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FOR THE PRIVILEGED FEW: THE PRIVATE AND SPECIALIST SCHOOLS OF ONTARIO, 1800-1930

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Introduction

In many parts of Canada the private school has traditionally played a relatively minor role in the educational system. For a number of reasons, this has not been the case in Ontario. During the first half-century of the province's existence, most of the schools established were private, if by the term one means a fee-paying institution. Full public financing of schools at the primary level did not begin until 1850, when legislation was passed permitting trustees to levy property taxes to support education, as well as the collection of user fees, the traditional method of support. Fees were not abolished in the primary schools until 1871, while fees for secondary-school students were abolished only in 1921. Even after the development of a publicly supported system of education, the private schools continued to play an important role in the development of the province. By 1930 there were a total of 17,000 students in the non-publicly funded schools in Ontario, compared with nearly 600,000 in the primary schools and 65,000 in the public secondary schools.¹ But the influence of private schools dwarfed the numbers of students taught there, for private-school graduates have traditionally played a disproportionately influential role in the country's decision-making processes. While much of this power may exist more in the minds of commentators than it does in reality, it remains the case that the "Canadian Establishment" is usually connected with private schools, and particularly with those in Ontario. Though their numbers may be small, the province's private schools are a not uninfluential part of the province's educational system, and the buildings which house them are significantly different from much of the province's educational architecture. For these reasons, it is worthwhile to examine in some detail the design of private schools in Ontario. Even though they vary widely in scale, origin, age and style of teaching, privately funded schools deserve to be treated as a separate building type. Five factors explain why Ontario's private schools differ markedly from the province's public educational facilities, and though the importance of each factor varies from individual case to individual case, it is worthwhile to list them here. Private schools are an identifiable building type for the following reasons:

1. Many private schools saw themselves as major educational institutions whose importance extended beyond the student community it served; they therefore adopted an architectural form and a style which marked them as educational and social symbols, with an external face of a quasi-public character;
2. Generally the private school offered a curriculum much broader than that provided by the public school system; this diversified curriculum often required facilities not available in the public schools;



- 3 The design of private schools was marked by the cultural symbols associated with their founding groups; for example, many schools were religious in origin, and their architecture draws on religious motifs for much of its inspiration;
- 4 Many private schools were residential in character, a fact which demanded the inclusion of additional facilities not found in public schools; these range from large educational complexes of residences, classroom buildings and physical education facilities down to smaller-scale dormitory schools; and
- 5 Private schools attempted, through their design and their domestic arrangements, to create a specific milieu which was judged conducive both to learning in the narrow sense and to social development in the broader; though the ways of carrying this through varied from institution to institution, in general the private school sought to create a milieu which approximated the atmosphere of an idealized upper-middle-class home. Schools were supposed to provide an ordered, stable and yet familial environment within which the student could become a member of "polite" society, both in educational attainments and in personal development.

The Development of Monumental Private Schools

All of the pioneer schools in Ontario were private schools; that is, all were fee-paying institutions unsupported by governmental funding. The legislature provided only modest financial assistance to schools, initially offering small grants to the grammar (or secondary-level) schools in 1807 and later, to the common (or primary-level) schools in 1816. The creation of a system of public education, on the other hand, was an extended process, which began in 1843 with the creation of a central educational authority (which eventually became the Department of Education in 1876) was completed by 1871 when fees in the common schools were abolished and financing entirely by property taxation became the norm.² Little is known about these pioneer schools. The first was established in Kingston in 1786 by Rev. John Stuart, who charged scholars \$1.00 per month to take classes in his own home. Shortly thereafter, schools were opened on the Bay of Quinte, at Fredericksburgh by a Mr. Clark and at Ernestown by a Mr. Smith. The first school building erected in the province was provided by the government for the Six Nations Indians on the Grand River in 1787. It was a log structure of uncertain life expectancy.³

The incomplete information available on these early schools suggests that they were generally conducted in spare rooms in the teacher's private home. When separate quarters were built -- as in the case of the Six Nations' school of 1787 -- the structures were modelled on contemporary domestic architecture, simple in design and unadorned in ornamentation. With the exception of the native schools, most appear to have survived for relatively short periods of time, and none would qualify as a permanent private school by our definition -- that is, a formally organized fee-paying institution housed in buildings erected for educational purposes. It was not until the first years of the 19th century that such schools came into existence.

The first of these permanent schools was probably the original Ernestown Academy, which was founded in 1811 and incorporated under the name of the Bath Academy in 1834. A two-storey brick building was completed in 1811, financed by public subscription. It contained teaching rooms alone; as its first prospectus noted, "scholars attending from a distance may be boarded in good families on reasonable terms, and for fifteen shillings may have the use of a valuable library."⁴ The building itself -- which was destroyed by fire in 1873, rebuilt and again damaged by fire in 1909 -- was a simple rectangular structure of palladian-inspired design, with a centre door covered by an undecorated porch, two windows on either side and five windows on the second floor. The roof was capped by a two-tiered square cupola of wood,

which provided ventilation. Lack of documentation prevents any determination of who designed and built the original Bath Academy; nor is it clear what the source of the design was. It was unquestionably the grandest building in the village, and looked like a fine country inn or large-scale residence. Only the cupola and the obvious openness of the rooms within identified it as a school. The Academy itself ceased operation in 1850, the building becoming a combined common and grammar school.

The same fate befell another very early private school, the Grantham Academy, now located in St. Catharines. Constructed between 1827 and 1829 and also financed by public subscription, the Grantham Academy was a grammar or high school with separate departments for male and female students. The Academy was incorporated in 1830 and was the forerunner of the St. Catharines Collegiate Institute. The original building -- of which no photograph has been obtained -- was deeded to the public school board, and until recently continued in use as a school, until converted into an arts centre.⁵

Both the Bath and Grantham Academies are of interest because they began the tradition of private schools as major pieces of quasi-public architecture, whose comparatively high standards of design bespoke of the important role their respective founders thought such institutions ought to play in the life of the community. Among early private schools, no structure was more eloquent in this regard than Upper Canada College.

UCC is Ontario's oldest still-active private school. In an important sense it was initially not a private school at all, but the province's chief grammar school. Founded in 1829 by the lieutenant governor, Sir John Colborne, UCC was designed to be a non-denominational (though strongly Anglican in tone), state-endowed preparatory school for boys, and it was only in 1900 that the school escaped from the management of its former Board, the Senate of the University of Toronto, and was established as an incorporated private institution. But formal status was a relatively unimportant consideration; throughout its history, Upper Canada College has been the institution many people think of when the term "private school" is mentioned. As one author has noted, "in the minds of a great many people Upper Canada College is the pre-eminent independent school in Canada, the school that more than any other is regarded as the cradle of the Canadian Establishment."⁶

Such were the intentions of its founders. UCC was established as a school for the children of the political and social élite, and its facilities were planned to match the lofty expectations of its sponsors. It originally consisted of a five-building complex located on Russell Square in Toronto, immediately adjacent to the provincial parliament buildings and the residence of the lieutenant governor. This grouping emphasised UCC's place as a major public institution. Designed by the Toronto architect and builder, John Ewart, these original buildings (Figure 1) were demolished for commercial development in 1900, so that we know relatively little about the details of the internal arrangements. One early student remembered that

the internal fittings and finish were of the most solid and unadorned character. The benches for the classes were placed around the rooms against the wall; they were movable, narrow and constructed of thick planks in a very primitive fashion, as also were certain narrow tables. Each room was provided with a very large wood box set near the capacious fireplace.... there was also a plain, strong, movable lock-up closet for the reception of loose books, maps and papers. The masters' desks were of heavy black walnut, the legs of each fastened by clamps to a small platform of its own which might be shifted about with ease on the floor. The wainscotting throughout the building was composed of stout boards of irregular width hand-planed, and nailed on longitudinally, all painted of a uniform drab colour.

In spite of the evidently spartan quality of the rooms, the original Upper Canada College was an institution which created much controversy for its élitism and its large expenditures of public funds. The College was probably the first to adopt the system of providing a separate room for each instructor -- 19th-century teachers often shared rooms with their colleagues -- and thus each classroom could develop a character in keeping with the subjects taught there.

Structurally, the original UCC consisted of a row of five domestically scaled Georgian-style houses, which would not have looked out of place in a residential district of an 18th-century provincial English town. The centre block was of a more architecturally pretentious character, in keeping with its importance to the working of the school; it accommodated the academic classrooms and the chapel. The four houses on either side were set aside for the quarters of members of the staff and their families. There were no separate boarding houses or residences for the students, who lived with their teaching masters. The intent was simple: to provide a private school modelled on an English public school and designed to provide two somewhat conflicting elements, a monumentally scaled public building possessing considerable symbolic impact, and an educational atmosphere of a suitably upper middle class and domestic character.⁷

Because UCC was a generously endowed élitist institution of a decidedly Anglican cast, it was immediately the target of criticism from political reformers and members of other religious groups. Various schools were established, in response both to the challenge of UCC and the special educational needs of the denominations themselves, in the decades following the founding of Upper Canada College. Among the first to challenge the pretensions, both in print and in the establishment of a competing private school, was the province's Methodist Conference. Their response to UCC was the Upper Canada Academy at Cobourg, the province's oldest surviving private school building (Figure 2). Begun in 1832 and opened in 1836, and designed by the Cobourg architect-builder Edward Crane, the original Upper Canada Academy has undergone a number of functional changes caused by modifications in the status of the Academy itself. Founded as a private school offering what would now be considered a secondary-school education, the Upper Canada Academy grew under the direction of its principal, Reverend Egerton Ryerson, into a university, Victoria College, which affiliated with the University of Toronto and moved to that campus in 1890. Since that time it has been used for various purposes, all of which have obscured the original internal arrangements. The original building consisted of an imposing, if somewhat ungainly, Classical Revival brick structure on a cut-stone foundation, four storeys in height and measuring 140 feet wide and 40 feet deep. To the rear projected two smaller wings, three storeys high and measuring 50 by 25 feet each enclosing a courtyard of 82 by 50 feet. The whole roofed with tin, and cost (with interior fittings) £7700. "The erection of this Seminary is," noted the House of Assembly committee which examined it in 1837, "the largest undertaking hitherto successfully prosecuted in Upper Canada, upon the plan of voluntary contribution alone." In contrast to Upper Canada College, the Academy was relatively inexpensive (£4 per term against £8 per term at UCC), coeducational (though the female department was separate from the male), and primarily residential, provision being made in the rear wings for 150 boarders. The front section was devoted to classrooms, with the female department, chapel, teachers' rooms and offices in the west wing, and the male department and dining hall in the east wing. One feature which attracted much attention was the provision of small study halls attached to the residential space, where professors and students could work closely together outside formal classroom periods.⁸ Because it became a university in 1841, the later development of the Upper Canada Academy -- including the construction of Faraday Hall in the 1870s (Figure 3) -- lies outside the bounds of this study, which is limited to structures built for elementary- and secondary-school purposes. During its short history as a private school, however, the Upper Canada Academy served as an

important challenge -- both in its existence and in the grandeur of its buildings -- to the power and prestige of Toronto's Upper Canada College.

Upper Canada College and the Upper Canada Academy represent two early attempts by religious organizations to construct large-scale, semi-public structures which symbolized denominational interest in higher education. The Anglicans, the spiritual founders of UCC, and the Methodists were not alone in seeking this type of facility. The Roman Catholics, under Rev. Alexander Macdonell, began a boys' school and seminary, Iona Academy, at St. Raphael's West, in Glengarry, in 1826 but the denomination's most important early educational effort was the construction, between 1838 and 1842, of Kingston's Regiopolis College. In spite of its title, this institution did not possess degree-granting powers until 1866, and served instead as a boys' grammar school and seminary until that time. Like the Upper Canada Academy, the first buildings for Regiopolis College have undergone a number of functional and structural changes; it is now the frontispiece of the city's Hotel Dieu hospital, having previously been used as an orphanage and annex to a mental hospital. It is therefore difficult, in the absence of school records, to interpret it as a school. The original building (Figure 4) was a four-storey structure, nine bays in width, constructed of local cut limestone, capped by a cupola clad in tin and fronted by a long wooden porch. Like the Upper Canada Academy, it was a piece of formal, monumentally scaled public architecture; its designer (probably the Kingston architect, Thomas Rogers) provided the Roman Catholic bishop with a structure that was suitably classical in design, imposing in its siting and scale, and restrained but elegant in its degree of decoration. The interior arrangements are unreported, but it is probable that the lower floors were set aside for classrooms, chapel and dining hall, while the upper two storeys housed both students and professors.⁹

By 1840, then, at least three major private school complexes had been erected in what was to become Ontario: Upper Canada College in York (Toronto), constructed between 1829 and 1832; the Upper Canada Academy (1832-36); and Regiopolis College (1838-42). Yet in 1840 the province's leading architect, John G. Howard, confessed that there were no accepted standards and no received judgements concerning either the exterior design or internal arrangements of such large-scale educational buildings. In submitting his plans for the architectural competition for the new Queen's College, Howard noted that "the opinions are so varied concerning the arrangement of a building of this description that it is very difficult for an Architect, though ever so conversant with the subject, to meet the wishes of all."¹⁰ To Howard the most serious problem was how to integrate an imposing façade, necessary for the symbolic impact of the school as a semi-public institution, with the internal requirements of a large and complex structure made up of classrooms, a residence, dining hall and chapel -- all of which were regarded as essential to a denominational school.

Only a few of the 19th-century private schools in Ontario were sufficiently large, however, to face this problem. Indeed, two decidedly different approaches to private-school design emerged during the 19th century: the large-scale, monumental school of the type represented by Upper Canada College, the Upper Canada Academy and Regiopolis College, and the small-scale institution -- often accommodated in private houses or other facilities -- managed by one or two teachers. Several examples of each type will be examined here, to illustrate their contrasting architectural treatments.

