

## Schools

### Agnes G. Hodge Public School

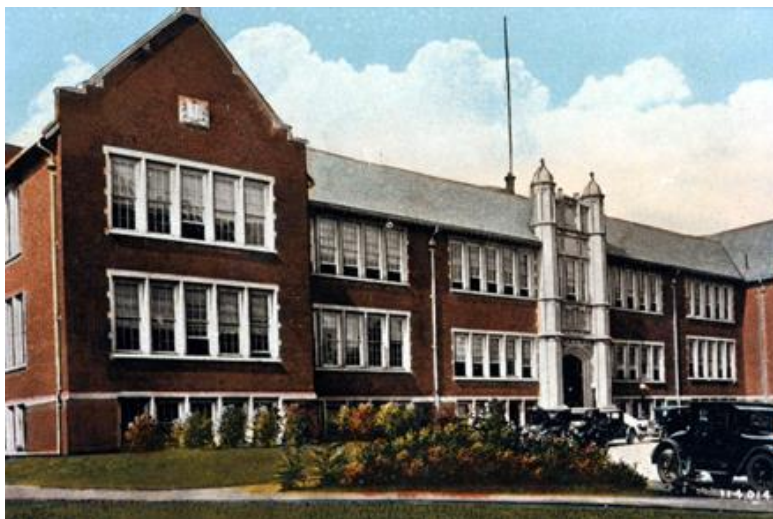
This school, located at 52 Clench Avenue, opened in May 1957. It was named after Agnes G. Hodge, the woman who organized Brantford's first Home and School Association. Born in Elora, Ontario, she graduated from the Hamilton Normal School and taught at Newport, Ontario. While she was president of the Alexandra Home and School Association from 1918 to 1919 she played an important role in setting up the Brantford Home and School Council and was the first president. She also served on the executive committee of the Provincial Federation of Home and School Councils in 1921. Agnes Hodge was a member of the Board of Education from 1923 to 1929 and was the chairperson in 1925. Besides her work in education she was also president of the Women's Hospital Auxiliary of the Brantford General Hospital where she laid the cornerstone of the Queen Elizabeth Pavilion. Agnes Hodge died on March 9, 1963 (**Brantford Expositor**, March 11, 1963, p. 3).



### Alexandra Public School

The original ward school house, built in 1853, was known as the East Ward School or the Darling Street Public School. Located at 214-222 Darling Street, the school was renamed Alexandra Public School in honour of Queen Alexandra, the wife of King Edward VII, when it was rebuilt in 1906-1907. The new school had twelve rooms and cost about \$30,000 to build. This school closed in June 1975 (**Brantford Expositor**, May 3, 1975, p. 14) and was torn down the following month. In

1979 the city's parks board bought the site. The following year it was renamed Charles Ward Park after a former long-time Ward 4 city alderman. It had previously been known as Alexandra School Park.



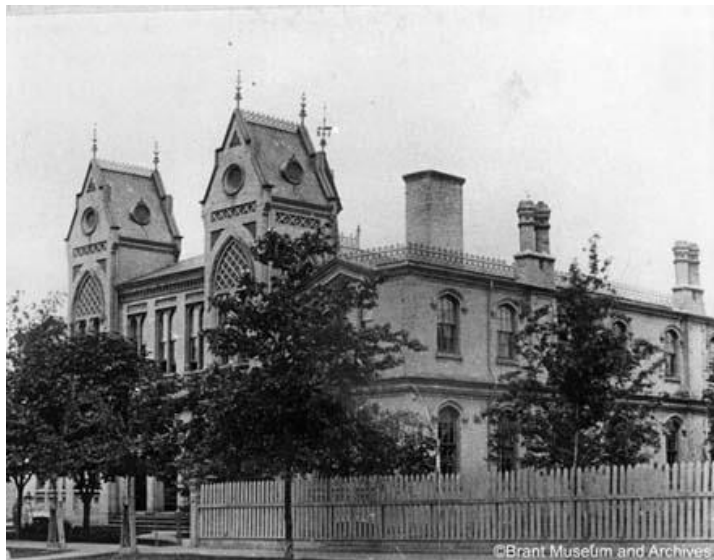
### Brantford Collegiate Institute

In 1867 a high school was temporarily located in an old frame church on the north side of Wellington Street, formerly the site of the first Grace Anglican Church. The school moved to a building in the East Ward at what is now 130 Park Avenue but overcrowding soon became a problem. In 1869 it was decided to build a larger school on George Street between Marlborough and Grey Streets. Dr. James Mills was the first principal of the Brantford Collegiate Institute when it opened in 1872 with three teachers and 124 students. This building was too small by 1909 so a new school, costing

