

**The Jardine Auxiliary
of Wychwood / St. Columba Presbyterian Church:
A Skeletal Reconstruction¹**

by

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The minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary at Wychwood / St. Columba Presbyterian Church in Toronto² permit a skeletal reconstruction of an important period in Canadian social history, tracing the expanding sphere of influence of such societies, and the growing professionalism and confidence of Canadian women. The minutes reflect a North American trend to merge home and foreign mission efforts, the gradual eclipsing of home missions by foreign missions, and by mid-century, a reconsideration of the missionary enterprise. As well, the minutes evidence a struggle to retain some control, however modest, over funds raised for worthy causes Auxiliary members deemed important – so called “special objects.”³ Beneath the

¹ I am most grateful to Dr. Marilyn Färdig Whiteley who commented on drafts of this paper throughout the process, and to the United Church of Canada, Victoria University Archives, Toronto, Ontario, without whose resources this paper would not have been possible. The librarians at Northern College, Kirkland Lake Campus, were of enormous assistance.

² The minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary of Wychwood/St. Columba Presbyterian Church, United Church of Canada, Victoria University Archives, Toronto, Ontario (hereinafter cited as UCA). Occasional references will be made in the body of the text to these minutes, by the dates of the meetings.

³ Patricia R. Hill, *The World Their Household: The American Woman's Foreign Missionary Movement and Cultural Transformation 1870-1920* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1985). Also see, for example, John Webster Grant, “Two-thirds of the Revenue: Presbyterian Women and Native Indian Missions” in *Changing Roles of Women with the Christian Church in Canada*, edited by Elizabeth Gillan Muir and Marilyn Färdig Whiteley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), p.106.

surface of the minutes we discern a process of mythologizing the missionary endeavour -- not in the sense of erroneous fiction -- but as "a legitimate *form* of statement."⁴

The form of the Jardine minutes is simplicity itself. Beginning in 1904 they record the highlights of monthly and annual meetings of a small group of Presbyterian Church women. Handwritten and usually one page in length, they include the date, opening and closing prayers, a brief statement of activities, and the signatures of the current president and recording secretary. The writing is often unclear, and the spelling of names, creative.

The minutes reveal a growing assuredness in the minister's wife, Mattie McEachran MacTaggart, as she guided and broadened the Auxiliary's activities, upon occasion, in support of her sister, Ethel McEachran, missionary to Korea. As well, the minutes show the supportive hand of the minister, Will MacTaggart, who mediated at key points in the Auxiliary's history. And the minutes parallel and intertwine with the life work of Ethel McEachran as she oversaw the building of a high school in Korea, which grew from a tiny two-roomed cottage of six pupils to a group of spacious buildings with over eight hundred pupils.⁵ The congregation of St. Columba Church and its Auxiliary generously contributed to this effort.

Labor omnia vincat (hard work conquers all) was the pioneer spirit Ethel transported to Korea, and Mattie and Will provided in their leadership at St. Columba Church. This was borne out in the minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary testifying to their life-long support of the missionary endeavour -- spiritually, emotionally and financially.

A life-defining moment for the sisters Ethel and Mattie was the death of their mother, Martha Maude Proctor McEachran, in 1883 at the birth of Mattie. Ethel was three years old. Their father, Colin McEachran, returned to his parent's homestead in Vaughan Township, County of York, Ontario, to live out his years. There was "little or no contact with the McEachran side of the family" wrote Mattie years later.⁶ Two sisters of their mother quickly assumed responsibility for the girls, so that Ethel and Mattie were raised separately -- Ethel in Maryborough Township, Wellington County, Ontario, with the Methodist Brandon family, and Mattie in King Township, York County, Ontario, with the Quaker/Anglican/Methodist Hollingsheads. They did spend idyllic childhood summer days together on their grandmother Proctor's family farm in King Township,⁷ in

⁴ Harold Fallding, *The Sociology of Religion: An Explanation of the Unity and Diversity in Religion*. (New York: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1974).

⁵ UCA, *Presbyterian Church in Canada, Records of Proceedings*, Woman's Missionary Society Annual Report for the year 1933. Ethel became a leader in Korean Christian education, and her school attained certification with all the required supporting agencies in spite of tumultuous economic, social and political change in Korea.