One well-documented early example of a monumentally scaled public school was reported to the CIHB, though only a fragment of the original structure has survived. Grenville College in Prescott (Figure 5) was founded in 1835 by a Roman Catholic priest, Rev. James Campion, as a non-denominational coeducational school accommodating from 250 to 300 children, both boarders and day pupils. The original building, of which most has been demolished, was "84 feet in length with two wings, one at either end, forty feet each in length, extending in a fine garden geometrically

arranged...." The course of study was like that of most large-scale private schools, broader than that available in most of the public grammar schools of the day; it included English, French, Latin and Greek, elementary and advanced reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, elocution, bookkeeping, mensuration, dancing, drawing and music. Fees were as high as \$6.00 per month, depending upon the subjects chosen; "each boarder [was] to bring a mattress and pillow and 2 pair sheets, blankets, counterpane, the necessary clothing, half-a-dozen towels, a knife, fork and spoon, etc."¹¹ Such a wide course of study combined with large numbers of students and the provision of residential space required a building of considerable scale; contemporary observers regarded the completed Grenville College as "a very elegant stone building" which, for the village of Prescott in the 1830s, must have been an impressive addition to the locale.

Only a few private schools began as large-scale institutions, however. Several 19th-century private schools underwent the transition from a small- to a large-scale institution. Places such as Trinity College School and, later, The Grove illustrate in a particularly graphic manner the tensions which existed between the desire for a large-scale semi-public structure and for education within a domestic atmosphere. Trinity College School, for example, began in 1862 with three students, the sons of its founder, Rev. William A. Johnston, who was dissatisfied with the quality of primary school education in the village of Weston.¹² Within three years, Johnston had attracted a number of boarding students to his school. Overwhelmed by the success, he approached Trinity College in nearby Toronto for assistance in the management of what soon became Trinity College School, a feeder preparatory school for the college. The first year of this new arrangement, 1865, found Johnston's parsonage crammed with 25 students, taught by the founder and a new headmaster, Rev. Charles Badgeley. Together they offered a broad curriculum modelled on the famous English public school at Rugby, including the Classics, mathematics, English, French, dancing, drawing, music, fencing and drill. In keeping with the spirit of the English public school, gymnastics and sports were an integral part of school life. The parsonage, and the village of Weston too, were not large enough for such a private school, and in 1868 the Board of Trustees rented a spacious country estate outside the town of Port Hope, sixty miles to the east. This setting was then considered ideal for a private boys' school -- domestic and upper middle class in atmosphere, and removed from the town where students "might encounter scenes of 'distress and vice'," as one historian has noted.¹³ But the press of numbers made it impossible to retain this setting for long, and new buildings of a much greater scale and degree of architectural pretention were planned. Early in the 1870s, Trinity College School was transformed from a small-scale private school located in a two storey-frame villa to a larger-scale institution situated in a magnificent piece of institutional architecture (Figure 6). Apparently modelled on English public-school designs combined with more than a hint of the English manor house, the resulting structure was a decided contrast to earlier buildings; to re-enforce the transition the new school was incorporated as an independent body. Destroyed by fire in 1895, this school was rebuilt, only to suffer the same fate in 1928. The present Trinity College School buildings date from this period, the junior school (designed by the prominent Toronto firm of Sproatt and Rolph) having been erected in 1924 and the new senior school (by Darling and Pearson) following it in 1929 (Figure 7). Both of these buildings reflect further trends in monumentally scaled private-school design, which will be discussed in greater detail later.

Between 1900 and 1930 a number of private-school complexes, consisting of up to 30 buildings, were constructed, of which Trinity College School is an excellent example. In an attempt to deal with ever-increasing numbers, the students were divided into "houses" of up to 70 pupils, and for the first time, provision was made in the new schools for married (rather than bachelor) dons and teachers. In keeping with Trinity's practice of close teacher-pupil relations, classrooms were limited to 20

pupils while provision was made for a museum, extensive workshops, a darkroom, rifle range and elaborate facilities for physical education. The maintenance of tradition was balanced, however, by the determination to be as modern as possible; the architects noted that in the new TCS, "all the internal arrangements and appointments will be of the most modern, efficient and up-to-date type."¹⁴ The development of Trinity College School, from an expanded Victorian home to a major educational institution, was complete.

A similar development occurred for Upper Canada College. The press of numbers and an expansion in the curriculum had forced a major modification in the character of the domestically scaled and arranged townhouses constructed in the 1830s. Between 1876 and 1877, the old structures were expanded to provide more classrooms, a larger chapel/assembly hall and more institutional-type residences. In addition, the centre unit was given a large, ornate front which attempted to provide a more institutional and monumental face to UCC.¹⁵ But these measures were mere stop-gaps; within a decade, UCC was planning to move, like Trinity College School earlier and several other schools later, to a large, rural site which detached the school from the commercial hubbub of the city. "The principal reason for the move," notes one historian, "was undoubtedly the crowding of the College into a nine-acre site where there was little room for the extensive playing fields that were associated with such schools, and where cloistered seclusion, considered equally desirable, was no longer a characteristic."¹⁶ In the process of these changes, the character of UCC subtly changed, just as TCC's had modified. The new UCC -- built between 1889 and 1890 to designs by George F. Durand (Figure 7) -- was dramatic testimony to the changes in the school wrought by increases in numbers, the advent of institutionalization, and the growing emphasis on the public character of the school. The centre tower, 165 feet high, climaxed Spadina Avenue, "an ever-present reminder to the students, and the city below the hill, of the importance of the college and the influence of the alumni that had been shaped by it."¹⁷ Standards of design were much higher than those required by the Department of Education in contemporary public schools; for example, the classrooms were larger, better lit and better ventilated than either primary or secondary schools, while dormitories offered 1,000 cubic feet of space per student, two pupils to a room.

The 1890 Upper Canada College was demolished and rebuilt in 1956. Two other buildings on the campus of UCC do qualify for our study, having been erected before 1930. The Peacock Building (Figure 8) was constructed in 1902 to designs prepared by Eden Smith, while the Parkin Building (Figure 9) was constructed between 1922 and 1923 to plans by Sproatt and Rolph. Both maintain their original exteriors though each has undergone some interior renovations. Like Durand's main building, both the Parkin and Peacock Buildings were designed by prominent, socially influential architects to equal or exceed the standards applied to contemporary public schools. The latter buildings are anything but monumental in scale, in an attempt to maintain a measure of domesticity in the face of the institutionality of the main building.¹⁸ But in scale and symbolic impact, the campus of Upper Canada College has clearly undergone a transition from domesticity to institutionality.

Several other 19th-century private schools were, like the Upper Canada Academy, erected as monumental buildings of a clearly institutional character. Albert College in Belleville (Figure 10) was built in 1856 by the Methodist-Episcopalians as a non-denominational, coeducational residential school. As their principal, Albert Carman, once noted, it was an institution "erected by Protestants as an exponent of their principles, a fortress for their literature, and a centre of their light and power."¹⁹ To accommodate these lofty expectations, Albert College erected an enormous structure of classical design, similar in scale and appearance to public buildings such as court houses or the larger town halls. Four storeys high, it measured 132 feet along the front, with a depth of 44 feet in the centre and 52 feet on the wings, and included a chapel, laboratory, reception room, dining hall, eight

classrooms, three apartments for staff and 45 residence rooms sleeping 100 students. Another 200 students attended as day pupils. The original Albert College building has been demolished, and its replacement was constructed on another site in 1926 (Figure 11). This newer building continued the monumental image of the earlier, while employing a more up-to-date style, the Collegiate Gothic which was then so popular for secondary schools and colleges. Designed for continuous expansion -- when the building opened, Albert College had only 50 students though the structure was planned to house 250 -- the new Albert College was regarded as a model of the modern private residential school, designed to the most exacting standards of student comfort.²⁰

Genteel female education in the 19th century tended to take place within small private schools whose atmosphere -- reflecting the Victorian view of both women and their proper education -- was suitably refined and domestic. As we shall see when we look at small-scale schools, these often employed converted houses for classroom use. A small number of monumentally scaled private girls' schools were built in Ontario, however, and mention should be made of five: Hellmuth College in London, the Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby, Alma College in St. Thomas and the Loretto Academies in Toronto and Niagara Falls.

Bishop Hellmuth College (Figure 12) was opened in London by the Anglicans in 1869. Located on a suitably sylvan site two miles out of the city, the building was three and a half storeys high over an exposed basement, monumentally scaled and elegantly decorated. Though the internal workings of the school have not been reported, it offered a wide variety of subjects to its students. Its external appearance of massive institutionality was relieved somewhat by the large wooden porch across the front. The Ontario Ladies' College in Whitby (Figure 13) is a particularly interesting example of this school type, for it nearly combined monumentality of scale with upper-middle-class domesticity in its internal arrangements. Founded in 1874, the school did not build but purchased Sheriff Nelson Gilbert Reynold's magnificent 75-room mansion, Trafalgar Castle. Built in 1859 at the astonishing cost of \$70,000, the mansion was regarded as the largest private residence erected in the province to that time. It was designed by the prominent Toronto architect Joseph Sheard in a Baronian Gothic style; modelled on the castles of Britain, it was surrounded by formal gardens and elaborately decorated with statues, tapestries and artwork. Little had to be done to transform it into a quality girls' school; a wing was added in 1878 to increase the number of rooms available for boarding students, and additional space was provided by separate buildings constructed on the grounds in 1887, 1895 and 1956. As one late-19th-century commentator noted, the original building was as close to ideal as possible as a place to educate young girls. "No more charming or suitable Home," noted the province's former deputy minister of education, "could have been secured for the education of young women."²¹

Alma College in St. Thomas (Figure 14) was founded in 1877 as a Methodist school for girls. Its buildings were conceived by the Hamilton architect James Balfour in an eclectic version of the High Victorian Gothic style, and were ready by October of 1881. The division of the interior space is highly symbolic. As the principal of the school noted in 1910, "Mr. Balfour's design ... is the union of Home, Church and School. The left wing represents the Home, the centre part the Church, and the right wing the School." In laying the cornerstone, the minister of education, Adam Crooks, applauded the symbolism of the design: "I have not seen in this Country, or anywhere else, a design in better harmony with the objects of the Institution, or one more expressive in its every feature of the noble work to which it is to be dedicated." The course of study offered a full programme of academic subjects at the high-school level, with the addition of such "female" subjects as singing, fine arts, music, household science (in which Alma was considered a provincial leader) and commercial studies.²²

The final examples of large-scale schools for girls, founded by religious bodies, are two of the several academies founded by Roman Catholic teaching orders, such as the Sisters of Loretto and the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Loretto Academy in Niagara Falls (Figure 15) was opened in a former hotel in 1861, but the present monumentally scaled structure has developed incrementally since the north wing was constructed in 1869. Loretto Abbey in Toronto (Figure 16) was begun in 1847, but the buildings illustrated date only to 1928. The history of this institution is particularly explicit in outlining the purposes of genteel female education during this period. "The education of girls" consisted of "preparation for a cultural home life, the development of intellectual and artistic gifts, the domestic arts and the matter of grace and ease in deportment."²³ In both cases these ambitious goals were, initially, best carried out in a home-like atmosphere in small-scale facilities, but over time, the special demands of female education coupled with the increased requirements for education generally compelled a transition towards institutionality and monumentality. If the purpose of the private boys' school was to prepare the student for the rigours and responsibilities of adult male life, the objective of the girls' school was to refine the female temperament. Different social roles required markedly different courses of study; boys were faced with scientific subjects, drill and physical education while girls took art, music, foreign languages, sewing and fine needlework.

Whether the schools were constructed to teach boys, girls or both sexes together, then, monumentality in symbolism and impact, and institutionality in atmosphere were the marks of many 19th-century private schools. A strong demand for private educational services, the range of subjects taught and the method of teaching, and simple finances combined to create a number of notable and influential private schools. Other examples of this phenomenon have been reported to the CIHB or uncovered by research, and several should be cited: the former De La Salle Institute in Toronto (Figure 17) has moved successively from a former residence, to these quarters designed by the Toronto architect Henry Langley in 1871, to later accommodations of larger scale north of the city; Pickering College in Newmarket (Figure 18, building erected 1906), which began as a Quaker boarding school in 1837; Ridley College in St. Catharines; St. Andrew's College (Figure 19) which has successively used a Rosedale (Toronto) mansion, a larger institutional-type structure (illustrated here) in North Rosedale, and a later set of school buildings in Aurora; and "The Pines," a residential college for females which operated in Chatham (Figure 20, building shown built 1909-10).

The Domestically-scaled Private School

Though most of the influential private schools in Ontario constructed monumentally scaled buildings of a quasi-public character, the largest number of private schools were much smaller in scale and housed in quarters which were decidedly domestic in architectural character. In part this resulted from the origins of the school, for most of these institutions began as informal teaching arrangements in the house of the instructor. The example of Trinity College School has already been cited, and several other schools which developed a monumental and quasi-public architectural face began, like TCS, as small-scale institutions in a private home. In large measure, however, this smallness in scale and domesticity in atmosphere were consciously adopted because, it was felt, education was not merely a matter of training the mind in a classroom; it involved the development of the entire person. The living environment was just as important as the teaching process, for the student learned by example as well as from books. Large-scale private schools attempted to maintain this quasi-domestic atmosphere, by having instructors serve as dons in residence with the students, and by sub-dividing sleeping accommodations into "houses." The transition from large dormitories to separate rooms sleeping two or

three students also resulted, in part, from a desire to create a home-like atmosphere. In essence, however, these attempts were only partially effective; large private schools were institutional in their character and atmosphere. The smaller-scale school was purposively designed to maintain, as far as possible, the illusion of being tutored in a middle-class home. Their external architecture and internal arrangements were designed to forward this objective.