approximately \$130,000, was built at 120 Brant Avenue on the former site of the Brantford Young Ladies' College. The architect was Chapman and McGiffin and the contractors were Schultz Brothers and Company. The school yearbook, Hello, was first published in 1921. By 1923 the classrooms were overcrowded and the school had to use rooms at nearby churches. A new wing opened in January 1924 (Brantford Expositor, September 20, 1924, p. 11) and another wing was built in 1929. A ten-room portable annex was added in 1952 which was replaced by a vocational wing in 1963. A new library was added to the back of the building in 1974. **75 Celebration: a history in words and pictures of the years 1910-1985** provides information and numerous photographs about the early years of Brantford Collegiate Institute.

For more information:

- Reville's History Volume 1 (p. 142-143 of PDF)
- Expositor October 1909 (p. 43 of PDF)
- Hello 1921 Yearbook
- Hello 1922 Yearbook
- Hello 1923 Yearbook
- Hello 1924 Yearbook
- Hello 1925 Yearbook



## Brantford Young Ladies' College

At a public meeting at City Hall in March 1874 plans were made to establish a Young Ladies' College in Brantford. **Rev. William Cochrane**, the minister at Zion Presbyterian Church, played an important role in the founding of the college and was president of the school. The residence and grounds of the Honourable Edmund B. Wood, Chief Justice of Manitoba and former provincial and federal representative for South Brant, were purchased for the school. This property was located on Brant Avenue and later became the site of Brantford Collegiate Institute. The building was immediately enlarged at a cost of \$50,000 to create space for eighty boarders. The inscription stone was laid by the Countess of Dufferin on August 24, 1874 and the College was formally opened in October of that year. Students came from all over Canada and even

the United States to attend the school and there were also many day students. Students were taught literature as well as music, and fine arts. The Brantford Young Ladies' College closed in 1900 with the art and music departments being transferred to the Conservatory of Music.

For more information:

- History of the County of Brant Warner, Beers, and Co. (p. 105-106 of PDF)
- Reville's History of the County of Brant Volume 1 (p. 144-145 of PDF)
- 1888 Telegram (p. 19 of PDF)
- 1890 Calendar of Brantford Young Ladies' College
- 1898 Calendar of Brantford Young Ladies' College
- 1891 Commencement, Brantford Young Ladies' College
- 1892 Commencement, Brantford Young Ladies' College
- 1938 College Reunion, Brantford Young Ladies' College

## Cainsville Public School

The original log and frame school, built in the early 1800s, was located in the middle of the village. When it was torn down classes were temporarily held in a local church. In 1875 a new two-room brick school was built at the west end of Cainsville. A four-room school was built on the east side of the old school in 1920 on land purchased from Mr. F. Sumler. Arthur McCann bought the old school at an auction and tore down the building shortly after. Increasing enrolment meant the assembly room had to be used as a classroom by 1944. The addition built in 1951 included: two classrooms, girls', boys' and teachers' washrooms, and a principal's room. After annexation this school became part of the city's school system. Cainsville Public School, located at 948 Colborne Street, closed on June 30, 1988. Students were sent to the Woodman Drive Public School, at 51 Woodman Drive, which was renamed the Woodman-Cainsville School.



## Central Public School

The west wing of the original Central School was built in 1850 and the school was officially opened by Egerton Ryerson. In 1857 the centre section was built and in 1871 the east wing was added. A fire on February 6, 1890 destroyed the main building and seriously damaged both wings of the school. A new school was built with William Stewart of Hamilton as the architect and Schultz Brothers of Brantford as the contractor. The most notable feature of the new school, located at 60 Sheridan Street, was the tower in the centre of the building. A gym was added to the school in 1969. On March 10, 1982 the school was damaged by fire. The school board decided to tear down the damaged building and replace it with a new one. While crews were

excavating the site for the new school in the southwest corner of the property a burial ground was found. Construction was stopped until all of the human remains were found. This site had been designated as a burial ground in 1830 but there were no records listing who had been buried there. The new Central school at 135 George Street, built at a cost of \$975,000, opened in October 1983.