⁶ In the estate of Mary MacTaggart (daughter of Will and Mattie MacTaggart) were found a few handwritten notes, a cookbook, a 1936 travel journal, a photo journal "Glimpses of China," and some undated, unidentified news clippings. These are henceforth referred to as the MacTaggart Papers.

⁷ Personal communication and the MacTaggart Papers. Handwritten notes by Mattie MacTaggart, presumably prepared for the booklet by Althea Steveley, *The Proctor Family History 1831-1981* (Woodstock: Print & Litho Ltd., 1981).

the hope that Mattie and Ethel would become sisters in spite of being reared separately. The sisters did become very close and this was borne out by a life-long friendship.

The sisters were second-generation Scottish/Irish immigrants, raised in rural Ontario in middle-class, devout homes connected by deep kinship ties. Close in age, the sisters taught school in rural Ontario as stepping-stones in their respective life missions. Ethel and Mattie attended Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. The choice of Queen's University in Kingston, some distance from their homes, was no doubt made because of its Presbyterian affiliation. While Mattie graduated, taught school and married Will MacTaggart by 1907, Ethel completed her degree through correspondence courses offered by Queen's,⁸ graduating while on furlough in 1922, at age 41.

It is difficult to grasp today just how remarkable an accomplishment it was for Ethel and Mattie to attend university. In 1891 only 0.5 per cent, or 25 out of 5,000 of all Canadian youth aged 15 to 24 attended universities. Only 13 per cent, or 3 of those 5,000 Ontario university students were women in 1901.⁹ There certainly was no family precedent for the higher education of women, nor expectations for women beyond, perhaps, an advantageous marriage, by which I mean the acquisition and consolidation of precious farmland. Ethel was the first female family member, either by necessity or by will, to seek financial independence, and to remain single. By age 19 she was working and boarding independent of her adopted parents. Thus, the sisters were of an early generation of university women who may have felt a particular responsibility to contemplate a more public social contribution. Both sisters entered ministries of a sort.

We may surmise that the sisters were members of that invisible generation of women who quietly and resolutely went about their business without expectation of earthly reward. Ethel is generally not credited -- nor did she seek credit -- with founding Hamheung Girls' High School.¹⁰ It is not surprising that there is little reference to Ethel in the exhaustive memoirs by her missionary colleagues.¹¹ Mattie and Ethel left very few personal papers.¹² Possibly, the sisters' single-mindedness alienated colleagues and

⁸ Queen's played a pioneering role in the development of correspondence courses. An interesting line of inquiry might well be the history of long distance learning in Ontario first offered at Queen's University in the 1890s and its impact and importance on women's history. See Chad Gaffield, Lynne Marks, and Susan Laskin, "Student Populations and Graduate Careers: Queen's University 1895-1900" in Paul Axelrod and John G. Reids, eds. *Youth, University and Canadian Society: Essays in the Social History of Higher Education* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

⁹ Lynne Marks and Chad Gaffield, "Women at Queen's University, 1895-1905: A 'Little Sphere' All Their Own?" *Ontario Historical Society Quarterly*, 78:4 (December 1986), p.336.

¹⁰ UCA, biographical file for Ethel B. MacEachern (sic). Credit for building the school is however acknowledged. "Miss Ethel B. MacEachern, Hamheung Girls' High School. She founded this School, built the new building, and was Principal until . . . 1941."

¹¹ See, for instance, Helen F. MacRae, *A Tiger on Dragon Mountain: The Life of Rev. Duncan M. MacRae, D.D.* (Charlottetown, 1993); William Scott, "Canadians in Korea: A Brief Historical Sketch of Canadian Mission Work in Korea," unpublished typescript, 1975; and Florence J. Murray, *At the Foot of Dragon Hill* (New York: Dutton, 1975).

¹² MacTaggart Papers.

contemporaries. Ethel may well have appeared to the next missionary generation as “some uncongenial saint of a missionary who always rub[bed] your fur the wrong way.”¹³

St. Columba's origins were as a mission of Bloor Street Presbyterian Church in the Wychwood district of Toronto, served by student pastors of Knox College and then called Wychwood Presbyterian Church.¹⁴ In 1904 the Home Mission Council appointed Will MacTaggart as student missionary. At that time the church's congregation consisted almost entirely of Scottish immigrants working five-acre market gardens each with a substantial brick house.¹⁵ The name of the church was changed in 1918 to St. Columba Presbyterian Church – a particularly apt name as St. Columba, missionary and abbot, is traditionally credited with the conversion of Scotland to Christianity.