These small-scale schools often did not survive for long periods of time, and few 19th-century examples exist today as schools. One prominent and well-documented example, for which we have no photograph, is "The Grove," a private boys' preparatory school founded in 1879, and now known as Lakefield College School. Founded by a classically trained Englishman, Sparham Sheldrake, The Grove offered a quality grammar-school education within "the comforts and training of a private family." Sheldrake boarded a very limited number of students -- he opened the school with 15 and imposed an upper limit of 20 -- in his own home, a farm on the outskirts of the village of Lakefield. The emphasis was upon the development of the entire pupil "special care," his prospectus noted proudly, "is taken to inculcate moral and gentlemanly principles, and every possible attention is paid to their domestic comfort and happiness." To maintain stability in living arrangements, the headmaster insisted that he be given six weeks' notice before a pupil was withdrawn from class. The atmosphere was purposively of an extended Victorian family; the headmaster and his wife took the place of the absent parents, the matron and tutors were thought of as aunts and uncles, and one's fellow pupils were akin to brothers. Naturally the parallel was, in reality, only approximate, and each successive headmaster imprinted his individual character upon the school and its policies. Under Sheldrake, for example, the emphasis was upon moral and physical "toughness"; pupils later remembered the rooms being so cold that water froze in its jug overnight, while both the water-pump and the privies remained outdoors. Under his successor, Dr. Alick Mackenzie, the atmosphere remained studiously domestic but the curriculum was broadened to include science and sports. Inevitably, some aspects of an institutional school appeared even here; a separate dormitory building replaced the main house as accommodations for the students, and additional classrooms, a laboratory, gymnasium and chapel were added. These changes did not greatly affect the character of the school; the 1910 prospectus noted that The Grove "has maintained its character as a preparatory school for young boys" which "endeavours to provide a comfortable, careful home, together with such oversight in manners as most boys need."²⁴

A similar development can be seen in a later small-scale, rural private school, Hill Croft, near Bobcaygeon which was specially designed as a residential school by the Toronto architect W.A. Langton for its founder, W.T. Comber, in 1909. "The house is designed," noted the architect, "to be a residential school for young boys, who will be members of the [headmaster's] family, in the modified sense that is desirable to both parties."²⁵ The main building included two classrooms, a common dining room, separate quarters for the headmaster's immediate family, servants' quarters, a bedroom for the tutor and five pupils' rooms sleeping 11 boys. The spacious grounds, on the shore of a lake, included formal gardens, a tennis court and a playing field; a gymnasium, locker room and carpentry shop occupied the basement. In external appearance and internal arrangement, Hill Croft differed little from the standard upper-middle-class residence; as the architect noted in his analysis, the facilities were "much what the family would ordinarily have had if there had been no school, except that the dining room is larger."

The establishment and maintenance of a home-like atmosphere was considered particularly important to the successful education of females. As early as 1851 the province's Superintendent of Education, Egerton Ryerson, noted that a "much larger number of girls than boys attend private schools," and most of these attended schools which were domestic in appearance and tone.²⁶ The use of a former private residence as a school was the most common means of ensuring the proper

atmosphere. Prominent 19th-century examples included Kingsthorpe School in Hamilton (Figure 21), St. Clement's School in Toronto (Figure 22), St. Mary's Academy in Windsor (Figure 23) and the oldest of the female private schools, Bishop Strachan School (which has since moved to more elaborate quarters). Even when a formerly small-scale academy erected much larger quarters, as was the case for Toronto's Havergal College in 1898 (Figure 24), an attempt was made in the new design to replicate whatever aspects one could of the school's former domestic quality.

One final group of buildings deserve mention as private schools, though their status did not much affect their design. Before 1930 the provincial government provided no funding of any kind for the Roman Catholic high schools erected in the province. These institutions were supported by the payment of fees and by the financial contributions of the church itself. Yet their design was more profoundly affected by their status as high schools, rather than any other factor. They encompassed the basic programme of studies of the public secondary schools, and because church officials wished to downgrade the differences between the public and separate high schools, the architecture of the latter type of building is actually a part of the story of the development of secondary-school design. Several examples of this type of school were reported to the CIHB, including St. Michael's High School in Belleville (1909, Figure 25), the Juniorat du Sacré-Coeur in Ottawa (Figure 26) and St. Peter's High School in Peterborough. For further information on the development of this type of building, the reader should refer to the study of secondary-school architecture in Ontario, printed separately.

Specialist Institutions

A small number of specialist institutions were constructed in Ontario, sometimes as private schools, or often under the auspices of the provincial government. These institutions do not fit neatly into any category of school, and include normal schools, schools for the handicapped, native and mission schools, and pre-university training schools. None of these buildings were brought to the attention of the CIHB by the public; their highly specialized nature combined with their rarity suggests that each structure might constitute a mini-study in itself. No attempt can be made here to discuss in detail the criteria which determined the architectural nature of each building, but several examples are illustrated as a contribution towards understanding specialized schools.

One of the most important factors in the development of education was the training of competent teachers, and the emergence of teaching as a profession. The creation of normal schools, or teacher-training institutes, was therefore a high priority during the 19th century. The leader in this field in Ontario was the first Provincial Normal School in Toronto (Figure 27), constructed between 1849 and 1851 to plans by the prominent Toronto architectural firm of Cumberland and Ridout. The building, Roman in style, was considered ideal for the serious work which took place within its walls, while the interior plan (Figure 28) illustrated many of the aspects of education in the 19th century: separation of male and female students, the use of very large classrooms seating as many as 150 students for teaching use, the provision of side gallery rooms for smaller classes involving recitation, and a concern for adequate lighting, heating and ventilation. Because it was to be the model for other schools of decidedly lesser pretensions, the Provincial Normal School included facilities unknown in lesser schools: a museum, art room, offices and a superb galleried theatre. Demolished for the construction of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, the normal school was clearly an important public building whose elaborate exterior bespoke of the importance of education, and the training of teachers, to the society which erected it.²⁷

As the 19th century matured, people became increasingly concerned with the well-being of those less fortunate than themselves. This concern manifested itself in a variety of ways -- prison reform, the provision of houses of industry, and copious amounts of social legislation. Central to the thrust to improve society was education. It was within this milieu that schools for the handicapped emerged. Two of these institutions are illustrated, the Institute for the Blind in Brantford (Figure 29) and the Ontario School for the Deaf in Belleville (Figure 30). The first was opened in 1872 to educate the sight-impaired as well as the blind, in order to allow the students "to be usefully and remuneratively employed after leaving the School." Its exterior was monumentally scaled and elaborately designed, to reflect the institution's status as a piece of public architecture, while the interior was arranged to accommodate the special needs of a multi-faculty residential school. Relatively little attention was initially paid to the fact that its students were blind.²⁸ Belleville's School for the Deaf was founded in 1870 but its present buildings date from 1923. Here, too, was a monumentally scaled and elaborately designed public building whose interior catered to the needs of a group of perceptually handicapped residential students whose educational needs were much wider than those of either public- or private-school students.

Education was also regarded as the most important tool in the emergence of native peoples as contributing members of society. Two Indian schools may be presented as examples of the type. In its exterior form and interior arrangements, the Indian Residential School at Spanish (Figure 31) resembles the private residential schools of the late 19th century in more southern parts of the province. This building was erected in 1913, operated as a school for girls by the religious order the Daughters of the Heart of Mary, and was destroyed by fire in 1982. While mission societies were responsible for much of the educational work done in Ontario -- particularly in the northern parts of the province -- many reserves were supplied with schools designed by the federal government's Department of Public Works. These buildings were designed as fine examples of primary-school architecture, to standards set by the Department of Education in the province concerned. As such they reflect the functional requirements and architectural styles of contemporary primary schools, the elements of which have been treated at some length in a separate study. These buildings were considered as integral parts of the process of assimilating the natives to the norms of society generally, and reflected no aspect of Indian culture. The example illustrated (Figure 32) is the Saugeen Indian School at Chippawa Hill, near Owen Sound. Erected in 1898, it is a well-designed example of a one-room rural primary school, and more elaborate in its decoration than the vast majority of its contemporaries erected across the province by local school boards.

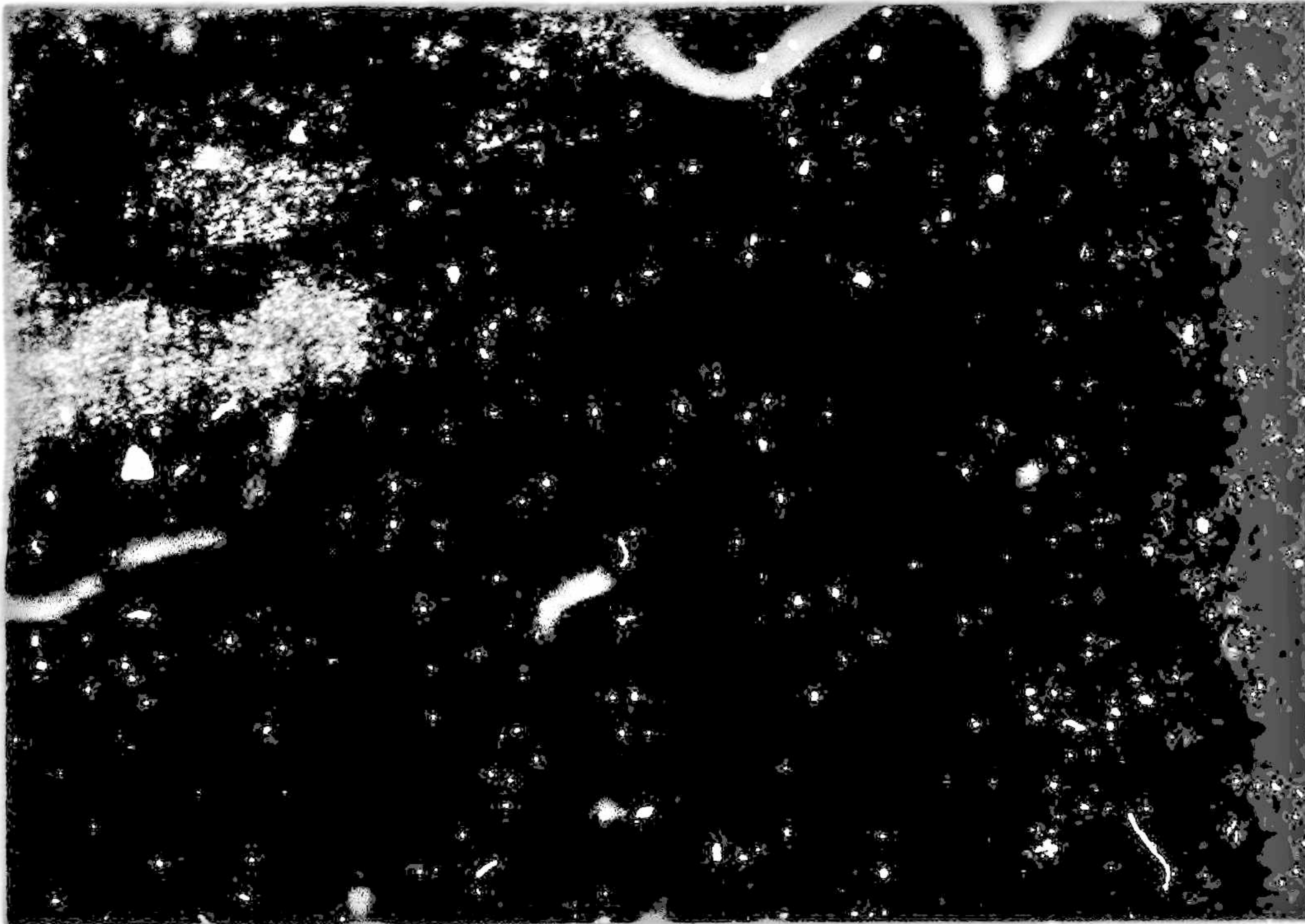
Conclusion

Though they are relatively few in numbers, and have educated only a small minority of the students of the province, Ontario's private and specialist schools constitute an important chapter in the development of education. Each structure reflects the unique functional demands of the building type coupled with the individual architectural character chosen by its sponsoring group. As a result, each building is an expression of the cultural standards of those involved in its planning and design, and less directly of the social milieu within which it was constructed. As a group, these buildings therefore constitute an important series of comments on the importance of education in Ontario before 1930.

