 3,000 pictorial illustrations, 1,000 synonym articles...” Advertisement in The Fall Book 1985 of The Horchow Collection, Dallas, Texas. This is confirmation of the fact that the English language has about a half million words. That fact should be contrasted to the fact that post-1930 basal readers deliberately used only a few thousand of the highest-frequency words out of that half million, thus grossly hobbling

the normal language development of children, and probably their brain development as well in the language areas, since the brains of children from five to ten or eleven years of age or so are still in development.

As cited earlier in a footnote in this history, a girl who was raised without any meaningful contact with language until about the age of twelve later had very poor language development. Furthermore, what little language she eventually acquired was localized not in the left, language area of the brain that is normal for most right-handed people, but in the right brain. Lacking exposure to normal language in the critical period before twelve, her brain development had apparently become permanently hobbled, since later exposure to language could not make up for that earlier deprivation. The analogy appears obvious to the harm that must result when children under twelve are exposed only to rigidly controlled, very small vocabularies and grossly simplified syntax in school textbooks and in the “literature” normally published for them.

Only about 3,000 of the highest frequency words compose about 98 per cent of almost any discourse. Words from the remaining half-million or so words in English normally compose the remaining two percent of any untreated, natural discourse. However, when written material is artificially simplified in the deliberate attempt to remove that two percent of low-frequency words, the harm that is being done to vocabulary development is hidden. It is usually not even suspected. Such vocabulary control is the real reason for the drop in test scores at the high school and college levels.

1985 Early American Textbooks 1775-1900, A Catalog of the titles held by the Educational Research Library, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C. This catalog is only a sampling of the titles in the library. More reading instruction materials are available in the Educational Research Library than appear in this Catalog. That library’s remarkable collection of rare nineteenth and early twentieth century textbooks has been woefully neglected and underfunded by the counter-productive U. S. Department of Education. In my opinion, for the sake of posterity, the Department of Education textbook collection containing so many important books should immediately be transferred to the Library of Congress where it will be relatively free from the counter-productive influence of bureaucrats who have their own axes to grind.

The department had an earlier publication in 1976 entitled Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century Rare Books on Education, A Catalog of the Titles Held by the Educational Research Library, National Institute of Education, Washington, D. C. It is almost useless as a source for texts on the teaching of reading.

1986 The Great American Con Game, by Barbara M. Morris, Published by The Barbara M. Morris Report, Upland, California. This disturbing book elaborates on the original work, listed under 1985, by Mrs. Iserbyt.

1986 Illiteracy in America: Extent, Causes, and Suggested Solutions, The National Advisory Council on Adult Education, Literacy Committee, Patricia H. Smith, Chairperson, Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. This is one of the very tiny number of Government publications on reading which is of real value.

1986 William Bathe, S. J., 1564-1614, A Pioneer in Linguistics, by Dr. Sean P. O’Mathuna: Philadelphia and Amsterdam, John Benjamin’s, Dr. O’Mathuna stated that Johann Amos Comenius (1592-1670) had sincerely praised the work of William Bathe and credited it as the source for the method he used to teach Latin in his 1657 book, Orbis Sensualium Pictus. William Bathe, an Irish Jesuit, wrote Ianua Linguarum in Spain in 1611. As Dr. O’Mathuna established, Father Bathe’s method for teaching a language with its heavy dependence on teaching in syntactical wholes instead of disjointed words had been used in Bathe’s Irish family in the sixteenth century.

An article from about 1922, which was part of a collated volume I saw in the New York Public Library but unfortunately did not record, referred to a folk method the author had seen in use in rural western Ireland for learning Gaelic by memorizing sentences in Gaelic along with the same sentences in English. There is a striking resemblance to Bathe's method and to Comenius who copied Bathe.

The probability is that the original source for Comenius' method for learning a language which he adopted from Bathe, the comparing of such whole sample "meaning-bearing" sentences, is very ancient in Ireland. It is conceivable that it could have originated in the learning of Latin texts by Gaelic-speaking students as long ago as the sixth century and was the method by which the Irish monks had become so competently bilingual. Gaelic-speaking children could not at that time, learning Latin from written texts, have concentrated very much on isolated "words" because words were not separated in texts, and I have seen no reference to the early existence of a true Gaelic/Latin dictionary. As Michael Herrin discussed in his edition of *Hisperica Famina*, glossaries of the rarer and more difficult Latin words were eventually available, but they would have been for the use of advanced students. Therefore, perhaps it is only natural that a connected text, the *Hisperica Famina*, was apparently used to teach Latin in that period when ordinary texts showed no word separations. It may well have seemed more normal at that time to learn new words from connected texts instead of word lists.

It is known that in the ancient world learners were taught to separate written texts into syllables, not words. It appears probable that, in language, syllables generate syntax, which only then generates words. Dr. Mathuna pointed out that Bathe's method did not rely over much on either the vocabulary/grammar approach, or on the "immersion" approach, but was a blend of both. Very probably, what might be called Bathe's "syllable-to-syntax" method matches more correctly the natural flow of language, which would explain why it was so very successful.

Dr. Mathuna uncovered another fascinating point. In the early 1600's, Father Bathe had been concerned with studying word frequency. That is an astonishing thing to learn, since it has been uniformly assumed that word-frequency studies are of far more recent date.

1987 Preventing Reading Failure, an Examination of the Myths of Reading Instruction, by Patrick Groff, Ph. D., San Diego State University, National Book Company, A Division of Educational Research Associates, Portland, Oregon. In addition to this important book, Dr. Groff has produced a very great many other important books and articles on reading instruction, and an extremely important review of research. He is the leading American authority on the use of phonics in beginning reading.

1987 In Search of the Dark Ages, by Michael Wood, Facts on File Publications, New York, New York, and Oxford, England. This is an excellent reference work.

1987 Egyptian Hieroglyphs, (particularly page 40) by W. V. Davies, University of California Press/British Museum. This text, like the one below, Cuneiform, is of major importance in understanding the history of writing. Although hieroglyphs were dominantly meaning-bearing, it was from a few of them which were sound-bearing that the alphabet was ultimately developed.

1987 Cuneiform, by C. B. F. Walker, University of California Press/British Museum. This text, like the one above, Egyptian Hieroglyphs, is of major importance in understanding the history of writing. Cuneiform was dominantly a syllabary or sound-bearing system, while hieroglyphs were dominantly meaning-bearing. Yet cuneiform died out, while the a small portion of Egyptian symbols which were sound-bearing developed into the sound-bearing alphabet. Presumably one of the reasons the alphabet survived while cuneiform did not is the fact that cuneiform could only be efficiently written on wet clay in a series of indented wedges, but the alphabet could be written easily on any surface.

Also of interest concerning cuneiform is an article on page 130 and following of the December, 1988, issue of Smithsonian, Washington, D. C., entitled, "Deciphering the Way We Were.... Sumerian, the first written language, is getting its first dictionary as scholars probe life in 3000 B. C."

Also of real interest concerning ancient cuneiform is Ebla, A Revelation in Archaeology, "The story of the discovery of a lost 4,500 year-old city and empire and its sensational impact on Biblical history," by Chaim Bermant and Michael Weitzman, published by Times Books, New York, in 1979, The dust cover on the book reads in part:

"...the lost kingdom of Ebla, missing for the past 4,500 years. Located in northwestern Syria, it has been excavated since 1964 by a team of Italian archaeologists. The discovery: Ebla's royal archive, nearly 20,000 clay tablets written in two languages, one a hitherto unknown Semitic dialect.... a record fleshing out the skeletons of a long-lost civilization, a vast commercial and cultural empire of a quarter of a million people rivaling the empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia. The clay rectangles outline diplomatic affairs; sophisticated trade agreements in textiles; laws; and administrative orders. Here are incised hymns, incantations, and school exercises. But even more important than the astonishing detail of the workaday world of the Near East of forty-five centuries past are the highly controversial documentations of previously unsubstantiated accounts of some of the names and places mentioned in the Bible - including Sodom, Gomorrah, and Jerusalem - on the clay tablets, called 'Urusalima'."

The apparently totally independent (?) development of the Chinese meaning-bearing characters is discussed in many published sources. The Japanese system (consisting of the meaning-bearing Kanji symbols and the syllabic sound-bearing Kana symbols, both of which developed from Chinese characters) is also covered in published sources. So are many other variant writing systems which have developed from the alphabet and which are in use today. However, concerning the general history of writing systems, only very recently has some success been achieved in deciphering ancient Mayan Mexican writing. It also has been found to be heavily syllabic, as reported in the article, "Linguists Solve Riddles of Ancient Mayan Language," in the New York Times on April 4, 1989, page C-1. From the discussion in that article, it appears likely that the Mayan writing was a totally independent development, unconnected to either the Chinese or to the Egyptian/Near East sources.

1988 The New Big Book of Home Learning, The Basic Guide to Everything Educational for You & Your Children, (Revised Edition), by Mary Pride, Crossway Books, A Division of Good News Publishers, Westchester, Illinois. This is a remarkable encyclopedia of presently available educational materials, listing and describing many fine "sound"-oriented reading programs. Mrs. Pride has written a second volume concerning supplementary materials in all subjects. She has an accurate eye in evaluating materials, including worthwhile "open-classroom" types of manipulative materials for children in mathematics and science.

1988 Profscam: Professors and the Demise of Higher Education, by Charles J. Sykes. This book establishes that higher education is in a frighteningly degenerate state.

Circa 1989 - Miller Word Identification Assessment (MWIA) by Edward Miller, published by The Literacy Council, Charles M. Richardson, Chairman, P. O. Box 2845, Huntington Station, New York, 11746. Mr. Miller has constructed two lists of test words to be read orally, and timed. One consists of the high-frequency words normally taught as sight-words in "meaning" instruction first-grade programs, reportedly using the Dolch list of 220 words. The other list consists of phonically regular words which are not on the Dolch list. In comparing the accuracy and speed scores that children receive on each list, Mr.

Miller found that a profile commonly shows up, demonstrating whether a child is reading with a “meaning” conditioned reflex or a “sound” conditioned reflex, or a mixture of both.

As has been discussed at length in this history, I found such a consistent profile of “sound” or “meaning” reflexes (or mixtures of them) when comparing the various types of scores on my oral reading test results from America and Europe in 1977 and 1978. That statistical profile clearly demonstrated the existence of two different types of readers, or mixtures of the types. Also as discussed in this history, I later discovered in December, 1980, that my 1978 “discovery” was not new but had been observed by Oskar Messmer in Germany in 1903, in his tests of accuracy in reading briefly-exposed print. Messmer named the “meaning” readers the “subjective” type, and the “sound” readers the “objective” type. Mr. Miller’s easily administered and uncomplicated tests are the first and only tests that have ever been devised to identify those reading types easily (“subjective” or “objective” or mixtures of the types).

Charles M. Richardson reported on some of Mr. Miller’s test results in Mr. Richardson’s May, 1993, and September, 1993, newsletters, “TLC, The Literacy Council,” P. O. Box 2845, Huntington Station, New York, 11746. Mr. Richardson also gave Mr. Miller’s tests to Long Island high school seniors, who had begun school with the standard basal-reader, sight-word approach in first grade. What was particularly disturbing (but not surprising) from the scores that Mr. Richardson obtained from those high school seniors was that they demonstrated that the “meaning” reflex persisted even at the level of the senior year of high school. The seniors also showed a relative weakness in their ability to sound out unknown words. According to

Mr. Richardson, an even more startling finding was that the error count on the Miller word list correlated strongly and negatively with the students’ verbal SAT scores (“ $r = -0.61$ ).

1989 Illiteracy: An Incurable Disease or Education Malpractice? U. S. Senate Republican Policy Committee, William L. Armstrong, Chairman. This illuminating material was prepared by Robert W. Sweet, Jr., at that time an associate of Senator Armstrong and later the head of the National Right to Read Foundation, P. O. Box 490, The Plains, Virginia, 20198. Mr. Sweet has worked for many years in the promotion of phonics in beginning reading instruction.

1990 Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning About Print, A Summary, Prepared by Steven A. Stahl, Jean Osborn, and Fran Lehr, Center for the Study of Reading, the Reading Research and Education Center, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This is a summary for more popular use of Marilyn Jager Adams’ much larger important book published by MIT Press, reporting on much research in the field.