The name of St. Columba's women's group, the Jardine Auxiliary, also had Scottish roots. It is said that the clan Jardine fought at the Battle of Bannockburn and were even present at the early Crusades. But then the McEachran clan claim to have been present at the fall of Troy, in fact, inside the Trojan horse,¹⁶ so one needs to keep a sense of proportion in these matters. Mrs. Amy Hislop McClure, wife of Dr. Robert Baird McClure,¹⁷ innocently reported to the Jardine Auxiliary in 1915, she was “encouraged” to relate that “the backbone of the opium habit in China [was] broken” (10 June 1915). It is ironic then that an infamous member of the Jardine clan, Dr. William Jardine, surgeon, trader and entrepreneur (1784-1843) also known as “the Iron-Handed Old Rat,”¹⁸ acquired his inestimable wealth smuggling opium into China.¹⁹

Typically, the Jardine Auxiliary women were married, middle-aged and middle-class with time and money to pursue worthy causes outside the home. Also included were

¹³ Ruth Compton Brouwer, “Home Lessons, Foreign Tests: The Background and First Missionary Term of Florence Murray, Maritime Doctor in Korea,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 1995, New Series, vol. 6 (1996), pp.103-128. Note p.119.

¹⁴ UCA, fonds 2516. Administrative History or Biographical Note. St Matthew's United Church (Toronto, Ontario). “St. Columba was originally a Presbyterian Church mission at the corners of Alcina Street and Vaughan Road in 1890. This work was abandoned in 1896 and a subsequent mission in 1902 developed into a new church at St. Clair and Vaughan (1903), known as Wychwood Presbyterian. In 1918 the name was changed to St. Columba, and new construction in 1924 resulted in a larger church joining the United Church in the following year.”

¹⁵ MacTaggart Papers. Fred Egan, “Zestful 40 Year Pastor Saw City Engulf Church,” from unidentified Toronto newspaper, n.d.

¹⁶ Flora McPherson and Norman F. Peterson, *Clan McEachran*, 5th ed., (Waterloo, Ont.: Norman F. Peterson, 1988), p.15.

¹⁷ Mrs. McClure, wife of Dr. Robert McClure, United Church missionaries to China, sponsored by Bloor Street Church. See Munroe Scott, *McClure: The China Years* (Toronto: Canec Publishing, 1977).

¹⁸ See Gazetteer for Scotland: “William Jardine,” <http://www.geo.ed.ac.uk/scotgaz/people/famousfirst627.html>

¹⁹ Wikipedia: “William Jardine,” http://www.wikipedia.com/wiki/William_Jardine Dr. William Jardine, 1784-1843, co-founded the famous Jardine Matheson conglomerate, making his fortune smuggling Opium into China, and sparking the opium wars.

widows, a few spinsters, and some teachers.²⁰ Ruth Compton Brouwer in *New Women for God* describes a typical Auxiliary meeting as an

opportunity to come together in a good cause, to enjoy a sense of sisterhood, and to turn for a time from mundane household responsibilities to the exotic challenges of a faraway world. The monthly missionary meeting was often one of the few outings available in a narrow social existence, and many women made extraordinary efforts to attend.²¹

There is a family story of a contemporary of Ethel's who wished to attend a Ladies' Aid meeting. No one was available to drive her so she instructed her 13-year-old daughter to drive the new car. Never having driven before on the road, and forgetting how to stop the vehicle, they drove through the unopened farm gate. Upon arrival at the church, farm gate attached to the car in most accounts, they circled the church until running out of gas. This story has been refined over the years in delicious re-telling, but there is no disputing that attendance at a church meeting was important.²²

The women of St. Columba Presbyterian Church held their first meeting 2 March 1904 for the purpose of organizing a Missionary Society under the Women's Home Missionary Society (WHMS) of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. At this inaugural meeting Mrs. Wm. Cochrane, first President of the WHMS,²³ presided and "show[ed them] how to organize a meeting." She described the accomplishments of the WHMS and "the great need of help no matter how small."²⁴ The Auxiliary proceeded to approve the constitution as provided by Mrs. Cochrane, and adopted the name "The Jardine Auxiliary of the Women's Home Missionary Society." The election of officers took place and the new President, Mrs. Bryce, took eight "mite boxes" which Mrs. Cochrane had fortunately brought with her to be "sold to the [Auxiliary] members for two cents a piece" (7 September 1904). In turn, the "mite boxes" would be distributed to young

²⁰ For further discussion of this historic model see Rosemary R. Gagan, *A Sensitive Independence: Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient, 1881-1925* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

²¹ Ruth Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p.42.

