

Deaconesses Present at Conference:

From Toronto Conference:—

Amy Sherwood	Stella Burry
Mrs. Mary Burwash	Mary A. Lake
Josie Brailey	Elizabeth Laughlin
Ethel Ketcheson	Agnes Staples
Ethel Taylor	Mamie Gollan
Lillie Howe	Marion Banks
Caroline Wilcox	Margaret Halliday
Eva Large	Hattie King
Etta Hart	Mrs. Bertha Putnam
Lilian Bechtel	Nellie M. Barker
Mary Firth	Mrs. Margaret Erratt
Louise Pirch, B.A.	Margaret Hall
Helen McGregor	Winnabel Harper
Mrs. Mina McMaster	Mary Curry

From Hamilton Conference:—

Esther Mofft	Vera Simons
Annie Richardson	Marzetta Cairns
Nettie H. Bickell	

From the Bay of Quinte Conference:—

Mrs. Marie Lytle	Anna M. Keith
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From Montreal Conference:—

Agnes M. Thompson	Bertha Shier
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From Maritime Conference:—

Mabel K. Smith

From Manitoba Conference:—

Edith Sherwin	Ida Pitt
Louise Mullenhauer	

From Saskatchewan Conference:—

Emily Latimer

From Alberta Conference:—

Ruth Lanagan

From British Columbia Conference:—

Ruby Brown

From Foreign Mission Fields:—

Grace A. Sykes	Christina Curry
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From Florida, U.S.A.—

Ida Johnstone

Representatives from Presbyterian Church:—

Miss Noble	Miss Gibson
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Representative from Anglican Church:—

Miss Mabel Jones

SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

OF THE
DEACONESS ASSOCIATION
OF
THE UNITED CHURCH
OF CANADA



UNITED CHURCH TRAINING SCHOOL

135 St. Clair Avenue West
TORONTO, ONT.

AUGUST 30th, 31st
AND
SEPTEMBER 1st, 1927

THE SECOND ANNUAL DEACONESS CONFERENCE

The Second Annual Conference of the Deaconess Association of the United Church of Canada was held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 30 and 31, and Sept. 1, 1927.

The complete enrolment was fifty deaconesses representing work in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick.

The Conference opened in the chapel with worship, and the Communion Service, conducted by Rev. Richard Roberts, D.D., Pastor of Sherbourne United Church, and each session opened with a responsive Service of Worship prepared by Rev. Ernest Thomas, D.D.

Two inspirational addresses, one at the beginning by Miss M. E. T. Addison, Dean of Women at Victoria College, and one at the closing by Rev. A. P. Addison, impressed the Conference with a deepened sense of the need for study, thought, meditation and prayer in the life of those who would live deeply themselves and serve effectively their fellows.

The President, Mrs. McMaster, occupied the Chair at the first session, and in her address, after graciously welcoming the members present, reviewed the work of the year as carried on by the Executive, re-emphasized the slogan for the past year, "not more work but better work," and held up for the future the words of St. Paul, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Business Items

1. The election of officers for the ensuing year took place during the first session, and these assumed their duties forthwith, and carried on during the remainder of Conference.

Hon. Presidents—Miss Macdonald, Miss Thomas, Mrs. McMaster

President—Miss Louise Pirch, B.A.

Vice-President—Miss Stella Burry

2nd Vice-President—Miss Margaret Halliday

Recording Secretary—Miss Mary A. Lake

Assistant Secretary—Miss Hattie King

Corresponding Sec'y.—Miss Ethel Ketcheson

Treasurer—Miss Margaret Hall

2. Election of Representatives to the Training School Board of Management: Mrs. McMaster and Miss Halliday.
3. Nominations for Representatives to the Committee on Employed Women Workers in the Church: Miss Ketcheson and Miss Pirch.
4. Motion that the next Conference be held at about the same date as this.
5. Motion that at the next Conference a Nominating Committee, consisting of three of the Executive and two lay members, bring in a report at the beginning of the Conference, and that the new officers assume their duties when Conference adjourns.
6. Motion that the Executive be instructed to aid in forming a Graduate Association.
7. The advisability of some kind of uniform for deaconess candidates was brought before the Committee on Employed Women Workers in the Church.

Unlike previous Conferences which were much occupied with discussion of future policy, only one session of this Conference was devoted to the consideration of the administration of the Deaconess Order. The Chairman and Secretary of the Committee on Employed Women Workers in the Church, Rev. C. W. Bishop, D.D., and Miss Thomas, gave a full report of the decisions reached by the Committee since its assuming responsibility in October, 1926. It was explained that this Committee exists in lieu of a permanent Board, and until there is such a Board to administer the Deaconess Order, and that its purpose

is to investigate and consider the whole status of Women's Work, whether or not there should be a permanent Board, or whether there is some better way of dealing with the increasing scope of women's work. Miss Thomas reported that a Memorandum of decisions affecting the Deaconess Order had been authorized by the Committee, and that every resolution made at the last Deaconess Conference had had the Committee's consideration and action.

Dr. Bishop presented the resolutions of the Committee on the ordination of women to the ministry, to be sent to the Presbyteries 1927-8 looking toward the establishment of a Diaconate. The vital question concerned here is the continuing status or otherwise of the present order. There was some discussion of this subject but no definite conclusions arrived at.

The subject of the Training School was present to the Conference by Miss Macdonald in respect of the authority by which the School is constituted and the machinery through which it works, and the way in which it serves the various bodies who need workers. The product desired by the School Miss Macdonald defined as "an educated Christian gentlewoman with all the implications of each of those words." It was emphasized that more than academic standing should be considered, namely personality, and a sense of call to the work, which is a call to prepare, that preparation being the concern of the Training School. Some discussion followed as to the advantage or disadvantage of the large number of subjects crowded into the course.

