

MANITOBA GOVERNMENT

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NEWS SERVICE

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FILM WINS RECOGNITION

- - -
Part of Dramatic Series
For School Broadcasts

A film written, produced and acted entirely by Manitobans won an award for educational films at the recent 25th annual Canadian Film Awards.

The film, The Trial of Polly Ugate, will be shown February 14, 1974 as the first of a three-part dramatic series on the Industrial Revolution to be presented by the Department of Education's school broadcasts branch.

Education Minister Ben Hanuschak said the series is the first time the branch has produced dramatic films entirely on its own. Most productions of the branch are produced with the help of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The productions are televised on CBWT Winnipeg, its satellite stations in Manitoba and northwestern Ontario and on CKX Brandon and the Dauphin satellite of CKOS, Yorkton, Sask.

The series was based on three radio scripts written by former Winnipeg writer Marian Waldman, who revised them for television.

The color films on the Industrial Revolution portray the industrial upheavals of the 19th and 20th centuries in the form of simulated trials of individuals representing three generations of one British family, caught up in and deeply affected by industrial changes.

In each film, Robert Owen, a famous 19th century British businessman and social reformer, defends the member of the Ugate family on trial and tries to explain the significance of the industrial question on which the "trial" focuses.

"The series challenges students to become aware of the turbulent times of the Industrial Revolution, and to compare causes and effects of the 19th century uprooting of the social structure with the 20th century breakdown in social standards -- and its ensuing agonies of adjustment to change," explained Gertrude McCance, former supervisor of school broadcasts. As supervisor, Miss McCance was co-producer of the series.

In the award-winning Trial of Polly Ugate, Polly is charged with the destruction of a spinning jenny, one of the earliest mechanical inventions of the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain. Robert Owen explains to the judge how Polly epitomizes the agony of a people caught in the birth-throes of a changing society.

"We wanted to make these films relevant to modern students and I think we will succeed," Miss McCance said. "One student told me The Trial of Polly Ugate was 'the first time I've seen anything on the Industrial Revolution that showed what actually happened to people!'"

A booklet to accompany the films will be distributed to students who will watch the series. It presents students with questions that might arise from watching The Industrial Revolution and suggests books, films and practical activities that could be read, seen or undertaken. The booklet was prepared for the Department of Education by students working under a Student Temporary Employment Program grant.

"These films will never be dated, since they can still portray the Industrial Revolution to students 20 years from now," Miss McCance said.

She said the productions were filmed "on-location" -- in the Law Courts building on Broadway in Winnipeg and at the St. Boniface Museum. The Law Courts scenes were filmed on weekends while the courts were not sitting.

"Courts and museum employees gave us co-operation all the way. In some cases, they allowed us to leave our equipment overnight and this saved a lot of time and money."

At the Canadian Film Awards, The Trial of Polly Ugate was entered in the educational and instructional division, the largest of the competition's seven divisions.

The director was Don S. Williams, who was also film co-editor with Jeff Kool. Cinematographers were Don Campbell and Jim Worobec.

Miss McCance said other provincial education departments and several film organizations have shown interest in the series.

The Industrial Revolution, aimed at students 13 years and up, will be shown in color on CBWT, CKX Brandon, the CKOS satellite at Dauphin and other satellite channels, February 14, 21, and 28 from 10 to 10:30 a.m.