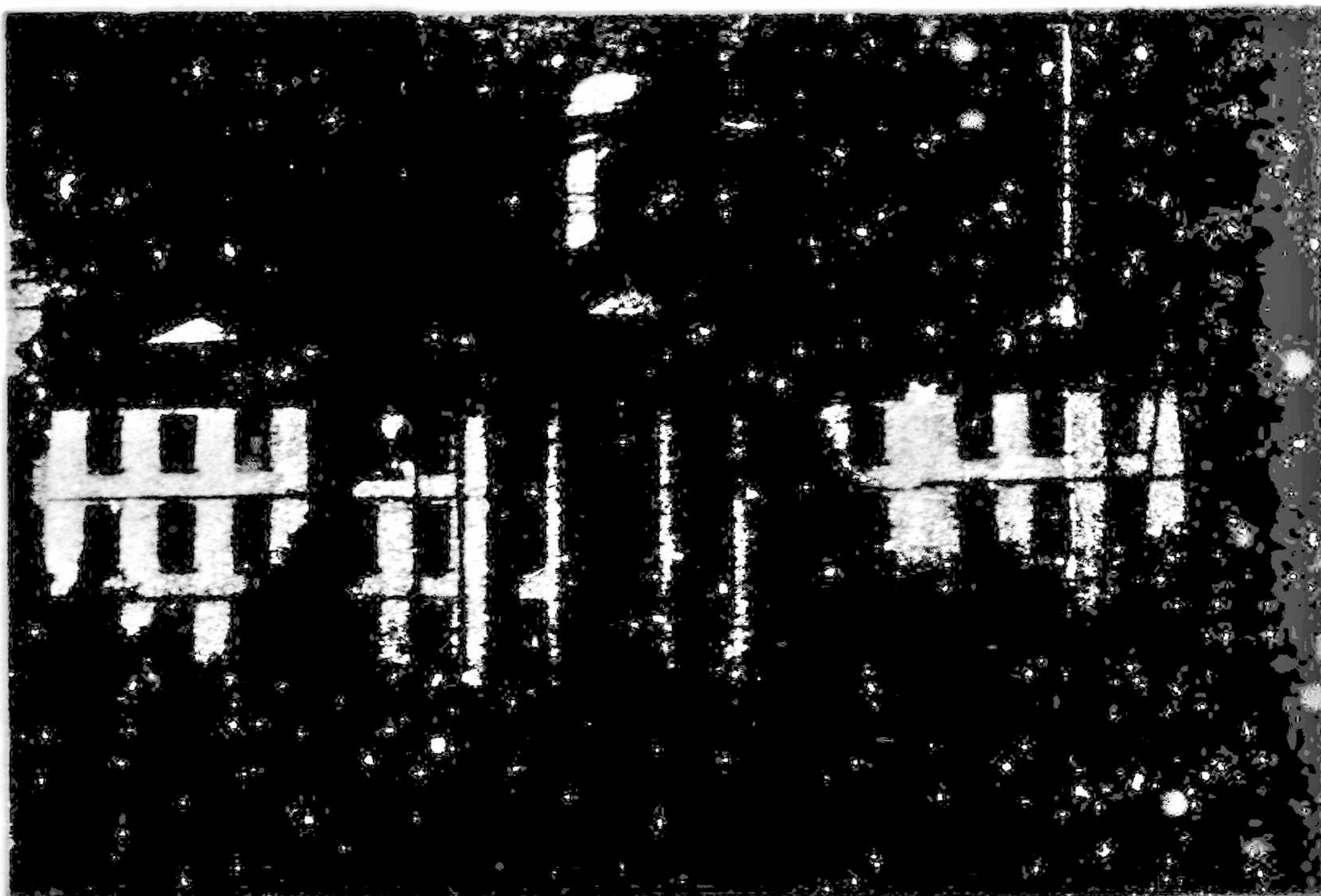
Endnotes

- 1 A convenient, readable and reliable general history of education in Canada is J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp and Louis-Philippe Audet, eds., Canadian Education: A History (Toronto: Prentice-Hall, 1970); the development of education in Ontario in the 19th century is treated in chapters 10 and 11. For statistics on private-school attendance, see Statistics Canada, Historical Compendium of Education Statistics From Confederation to 1975 (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1978), Table 10, p. 37.
- 2 Canadian Education: A History, op. cit., pp. 196, 200-1 and 218-26.
- 3 See Frank Eames, "Pioneer Schools of Upper Canada," Ontario Historical Society, Papers and Records, Vol. 18 (1920), pp. 93-103.
- 4 J. George Hodgins, The Establishment of Schools and Colleges in Ontario, 1792-1910 (Toronto: L.K. Cameron, 1910), Vol. 1, pp. 153-4 (hereafter cited as Establishment of Schools); Muhammed Arif, Larry Pearson and Godfrey Spragge, History and Architecture, Village of Bath, Ontario: Buildings of Architectural and Historical Significance (Kingston: Queen's University, 1976), pp. 117-9.
- 5 Establishment of Schools, Vol. 1, pp. 138-41 and 155-6.
- 6 Carolyn Gossage, A Question of Privilege: Canada's Independent Schools (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1975), p. 39 (hereafter cited as A Question of Privilege).
- 7 On the original Upper Canada College, see A Question of Privilege, pp. 39-46; William Dendy, Lost Toronto (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 37-9, and Robert B. Howard, Colborne's Legacy: Upper Canada College, 1829-1979 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979). The quotation is cited by Howard, pp. 18-9.
- 8 See CIHB, file on Upper Canada Academy/Victoria College, information provided by Cynthia Lelliott of Cobourg; the 1837 Assembly Committee report on UCA is reprinted in J. George Hodgins, ed. Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada (Toronto: Warwick Bros. and Rutter, 1895), Vol. 3, pp. 52-4. The early history of the school is discussed in Establishment of Schools, pp. 59-71 and in H. Hough, "Victoria University: Its History and Educational Work," Canadian Magazine of Politics, Science, Art and Literature, Vol. 7 (June 1896), pp. 205-15.
- 9 On the history of Regiopolis College, see Buildings of Architectural and Historical Significance, Kingston Ontario (Kingston: Corporation of the City of Kingston, Vol. 5, pp. 242-4; Louis J. Flynn, At School in Kingston, 1850-1973 (Kingston: Hanson and Edgar, 1973), pp. 23-33, and Establishment of Schools, Vol. 3, pp. 154-5.
- 10 Queen's University Archives, Miscellaneous Collections, "Specifications for the Plans of the Proposed Queen's College, John G. Howard, Architect."
- 11 CIHB, Grenville College file; information provided by Mrs. Barbara Seargeant, Prescott.
- 12 See A Question of Privilege, pp. 79-86; a more detailed history is provided by A.H. Humble, TCS: The School on the Hill (Port Hope: Trinity College School, 1965).
- 13 A Question of Privilege, p. 82.
- 14 On the 1897-99 building, see "Trinity College School, Port Hope, Ontario," Canadian Architect and Builder, Vol. 11 (July 1898), pp. 155ff; on later structures, see Humble, op. cit., and "Trinity College School, Port Hope, Ontario," Construction, Vol. 23 (October 1930), pp. 317-22 and 330; "Handsome Buildings Planned for Trinity College School at Port Hope, Ont.," Contract Record, Vol. 42 (31 October 1928), pp. 1151-2, and "A Memorial School," Construction, Vol. 18 (June 1925), pp. 177-80.
- 15 For further details, see Dendy, Lost Toronto, op. cit., pp. 38-9.

- 16 Ibid., p. 39.
- 17 Ibid., p. 188.
- 18 See CIHB, files on the Parkin and Peacock Buildings, Upper Canada College, Toronto; information supplied by Robert B. Howard.
- 19 Cited in A Question of Privilege, p. 68.
- 20 Ibid., pp. 67-71; see also CIHB, files on Albert College. On the original building, see Establishment of Schools, Vol. 3, pp. 162-71; on the design of the present structure, see "The New Albert College, Belleville, Ontario," Construction, Vol. 20 (February 1927), pp. 55-9.
- 21 On the development of the Ontario Ladies' College, see A Question of Privilege, pp. 113-6; Establishment of Schools, Vol. 2, pp. 241-4; Hodgins' comment is on p. 241. Heather McDougall, A Short History of Whitby Buildings, Manuscript Report Series No. 229 (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1976), pp. 67-77. On Hellmuth College, see History of the County of Middlesex Canada (1880, reprinted Belleville: Mika, 1972), p. 294.
- 22 On Alma College see Establishment of Schools, Vol. 2, pp. 235-7 and A Question of Privilege, pp. 124-7.
- 23 Establishment of Schools, Vol. 2 pp. 260-7; CIHB, files on Loretto Academy, Niagara Falls (information provided by J.L. Collinson) and Loretto Abbey, Toronto (information provided by the Secretary-General, Loretto Abbey, Toronto).
- 24 On the early history of "The Grove" see Andrew Harris, ed. Lakefield College School: The First Hundred Years (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1979), pp. 11-49.
- 25 On Hill Croft, see Establishment of Schools, Vol. 2, p. 229 and "Hill Croft, Bobcaygeon," Construction, Vol. 1 (November 1908), pp. 48-50.
- 26 "Annual Report of the Chief Superintendent of Education for the Year 1851," in Historical and Other Papers and Documents Illustrative of the Educational System of Ontario, 1842-1861, ed. J. George Hodgins (Toronto: L.K. Cameron, 1912), Vol. 5, p. 121.
- 27 On the Provincial Normal School, see Establishment of Schools, Vol. 1, pp. 32-8 and Vol. 3, pp. 228-55; Hodgins, Documentary History, op. cit., Vol. 10, pp. 1-14 and 278-87. See also Dendy, Lost Toronto, op. cit., p. 118.
- 28 On native schools, see Establishment of Schools, Vol. 2, pp. 180-5; Elgie E.M. Joblin, The Education of the Indians of Western Ontario (Toronto: Ontario College of Education, 1947) and the annual reports of the Department of Indian Affairs.



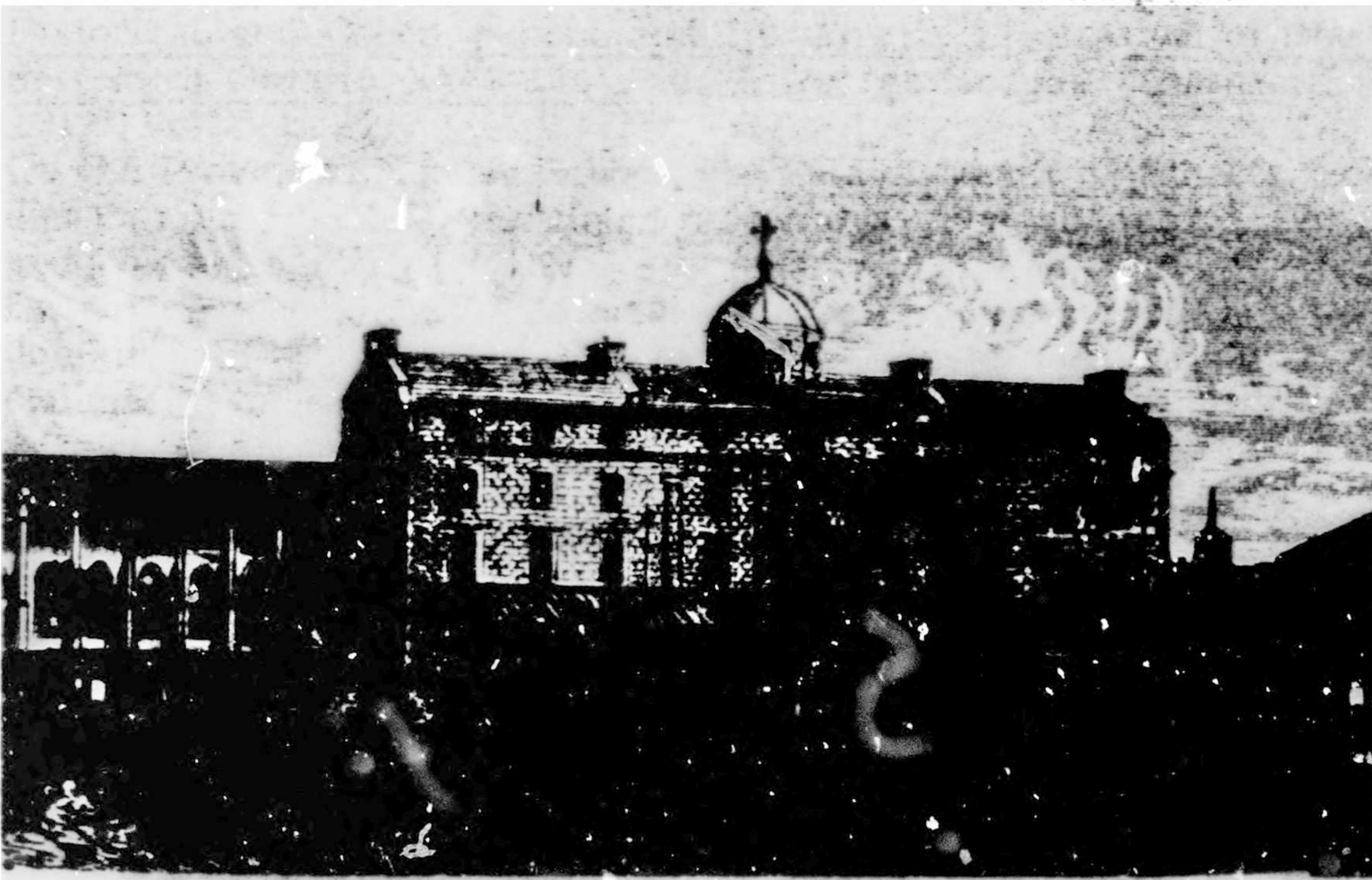
1 Upper Canada College, York (Toronto), 1829-32 (demolished). (Metropolitan Toronto Library Board.)