1990 “Restoring Volumes Bound for Ruin,” by Cathryn Donohoe, in *Insight*, April 2, 1990. It concerns the discovery in the binding of two tattered 16th century medical texts, bound in a single vellum cover, a fragment from about 625 A. D. from Rufinus’s Latin translation of Eusebius of Caesarea’s fourth century ‘Ecclesiastical History.’ The quotation in Part 2 is reprinted with permission of *Insight*. Copyright 1990, News World Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.

1990 “Exhibit Lifts the Veil of Obscurity,” *Insight* October 1, 1990, page 62. This article on an exhibit of the paintings of the artist Joseph Wright mentions in passing two instances of mindlessly inhuman brutality to animals by members of the usually highly praised Lunar Society and Royal Society. The two hideous “experiments” received no apparent opposition from members. One “experiment” was the cutting open of a conscious dog’s spine and performing experiments on it, done by members of the Royal Society (including Samuel Pepys) in the seventeenth century. The other was the killing of a pigeon by creating a vacuum around it, by pumping out all of the air in the bell jar in which it had been placed. That “experiment” was done before members of the Lunar Society in the eighteenth century. The lack of opposition and even active participation suggests the “intellectual” members witnessing and performing



those “experiments” were themselves inhuman monsters. The quoted portions in Part 4 of the article on the Wright paintings exhibit have been reprinted with permission of *Insight*. Copyright 1990, News World Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.

1990 Life in a Medieval Village, by Frances and Joseph Gies, Harper and Row, Publishers, New York. This is a very worthwhile book, a small portion of which has been quoted in this history.

1991 The New York Times, Obituary of June 19, 1991, “Zerna Sharp, 91, Dies in Indiana; Originated ‘Dick and Jane’ Texts, by Joseph B. Treaster.” Whoever gave Treaster his information certainly left out a vast amount of background information, without which his article title, if read in such isolation, was simply wrong. So was the title to the article in the Chicago Tribune, the next day, June 10, 1981, in the Obituaries section:

“Mother of ‘Dick and Jane’ books, Zerna Sharp, dies at 91.”

The names of the characters, and the so-called “story line” may have been Sharp’s contribution. But the characters, “Dick and Jane,” were not what made that series so different from earlier ones. What made it so different were the following facts:

- (1) It used a rigidly controlled high-frequency vocabulary of about two thousand words through the first three grades, those highest frequency words having only been identified by Thorndike by 1919 (and published in 1921). Before the advent of Thorndike’s list, only the thousand highest frequency words had been identified. Yet, in order to construct rigidly controlled vocabulary books of the very highest frequency words through the first three grades, about two thousand of those very highest frequency words had to be identified. Those approximately two-thousand words would provide a sufficiently large matrix for future context guessing of unknown words in the upper grades and throughout life. Thorndike’s 1934 article, listed in this appendix, specifically stated that about two thousand words would have to be learned as sight words before the beginning of fourth grade. (Yet Thorndike said he was deliberately omitting from that article any mention of the teaching of reading before fourth grade!)
- (2) The Dick and Jane series relied on a rigidly-controlled repetition of new words so as to fix them in memory. The dreary work of constructing “stories” which could provide that mathematically precise word repetition was the work of Sharp and the rest of the writing staff, who were apparently under her direction. The content of such stories and the names of their characters were of absolutely no importance for the “reading recipe” being used. The characters might just as well have been named Mutt and Jeff, and the stories might just as well have taken place in fairyland, instead of in America’s back yards.
- (3) The Dick and Jane series outlawed real (but supplementary) phonic drill, and in its place used the deaf-mute-method of so-called “intrinsic phonics,” figuring out unknown words from the context and fixing those unknown words in memory by comparing their parts to the parts of previously memorized sight words. That deaf-mute method requires no use of “sound” (real phonics) whatsoever.

Those three points were obviously the recipe given to the drudges writing the silly “stories” in the 1930 Scott, Foresman series. That recipe came from William Scott Gray, acknowledged as the senior author on that series, and his very own description of its use can be found in the series’ teacher’s guides of 1930, which he personally wrote. It was not the so-called story-line, nor the names of the characters, that made that series important. It was the deaf-mute-method “meaning” recipe that Gray gave to the writers of those stories, over whom Sharp was the apparent manager.

Gray had been Thorndike's graduate student (and research assistant) in 1913-1914, at which time Thorndike had already been working for two or three years on his massive word counts, to provide the data for his list of the 10,000 commonest words, finally published in 1921. It was only after that word-count was published that it was possible to write second, third, and higher grade books with sufficiently controlled high-frequency vocabulary. (Thorndike's graduate student about 1916, Arthur Irving Gates, wrote the other initial deaf-mute-method series, the Macmillan, which began to appear in 1930, and it also used the literary device of a little boy and a little girl, with its "stories" taking place at home and in the neighborhood. Therefore, there was nothing very original about the Dick and Jane "story" approach, since it is highly unlikely that Arthur Irving Gates plagiarized Verna Sharp at the time that he had the parallel Macmillan sight-word series written by his own corps of drudges.)

The Chicago article continued:

"Private services for Verna Sharp, 91, mother of the 'Dick and Jane' primary readers, will be in Michigantown, Ind. Miss Sharp died Wednesday in a Frankfort, Ind., retirement home.

"For 30 years [sic], Miss Sharp worked for Scott, Foresman & Co., Glenview publishers who produced the 'Dick and Jane' books. There, she headed an editorial staff, wrote much of the text [sic], and commissioned the artwork for the books. She believed that the art was most important to the books and that it 'carried' the stories. But the repetitive action words - 'Look, look!' and 'Run, run!' - that made the books famous were her own, taken from her observations of youngsters on the Chicago beach between 74th and 75th streets, where she sunned and exercised in the 1920's.

"Miss Sharp also drew heavily for her texts on the behavior of children in primary schools in LaPorte, Ind., where she once was a schoolteacher and principal...."

The article said that in 1964 she had retired from Scott, Foresman, and had gone to live in California, but had returned in the 1970's, and that she was survived by Rush B. Sharp of Hamilton, Ohio, her brother.

The obituary in The New York Times on June 19, 1981, was more accurate (although not accurate enough) and included more information: The Times article said that Verna Sharp had never married and spoke of Dick and Jane as "my children. She had been a traveling reading consultant for Scott, Foresman when she came up with the idea of Dick and Jane, and the idea of their repetitive vocabulary. Before that, she had taught first grade for more than ten years, and had later been an elementary school principal.

The Times article quoted her nephew, Robert L. Sharp, as saying, "She used to go down and sit on the beach on the South Side of Chicago and listen to the kids playing. She noticed them saying, 'Look, look,' instead [of] one word, 'Look.' That's how I understand the idea for the books came about."

The article in the Times reported that she had not, herself, actually written the books but had worked with others, including an illustrator, Eleanor B. Campbell, whose pictures had demonstrated the so-called story line. The Times article gave the formula (obviously coming from William S. Gray) that Verna Sharp's group used in the writing of the "stories." No more than five new words were to be used in any of those so-called "stories," and not more than one new word was to be used on any page.

However, it is obvious that Verna Sharp really believed in what she was doing, and that is very pathetic. She said, according to the Times article:

“There’s nothing these children do that a child couldn’t remember having done themselves.... They made the books part of themselves. We made reading easy for them and encouraged them to read more.”

In response to the criticism that Jane was subordinate to Dick, playing the stereotyped role for girls, Verna Sharp is reported to have answered:

‘It never bothered the children. That’s all an adult’s viewpoint.’

The Times article reported that Verna Sharp was born on August 12, 1889, the oldest of five children. Her father owned a general store in Hillisburg, Ind. Although she attended a Marion, Indiana, teachers college, she never earned a degree there. The Times article reported that, in addition to her brother, she also had two nephews and three nieces at the time of her death.

Despite the internal inconsistencies (such as Sharp’s having worked at Scott, Foresman for only 30 years before 1964, which would mean only since 1934, when the finished ‘Dick and Jane’ readers were actually put on the market in 1930), the articles are still informative. Yet, if the articles were read out of context by someone with no background in reading instruction history, they would be very misleading. In no meaningful sense can Verna Sharp be called the “mother” of the ‘Dick and Jane’ readers even though she apparently supervised the staff actually putting them together, tailoring them to use only a handful of words in the “stories” and providing the monotonous repetition required by the deaf-mute method. She may also have suggested the two main characters, “Dick and Jane,” who actually did so very little in the vocabulary-impooverished so-called “stories.” Yet The Times article made it clear that Sharp had not, herself, been involved in the construction of those word-counting, dismally dull “stories.” Instead, the books themselves clearly identify W. S. Gray as the principal author since Gray was the one who concocted the recipe for the use of a specific limited number of sight words, and a very specific number of repetitions. Sharp and her staff were simply following Gray’s directions. Gray’s 1930 guide to the “Dick and Jane” readers certainly makes it clear that the rigid vocabulary control and the rigid, programmed numbers of word repetitions were his own contributions.

Less rigidly controlled vocabulary than Gray proposed had been in use in American sight-word primary texts since 1826 (not 1926), but upper-grade texts had always had to rely on “supplemental phonics,” since not enough high-frequency words could be identified to use as a guessing matrix above the primer levels. Gray’s use of Thorndike’s highly scientific list of the highest frequency words which provided that previously-unavailable guessing matrix was indeed new. So was Gray’s dismissal of any kind of “supplemental phonics.” Gray used instead Gates’ so-called “intrinsic phonics” (and so did Gates use it, and Gates also used Thorndike’s list, in the Macmillan series which began to come out in 1930). Children taught in Gray’s and Gates’s new deaf-mute-method way would be permanently inoculated against ever using any real “sound” in their reading. Instead they would have to rely on sight-words, and on context-guessing from sight-word parts, for the rest of their lives.

Probably Sharp’s only truly original contribution was her proposal that sight-word repetition did not have to be spaced throughout connected texts, but could come instead in unbroken salvos: “Look, look!” and “Run, run!” That made it far easier for her staff to construct texts which would meet Gray’s demand for specific numbers of sight-word repetitions, in order to “fix” those sight-words in the children’s memories. Sight words no longer had to be separated in “meaningful” text but instead could come in such explosive salvos: “Look, look!,” “Run, run.” “Dick, Dick,” and so on, ad nauseum.

By reporting on Sharp’s Indiana background, both articles seem to suggest the strong possibility that Sharp had entered Scott, Foresman through the influence of W. S. Gray, since Gray was very active giving oral tests and (undoubtedly influencing reading instruction) in the state of Indiana during the

period in which Sharp was a teacher and principal in La Porte, Indiana. See the 1917 and 1919 entries in this appendix on Gray's tests of oral reading in Indiana. Furthermore, W. N. Hailmann, associated since about 1880 or so with the founding of kindergartens in America, had been located in La Porte, Indiana.. That was only about fifty miles or so from Chicago, where Gray was located, and La Porte was very likely a focal point after Hailmann's day for continuing education "improvements" in the primary grades, like those that Gray was probably already promoting by 1917. Besides Hailmann's influence, Indiana already had some very "prestigious" education history, and not just the fact that the Owens' socialist experiment of 1826 and later had taken place in New Harmony, Indiana. See the discussion in Part 6 and Appendix C on the Indiana State Series of reading books, which series of books were so obviously connected with education activists from 1883 through about the 1890's.

There was nothing in Gray's background that would have fitted him for dealing with how to write controlled vocabulary readers for first, second and third graders. Such readers had been the norm ever since 1826 (not 1926). However, those earlier readers did not have Thorndike's newly-identified two-thousand or so highest-frequency words which would make it possible to perform highly accurate context-guessing in the fourth-grade and higher. It is highly likely that Gray was looking around for a likely first-grade teacher about 1921 or so who could help him with the nitty-gritty of writing sight-word materials, but using Thorndike's newly-identified highest-frequency words.

In March, 1919, Gray published an article in the *Elementary School Journal* on reading in Indianapolis which revealed (a) that in Indianapolis they used the sight-word method for first grade, and (b) that in Indianapolis the children could not read. But Gray glossed over that embarrassing fact lightly, citing the need for "supplementary phonics." (Gates' "intrinsic phonics" only entered the literature in 1925). Quotations from page 511 of Gray's March, 1919 article, showed up again in a December, 1921, *Elementary School Journal* article by Chester Parker, and pages 160, 163 and 164 of Parker's article confirm the poor performance in Indianapolis and the fact that Gray, himself, sometimes gave the oral tests and met with and spoke with principals and teachers in Indiana. Therefore, it is certain that Gray knew some teachers and principals in Indiana by 1919. By 1919 Indiana produced the "right" kind of teachers and principals, those who believed in sight words and silent reading, and it is certain that Gray met at least some of them personally. The bibliography on Gray's 1925 summary of research shows that Gray was involved in testing in 16 cities in Indiana about 1917. One of those 16 Indiana cities in which Gray tested may well have been La Porte, Indiana (already well known because of Hailmann's work there with kindergartens), in which city Zerna Sharp was employed as a first-grade teacher and principal. If La Porte had been one of those 16 cities in which Gray gave tests about 1917, that would strongly suggest that Gray may have met her at the time of the testing and remembered her by the early 1920's as an experienced first grade teacher who believed in "sight words" and "controlled vocabulary," the kind who would know how to help him in writing the deathless prose of what eventually became the Dick and Jane readers.