For more information:

- [Expositor Semi-Centennial 1877-1927 \(p. 26 of PDF\)](#)
- [Reville's History of the County of Brant Volume 1 \(p. 139-141 of PDF\)](#)
- [Views of Brantford \(p. 14 of PDF\)](#)

## F. C. Bodley Public School

F. C. Bodley Public School, which was located at 365 Rawdon Street, opened in 1955. This school was named after Frederick C. Bodley, an architect who designed many of Brantford's schools between 1915 and 1959 including: North Park Collegiate, Pauline Johnson Collegiate, Prince Charles, Cainsville, Fairview, and Princess Elizabeth. Born in London, England, he was a graduate of the Kensington School of Art and received his fellowship at the Royal Institute of Architects in 1942. A resident of Brantford for over 50 years, he died on February 4, 1968 (**Brantford Expositor**, February 5, 1968, p. 11). F. C. Bodley Public School was closed in June 2006 because of declining enrolment (**Brantford Expositor**, April 11, 2006, p. A3).

## Graham Bell Public School

This Grand Street school opened in 1923. It was named after Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor. Naming the school in his honour was approved by his widow shortly after Bell's death on August 2, 1922 (**Brantford Expositor**, September 11, 1922, p. 1). Born on March 3, 1847, he had come to Brantford with his family in 1870. He conceived the idea of the telephone in Brantford in 1874 and made the first long distance call between Brantford and Paris, Ontario on August 10, 1876. The Bell Memorial, at the intersection of West, Wellington, and King Streets, was completed in 1917 and the Bell Homestead on Tutela Heights is now a national historic site. Bell was inducted into Brantford's Walk of Fame in 1999. When the Board of Education decided to close Victoria Public School in June 2002 students were sent to Graham Bell Public School and the name was changed to Graham Bell-Victoria Public School (**Brantford Expositor**, June 22, 2002, p. A13)

## Herman E. Fawcett Secondary School

The Herman E. Fawcett Secondary School, located at 112 Tollgate Road, opened on January 3, 1967. This school was named after Herman Fawcett, a former city educator. He was born in Clarksburg, Ontario and graduated from Hamilton Normal School and the Ontario College of Education in Toronto. After teaching at several Ontario high schools he came to Brantford where he was the head of the social studies department at Brantford Collegiate Institute for nine years. He was the first principal of Pauline Johnson Collegiate from 1954 until being named the first inspector of secondary schools in July 1963. Herman Fawcett died on November 16, 1964 (**Brantford Expositor**, November 16, 1964, p. 1, 2). The name of this school was changed to Tollgate Technical School in 1995.

## James Hillier Public School

When this four-room school was officially opened on March 31, 1950 it was located on Victoria Avenue in the Grand View district of Brantford Township. (**Brantford Expositor**, April 1, 1950, p. 1). At the opening there were already plans to add three more rooms to the school in the near future. The school's address later became 62 Queensway Drive in Brantford. It was named after James Hillier who attended Brantford Collegiate Institute and later studied math and physics at the University of Toronto. He helped develop the first practical version of the electron microscope and had more than 40 patented inventions to his credit. September 24, 1992 was designated as James Hillier Day in Brantford. He was inducted into Brantford's Walk of Fame in 1997. He received a lifetime achievement award from the U.S. National Inventors Hall of Fame and was inducted into the Canadian Science and Engineering Hall of Fame in 2002. The James Hillier Foundation awards scholarships to Brant County students pursuing a post-secondary education in the sciences. James Hillier died on January 15, 2007.

## Joseph Brant Public School

The school named after Joseph Brant is located at 347 Erie Avenue. It opened in September 1967 for students in Grades 7 and 8. Thayendanegea, the son of a Mohawk chief, was born in the mid-1700s. After helping the British fight the Americans he got a land grant along the Grand River for the Six Nations. He translated the Gospel of St. Mark and the Common Book of Prayer into the Mohawk language. He built the Mohawk Chapel and was later buried on the grounds near the church. The Brant monument in Victoria Park was unveiled in October 1886. He was inducted into Brantford's Walk of Fame in 2002. Students in kindergarten to Grade 6 attend Bellview Public School, at 97 Tenth Avenue, before spending their final two years of elementary school at Joseph Brant Public School

## King Edward Public School

Built in 1890, the school was originally known as the Huron Street School. Four rooms were added to this school circa 1906-1907 at a cost of \$15,000. It was renamed King Edward School in honour of the British monarch, King Edward VII. Located at 55 Edward Street in Eagle Place, this school closed in August 1980. The school was destroyed by fire on June 13, 1981 (**Brantford Expositor**, June 15, 1981, p. 1). The building was torn down a few weeks later.