2 Former Upper Canada Academy, Cobourg, 1832-36. (Robert Mikel, Cobourg.)



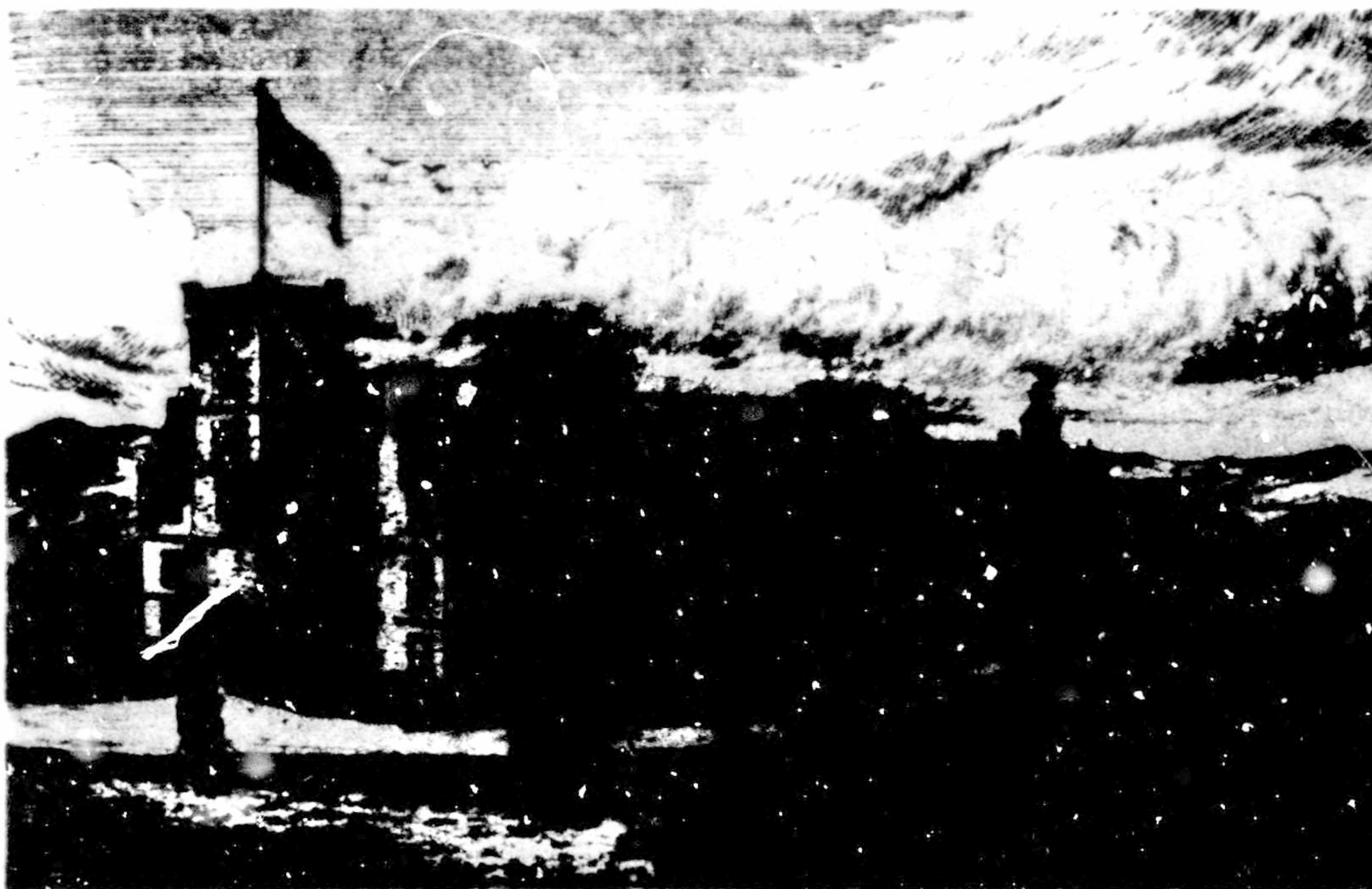
3 Former Upper Canada Academy, with Faraday Hall, Cobourg. (Canadian Illustrated News, Vol. 17 [22 June 1878], p. 388.)



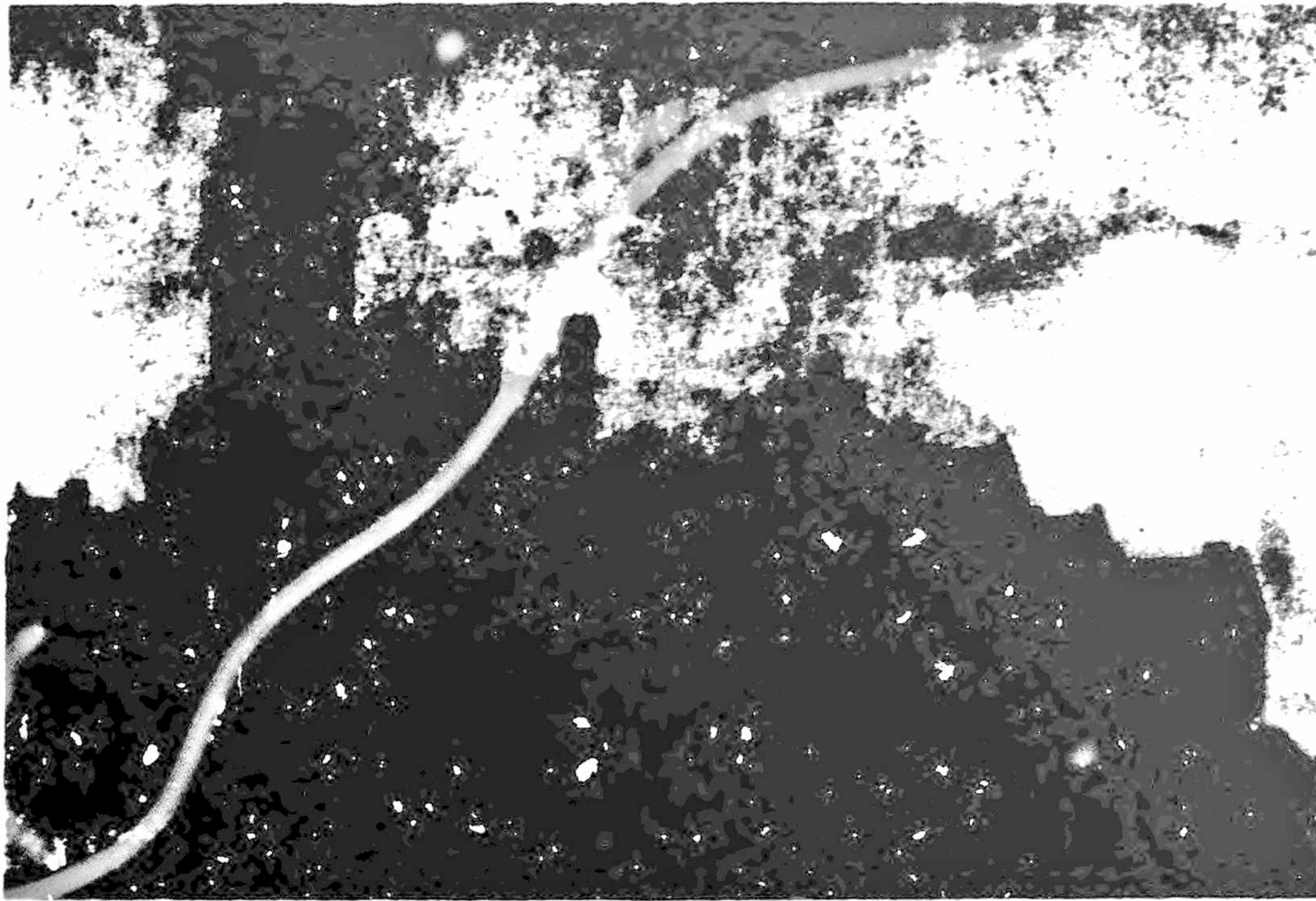
4 Regiopolis College, Kingston, 1838-42. (Canadian Illustrated News, Vol. 3 [17 June 1871], p. 381.)



5 Grenville College, Prescott, 1835. (Mrs. Barbara Seargeant, Prescott.)



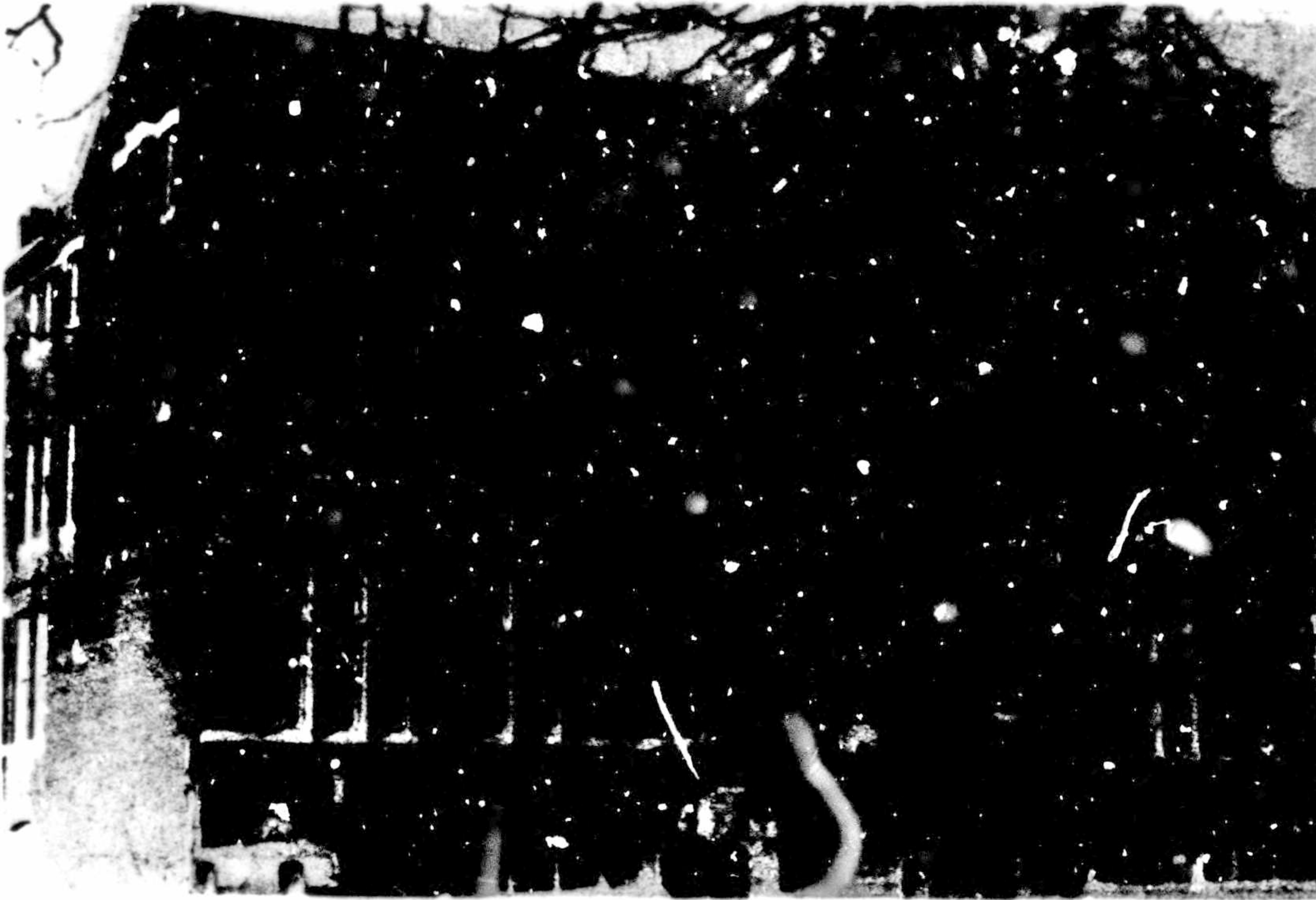
6 Trinity College School, Port Hope, ca. 1872 (demolished). (Canadian Illustrated News, Vol. 12 [11 September 1875], p. 173.)



7 Upper Canada College, Toronto, 1890-1956 (demolished). (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



8 Parkin Building, Upper Canada College, Toronto. (Mark Hord, Toronto.)



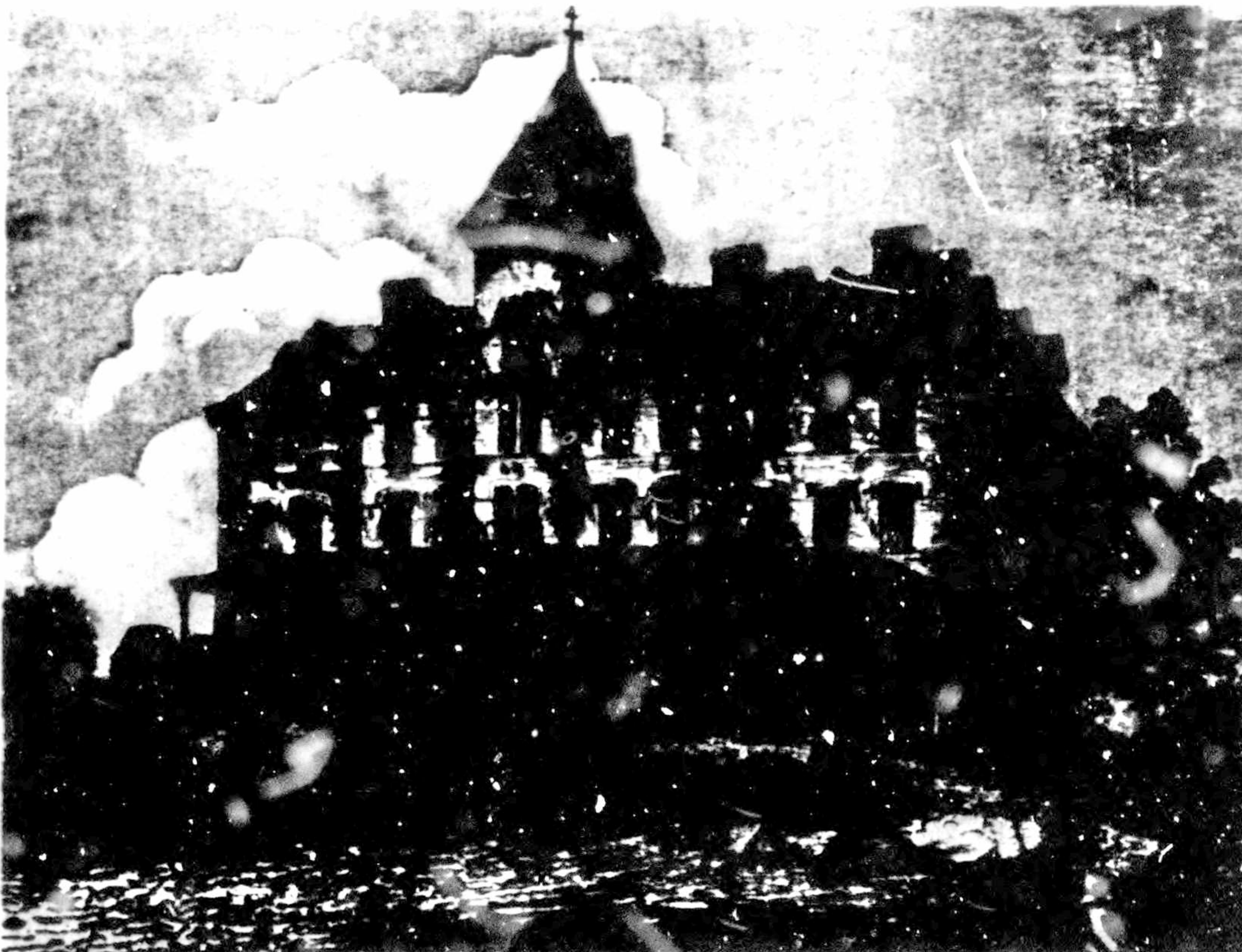
9 Peacock Building, Upper Canada College, Toronto. (Mark Hord, Toronto.)