1991 "Japanese Elementary School Education," by Harold W. Stevenson, University of Michigan, in The Elementary School Journal, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, September, 1991, pages 14 to 22. Stevenson said, "Our research group at the University of Michigan, in collaboration with our colleagues at Sendai's Tohoku Fukushi University in Japan, has spent the past decade studying young children in Japan and the United States."

Reference to Japanese reading achievement is made in the text, *How to Increase Reading Ability*, by Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay, David McKay Company, Inc., New York (1940, revised editions to 1975 and probably later). On page 14, Makita was reported to have estimated in 1968 that the per cent of reading disability in Japan was 1%. The study being cited was "The Rarity of Reading Disability in Japanese Children," by Kiyoshi Makita, *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, p. 599-614, July, 1968.

Concerning it, the comment was made:

“Makita attributed the low rate of disability in Japan to the nature of Japanese orthography and concluded that reading disability is more of a philological than a neuropsychiatric problem.”

In a footnote on the same page, this appeared:

“At the International Reading Congress in Vienna in August, 1974, Makita repeated his low estimate and was supported by T. Sakamoto. Both attribute this low incidence to the ease of learning kana, the Japanese syllable alphabet, and in part to almost universal parental teaching before children enter school. The kana writing system is apparently much easier to learn than the ideographs used in both Chinese and Japanese.”

The ideographs are the Kanji characters, the learning of which is spread over a child's school years. Similar comments concerning the high level of Japanese literacy are often encountered elsewhere. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Japanese people must have little trouble with decoding, which makes Stevenson's comments to the contrary, below, concerning reading very puzzling, indeed.

Stevenson made this statement concerning mathematics:

“In a recent study comparing the performance in mathematics of children in Sendai, Japan, with that of children in Minneapolis, the scores of Japanese children exceeded those of the American children in kindergarten, and the difference persisted through first and fifth grades. In fact, among the 20 fifth-grade classrooms tested in each city, the average score of the lowest-scoring Japanese classroom was above that of the highest-scoring American classroom. (Stevenson, Lee, & Stigler, 1986.)”

John Saxon's highly successful American algebra program was reported on some time ago in an issue of National Review. That highly successful algebra program is enigmatically rejected by the American education “establishment.” Yet it produces the same kind of results in America on algebra as the Sendai/Minneapolis study does on elementary mathematics. The bottom achievers in American high school classes using Saxon's algebra program outscore the top achievers in American high schools using the “experts” algebra programs. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the difference between the Japanese and American classes on elementary mathematics can probably be explained by the fact that the Japanese are using elementary mathematics texts as competent as Saxon's algebra texts, while the American government schools are using elementary mathematics programs produced by the same kind of “experts” as those who rejected Saxon's algebra materials.

Stevenson continued:

“Japanese children fare less well in cross-national studies of reading. When children were given tests of decoding and comprehension in the Stevenson, Lee, and Stigler (1986) study, the relative status of children in the two countries was reversed. The reading scores of the American children exceeded those of the Japanese children. Rather than reflecting less interest in reading or poorer instruction, it seems likely that the lower scores of the Japanese children stemmed from the difficulty of learning to read Japanese. Learning to read Japanese appears to be more difficult than learning to read English.”

That is obviously not the case, since the Japanese end with 99% literacy, and we do not, and since Makita flatly stated that learning Japanese was easier, not harder. What the reading study did uncover was not reading disability in the Japanese children but the presence of automaticity in reading (decoding),

which is the result of correct automatic conditioned reflexes. In contrast, because of misinstruction in reading, the American children had faulty conditioned reading reflexes. They were incapable of reading automatically, and could read only consciously, or “psycholinguistically.” Incapable of reading automatically, such disabled children are incapable of letting their attention wander and may receive slightly higher averaged “reading comprehension” scores than properly taught children, if the properly taught children permit their voluntary attention to wander while they are reading. Yet, if the Japanese and American “comprehension” scores had been individually graphed instead of lumped into averages, they would have shown predictable profiles. The Japanese first- to fifth-grade scores would have gone from very poor to superb, reflecting the inattention of some readers who therefore scored low, but the presence of voluntary attention and superb reading comprehension in others. The faulty American scores would have fallen into that typical narrow band that demonstrates reading disabilities, higher than the worst Japanese scores, but lower than the best. That narrow band of reading comprehension scores results from forced but divided attention between the meaning of the text and the effort to decode the print.

My 1977-1978 research discovered the fact that a narrow band of reading comprehension scores is a statistical function of lower accuracy scores in decoding print. That narrow “reading comprehension” band indicates the presence of reading disabilities.

Such disabilities are certainly induced in American children attending government schools, but historically they have not been induced in Japanese children. However, that may be changing, since Japanese “experts” are reportedly now urging that children in nursery school and kindergarten make a heavy study of the difficult Kanji “meaning” characters that were previously only taught, very gradually, to much older children. Japanese “experts” are also urging that three-year olds be taught the Kana characters, but the Bender-Gestalt norms show that average three-year-olds cannot yet distinguish between geometric shapes. Both unfortunate practices should induce reading disabilities in many immature Japanese children.

1991 Educating for the New World Order, by B. K. Eakman, Halcyon House, Portland, Oregon. Mrs. Iserbyt’s book, listed above, was the original work on this subject, and Barbara Morris’s book, above, contributed further to it. Mrs. Eakman elaborated on the subject with very useful current information, which is largely based on the remarkable work of Anita Hoge in Pennsylvania.

1992 Article in the New York Times, March 4, 1992: “A School for the Deaf That’s Founded on Speech,” reporting on the present-day programs in the Clarke School for the Deaf, in Northampton, Massachusetts.

1993 “Phonicsphobia,” a paper by Dr. Joyce Morris, presented on September 18, 1993, at the “Literacy 2000” conference at Roehampton College in England. The conference was reportedly organized by Dr. Beve Hornsby and Longman publishers. Excerpts have been quoted at length in this history in the section concerning Great Britain. Dr. Morris’s comments are greatly illuminating concerning the history of the teaching of reading in England from the late 1930’s until 1993. Since she was a young beginning teacher during World War II (about 1943?), but had received no training from her college tutors in phonics, it appears evident that the teaching of phonics must have been “officially” gone in England by the late 1930’s. The theme of Dr. Morris’s paper was the existence of intense and irrational opposition to the teaching of phonics, which she labeled, “phonicsphobia.”

Dr. Jeanne Chall in her 1967 landmark book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967) had referred specifically to some of the work of the well-known psychologist from England, Dr. Joyce Morris. Dr. Morris is highly qualified to comment on developments in England in the teaching of reading.

1993 Reading Reform Foundation Newsletter published by Mona McNee in England, reported in No. 22, December, 1993, and in other material, on work by Professor Simon Garrod and a team of researchers at ESRC's Human Communication Research Center in Glasgow, Scotland. Using an electronic eye-tracker in studying the reading of over 300 subjects, they found that the size of the "text window" for human beings is typically only 18 characters, even for speed readers. Since the human eye is also limited physiologically by the speed with which it can move from one fixation (of 18 characters) to the next, that Scottish finding obviously establishes that so-called "speed reading" of whole pages of print at rates of 1,000 to 2,000 words a minute cannot be true reading but is only scanning. Intelligent scanning, which has its proper place, is the acquired ability to pick up snatches of words and to use those snatches to guess the missing and far greater portion of a page. Professor Garrod's research seems to establish that such scanning is a perilous activity if a scanner arrogantly assumes that he has really read the material.

1993 Adult Literacy in America, A First Look at the Results of the National Adult Literacy Survey, National Center for Education Statistics, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C. Prepared by Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, under Contract with the National Center for Education Statistics, September, 1993.

Concerning basic literacy, this 150-page book is totally useless statistical fog. It does present some interesting statistics concerning some behaviors of groups in American society, based on levels achieved in tests of "reading comprehension." Yet what was being tested in the test population was its available functioning intelligence, not its "literacy." An inexpensive personal computer which has a speaker and Firstbyt "Smoothtalker" software can pronounce typed material aloud, scoring at almost 100% on basic literacy, but total zero on "reading comprehension." In contrast, as Binet noted almost ninety years ago in France, as quoted by Simon in 1924, some children who read with enormous errors and difficulty nevertheless can get the general idea of newspaper articles. Therefore, the two subjects, basic literacy and available functioning intelligence, absolutely should not be mixed together on tests, or the test results are meaningless, just as meaningless as talking of the "reading comprehension" of Smoothtalker software. This 1993 massive survey would rate Binet's disabled readers fairly high on their literacy scale, when the scale on which those children actually did rate high about ninety years ago was Binet's scale of intelligence quotients. After all, Binet used those reading comprehension tests as part of his famous invention, the intelligence test, not to test "literacy"!

The 1993 so-called "literacy" tests are hopelessly flawed, their results being dependent on many factors besides intelligence such as education and cultural background. Results were only partially dependent on some degree of reading ability, and it is impossible to separate that basic literacy strand from the other strands. Therefore, to call this a "literacy survey" is nonsense, despite the elaborate rationale which is presented for claiming it was necessary to throw all such unrelated factors into one big testing pot.

This terribly flawed study should be contrasted to the more usable Functional Literacy Study based on tests given in 1971, 1974, and 1975. That study was funded by the Government's Right to Read program, and carried out by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a project of the Education Commission of the States, Denver, Colorado. The 1970's tests were given nationwide to 17-year olds, high-school seniors. In contrast to the vague 1993 report, the report of that 1970's study described all the individual questions and gave the percentage of accurate answers to each question. The simple 1970's questions make it far easier to judge the results on the basic literacy strand, though, of course, intelligence is certainly also involved in answers given. However, the fact that the test was given to high school seniors suggests that almost all subjects should have been of average or better intelligence. Since the questions were not difficult, the literacy strand became the dominant one, not the comprehension strand.

The most difficult item on the 1970's test and the one with the lowest score concerned finding the amount of coverage for bodily injury liability on a standard insurance form. Only 18% of high school seniors could do that. On a book-club membership form, only 44% could recognize that no money had to be sent in, and that the club would bill them. On a traffic ticket, only an average of 46 per cent could find the date by which the fine had to be paid. On a report card, an average of 75% of high school seniors could identify the subject in which improvement was shown, but 25% could not. Tables in the back of that study showed some questions on which 90.6, 94.7 and 94.1% answered correctly, so the seniors were obviously trying to score correctly. The higher scores came on questions like the one described as follows:

“Picture of four doors that might be in a school, labeled ‘Principal,’ ‘Nurse,’ ‘Cafeteria,’ ‘Library.’ Door where you might go for lunch?”

The 1970's scores therefore ranged from the most difficult one, on which only 18% of seniors could find the amount of coverage for bodily injury liability on a standard insurance form, to middling difficulty, when only 46% could find the date on a traffic ticket by which the fine was due, to 75% who could find the subject in which improvement was shown on a report card, and finally to the easiest ones, 94% or so. The easiest questions were like the one testing whether the seniors could read or psycholinguistically guess the word, “lunch,” in the given question, and then match it (perhaps also by “psycholinguistic guessing” from initial consonant sounds) to the correct one of four pictured doors carrying word labels.

Only 55.6% of high school seniors answered 90% of these exceedingly simple questions correctly, which meant that 44.4% failed functional literacy (and therefore basic literacy) by any reasonable standard. That result contrasts to the 1993 study, on which a mixed and academically lower population is actually presumed to have performed far better, by the vaguely defined levels of the 1993 study. The 1993 study does not present percentages on right and wrong answers to specific questions, like the 1970's study, but only vague, generalized “levels” of difficulty with a sample question for each. It shows statistically-arrived-at “scales” of achievement, instead of clear percentages of right and wrong answers which permit a reader to construct his own “scale” of achievement. The 1993 study breaks scores down by a very great number of sub-groups, which obviously represented great overlapping, presumed to be representative of American types. The earlier test had a specific test population: 17-year old American government school seniors, the vast majority of whom spoke English and were free of physical impairments. Yet the 1993 study instead used many mixed populations, and included in each age, geographical or other sub-group unspecified numbers of subjects who were hearing impaired, visually impaired, or spoke a foreign language. It did specify those overall numbers of disabled persons in the total test population but not in each sub-group. The foreign-language group obviously must have skewed results for some age and geographical groups, just as the visually impaired obviously skewed results for upper-age groups.

