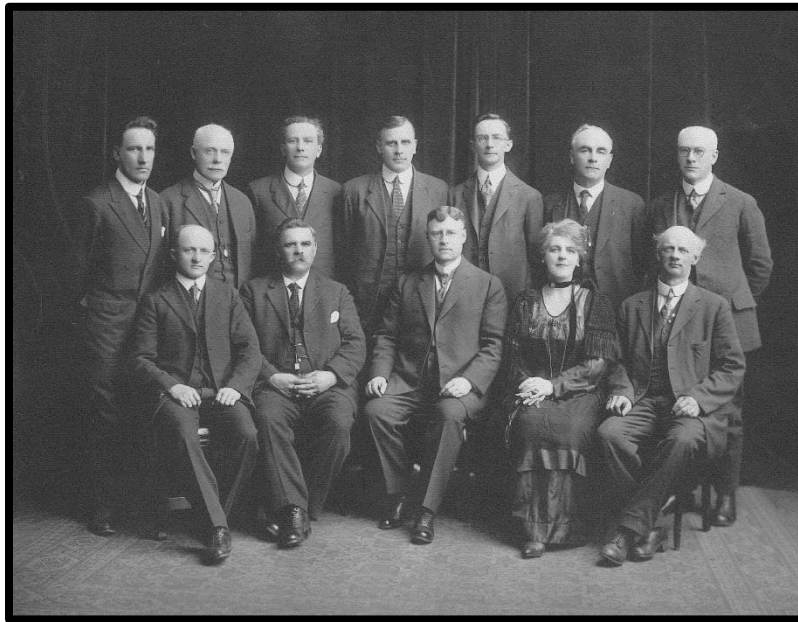




Looking Back: “The Largest Convention”



An early Provincial Executive of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association

With language of instruction still an issue of keen interest, registration at the 1918 convention of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (then called the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association) was the largest ever in the organization's history, at 3,000 delegates.

The group crowded into a Saskatoon church and the meeting soon became out of control. The vice-president, James F. Bryant of Regina, was the only person able to maintain any order and decided to adjourn the session to reconvene in the evening. In the meantime, the Saskatoon fire department intervened by forbidding such a large assembly in one church.

Use of a second church was arranged and the duplicate sessions led to further complications. For example, elections of officers were completed and announced in one building before they were programmed to take place in the other building. Bryant was unopposed for the presidency.

Despite the tensions, trustees then were committed to the betterment of their province and communities – just like trustees are today. One dollar was collected from each of the 3,000 delegates to create a fund for the Association – and then they donated \$500 of it to the Red Cross.