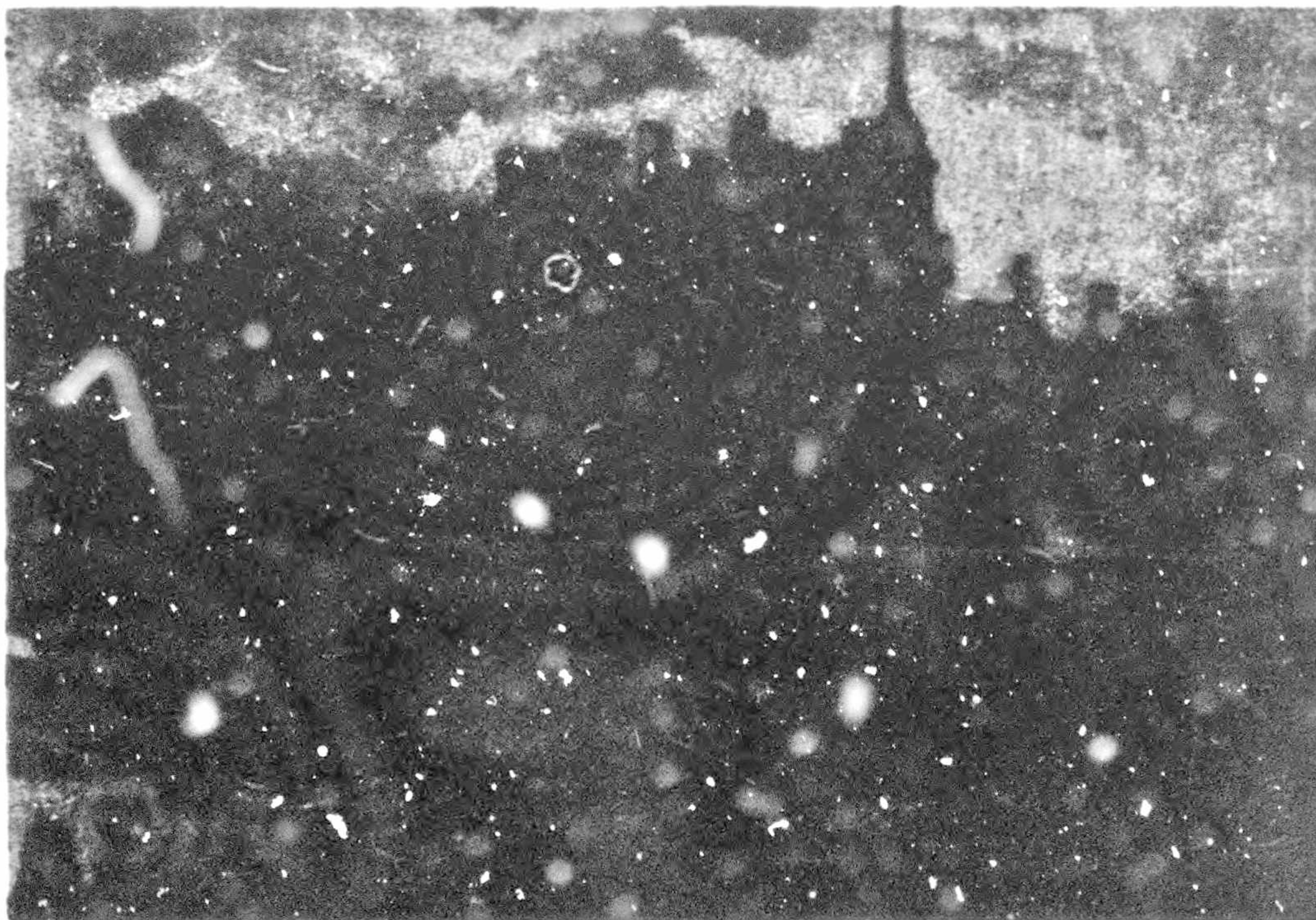
10 Albert College, Belleville, 1856 (demolished). (Canadian Illustrated News, Vol. 2 [31 December 1870], p. 436.)



11 Albert College, Belleville, 1926. (CIHB, R. Goldsteen.)



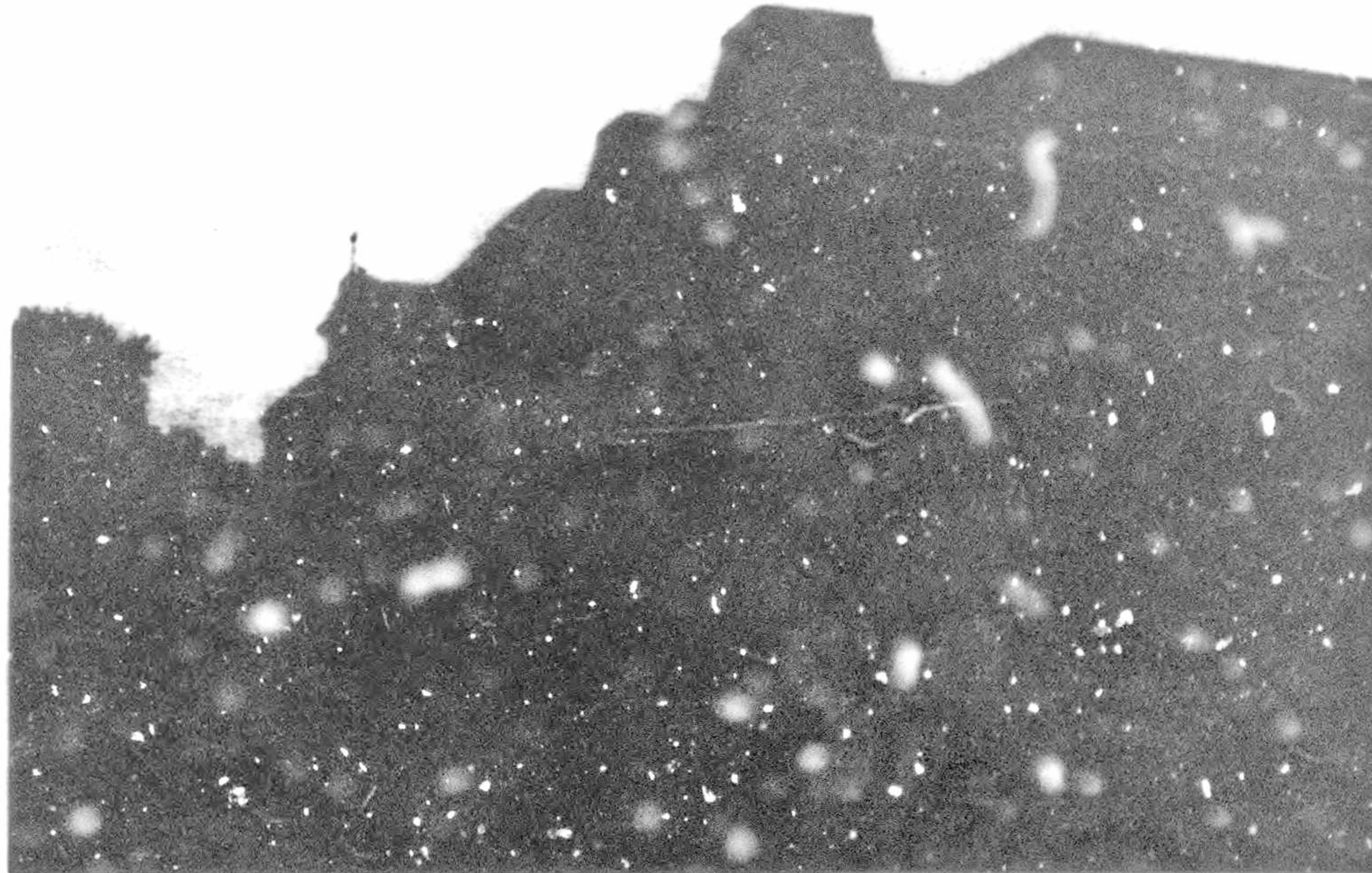
12 Hellmuth College, London, 1869. (Canadian Illustrated News, Vol. 2 [10 September 1870], p. 172.)



13 Ontario Ladies College, Whitby, 1859, converted to school 1874. (Whitby Historical Society.)



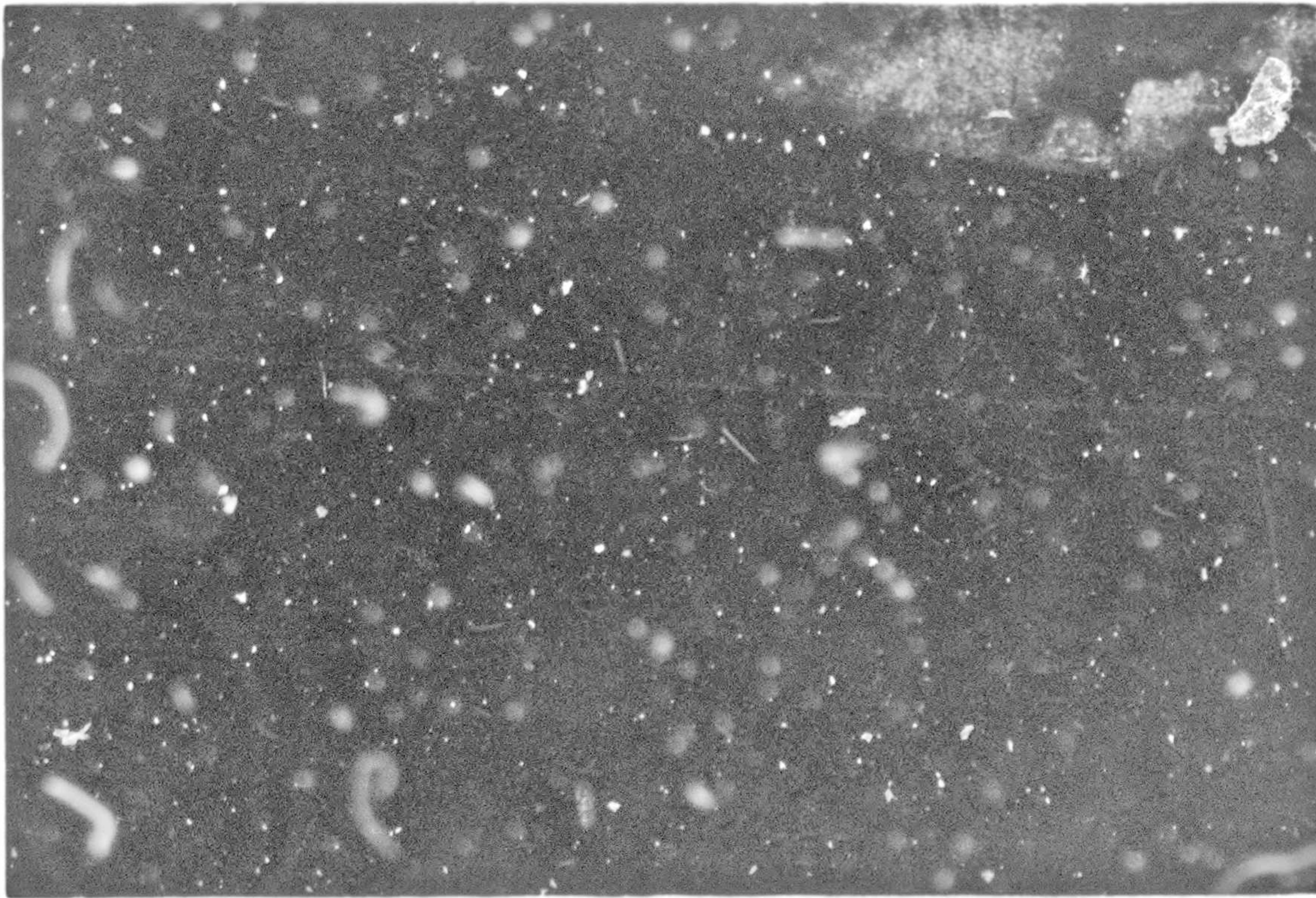
14 Alma College, St. Thomas, 1880-81. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