The main purpose in planning the Conference was such a program as would embody something immediately helpful to each deaconess in her own work. To this end the Conference divided into three "Interest Groups," each meeting for three two-hour sessions. One of these considered the Church's Organized Work for Adults, and was led by Rev. J. C. Robertson, D.D., of the Board of Religious Education and Mrs. Helen Inksater, of the Dominion Board of the Woman's Missionary Society. A second group considered the Church's Organized Work for Children and Young People, and was led by those familiar with Children's,

Girls' and Young People's work. The third group considered the question "How can the deaconess serve the family?" and was led by Miss Hannah Mathison, of the City Welfare Department, and Rev. J. A. Miller, Chairman of Missionary Extension in Toronto.

The Memorial Service

During the Conference an hour was set apart to commemorate the life and service of the four members of the Order who have died since the opening of the present year. It was a quiet service led by Rev. C. W. Bishop, D.D., and while there was present the note of sadness, the deepest feeling was one of gratitude for the gifts and devotion which had enabled these women to fill so large a place in the work of the Church and of the Kingdom of God.

As an intimate friend and fellow-worker, Miss Amy Sherwood presented a brief appreciation of Miss Emma Cunningham, who died after many years of service as a deaconess; and Miss Jean E. Macdonald, B.A., as Principal of the School from which they had graduated, told of the character and work of Miss Ida Webster, Miss Mary Blain, M.A., and Miss Alice Walker, all of whom were still in the early years of their membership in the Order and in the midst of their active ministry when death came to them.

These statements will form a permanent record in the Memorial List of Deaconesses.

Miss Emma Louise Cunningham graduated from the Deaconess Training School in May, 1903. Her first appointment was as Travellers' Aid at the Union Station in Toronto, where she worked until 1906 when appointed as visiting deaconess in a church in Palmerston. In 1909 Miss Cunningham was stationed in Picton, Ont., being employed by the W.C.T.U., so that her work was not confined to any one church or denomination but extended all over the city with centre at a mission where she organized Children's classes, girls' clubs and Mothers' meetings. She helped all not only materially, but by giving ideals which lifted many from sin and discouragement to a life of high Christian endeavor. During the last two or three years of her work at Picton her health was failing, but her life was one of self-sacrifice and her spirit will live on in the many lives she has influenced.

On March 3rd, 1927, Miss Cunningham passed away in her own home city, Halifax, N.S., where many deeply mourn her loss, but our Deaconess Order is the richer to-day because of Miss Cunningham's life of devotion.

"God calls our loved ones, but we lose not wholly
What He hath given.

They live on earth in thoughts and deeds as truly
As in His heaven."

Miss Ida Maria Webster, born in Prince Edward Island, attended Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown for a time. She had some experience as a Public School Teacher. She had also two years' training in Nursing. In 1919 she entered the Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training Home "to fit herself for any work in the church." She graduated from the School in the spring of 1921. Her designation to the Deaconess Order by the Presbytery of Truro followed on June 5th, and she entered upon service in the First Presbyterian Church, Truro, where she continued to serve for six years almost to the day of her death.

Her minister's report of her service from year to year was always enthusiastic, commending the spiritual that wrought itself out in that congregation in many ministries—most important perhaps through helpful service in homes that needed the nursing, womanly, domestic touch of this singularly self-less visitor.

In poor health she resigned from First Church, Truro, in March to go into hospital in Charlottetown for operation and then to take a time for rest and recuperation. She died in hospital and entered in faith "Into the rest that remaineth."

Women and girls rise up to call her blessed; yes, and men too, who found in her coming into their homes a living exposition of Christ. Simple and unassuming, richly has her life been crowned.

Miss Mary Willis Blain, M.A., a graduate of the University of Toronto, studied also in Columbia University, and later graduated from the Department of Social Service in the University of Toronto. Hers was the trained intellect and the indomitable spirit and the passion for service that was master over a body physically impaired and often suffering. The

passion of her years (if one human being can ever rightly interpret another) was service to those who seemed at least to have less opportunity than was hers by the gracious circumstances of home and environment and education. A student of social conditions with experience in community work, Miss Blain entered the Training Home because of her conviction that she could best serve through the church and as a deaconess. She graduated in 1924 and on appointment under the W.M.S. to the Silverthorn District, Toronto, she was designated there to the Deaconess Order by the Presbytery of Toronto in the autumn of 1925. To the work of Silverthorn and Harwood she gave herself without stint "In season and out of season." Perhaps the work that was most insistent in her judgment was wise and rightly directed religious teaching for childhood and youth. To that she bent her energies with a passion to help enrich and enlarge the opportunities of others.

Miss Alice I. Walker, born in Mitchell, Ont., entered the service of the Church under the W.M.S. following two years of study in the Toronto Bible College. She was Evangelistic worker at Pine River, Man., working in a Non-Saxon district. Our Home Missionaries have been spoken of as men and women who are "lighting fires in cold rooms." That is what her work often was, tending the smouldering good and helping to re-awaken or inspire the warmth and glow of life through spiritual ministries.

Miss Walker desired admission to the Deaconess Order and following one session at the Missionary and Deaconess Training Home, she was designated to the Order by the Presbytery of Toronto on graduation in 1925. She was under appointment to work at Matheson, Ont., but was immediately transferred to Drumheller, Sask. After two years service there she had a case of Scarlet Fever on June 7th last. Miss Walker had a devotion to home, and all the gracious friendliness that gift is capable of producing when it is allowed to become widely inclusive instead of narrowly exclusive. Her pleasing humor and ready wit left a smile when she passed. Hers was an experience and a conviction and devotion that led her out to her never easy fields of service for her Master.