## King George Public School

Additional space for students was needed in this area of the city so construction started on this school in 1914. The cornerstone of the school, located at 265 Rawdon Street, was laid in June 1914 (**Brantford Expositor**, June 25, 1914, p. 10) with construction completed in 1915. The school, named after King George V, opened in September 1915. The cost to build this school, including land and furnishings totaled approximately \$55,000.

## Major Ballachey Public School

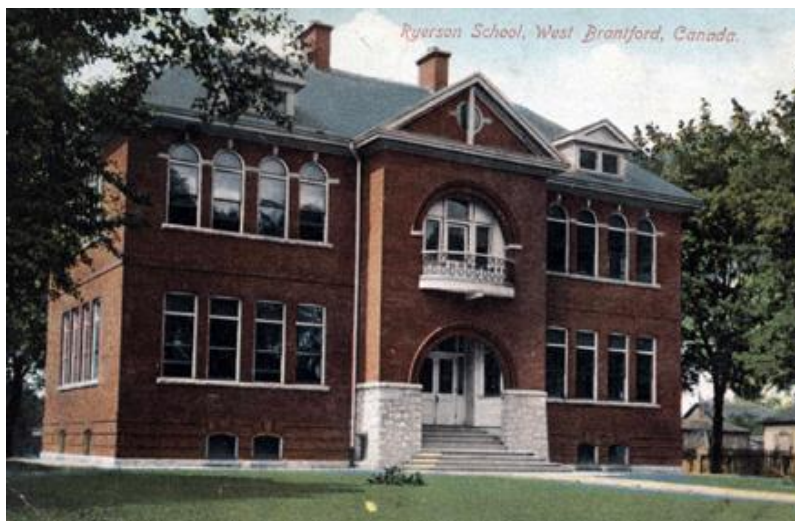
Major Ballachey Public School, located at 105 Rawdon Street, opened in September 1920. It cost \$150,000 to build this school which included technical and domestic science rooms, a dental clinic, and an office for the city's inspector of schools (**Brantford Expositor**, August 28, 1920, p. 20). The school was named after Major Panayoty Percy Ballachey, a dentist and a long-time member of the Board of Education. He was killed while serving with the 58th Battalion in France in June 1916 (**Brantford Weekly Expositor**, June 22, 1916, p. 9). At the time he was second in command of this Battalion. This was the first school in Brantford to be named after a local citizen.

## Pauline Johnson Collegiate

This school, located at 627 Colborne Street East, was built in 1954 on 15 acres of the Glebe lands at a cost of \$1,030,000. Since the Six Nations had sold the land to the city, they wanted to be involved in naming the school. The name **Pauline Johnson** was suggested in honour of the famous Indian poetess. Born at Chiefswood in 1861, she traveled across Canada many times performing her poetry on stage. **Flint and Feather**, **The Moccasin Maker**, and **The Legends of Vancouver** are compilations of her poetry and prose. She died in Vancouver in 1913 and was buried in Stanley Park. In 1961 she was the first author and the first aboriginal person to have her picture on a Canadian postage stamp. She was inducted into the Brantford Walk of Fame in 1998. The barracks at the Brantford airport were used as classrooms until the building was completed. The school opened in 1955.

## Russell Reid Public School

Located at 43 Cambridge Drive, this school opened in 1964. It was named after Russell Reid who came to Brantford in 1918 as the principal of Bellview School and worked in the local educational system for forty-one years. He was appointed public school inspector in October 1935 and chief inspector in 1943. Named superintendent of public schools in 1955, he had to retire from this position in 1959 due to poor health. Russell Reid also served overseas with the 48th Highlanders in World War I and with the Dufferin-Haldimand Rifles in World War II. He died on August 24, 1968 and is buried in Mount Hope Cemetery (**Brantford Expositor**, August 26, 1968, p. 11).