Furthermore, the study specifically stated it took more samples from Blacks and Hispanics (see pages 5 and 6) and they are known to have more severe literacy problems than other groups. That should have lowered results, and yet the results were astonishingly high, particularly in comparison to the 1970's study. The publicity that appeared about September, 1993, when the study came out, stated that it reported great literacy disabilities, but that is simply not the case when the study itself is examined. Such publicity, however, may well have deflected the criticism this study so clearly deserves for its badly inflated conclusions concerning basic literacy.

The statistics implied instead that all groups (and therefore most in them) possessed the ability to read very simple material. Yet a simple 90-word-paragraph oral-reading-accuracy test, like William Scott Gray's 1914 paragraphs, could have been easily administered in two minutes to each subject, considering



the nature of the study, in which subjects were interviewed in their homes. Such an oral test would have shown clear statistical results on each subject's ability to read words, exactly as it is possible to judge the accuracy of Firstby Smoothtalker computer software, and would have shown the falsehood of the general conclusions of the 1993 "literacy" study that almost no one had trouble with reading (and therefore pronouncing) simple material.

WHY WAS SUCH AN ORAL TEST NOT INCLUDED? WHY HAS IT BEEN SEVENTY YEARS SINCE THE LAST MEANINGFUL ORAL READING STUDY WAS DONE IN AMERICA, DURING WHICH TIME OUR MASSIVE BASIC LITERACY PROBLEMS HAVE APPEARED? (That seventy-year-old study was Arthur I. Gates' "A Test of Ability in the Pronunciation of Words," page 205-219 of Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, November, 1924.)

This 1993 foggy, statistically-laden study tells absolutely nothing about basic literacy levels, or the degree of reading disability among those people who have been trained to "guess" their way "psycholinguistically" down a page, guessing from the total context the meaning of many individual words which they actually cannot pronounce. Of course, that is the same way Binet's disabled readers read some ninety years ago, and their ability to guess "meaning" was a function of their intelligence.

Two statements made in the 1993 report are particularly objectionable. This one was on page xviii:

"After all, the majority of adults who demonstrated limited skills described themselves as reading or writing English well, and relatively few said they get a lot of assistance from others in performing everyday literacy tasks. Perhaps these individuals are able to meet most of the literacy demands they encounter currently at work, at home, and in their communities."

That statement discounts the necessity of doing anything about our government-school-caused basic literacy problem, and instead implicitly denies that such a basic problem exists. Concerning that wrong conclusion, see the above 1970's score of high school seniors, demonstrating appalling literacy problems.

The second particularly objectionable statement was this on page xx:

"Historians remind us that during the last 200 hundred [sic] years, our nation's literacy skills have increased dramatically in response to new requirements and expanded opportunities for social and economic growth. Today we are a better educated and more literate society than at any time in our history."

That statement can be contrasted to the contemporary historical documents I have quoted all through this long history.

The statement is incredibly, breathtakingly wrong! Yet, just as Nila Banton Smith justified such misstatements in her "history" with "academic" footnotes, so does this statement carry such a footnote: L. C. Stedman and C. F. Kaestle (1991) "Literacy and Reading Performance in the United States from 1880 to the Present," in C. F. Kaestle et al, Literacy in the United States: Readers and Reading Since 1880. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, T. Snyder (ed.) (1993). It also cited 120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait, Washington, D. C.: National Center for Education Statistics. If those fallacious statements concerning literacy which were made on page xx of the 1993 report also appeared in the cited documents, then both Yale University Press and the National Center for Education Statistics certainly lack discrimination in the kind of materials they choose to publish.

This hopelessly defective 1993 “study” can now be used to support the “establishment” conclusion that our education weaknesses do not concern the teaching of basic reading (decoding) but instead concern “higher-level thinking skills,” the world’s ultimate oxymoron. Thinking is carried out in that part of the brain, the higher brain mechanism, which cannot be conditioned, or “taught,” so to attempt to “teach” such “skills” is utter nonsense. With the existence of these imaginary disabilities in “higher-level thinking skills” being supported by the “data” in this so-called literacy research, the “disabilities” can then be treated with such curricular panaceas as “whole language” and “critical thinking” (i. e., brainwashing). Concerning the nature of curricula “reform,” see the book listed in the 1991 entry above, *Educating for the New World Order*, by B. K. Eakman, Halcyon House, Portland, Oregon.

1997 Reading Reform Foundation Newsletter published by Mona McNee in England, stated the following on page 24 of issue No. 35, April, 1997:

“In 1955 Rudolph Flesch’s book ‘Why Johnny Can’t Read’ came out.... The outrage he felt as he realised the enormous damage that had been done was clear in that book. It was a best-seller for 9 months in America, and should be read by every student teacher. In 1981 his second book, ‘Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read’ came out, but it was in conflict with a reading scheme published by his publisher, Harper, Row. Instead of being another best-seller and perhaps dislodging the ‘experts’ from their positions of influence, it sold only 30,000 copies - only seven in Britain by April 1984 when Flesch wrote to me:

“I tried to describe (the sad sequence of events) in my 1981 book “Why Johnny STILL Can’t Read,” but to no avail. Harper & Row sabotaged the book, didn’t advertise and eventually recalled it from the stores. I talked to three excellent lawyers, all of whom told me it was hopeless to sue.

“So U. S. illiteracy marches on unabated. My estimate is that some 30 million adults in this country are wholly illiterate, plus another 40 or 50 million marginally so. There are now 48% black teenagers out of work; I’m sure most of them can’t read and are therefore incapable of filling a job.

“I tried to resell my phonic exercises to another publisher, but was turned down by seven of them. Then I gave up.”“

Mrs. McNee commented:

“The educationists ignored Flesch’s researches and just waited out the storm of the 1955 book, and carried on regardless.”

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#### ADDENDA

The following additional works, most of which this author has not seen and therefore not included in this lengthy annotated bibliography, were listed in the “Bibliography” to *Early American Textbooks*, published by the U. S. Department of Education, Washington D. C., 1985.

1892 (1907) *The Essentials of Method*, by Charles DeGarmo. Heath & Co., Boston. [ED.: De Garmo’s general influence has been mentioned in this history.]

1897 *The Free Textbook Question*, by Illinois State Teachers Association, Springfield, Illinois.

1916 William Holmes McGuffey and His Readers, by Harvey C. Minnich, American Book Co., New York. This U. S. Department of Education entry is in error concerning the publication date by American Book Company, which was 1936, not 1916. As shown earlier, the first publication date for Minnich's work was 1928, but by another publisher. Reference to Minnich's work has been made in this history. Since the promotion of the McGuffey Myth, which is that the series was used by 8 or 9 of every 10 children in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was only begun in 1927 with the publication of the very widely read Saturday Evening Post folksy article, "That Guy McGuffey" the error in moving Minnich's publishing date back from 1928 to 1916 only serves to bolster the McGuffey Myth that was only invented in 1927.

1920 The Textbook: How to Use and Judge It., by Alfred Lawrence Hull-Quest, The Macmillan Co., New York.

1931 The Textbook in American Education: Thirtieth Yearbook, Part II. Natural [sic: should be National] Society for the Study of Education. Public School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Illinois. [Ed.: Other materials published by the National Society for the Study of Education have been mentioned in this history.]

1936 Noah Webster, Pioneer of Learning, by Ervin C. Shoemaker, Columbia University Press, New York.

1936 Noah Webster, Schoolmaster to America, by Harry Warfel, The Macmillan Co., New York.

1938 Seventy Years of Textbook Publishing: A History of Ginn & Co., by Thomas B. Lawler, Ginn & Co., Boston.

1939 The Book in America, by Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, R. R. Bowker Co., New York.

1948 American Children Through Their Books: 1700-1835, by Monica Kiefer, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

1957 (Original publishing date not given) Recollections of a Lifetime, Volume II, by Samuel G. Goodrich, published by Miller, Orton and Mulligan, New York. [Ed.: Although I have not seen Goodrich's autobiography, Goodrich and his works have been discussed in several places in this history.]

1957 An Educational History of the American People, by Adolph E. Meyer, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, Toronto and London.

1962 The American Spelling Book, by Noah Webster (1831 edition with an Introductory Essay by Henry Steele Commager), Teachers College Press, New York. [Ed.: that 1831 edition would most likely have been based on Webster's 1829 major revision. That was NOT Webster's original version, and it was the 1783 original material which had been massively used up to 1826, the date the activists began to move the teaching of beginning reading from the "sound" approach to the "meaning" approach. One of those activists was Samuel Goodrich, mentioned above. By 1831, "meaning"-approach primers like Goodrich's (written shortly afterwards, in which he belittled Webster) had taken over beginning reading instruction in America, and the use of Webster's speller (in either the 1783 or 1829 versions) by beginning readers had almost completely ceased, except in backwoods areas. The use of the 1829 version did continue in massive use for older children, but the damage had been done to the children by then by teaching them initially to read by "meaning" instead of by "sound." Commager's choice of an 1831 edition of Webster's speller, if it was the 1829 version, as appears probable, is therefore unfortunate and misleading. However, I have not seen Commager's Introductory Essay nor his 1962 reprint.]

1963 *History of American Schoolbooks*. Charles Carpenter, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.

1964 *Guardians of Tradition: American Schoolbooks of the Nineteenth Century*, by Ruth Miller Elson, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska.

1973 *Forming the American Minds: Early Schoolbooks and Their Compilers. 1783-1837*, by Michael B. Belok. Moti Kutra, Agra - V. P., India: Satish Book Enterprises.

1979 *The Classless Profession*, by Paul H. Mattingly, New York University Press, New York.

# APPENDIX F

## Copies of Some Papers by Geraldine E. Rodgers Which Were Submitted to Government Entities And Which Were Never Acknowledged in Any Way

### CONTENTS

#### Section 1.

Comments given orally at the July 19, 1989, Open Meeting on Recompensation of Regional Educational Laboratories, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Room 328, Washington, D. C., after which a written copy of the remarks was formally submitted. No acknowledgment of the oral remarks or of the written paper has ever been received, eleven years later.

#### Section 2.

Material sent to ALL members of The National Assessment Governing Board in February, 1992, along with a copy of the comments that had been made before it in orally (with a written copy also submitted) in October, 1989. Those 1989 comments were never acknowledged. In addition, a paper copy of an early draft of this book, *The History of Beginning Reading*, was sent to three members. This book was almost completed in draft form in February, 1992, except for most of the appendices and the section on France. Offers of computer disk copies of the 1992 draft history were given to the other members. Not a single one of the TWENTY-FOUR PEOPLE associated with The National Assessment Governing Board who were sent copies of this material has ever replied up to July, 2000, eight years later.

## Section 1

Comments Given at the July 19, 1989, Open Meeting on Recompensation  
of Regional Educational Laboratories, Office of Educational  
Research and Improvement (OERI), Department of Education,  
555 New Jersey Avenue NW, Room 328,  
Washington, D. C.

The primary educational problem in America is functional illiteracy. Any research which can establish its cause and its cure should get the highest priority when the Federal Government underwrites future educational research.

Yet, to judge from past history, it is most unlikely future applicants will plan effective literacy research. It is therefore the responsibility of the Federal Government to insure such research by requesting bids on specific work which clearly promises to clarify the problem.

Bids should be sought on four items which I shall describe. I ask you not to shirk your responsibility to see that tax dollars for research are spent wisely and that you request bids on all four items.

Tens of thousands of reading comprehension studies have been done since such tests first appeared about 1914. Bizarrely, only about a dozen oral reading accuracy studies have been done. Yet the worthlessness of reading comprehension tests instead of oral reading accuracy tests to test reading ability was made clear as early as 1908, when two master psychologists in France found reading comprehension to be a function of intelligence, not reading skill. Dr. Theophile Simon wrote the following in his 1924 book, "Pedagogie Experimentale," on his work with Alfred Binet on the original intelligence tests, when children were required to show how much they comprehended of what they read orally.