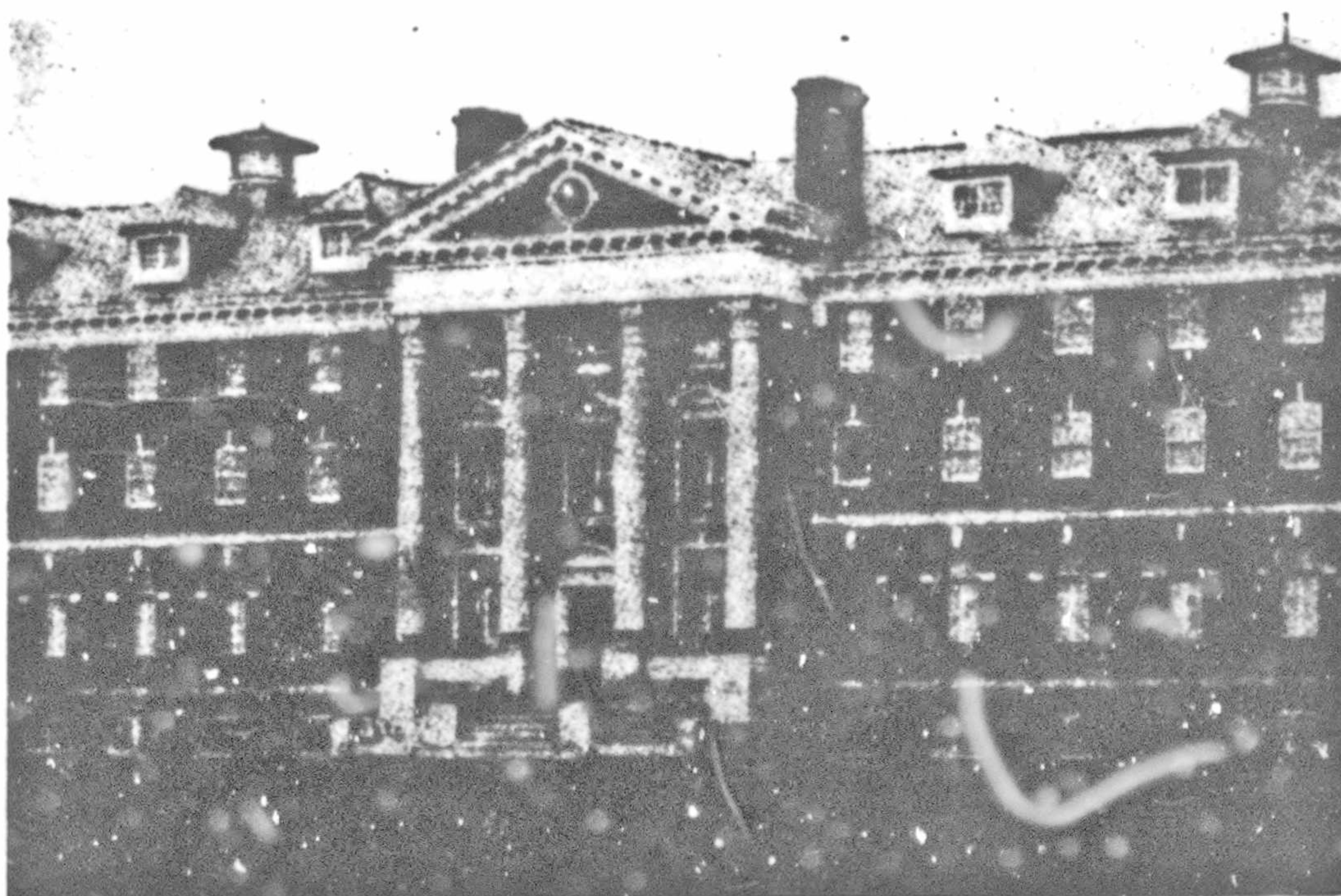
15 Loretto Academy, Niagara Falls, 1869. (CIHB, D. Johnson.)



16 Loretto Abbey, Toronto, 1928. (Courtesy of the Secretary-General, Loretto Abbey, Toronto.)



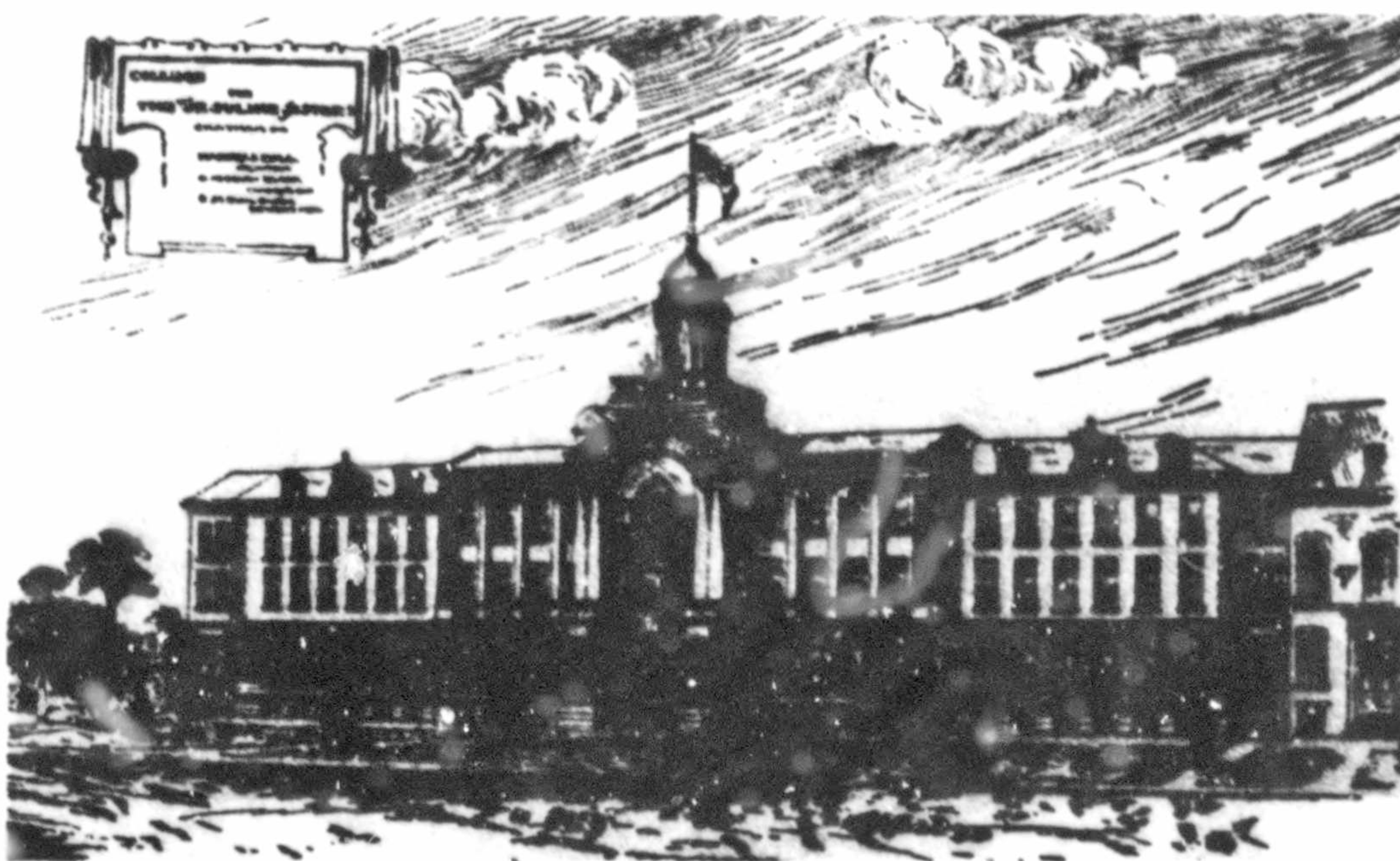
17 Former De La Salle Institute, Toronto, 1871. (CIHB, D. Johnson.)



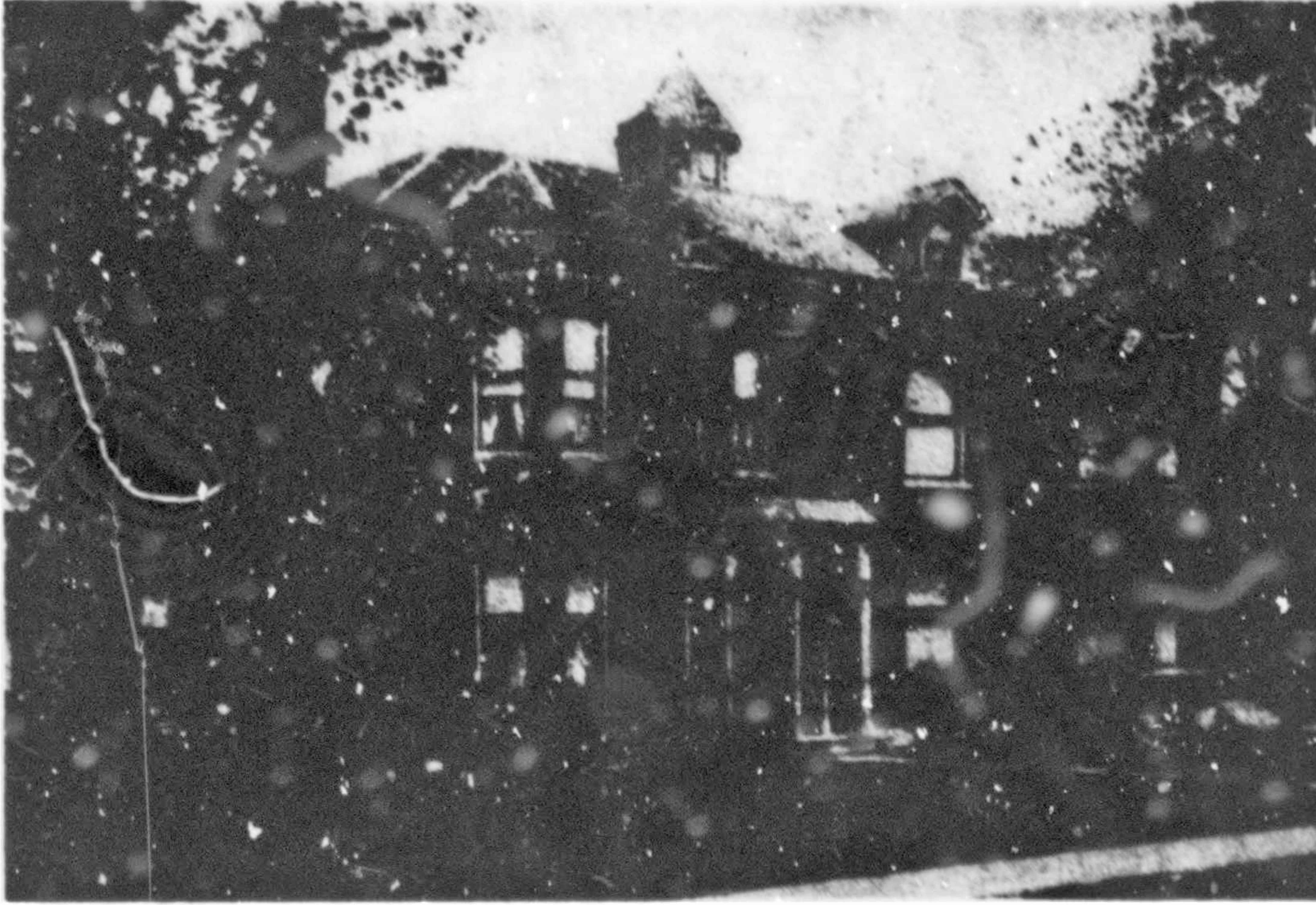
18 Pickering College, Newmarket, 1906. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



19 St. Andrew's College, Rosedale. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



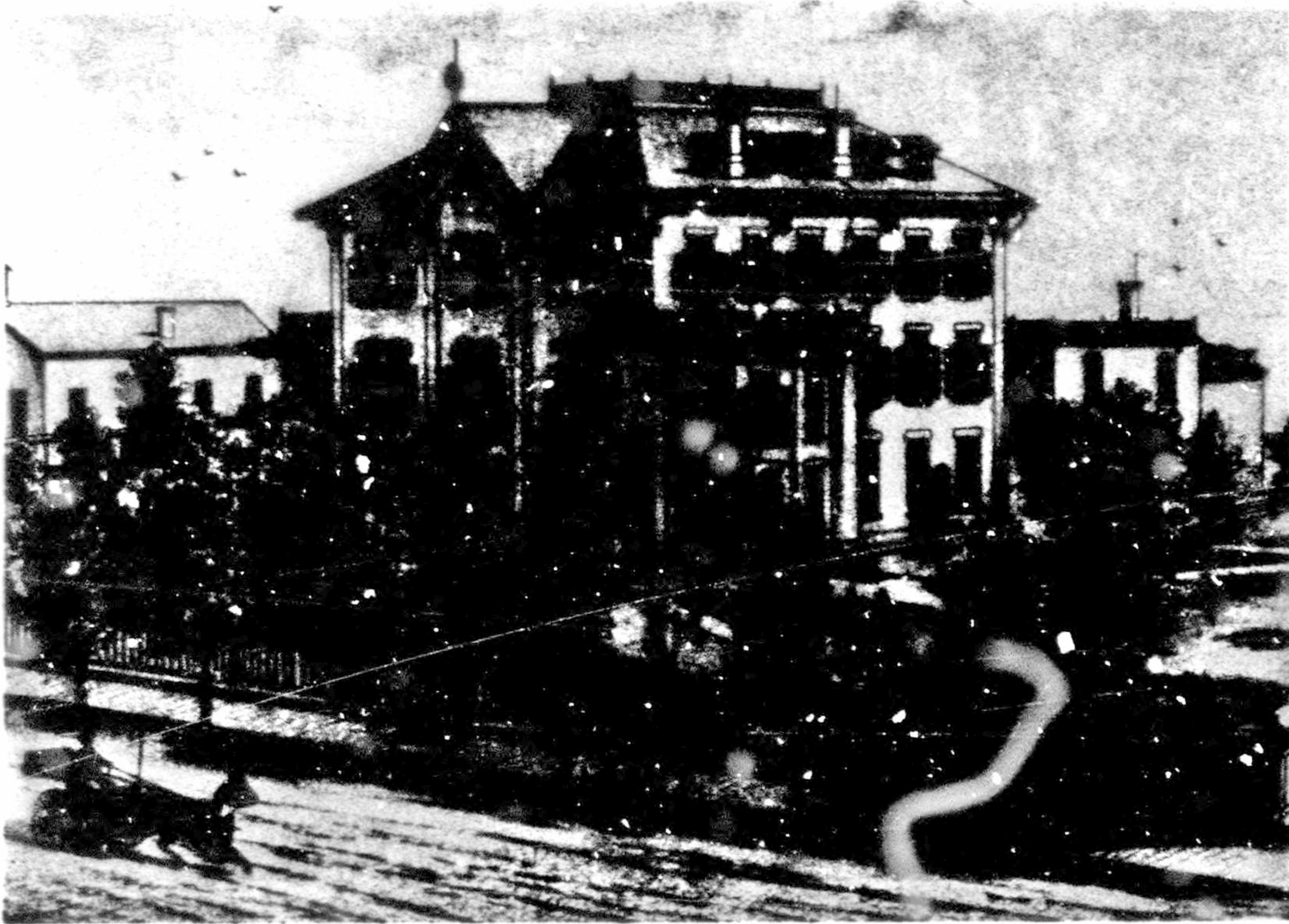
20 The Pines, Chatham, 1909-10. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