## Ryerson Public School

The original ward school house, known as King's Ward School, was built circa 1853. In 1904 this school was torn down and replaced by a new four-room building. Located at 25 Oak Street, it was named after Egerton Ryerson who was considered to be the founder of the public school system in Ontario. Born in 1803 in Norfolk County, he became a Methodist Church minister, was editor of the **Christian Guardian**, was the first president of the University of Victoria College at Coburg, Ontario, and later became the chief superintendent of education for Canada, a position that he held until 1876. He died on February 19, 1882.

The original Ryerson Public School was torn down in the early 1960s because the building was unsafe. A new Ryerson School opened in 1965 at 61 Sherwood Drive. This school was closed in June 2006 as part of a reorganization of the elementary schools in West Brant (**Brantford Expositor**, June 12, 2006, p. A3)

## St. Ann's Separate School

A second separate school was built on Pearl Street where two houses had previously been torn down. Located at 77 Pearl Street, it was a red brick building with eight classrooms and space for as many as 320 students. The new school also had rest rooms for the teachers, and playrooms, rest rooms, and bathrooms for both boys and girls. The school opened on February 4, 1924 (**Brantford Expositor**, January 24, 1924, p. 8). Eventually St. Ann's School was combined with the nearby St. Basil's School. Both schools closed on June 30, 1978 because of declining enrolment and lack of money for the extensive renovations needed (**Brantford Expositor**, January 25, 1978, p. 1). By this time there were about 150 students attending St. Ann's School with no classes being held at St. Basil's. **Through the years: a history of St. Basil's Parish** by Donald J. Boyle provides more information about this school.



## St. Basil's Separate School

Starting in 1854 classes were held in a white frame building near the corner of Crown and Palace Streets. This building was torn down when the second section of St. Basil's Church was built in 1874. Between 1868 and 1874 the school was in a building attached to the back of the new church. A new school was built at 73 Pearl Street in 1910 at a cost of approximately \$30,000. The school at the back of the church was still needed for additional classrooms for a number of years. Eventually St. Basil's School was joined with the nearby St. Ann's School. Due to declining enrolment and the lack of money for extensive

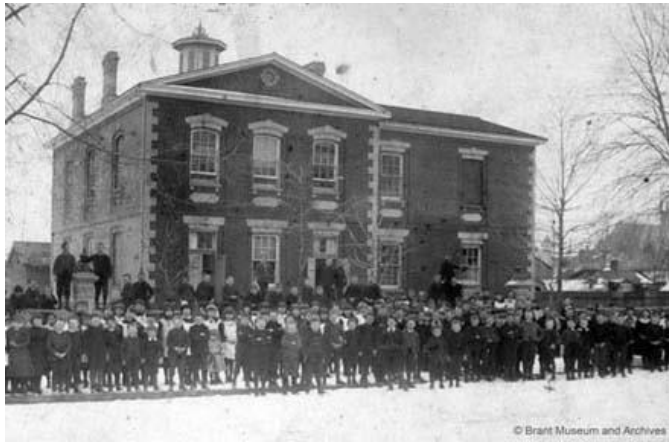
renovations both schools closed on June 30, 1978 (**Brantford Expositor**, January 25, 1978, p. 1). By this time there were no classes being held in St. Basil's School building. **Through the years: a history of St. Basil's Parish** by Donald J. Boyle provides more information about this school.

## St. John's College

The Brantford Catholic High School opened in 1941. The high school was originally located in St. Ann's School on Pearl Street and classes were held there until the space was needed for the elementary students. In 1951 the school moved to the former Dufferin House on the estate once owned by Col. Harry Cockshutt. The Brantford Catholic High School's name was changed to St. John's College in 1959. The Sisters of Providence opened a Catholic high school for girls in 1961. Classes were initially held at St. Bernard School until the new Providence College at 80 Paris Road opened in 1963. In 1970 the two schools were combined into one co-educational school known as St. John's College with an enlarged Providence College on Paris Road being used for all classes.