"...we have observed many times this curious thing: it happens that some children read very incorrectly, so incorrectly that their reading aloud is, for those who listen, very nearly incomprehensible, and then, if one asks them what they have read, they say it almost correctly. There is therefore less correlation than one could believe possible between the understanding and the correctness of reading."

"Almost correctly," of course, is not good enough, but it is this "curious thing" Binet and Simon observed in Paris in 1908 which explains the current American "method" of teaching reading by psycholinguistic guessing. English has perhaps half a million words. Yet only about 300 of them compose about three-quarters of the words in simple materials. Children who know about 300 high-frequency sight words and who have been drilled in guessing from the context, as American children constantly are drilled, can give the illusion of reading and pass lower level comprehension tests, just as Binet's subjects did. Their real reading failure will only show up on more difficult material, exactly where we are hearing that our reading problem is now, above fourth grade level.

The only thing new about teaching reading by psycholinguistic guessing is the name. The same approach appeared in the watershed readers of 1930, W. S. Gray's Scott, Foresman "Dick and Jane" readers, and A. I. Gates' Macmillan readers.

For the record, both Gates and Gray had been graduate students and friends of the master American psychologist, E. L. Thorndike, and associates, like Thorndike, of two other master psychologists, John Dewey and James McKeen Cattell.

The Gates-Gray readers used a context-guessing approach for unknown words, which were carefully embedded in texts of memorized sight words. They did not teach children to decode unknown new words by true phonics because the 1930 Gates-Gray reading method is actually an ancient approach used to teach deaf-mutes language. On page 17 of Gates' 1930 book, "Interest and Ability in Reading" he indirectly admitted that connection.

"Becoming a Nation of Readers," the Government-funded 1985 report, adopts a definition for reading on page 11 which implies that conscious attention, or guessing, is required in the identification of even a single word. The use of conscious attention in reading rules out automaticity.

Yet the highly qualified Dr. Hilde Mosse, the psychiatrist-pediatrician who wrote "The Complete Handbook of Reading Disorders" in 1982, considered the reading act to be an automatic conditioned reflex. She considered a lack of automaticity in reading to be a disability. Her landmark work is not cited in "Becoming a Nation of Readers." Instead, this report implicitly contradicts her and implicitly denies the possibility of automaticity in reading.

Gates said in his 1925 article, "Problems in Beginning Reading - An Analysis of 21 Courses," that heavy phonics was taught then in almost all American first grades. For reliable illiteracy data, we must compare today's psycholinguistic reading results with results from heavy phonics before 1926.

#### The First Test

Gates' word lists reported in his 1924 article, "A Test of Ability in the Pronunciation of Words," should be retested. In mid-year 1923-24, Gates tested individually 1700 pupils of grades 1 through 6 in schools mainly in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware. On Gates' lists of progressively more difficult words, the average score at sixth grade was 95.5% and for 14 year-olds 90.9%. Children for whom the age was given were obviously left-backs, since children had to stay in school by law to those ages. Statistically speaking, 100% of the children at sixth grade or old enough to be in sixth grade pronounced over 90% of the list.

If we could obtain a score like that today, we would have no illiteracy problem. Yet the newer Gates-McKillop 1963 test results on the same word lists seem to imply we do get results like that. The Gates-McKillop median score, at the 50th percentile, is about the same as the 1924 average of over 90%. This is a classic case to prove that median and average scores are not equivalent. Very likely the 1963 score shows that only 50% of the children average now what 100% of the children averaged in 1924. Gates' oral test must be run and marked to show the average and not the median, just as in 1923-1924, in order to get hard data on the drop in reading accuracy in grades 1 through 6.

#### The Second Test

The correlation between spelling accuracy and reading accuracy is very high. Leonard P. Ayres' "A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling" should be retested exactly as done in 1914-1915, when he tested 70,000 children in grades 2 through 8 in 84 American cities. These new norms should be compared to the 1915 ones to show the degree of retardation. Children were normally not permitted to drop out of school in those cities before about 14 years of age or older. Ayres showed elsewhere children then were almost never more than two years below grade level. Therefore, 1915 fifth grade scores represented virtually 100% of city children in that age group, and showed clearly virtually 100% were literate, including Blacks and foreign born.

If World War I Army illiteracy statistics should be cited in an attempt to discount Ayres' data, the unreliability of these statistics should be made clear. The 1917 program was run by American psychologists. In most Army camps, psychologists marked soldiers illiterate if they had not reached a specific grade level. It varied from camp to camp, from fourth to eighth grade. Abe Lincoln, who only

reached second grade, would have been marked illiterate by the World War I psychologists. In a minority of camps, a so-called reading test was given. Draftees who were undoubtedly nervous and distracted were scored as illiterate if they could not answer enough comprehension questions on a news article they had read. Their oral reading accuracy was not tested so the test was meaningless.

### The Third Test

Eye regression movement means to go back to look again at print already seen. Such movements can be recorded statistically with laboratory methods, as shown in Educational Development Laboratories, Inc., "Research Information Bulletin 3, 1960". Another kind of test called oral reading error studies has shown that, even at first grade, phonically trained first graders make far fewer regressions. They are obviously reading sound, and not going back to check meaningful conscious guesses.

Since most American schools keep a reading record on each pupil showing reading texts used from first to sixth grade, and since records follow the pupil to a new school when he moves, it should be simple to break sixth grades into two groups: those who learned with true phonics in first grade and those who learned with context guessing phony phonics plus sight words in first grade. Labeling of programs for this test as true phonics or context-guessing phony phonics should follow the guidelines in Dr. Rudolf Flesch's carefully researched 1981 book, "Why Johnny STILL Can't Read." As Dr. Flesch pointed out, 85% of American first-grades use textbooks he labeled The Dismal Dozen, which teach only context-guessing phony phonics.

With sixth-graders identified on first grade methods, an eye movement study like that of Educational Development Laboratories should be carried out to compare the two methods. Fewer regressions would indicate greater automaticity, and numerous regressions a lack of automaticity.

### The Fourth Test

Methods are available to tell if a reader is using his LEFT or his RIGHT brain memory bank to read print. See, for instance, an article by Daniel Goleman in the May 12, 1985, "New York Times Magazine" on experiments in which words were read by either one or the other side of the brain.

Again, it should be possible to arrange tests between two groups: sixth graders phonically trained in first grade, and sixth graders with context-guessing phony phonics plus sight words in first grade.

The left side of the brain is normally the language side, so phonically trained sixth graders should test like the classical aphasic patients in William James' 1890 psychology text: capable of reading only with the left side of the brain. This should suggest true dominance and the formation of an automatic conditioned reflex.

The right side of the brain is known to be used for the reading of Chinese characters. Since sight words are taught as wholes or globally like Chinese characters, and since context-guessing phony phonics teaches partial phonics, children taught with these two associated approaches should demonstrate they are reading with both sides of the brain. Reading with both sides of the brain suggests mixed dominance with possible impairment of automaticity.

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Please inform me if you will or will not request these four tests, and, if not, why not, so that your response will become a matter of public record. Thank you.

(Copies were distributed widely, many without cover letters.)



## Section 2

The following was submitted to ALL members of The National Assessment Governing Board in February, 1992, along with a copy of comments made before it in 1989. (However, a correction has been made in the following on the title of Dr. Chall's book, which title had been quoted incorrectly.) In addition, a paper copy of the history, which was almost completed in draft form except for most of the appendices and the section on France, was sent to three members. Offers of computer disk copies of the draft history were given to the other members.

Not a single one of the twenty-four people associated with The National Assessment Governing Board who were sent copies of this material has ever replied up July, 2000, eight years later..

### THE 1992 READING ASSESSMENT: IS IT FRAUDULENT?

Comments on the Failure of  
The National Assessment Governing Board  
Of The National Assessment of Educational Progress  
To Report that a Consensus on  
Testing Reading Achievement in 1992 Does Not Yet Exist

And on Their Misrepresentation in their December, 1989,  
Public Hearings: Analysis of Comments - Final Report  
That Such a Consensus Is Developing by Quoting Only the  
Biases of Those Entrenched Vested Interest Groups in  
Education which Many Observers Believe Are Directly Responsible  
For American Functional Illiteracy,  
Their Failure to Achieve a Viable Consensus  
Being in Violation of Specific Legislation of  
The United States Congress.

In Addition,  
A Preliminary Draft Version of  
A History of Reading Instruction  
To Provide Necessary Background Material  
To Understand the Issues at Stake

By: Geraldine E. Rodgers, B.S., M.A.  
Retired Primary Grades Teacher  
and Researcher in Education  
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On October 11, 1989, the National Assessment Governing Board of the National Assessment of Educational Progress held a hearing in Trenton, New Jersey, requesting comments from the public on the proposed 1992 NAEP tests of reading achievement in American schools. This was in accordance with Public Law 100-297, section 6(E), which states, "Each learning area assessment shall have goal statements devised through a national consensus approach, providing for active participation of teachers, curriculum specialists, local school administrators, parents and concerned members of the general public." Shortly afterwards, the National Assessment Governing Board held hearings in several other American cities, for the same purpose.

These hearings resulted in their issuing in December, 1989, the totally unsatisfactory Public Hearings: Analysis of Comments - Final Report, which purports to provide a summary of the views expressed by the public at these meetings but which totally omits any views which contradict the views of the vested interests in America's education establishment. The Final Report instead tells approvingly of such things as requests for open-ended questions like those on the Michigan reading test which produced such a hornets' nest of opposition from angry parents in Michigan.

My testing requests which I read at their October 11, 1989, hearing in Trenton are given on pages 16, 17 and 18. Yet, my requests were totally omitted from the final report on these legislatively mandated hearings, which hearings were held solely to receive such requests.

Also given, starting on page 19-1, is my February 11, 1992, copyrighted addition to my testimony, which I am now sending to the National Assessment Governing Board. It outlines the history in American schools of the massive use for hearing children of a deaf-mute reading method. Instead of teaching children to read by the sounds of the letters in words, the deaf-mute method teaches reading without the use of sound. It was used in eighteenth century France by the Abbe de L'Epee, and had been in use in Europe as long ago as the fifteenth century. Printed words were taught as soundless, meaning-bearing wholes, like symbols and pictures. After enough words were learned as pictures with which to build sentences, unknown words were inserted in such sentences, the meaning of which could be guessed from the sentence's context. An addition to the deaf-mute method is "phony phonics," which means to drill students to piece together the beginning consonant sounds of one known word with the ending portion of another known word to work out a third unknown word. This approach of building new words from the parts of memorized whole words was also used with deaf-mutes, to help them visually to distinguish among sight-words. Such two-step visual "phonics" which is only the pasting together of parts of known whole sight-words is used as an additional crutch, besides the meaning of the context, with which to guess an unknown printed word's identity, out of the reader's already existing store of spoken vocabulary. Very often, however, the only "phonics" used is the beginning sound of an unknown whole word, which is worked out by comparing it to the beginning sounds of known whole words, plus a context guess.

Because of the structure of language, the reading disabilities that result from the deaf-mute method plus phony phonics are hidden by fifth grade for most children, so that fifth grade teachers in middle-class communities will often say they seldom find a child who cannot read. From this vast population of hidden reading failures in upper grades come our low achievers in high school and college. Only one thousand high frequency words out of the half-million or so in English comprise over ninety percent of written texts. Once children know these sight-words and have been drilled to guess new words by the aid of the context and phony phonics, they can read at or well above ninety percent accuracy, which is above the frustration or failing rate, on material made up of words already in their spoken vocabularies. Fifth grade and higher grade teachers therefore wrongly assume such children can read. Fifth grade teachers (and the NAEP) should test children on the oral reading of a list of progressively more difficult rare words. They would be astonished to find children who either could not read these words at all, or who had such

difficulty piecing words together with phony phonics that it was evident the “skill” could be of little use to them on demanding material. It is this inability to read and therefore to learn low frequency words which accounts for the inability of high school students to handle academically demanding texts, which is discussed further below.

In order to uncover the extent of real reading disabilities in school children, I requested the Department of Education in my letter of September 19, 1986, to William J. Bennett, then Secretary of Education, to arrange to have carried out four specific survey tests of real reading ability to establish clearly the harmful effects of the reading methods in use in American schools. These testing requests were denied by the counter-productive U. S. Department of Education, just as my other testing requests of October 11, 1989, were ignored by the National Assessment Governing Board.