21 Kingsthorpe School, Hamilton. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



22 St. Clement's School, Toronto. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



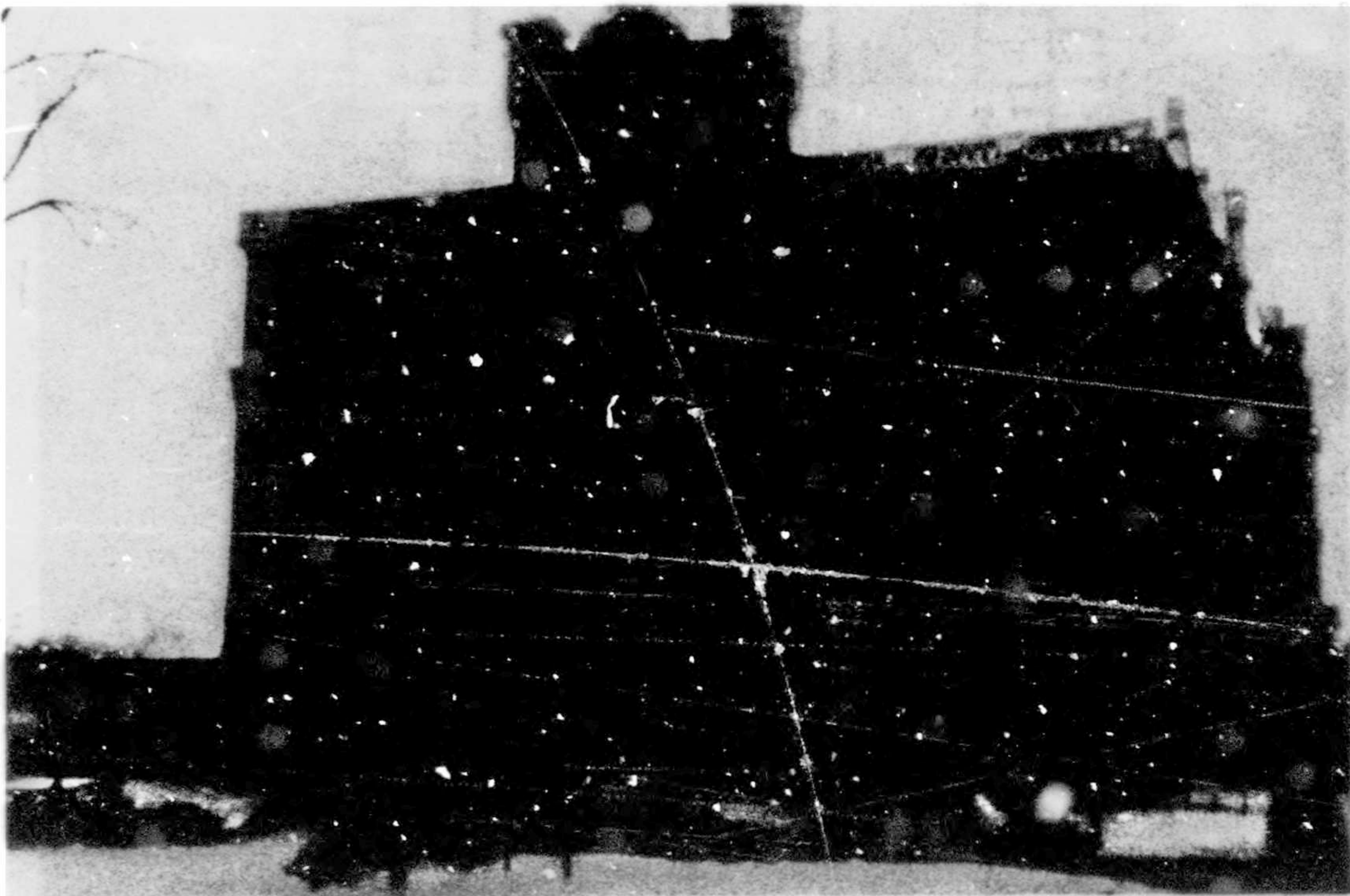
23 St. Mary's Academy, Windsor. (Illustrated Atlas of the Dominion of Canada [Toronto: Belden, 1881], p. 10.)



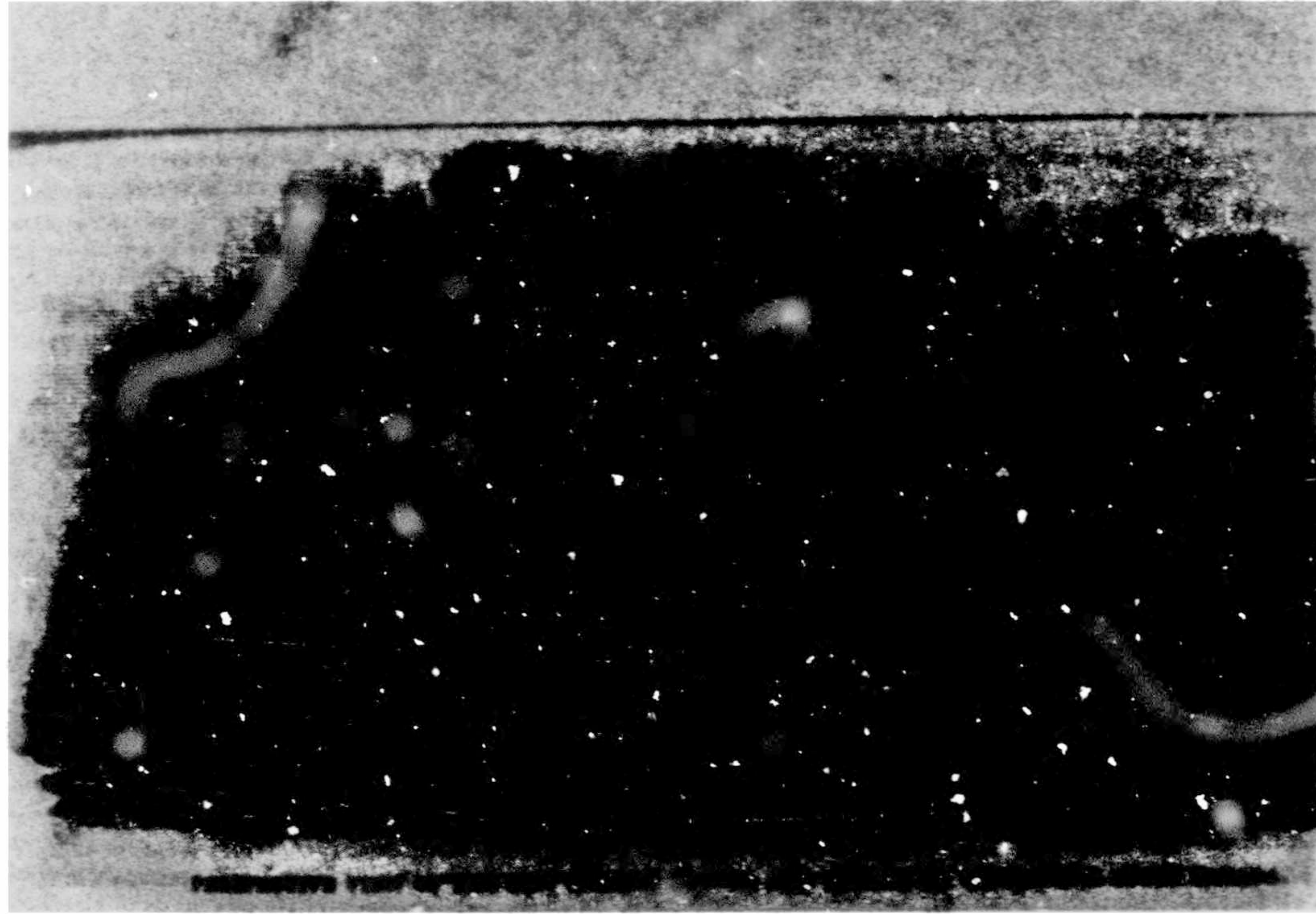
24 Havergal College, Toronto. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



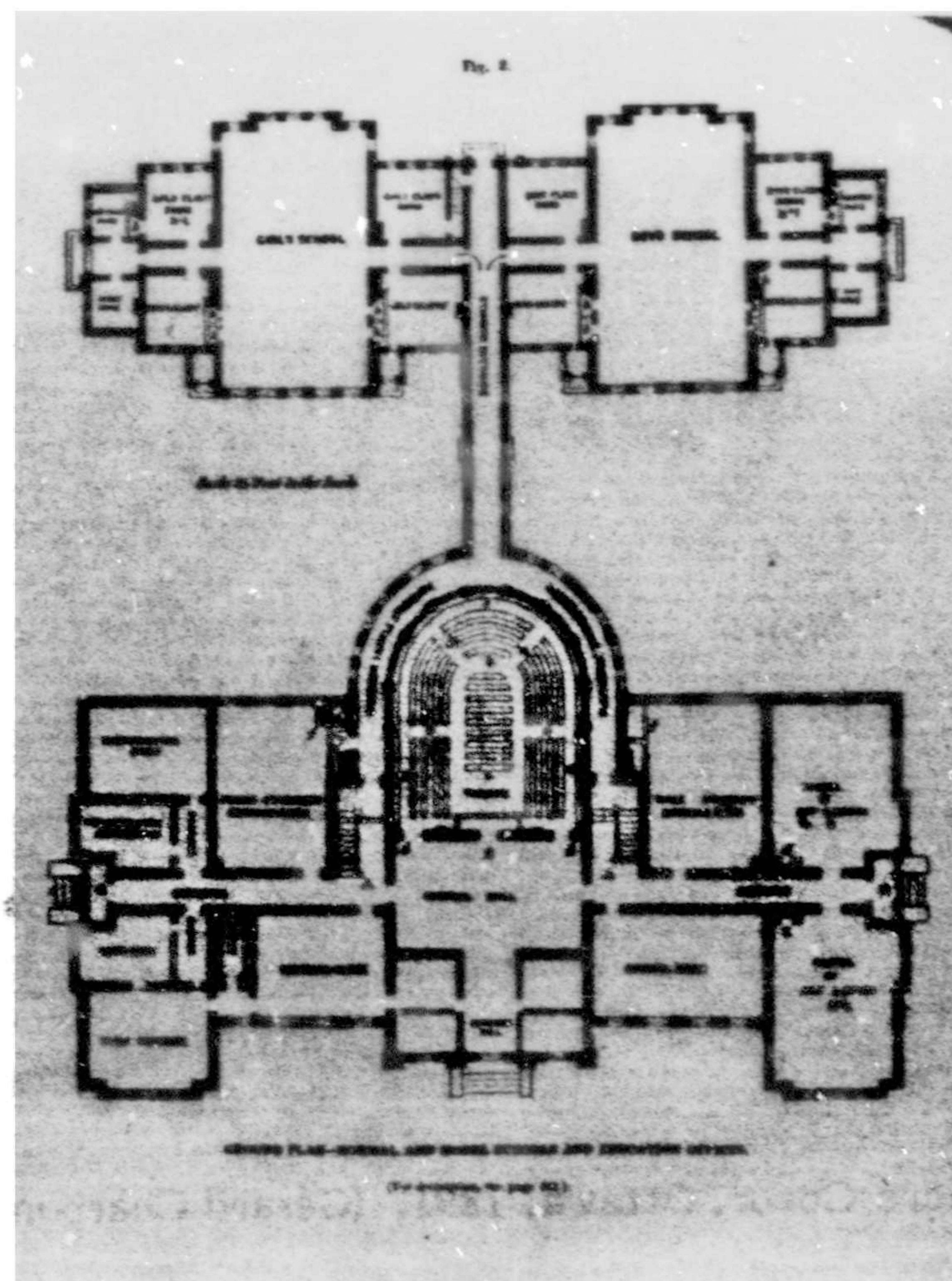
25 St. Michael's High School, Belleville, 1909. (CIHB, R. Goldsteen.)



26 Juniorat du Sacré-Coeur, Ottawa, 1891. (Gérard Charbonneau, OMI.)



27 Provincial Normal School, Toronto, 1849-51 (demolished). (Journal of Education for Upper Canada, Vol. 4 [July 1851], p. 97.)



28 Plan of the first floor, Provincial Normal School, Toronto, Cumberland and Ridout, Architects. (Journal of Education for Upper Canada, Vol. 4 [July 1851], p. 100.)



29 Institute for the Blind, Brantford, 1870-72. (Ontario Ministry of Education.)



30 Ontario School for the Deaf, Belleville, 1923. (CIHB, R. Goldsteen.)



31 Indian Residential School, Spanish, 1913 (demolished). (Courtesy of Lillian Latielle, Spanish.)



32 Saugeen Indian Reserve School, Chippawa Hill, 1898. (CIHB, D. Johnson.)