## Thomas B. Costain Public School

This school, located at 16 Morrell Street, was named after Thomas B. Costain in 1953. Starting as a reporter with the Brantford Expositor Thomas Costain became an editor of **Maclean's Magazine** in 1910 and later moved to the United States where he was an associate editor of **The Saturday Evening Post**. He wrote 25 books (13 novels, 2 biographies, 5 histories, and 5 anthologies) including **For My Great Folly**, **The Chord of Steel**, about the invention of the telephone, and **Son of a Hundred Kings**, about a boy growing up in Brantford. He was inducted into Brantford's Walk of Fame in 2002. Thomas B. Costain died on October 8, 1965 in New York City and was buried in Brantford. The elementary school named in his honour was closed in 1998 because of declining enrolment. Students were sent to Lansdowne Public School at 21 Preston Boulevard and the name was changed to Lansdowne-Costain Public School. The Costain school was bought by the city in 2001 to use as a community centre. The Thomas B. Costain-S. C. Johnson Community Centre opened in 2002 (**Brantford Expositor**, June 10, 2002, p. A3). The S. C. Johnson donated almost \$600,000 to convert the school into a community centre.



## Victoria Public School

Built in 1853 this school was originally known as the North Ward School or the Albion Street School. By 1897 a new school was badly needed but the fire chief had to condemn the building before taxpayers voted to spend money on a new school. Land was purchased at 40 Richmond Street where a 10-room building was erected. The cornerstone was laid by William Gibson, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge A.F. and A.M. of Canada in July 1897. The new school was named Victoria Public School in honour of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria's coronation. It was the first Brantford school to be named after a member of the royal family. When the new school opened in 1898 Miss

Mary Colter was the principal. A fire in February 1944 destroyed the interior of the school and renovations took more than two years with students being sent to nearby schools. The Board of Education decided to close this school in June 2002 and send the students to Graham Bell School which became known as Graham Bell-Victoria Public School (**Brantford Expositor**, June 22, 2002, p. A13)



## W. Ross Macdonald School

Brantford was chosen as the site for a school for the blind in 1869. The Honourable Edmund B. Wood, a member of both the provincial and federal parliament for Brant South, played a key role in getting Brantford chosen as the site and also found money in the treasury to finance the school. The Government purchased 65 acres on the northern edge of town from Dr. Reginald Henwood, part of the original Digby estate. The cornerstone was laid on May 24, 1871. Kivas Tully was responsible for planning the school so that the buildings would meet the needs of blind children while J. W. Langmuir was responsible for hiring staff. After several construction delays, the Ontario Institution for the Education of the Blind opened on May 1, 1872 with 11 students from various parts of

Ontario. After 1899 students from the western provinces were also accepted. The school was under the control of the Department of Prisons and Asylums until 1905 when a Department of Education was established. The first principal of the school was Dr. E. Stone Wiggins. During the early years of the school's existence blind men and women over

twenty-one years of age were allowed to attend the school for a four-year combined academic and technical program with emphasis on skills which would help them earn a living. Students took the complete public school course and male students also learned willow and cane-working, piano tuning and musical instruction while female students learned how to knit and sew as well as household science. There were many additions through the years including: a new wing with additional dormitory space and a hospital wing in 1877, a new gymnasium wing in 1892, and two separate buildings for a boys' and a girls' dormitory in 1912. In 1900 a circulating library was started for the blind in the province with its headquarters at the school. The Ontario Institution for the Blind was renamed the Ontario School for the Blind in 1913. After 1956 students with handicaps other than blindness could attend the school. The new senior school complex was officially opened by W. Ross Macdonald, lieutenant governor of Ontario, and Thomas Wells, the Minister of Education, on May 28, 1973. In 1974 the school's name was changed to the W. Ross Macdonald School to honour him. **A Century of challenge: the history of the Ontario School for the Blind** by Margaret Ross Chandler provides a detailed history of this school.

For more information:

- [Expositor Semi-Centennial 1877-1927 \(p. 42 of PDF\)](#)
- [Reville's History of the County of Brant Volume 1 \(p. 143-144 of PDF\)](#)
- [History of the County of Brant Warner, Beers, and Co. \(p. 101-105 of PDF\)](#)
- [1888 Telegram \(p. 11 of PDF\)](#)
- [Expositor October 1909 \(p. 43 of PDF\)](#)
- [Industrial Recorder of Canada \(p. 5 of PDF\)](#)
- [Remember: Brantford, 1877-1977 \(p. 43 of PDF\)](#)