As necessary background to the deaf-mute method currently in use in American schools, the attached history also outlines the history of reading instruction in general. The National Assessment Governing Board implicitly supports this deaf-mute method by failing to report that this entrenched method has aroused vigorous opposition from many people. My purpose in sending this addition to my October 11, 1989, testimony is to enlighten the National Assessment Governing Board concerning the previous history and actual nature of reading instruction. With such information which they obviously lack, they should be in a position to amend their faulty report of 1989. Through omission, it falsely suggests that a kind of consensus is developing for invalid reading tests which support this deaf-mute method. It is to be hoped that, in an amended report, the National Assessment Governing Board will outline the demand for valid reading tests from those who oppose America’s “reading establishment.”

When the National Assessment Government Board finally admits that the only kind of consensus on the testing of reading which can exist at present is a two-part testing program which provides for both invalid reading tests (to placate the institutionalized vested interests in education) and valid reading tests (to meet the demands of outraged members of the public), it will then be able to achieve a consensus on reading tests as mandated by the U. S. Congress.

One of my October 11, 1989, requests was for oral testing of accuracy in reading lists of progressively more difficult words, the lists being those prepared by Arthur I. Gates in 1923, on which he tested 1,700 students in 1923-1924 at grades two to six, all of which words, astonishingly, more than 95% of American 1923-1924 students could read by sixth grade! The oral reading of word lists is a more desirable oral reading test than the oral reading of paragraphs, such as those paragraphs first prepared by William S. Gray in 1914 (on 1915 versions of which thousands upon thousands of American students were tested before 1918). To paraphrase what Leonard P. Ayres reported in his 1915 A Measuring Scale of Ability in Spelling,

A MERE ONE THOUSAND OF THE HIGHEST FREQUENCY WORDS OUT OF THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS IN ENGLISH OCCUPY MORE THAN 90% OF ANY RUNNING TEXT IN ENGLISH.

By the end of fourth grade in our benighted schools, most of our so-called “functional” illiterates have been taught these thousand or so highest frequency words as whole sight-words, like Chinese characters, without concentration on their individual letter sounds.

FUNCTIONAL ILLITERATES CAN THEREFORE SCORE OVER 90% WHEN READING ANY CONNECTED TEXT, WHICH IS “PASSING” OR ABOVE THE “FRUSTRATION LEVEL.” “ABOVE THE FRUSTRATION LEVEL” MEANS THE SIGHT WORDS THEY KNOW MAKE UP ENOUGH OF THE CONTEXT SO THAT THEY CAN GUESS THE MEANING OF THE

## REMAINING UNKNOWN WORDS OR AT LEAST THE MEANING OF THE READING SELECTION AS A WHOLE.

This, of course, is how deaf-mutes were taught to work out the meaning of unknown sight words. The new words were embedded like raisins in a dough consisting of their memorized sight words. Since such scores of over 90% on oral reading tests are marked as “above the frustration level” or passing,

**MOST OF OUR FUNCTIONAL ILLITERATES WOULD PASS TESTS OF CONNECTED ORAL READING AND HIDE THEIR TERRIBLE INABILITY TO READ UNFAMILIAR WORDS, JUST AS THEY CAN GUESS SO MANY ANSWERS ON THE LOWER LEVELS OF OUR FRAUDULENT “READING COMPREHENSION” TESTS WHICH HAVE BEEN USED TO MASK OUR READING FAILURES FOR SIXTY YEARS.**

Yet, it is the lowest frequency, more unfamiliar, words which bear the deepest meaning in a text, and it is the sound of these words which our functional illiterates cannot “decode,” or, if they can, do so with such difficulty that the “skill” is of little or no use to them when they are reading connected text with difficult words. Having acquired rigid conditioned reflexes in first grade to look at words as meaning-bearing wholes because they were taught by the deaf-mute method, it is impossible for them to “hear” unfamiliar printed words as sound as they are reading, even when they can guess the meaning of the words from the context. They therefore are not able to combine the sound of such words with the apparent meanings of the words from the context during the actual act of reading connected text, as competent readers are able to do. They are obviously unable to add such words to their vocabularies even if they can discern the meanings of the words from the context.

The “phony phonics” which functional illiterates have been taught in our schools by the use of mountains of expensive reading workbooks can frequently only be used to identify printed words which such readers already know as spoken words. Functional illiterates are nearly helpless when sounding out words they do not already know as spoken words, many being unable and others unwilling to use Arthur I. Gates’ effort-filled, awkward, complicated, “intrinsic phonics” approach which is actually the deaf-mute approach of using context and parts of known whole words to add an unknown whole word to the visual memory. Yet it is this unpleasant, conscious approach dealing ONLY with the comparison of whole words, NOT letter sounds, which is actually used by those deaf-mute trained American readers who have managed to rise above the “functional illiteracy” level, as attested by the 1985 Government report, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* (page 11).

Almost 100 per cent of those readers who developed phonic conditioned reflexes in first grade, and those of the deaf-mute [method] trained readers who are lucky enough to be able to read with some degree of success despite that defective approach, can add new printed words to their vocabularies by figuring out their sound from the print and their meaning from the context. They are therefore constantly adding the sound and meaning of such new low frequency-words to their reading vocabularies. By contrast, functional illiterates are left in a state of arrested vocabulary development. It is precisely this inability to sound out and then to learn from the context the meaning of these low frequency words which accounts for the low scores of functional illiterates in upper-grade “reading comprehension.” The only approach that can uncover their terrible decoding disability is the oral reading of progressively more difficult word lists, where there is no context for the illiterates to use as “clues” for “psycholinguistic guessing.”

It is curious that no one has ever pointed out the Achilles Heel of the “psycholinguistic” teaching of reading and of its most recent retreat, the “whole language” approach. After stripping off the layers of verbiage with which both methods are covered, it is obvious they are actually the same (and the same as the “natural” method promoted by “experts” in the 1890’s). The approach makes it exceedingly difficult

for readers taught only that way and without true phonics to increase their vocabularies through their independent reading. Therefore, the approach arrests mental development and ultimately lowers verbal intelligence quotients.

Yet oral accuracy tests on word lists are reportedly not going to be given to the whole 1992 fourth grade reading test population to uncover the fact that many cannot really read, and that they are not “functionally illiterate” but simply illiterate (meaning unable to deal with letters). Instead, only a portion of the 1992 test group will be tested on oral reading. Yet even this test will not be on progressively more difficult word lists, but on connected oral reading of paragraphs where most of the words are certain to be high-frequency words, which, with context-guessing of words already in spoken vocabularies, can yield high scores and hide decoding disabilities. But even this unsatisfactorily small oral test group in 1992 will NOT be scored on oral reading accuracy, as was done on the Gray oral reading tests given to vast numbers of students between 1914 and 1918. (The fact that oral tests were given to thousands of students in those years makes it abundantly clear that it is NOT unfeasible to give large-scale oral tests. To see how easily it can be done, refer to the 1917 *The Cleveland School Survey - Summary Volume*, by Leonard P. Ayres, which reported on page 168 and following on the 1915 Cleveland schools oral tests given to 1,831 pupils.) Instead, in the proposed 1992 tests, if the students are considered to have read at a normal rate, it is reported that they will not be tested on accuracy AT ALL but will simply be recorded as having passed the test! Yet most people begin to approach their adult oral reading speed by the fourth grade level, including those poor readers who read with many errors - the “functional illiterates.”

As has been pointed out, functional illiterates are capable of passing oral accuracy reading tests at above 90% accuracy because they may know the one thousand highest frequency sight words which account for over 90% of most texts. Yet even if they know only about 300 of the highest frequency sight words, which few words compose an incredible 75% of most texts, such readers may score above the 90% frustration level if they are accomplished context guessers.

IS IT NOT CURIOUS THAT THIS TESTING INFORMATION HAS NEVER BEEN PUBLISHED?

Functional illiterates are also likely to substitute guessed synonyms for those low frequency words they do not know, without a perceptible change in rate (“puppy” for “dog,” etc.) particularly since so many have been drilled to read in this “psycholinguistic guessing” “whole language” fashion since first grade. It is almost unbelievable, therefore, that the appalling 1992 “assessment” is reportedly going to record such fourth graders, who read at an average rate but inaccurately, as passing the oral test! Only the slow and stumbling readers, who have been unable to memorize even high-frequency sight words, the most disabled readers out of the small group being “tested” (?) on oral reading, will receive an oral reading score, but even it will not be an accuracy percentage score. Instead, it will come from the disgraceful “cloze” “tests” which are meant only to yield a subjective analysis of how “good” they are at “psycholinguistic guessing.” Yet when Clara Schmidt tested the oral reading of Chicago children in 1914, she found “psycholinguistic guessing” to be the hallmark of the mentally deficient! (Her article, “School Subjects as Material for Tests of Mental Ability, I,” appeared in the *Elementary School Journal*, then *Elementary School Teacher*, of the University of Chicago in November, 1914.) Clara Schmidt’s 1914 mentally retarded children, therefore would be scored on the 1992 reading assessment as more accomplished “readers” than children of normal intelligence!

Reading “rate” tests and “cloze” tests are clearly NOT the oral reading accuracy tests I requested which would have given objective percentage scores on reading accuracy for ALL fourth graders, instead of opinions on the kinds of errors made by a tiny group of the most disabled. By “cloze” philosophy, those errors favoring the context’s “meaning” instead of the letters’ “sounds” are considered far more desirable, since they show the student is concentrating on the “meaning” of the selection. Errors

concentrating on letter sounds are supposed to demonstrate inferior reading ability, even though Clara Schmidt found that concentrating on letter sounds was the hallmark of children with normal intelligence, and that “psycholinguistic guessing” was the hallmark of the mentally deficient.

The “born yesterday” nature of today’s “cloze” tests and “error analyses” must be considered. Cloze tests originated (though most of their proponents probably do not know it) in work by Ebbinghaus in Germany in 1885, reported in his *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology*. (According to William S. Sahakian, page 107 and following, and page 458, *History of Psychology*, F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., Itasca, Illinois, Ebbinghaus’s report included “his study of completion tests,” which obviously are cloze tests, as well his study on the relative ease of memorizing meaningful material compared to meaningless syllables.) The most important contribution to “error analysis” theory came from Clara Schmitt, working in the Chicago schools, who reported in the *Elementary School Teacher* in November, 1914, on the kinds of oral reading errors made by mental defectives. The children she tested who had normal intelligence misread words primarily by sound. To use an old analogy from another source, children who make errors on words by “sound” might read “bottle” for “battle.” Decoding by sound, such children are on the right track for adding words to their vocabularies - and can correct the misreading from bottle to battle once they know the context. (As has been pointed out, the misread sentence, “My father was in a bottle” is rapidly corrected to “My father was in a battle.”) Clara Schmidt’s mental defectives, however, “psycholinguistically” guessed whole words for meaning, not sound. By the former analogy, her mentally retarded students might have read “war” for battle, and never would have known they were wrong. The error Clara Schmitt actually reported in her article, however, concerned the reading of the fable about the fox and the grapes:

“The errors in pronunciation made by the normal children... were always in favor of a word which had considerable visual or phonetic resemblance to the correct word. The errors made by the defective children with the first selection which was perfectly familiar to them in content, at least, were absurd so far as visual or phonetic values were concerned, but were calculated to fill in the context. The defective child reads, for instance, that the fox saw a vine with berries on it. Because of the great prevalence of this type of variation the performance of the defective group cannot be compared with that of the normal.”

Clara Schmitt’s poor retarded students “psycholinguistically” altered “grapes” to “berries,” which she found to be a hallmark of mental disability. Yet according to the “born yesterday” cloze theory, reportedly to be used on the 1992 “oral reading” error analyses, Clara Schmitt’s mental defectives would be marked as accomplished readers because they were reading for “meaning,” while normal children who decode for sound would be marked as disabled! Is THIS the kind of “oral reading test” and reading philosophy to be used in 1992?

The second test I requested was dictated spelling (spelling being the best over-all indicator of reading automaticity, as any honest primary grade school teacher could confirm). These two proposed 1992 test scores on oral reading accuracy and spelling accuracy could then be compared to the A. I. Gates’ 1923-1924 oral word list norms and to the Leonard P. Ayres 1915 spelling norms in *A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling*, which scientific norms were based on tests of thousands of American students in those years: 1923-1924 and 1914-1915. Hard test data in 1992 to compare to these earlier scores should confirm the drastic drop in reading ability which has occurred since 1930 because of the adoption of the deaf-mute method for teaching first-grade reading.

Virtually no meaningful large-scale testing of oral reading has been done since 1930. The United States Office of Education large-scale, Government-funded first-grade studies on 27 different kinds of reading programs in 1967 were almost completely composed of written tests, but some oral reading was tested which compared phonics-trained classes to sight-word (“deaf-mute method”) trained classes.

However, the tests were done in the spring of first grade which was too soon to produce meaningful results. The following year, USOE continued the tests on some of the original 27 programs in second grade, and this testing also included oral testing. But the second grade oral test data did not become available with the written test data. The children in the 27 programs had been pre-tested before beginning first grade to determine how many did or did not know the alphabet, and how many did or did not have other “readiness” strengths or weaknesses. The resulting data was fed into the computer so that all classes started with the same “handicap.” The scores on all subsequent tests were adjusted accordingly by the computer so that they could be compared fairly. When I inquired by telephone about the availability of these final oral reading scores for second grade, I was told by a man who had worked on the USOE tests that someone had accidentally pressed a wrong button and wiped out all this scientifically-processed data on the second grade oral tests. This wiped-out tax-supported second-grade data would have provided the first meaningful large-scale testing of oral reading in America in fifty years.

NAEP, which is funded by tax dollars, is now in a position to provide the first large-scale testing results on American written spelling and oral reading accuracy in about SEVENTY YEARS and yet is failing to make provision for such tests. Its failure to do so should be brought to the attention of Congress which passed the enabling legislation for this testing program, now being so appallingly mishandled. NAEP and the National Assessment Governing Board should be held strictly accountable in the future if the 1992 reading assessment finally turns out to have been an improper use of tax monies.

The large-scale multiple-choice printed spelling test forms which are used today, in place of standardized large-scale dictated, written spelling tests like Ayres’, require that a student check which one of about four printed spellings for a word he considers correct. Such multiple-choice preprinted tests are NOT valid spelling tests. These spelling tests arrived about 1930, curiously at about the same time as the Gates and Gray deaf-mute-method, sight-word readers which had such a catastrophic effect on American spelling and oral reading accuracy. The drop in spelling is proven beyond any possible question by comparing certain words which occur on both the Iowa norms in the 1950’s and on Ayres’ norms in 1915.

Also by 1930, “silent reading comprehension” tests introduced in 1914 (and one of the first in 1914 was by the Columbia Teacher’s College famous psychologist, E. L. Thorndike) had totally displaced large-scale individual oral reading accuracy tests. Yet, curiously, the standardized oral reading accuracy tests which went out of general use in schools after the 1920’s except in “reading remediation” were also introduced in 1914 by Thorndike’s student, William Scott Gray. The tests were prepared under the psychologist Thorndike’s direct supervision. In 1923, Thorndike’s other famous ex-student, Arthur I. Gates, who worked at Columbia Teachers College with Thorndike, wrote the oral word-list test which I am requesting be retested in 1992.

Portions of the Gates test are currently used on a test published by Teachers College Press, but the scores are treated very differently than in 1924, reporting only on the score of the median child who is half-way between the top and the bottom of the class. The resulting norms are in no sense comparable to average scores for whole classes in 1924, even though they look similar, and even though such “median” and “average” scores on other topics generally tend to be similar. It is easy enough to show that they are NOT similar on the Gates word lists: no one could believe that one hundred percent of today’s sixth-graders can read nineteen of twenty increasingly difficult words, or, to put it differently, that ninety-six percent of sixth graders could read one hundred percent of the increasingly difficult word lists without a single error, if four percent read none of them. (That would give a four percent illiteracy rate, opposed to 96% total literacy!) That is exactly what those 1924 “average class” scores meant statistically, though individual scores obviously fell in between these two extreme statistical cases. However, it is obvious we would have only a minor illiteracy problem if our sixth graders today could score like those in 1924.

Gray returned to the University of Chicago from Columbia Teachers College in 1915 to work with Thorndike's ex-college classmate, the psychologist Charles H. Judd, and Gray later wrote the Scott, Foresman "Dick and Jane" deaf-mute method readers published in 1930. Arthur I. Gates, Thorndike's student about 1916, published in 1930 the primer of his deaf-mute method Macmillan series. These two deaf-mute method series published by Thorndike's ex-students, Gates and Gray, starting in 1930, were the first such deaf-mute series ever published for hearing children. Their books which used the "new" "intrinsic phonics" pushed the supplementary phonics charts out of primary classrooms, all over America. For instance, as I was told by a teacher who taught in New Jersey at that time, New Jersey state-supplied phonic drill charts were removed from classrooms after 1930.

Gates' deaf-mute method intrinsic phonics, which meant comparing an unknown word in context to remembered words in memory to see like parts so as to help in guessing its identity, was publicized as a scientific, enlightened, child-loving replacement for the old, child-abusing phonic drill. No one mentioned it was based on the visual analysis used for centuries in teaching deaf-mutes.

For almost fifty years dating from the early 1920's, Gates and Gray were widely publicized as the ultimate "reading experts" in America by America's education establishment. Nila Banton Smith made these comments about them on page 222 of *American Reading Instruction* (1932, 1965) for the period from about 1925 to 1935 (as outlined on page 196):

"During this period two 'giants' in the field of reading instruction turned their great funds of knowledge to practical application in developing basal reader programs. These 'giants,' in so far as reading goes, were Dr. Arthur I. Gates and Dr. William S. Gray, both of whom, during the immediately preceding years, had conducted research of great magnitude and produced writings in great volume concerning the teaching of reading."

Paper never refuses ink, even that from Smith or her "giants," Gray and Gates.

Jean Chall acknowledged Gray's very real influence in her book, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate*. McGraw Hill Book Company, New York: 1967, (page 96) (second and third editions 1983 and 1996, Forth Worth, Texas: Harcourt Brace), when she referred to:

"...the late William S. Gray, acknowledged leader of, and spokesman for, reading experts for four decades; major summarizer and interpreter of reading research; and author of America's leading basal-reader series, the Scott, Foresman & Company series."

It would be interesting if someone would research this development historically to demonstrate the power of public relations. The fame (notoriety?) of Gray and Gates coincided with a push to remove oral reading from the schools, and to replace it with silent reading and silent tests, at all levels from grade one upwards. It coincided with the burying of the once-famous Ayres' spelling scale which demonstrated American children in 1915 had been able to spell - and therefore to read - with astonishing accuracy.

Gates at Columbia Teachers College, New York, and Gray at the University of Chicago, who were both trained by Thorndike, trained hordes of reading "experts" who themselves wrote other deaf-mute method series. Thorndike's theories were refined from ideas he had received from his former professors, the psychologists William James of Harvard and James' close friend, James McKeen Cattell of Columbia, and Cattell's and James' delusions are the probable source for the use of the deaf-mute method for hearing children. Yet Cattell and James were only endorsing the deaf-mute methods so successfully promoted in America from 1826 until about 1900, the same methods by which they had both probably been taught to read as children. (That most Americans learned to read with a "phonic" McGuffey series in the 1800's is an academically scandalous myth, as my attached history concretely demonstrates.)



Thorndike's ex-students, Gates and Gray (and their horde of followers who are suitably decorated with meaningless university degrees in "reading instruction") are directly responsible, as obviously is Thorndike, for America's functional illiteracy. (I dropped out of a program for an additional master's degree half-way through. It was in "reading instruction," but the content was so faulty the degree would have been as meaningless as a degree in astrology or alchemy. It is a tragedy that, because of misinformation and disinformation from "experts," well-intentioned teachers and professors have been misled into thinking such programs have validity and so promote such programs.)

Large-scale tests of written spelling accuracy and oral reading accuracy were commonly done in massive city school surveys all over the United States from 1914 to 1918. The dropping of such large-group tests as the standardized 1915 Ayres spelling scale and the William Scott Gray standardized 1915 oral reading paragraphs has raised the gravest of doubts concerning the objectivity and motivations of the leaders of the "reading instruction community" over the intervening years. These were the same years in which our functional illiteracy problem developed. One might have assumed that the National Assessment Governing Board would have chosen to allay doubts concerning its own objectivity by reporting on the need for carrying out once again such large-scale written spelling accuracy and oral reading accuracy tests, in addition to the invalid "reading comprehension tests." Today's scores might then be compared to those recorded before 1930 when American schools taught children to read by phonics, and not by the deaf-mute "whole language" sight-word method which is prevalent today.

The National Assessment Governing Board report also cavalierly ignored the comments of other speakers who requested that NAEP test achievement of today's phonically-trained students against those trained today by the deaf-mute sight-word "whole language" approach. Instead, in their discussion of proposals for spending taxpayers' money, the National Assessment Governing Board continued to speak of their non-existent and impossible-to-achieve consensus on testing. This imaginary consensus attempts to legitimize the fact that pro-phonics taxpayers will be forced to continue to pay for "testing" of reading which is not testing at all. The standardized but invalid silent reading comprehension tests which have been used in the past can be passed by shrewd guessing by functional illiterates with average or higher than average intelligence. Therefore, they correlate far more closely with intelligence quotients than with mechanical reading ability which can be demonstrated by oral reading of progressively more difficult word lists. "Silent reading comprehension tests" do not reflect the ability to read low-frequency words except for virtual illiterates, who cannot read enough of the high-frequency words to use their intelligence to guess at answers. However, a newer and even more objectionable version of the silent reading comprehension test is now being proposed for the 1992 reading assessment: an "open-ended" exercise specifically tailored to hide the rampant and widespread reading failures which have been the product of the recent anti-phonics "whole language" steamroller, which has been turning out large numbers of such virtual illiterates who cannot read enough even to make shrewd guesses to the answers on objective silent reading comprehension tests.

"Open-ended questions" on the proposed NAEP printed silent reading test forms would provide the option of several "correct" printed answers to a printed question out of a larger number of printed answers, instead of only one correct answer out of such multiple choices. Those remaining printed answers to be marked "wrong" would presumably be either logically impossible or unacceptable to the subjective biases of the test-makers. Yet, when there are several "correct" answers to any given question, such multiple "correct" answers must obviously represent only subjective opinions, which can obviously vary or there would not be so many different flavors of ice cream. Such multiple "correct" answers, however, cannot represent objective facts, unless the principle of contradiction ("A thing cannot be and not be at the same time,") is being temporarily suspended by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Furthermore, it is statistically obvious, because of the multiple correct answers, that a student could score "correctly" on a very large number of such open-ended questions simply by filling in blanks randomly, without reading anything at all, which might yield a relatively high grade level score.

Any grade school teacher in America can confirm that some students regularly fill in blanks at random on these multiple-choice, silent printed tests. Such tests have taken the place of the oral recitations which were in use not only in the nineteenth and early twentieth century but since ancient times. Almost no one in America today even knows what “recitation” really means, unless he is reading Alice in Wonderland who talks about her recitations. (The written essay tests which attempt to take the place of oral recitations are awkward and unsatisfactory for evaluation purposes.)

Psychologists label the memory differences required for oral recitations vs. multiple-choice printed tests as “recall” vs. “recognition.” Seeing in print the date 1066 opposite a list of names including Harold of Hastings, some students might “recognize” the connection between the date and Harold, but would be totally unable, without the test form in front of them, to “recall” either Harold of Hastings’ name or the date 1066. By random blank filling other students can, by sheer chance, connect Harold and 1066 and get “correct” answers, even though these students might not even be able to PRONOUNCE Harold of Hastings or even read the number 1066.

Random blank-filling on subject-matter standardized tests such as in the sciences or mathematics can raise scores above the zero mark, but it is highly unlikely in subject-matter areas that random guessing can produce a passing grade, so such subject-matter tests are perfectly valid tests, even though they reflect “recognition” memory and not “recall” memory. Subject matter tests have no “context clues” with the answers embedded in reading selections to enable a student with a sufficiently high intelligence to identify the answers, even if he cannot read many of the words on the page. “Psycholinguistic guessing” is the reason why reading “comprehension” tests do a bad job of testing reading, except for the almost totally illiterate, but it is also the reason why reading “comprehension” tests are an excellent indicator of intelligence. By contrast to reading “comprehension” tests, in most standardized, multiple-choice, subject-matter tests, the student does not have context but only his own learning to use as the source for correct answers. Unquestionably, such standardized, multiple-choice, subject-matter tests need to be used more, not less, in our schools, to demonstrate whether students are, or are not, learning subject matter.

Yet a drive is on to eliminate such standardized, multiple-choice, subject-matter tests, just as a drive is on to replace objective multiple-choice “reading comprehension” tests with “open-ended” multiple-choice reading tests. Bad as the objective reading comprehension tests have been, the open-ended reading comprehension tests are considerably worse. Random blank filling on objective reading comprehension tests, which is the only option open to a near illiterate, has at least yielded scores usually below grade level. Therefore, the objective reading comprehension tests managed to some extent to separate those who could read a little from those who could not, or would not, read at all. With the so-called Michigan-type test with open-ended questions which will dispense with one objectively correct answer, it will no longer be possible to provide even this bedrock data.

In its report, the National Assessment Governing Board supported the open-ended testing approach of this infamous Michigan assessment test by reporting positively on page 7 on the possible use of such “open-ended questions.” (It should be noted, however, that the Michigan test outraged parents even more by its content than by its open-ended, non-objective form.) Since, by definition, such open-ended questions can have no one correct answer but instead represent opinions, the use of such questions cannot possibly constitute an objective curriculum “test.” Such questions are, however, widely used on psychological tests to assess personality traits. The National Assessment Governing Board should have stated on page 7 of its report, of course, that the NAEP is only authorized by law to carry out objective testing of achievement. NAEP was formed and funded solely for the purpose of producing objective data on scholastic achievement, NOT to assess such things as personality traits. Actually, if such “open-ended” questioning of captive audiences of public school children should invade the area of values and psychology, the very asking of such questions in public schools would be illegal. It should be

remembered that the Hatch Amendment (The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, Section 439 of the GEPA) was passed specifically to protect pupil privacy and to prohibit unauthorized psychological meddling in the public schools, which can occur with the kind of “open-ended questions” implicitly endorsed by the National Assessment Government Board in its unfortunate final report.

The promotion of the objectionable NAEP reading tests appears to have come as a result of concerted action by relatively small groups of people (change-agents) who obviously shared the same aims. The harmful changes in American educational practices over about the past 165 years have always come from such groups, as my reading history demonstrates, a draft of which is attached. That people in the past should have banded together to produce worthwhile improvements is, of course, only natural. What is different about most groups which affected American education is that they promoted changes which have always had, at their core, control of the content of the education of the children of the public. American education has been shaped to the liking of change-agents, sometimes in direct opposition to the wishes of their parents, or, more commonly, without their knowledge. The publicity the change-agents have generated to effect change has always been the same: expressed horror at some real or imagined defects in current education, following which emotional outcry recipes were given for the cure of such “defects.” The change-agents’ cures have always moved towards more centralized control of education, through the use of at least one of the three “T’s”: Teacher education, Textbooks, or Tests.

It is usually easy to discern the “improvements” being worked on by change-agents at any period of time by reading their newspaper and magazine articles, and books and speeches, concerning “defects” in education, and then reading their recipes for cures. The “defects” they list at present are legion and sometimes their cures may seem to be so, but a common denominator can be seen in all of today’s “cures.” The common denominator is the promotion of the third “T,” Tests - tests for children and tests for teachers. Those who control the content of the tests will have a stranglehold on education, no matter how much the “choice” of schools and tuition vouchers are promoted.

The smokescreens being used at present to cover up the move to control through Tests are the “spontaneous” and highly publicized movements toward school-based instead of centralized control, toward parents being allowed to choose the schools to which to send their children, and toward tuition credits. These are all obviously very good and highly desirable things, and many fine people are working to bring them into existence. These fine people are apparently unaware that others may be using these same causes as smokescreens behind which to conceal the movement toward total control through “Tests.”

What children are taught - or not taught - can be controlled through “official” tests, and “unsuitable” teachers can be failed and not hired for the schools through “official” tests. The achievements of parental choice and tuition credits will become meaningless if the children’s curriculum in all schools is to be rigidly controlled by “official” tests. “Local control” will also be meaningless if the teacher candidates for locally-controlled schools will be expected to pass a test made up by some group such as the Carnegie foundation.

Such groups will take it upon themselves not only to decide what it is that a “good” teacher should consider a “right” answer, but what questions should be asked in the first place. In the Michigan reading tests, for example, many parents found many of the questions to be highly objectionable, but their opposition did not change the tests. Therefore, when such “official” tests arrive for both children and teachers, where will free speech be then not only for children and teachers but for parents?

At present, however, the country is saddled with the proposed 1992 reading tests. Since they will take place, all effort should be made to see that at the least they are not so false and misleading as previous reading tests based on that oxymoron, “reading comprehension.” To assure that they are not so

misleading, rigid oral accuracy tests and rigid spelling tests such as I recommended in October, 1989, should be included instead of omitted as at present.

It should be remembered that the Constitution made no provision for any Federal Governmental involvement of any kind in education (just as it kept the Government out of religion). The Constitution never envisioned the existence of such Governmental groups as the NAEP and the National Assessment Governing Board. Even state involvement in education in the United States did not commence until some years after the Constitution was written, and even then it was minimal. New York State and Massachusetts were the first states to become involved in education, and yet for many years they were almost the only states to have done so. State involvement in education in the United States did not begin to become at all general until more than fifty years after the Constitution was written, and only then because of a massive drive by heavily organized activists for government schools, as Samuel Blumenfeld documented in his book, *Is Public Education Necessary?* (The Paradigm Company, Boise, Idaho, 1981, 1985). Yet incontrovertible evidence exists of extraordinarily high literacy in America before government schools existed outside those few in Massachusetts and New York State. Even in those states, governmental schools were very limited and private education was highly successful.

Edmund Burke said succinctly 200 years ago, "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." If the National Assessment Governing Board and the NAEP mishandle the 1992 reading assessment by failing to give valid tests, a wide audience may remember Burke's adage and come to believe in the potential harmfulness of granting power to evaluate achievement and thereby to shape curriculum to self-perpetuating Governmental agencies which are unaccountable to the voting public. The National Assessment Governing Board and the NAEP may thereby hasten the happy day when American education and the policing of American educational results will be returned, by future acts of Congress, by a Constitutional amendment, or even by a decision of the Supreme Court, totally to the local (not the state) level. After all, that is where the United States Constitution originally, and obviously very intentionally, left them.

Testimony Given at the  
National Assessment Governing Board Public Hearing  
Trenton Board of Education Board Room  
108 North Clinton Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey 08609  
October 11, 1989  
By Geraldine E. Rodgers

The purpose of these meetings is to get a consensus on goals for the 1992 assessment of fourth-grade reading. The dictionary defines "consensus" as "general agreement." To try through a few public meetings to get agreement on goals in reading methods and tests when Americans have been bitterly divided on them for well over a hundred years cannot succeed. NAEP must amend this impossible aim by giving two separate sets of tests to meet the vastly different teaching and testing goals of both sides of the controversy.

Despite opposition from the true-phonics side, those who promoted the phony-phonics, sight-words-plus-guessing, deaf-mute method of teaching reading have been in almost total control of American schools, teacher colleges and reading books since the 1920's. It is sad that the deaf-mute method they installed to teach normal children to read is an inferior way to teach even deaf mutes! Nevertheless, their vigilant censorship practices have kept this group in control. Their disinformation has even misled many into thinking true phonics has returned to reading instruction. Such disinformation and censorship must not affect the 1992 tests.

The latest window-dressing title for the deaf-mute guessing method is "whole language." The latest fake reading test is the notorious Michigan assessment test, reliably reported to be used by NAEP in 1992. Although the test is indefensible, I am not so naive as to presume comments like mine can stop the reading establishment steamroller from pushing that bad test into our schools. Yet, meaningless tests of reading comprehension like Michigan's do represent a consensus on how to teach and test reading from that curious group, America's entrenched reading experts. But their opponents have a different consensus: that true phonics is necessary for beginning reading. As American citizens, the pro-phonics group has the right to expect that NAEP will protect pro-phonics interests with the same ardor with which NAEP protects the interests of the deaf-mute method steamroller. Therefore, NAEP must also use tests the pro-phonics group can approve.

Our hordes of functional illiterates, unknown before 1930, were produced by the invasion of our schools in 1930 by the deaf-mute method of sight words and context guessing for teaching reading. The experts won this victory for the deaf-mute method by confusing the differences between reading skill and comprehension. Real tests of reading skill were replaced by 1930 by tests which reflected children's relative ability to understand and to guess - the so-called silent reading comprehension tests.

Unlike America's reading experts in 1930 and today, the Russian psychologist, D. B. Elkonin, entertained no such confusion on the differences between reading skill and understanding. He said:

"Understanding, which is often considered as the basic content of the process of reading arises as a result of correct recreation of the sound forms of words. He who, independently of the level of understanding of words, can correctly recreate their sound forms is able to read."

Elkonin saw reading as a skill like typing. The master French psychologist, Alfred Binet, also saw the skill of reading as something completely different from comprehension. When he tested intelligence in Paris in 1908, children were asked to tell how much they understood of what they had just read orally. His assistant at the time, Dr. Theophile Simon, said in 1924:

“...we ... observed many times this curious thing: it happens that some children read very incorrectly, so incorrectly that their reading aloud is, for those who listen, very nearly incomprehensible, and then, if one asks them what they have read, they say it almost correctly. There is therefore less correlation than one could believe possible between the understanding and the correctness of reading.”

“Almost correctly,” of course, is not good enough, but this capacity to guess the meaning of a page from those few words which can be read explains why children taught by the “whole language” variant of the deaf-mute method, and who therefore cannot really read, can still get passing scores on reading comprehension.

Dr. Hilde Mosse, psychiatrist and pediatrician, said in her Complete Handbook of Reading Disorders that reading should be an automatic conditioned reflex, and that a lack of automaticity in reading such as Binet saw is a disability. Since reading comprehension tests can be passed by guessing, they reveal nothing about defects in automaticity.

The structure of the brain explains why “reading comprehension” should have no place in a definition of reading and why it is a classic oxymoron. According to Dr. Wilder Penfield, the famous neurologist and surgeon, the human brain has two main systems: the automatic sensory-motor mechanism, which is our brain’s computer, where our learning or conditioned reflexes are stored, and the higher brain mechanism, where our consciousness resides.

Testing reading achievement, like testing of vocabulary meanings, should be concerned only with the automatic sensory-motor mechanism, the brain’s computer, because that is where such learning or conditioned reflexes are stored. Testing of reading achievement should not be concerned with the higher brain mechanism, where consciousness and comprehension reside, because, by definition, that part of the brain cannot be taught or conditioned. That is why trying to teach comprehension is ridiculous.

For 1992, therefore, these tests are needed to show how well children have learned to read printed words, not how well they can guess meaning:

#### Pronouncing of Word Lists:

Oral testing of word lists is better than paragraphs since word lists are immune from context guessing. “A Test of Ability in the Pronunciation of Words” by Arthur I. Gates should be used in 1992. Gates told in 1924 of his oral tests of 1700 pupils in grades 1 through 6 on his lists of progressively more difficult words. Fourth grade averages for 1992 must be compared to his 1924 fourth grade averages to show the failure of the deaf-mute method. Median scores, such as those on the 1962 Gates-McKillop tests, (“the average child,” or the child at the 50th percentile)<sup>42</sup>, ABSOLUTELY SHOULD NOT BE USED as they obscure results.

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<sup>42</sup> The phrase in parentheses was added on November 1, 1989. Also, the date of the Gates-McKillop test was corrected from 1963 to 1962. The Gates-McKillop Reading Diagnostic Tests (1962) and the Gates-McKillop-Horowitz Reading Diagnostic Tests (1981) were published by Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York. The test I recommended, however, is SOLELY that outlined by Arthur I. Gates in his “A Test of Ability in the Pronunciation of Words,” page 205-219 of Teachers College Record, Teachers College, Columbia University, November, 1924. The necessary word lists and sufficient information on his test results are contained in that article. The 1915 A Measuring Scale for Ability in Spelling, originally published by the Russell Sage Foundation, New York, New York, has been republished by Mott Media, Milford, Michigan. The preface attributed to me was only an adaptation of material I sent Mott Media and was not written by me, and that adaptation is factually wrong in places.

Dictated Spelling Tests:

Spelling accuracy is the best indicator of oral reading accuracy, but it must be tested by dictated, written spelling tests, not by multiple choices on printed forms. Leonard P. Ayres' tested 70,000 children in grades 2 through 8 in 84 American cities on written spelling of the commonest words, and in 1915 reported the results in A Measuring Scale for Ability In Spelling. Fourth graders in 1992 should be retested with Ayres' scale and their scores compared to 1915 fourth graders. The drop in scores since 1915 should be catastrophic because of the switch to the deaf-mute method.

Inclusion of these tests of real reading ability should counterbalance meaningless multiple-choice tests on silent reading comprehension.

(Copies of this paper have been widely distributed.)