²² Personal communication. The year would have been circa 1922.

²³ Edmund H. Oliver, *His Dominion of Canada: A Study in the Background, development and Challenge of the Missions of the United Church of Canada* (Toronto: The Woman's Missionary Society and the Board of Home Missions of the United Church of Canada, c.1932), p.239, tells us that the Women's Home Missionary Society (WHMS) emerged to relieve the sufferings in the Klondike mining camps. For background details on Mrs. W. Cochrane, born Miss Mary Houston of Paisley, Scotland, see R.N. Grant, *Life of Rev. William Cochrane, D.D.* (Toronto, 1899), pp. 66-7. Mrs. W. Cochrane was the First President of the WHMS, and Mr. Wm. Cochrane was Convener, Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

²⁴ UCA, Acc. #77.716L, Box 8, file 7; provenance: St. Matthew's United Church, Toronto. *Jardine Auxiliary Minutes*, 2 March, 1904.

children to collect their pennies for missions.²⁵

At the very next meeting, the women listened to a letter from a Mrs. Hunter of the Teulon, Manitoba, Mission that "made us want to be up and doing what we could to help the mission" (8 April 1904). They decided to make garments for children. The next month, seven women were buying and sewing garments. Leah Dinwoody, future missionary to China, suggested making a quilt (7 September 1904). By December they considered starting a Mission Band for boys and girls. Children "with their enthusiasm raised substantial gifts for missionary purposes."²⁶ In 1905 bales of clothing were sent to the poor in Chicago and native peoples of Western Canada.

The Jardine Auxiliary enthusiastically supported home missions, responding to incoming waves of settlers. The logging camps in Northern Ontario, the Chinese women in Toronto, and the Japanese and Polish settlers in the Alberta mine fields were discussed and studied, as were the Galicians²⁷ and Russian Doukhobors of Western Canada, and the Roman Catholics in Quebec; eventually the latter mission was considered less than encouraging.²⁸

The earliest mention in the minutes of foreign missions was in March of 1906 when Mrs. J. Griffith addressed the Jardine Auxiliary about the women of Honan, China. Funds were raised and interest in mission work was sustained and augmented by guest speakers at meetings of the Jardine Auxiliary. The list of guest speakers reads like a veritable "Who's Who" of the mission field. A partial listing of the foreign missionaries includes, from China: Mrs. J. Griffiths, Mrs. Jonathan Goforth, Mrs. Robert McClure, Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Menzies, Mrs. Duncan MacRae, Mrs. Duncan, Mrs. McKay, Misses McDonald, Dinwoody, McNeeley, and Dr. Mitchell; from India: Drs. Margaret Patterson and Margaret McKellar, Mrs. Wilkie, Mrs. G. Bryce and Miss Grier; from Korea: Misses McCully, and McEachran; from French Indo-China: Mrs. Cadman.

Between 1904 and 1920 the programme content was fairly evenly divided between home and foreign missions: 24 were on home missions; 30 on foreign missions. From 1920 to 1945, however, the programmes concentrated more on the foreign mission field: 7 programmes were on home missions; 30 on foreign missions. As Rosemary Gagan points out foreign missions were highly marketable and fundable; human

²⁵ A young child might take the boxes home at the beginning of a special course of study "not to be kept longer than one month, as a month is a long time to a child." See Martha B. Hixson, *Missions in the Sunday School*, (Toronto: The Methodist Young People's Forward Movement for Missions, 1906), pp.130-1. Hixson suggests that there might be more dignified, more creative ways of giving to missionary causes.

²⁶ Hixson, p.64. There also seems to be another meaning for Mission Band; that is, "an association of young ladies organized in a local congregation to aid the WFMS and undertaking to raise not less than \$20 a year." UCA Finding Aid 226, p.viii.

²⁷ John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*. Updated and Expanded ed. (Burlington, Ont.: Welch Publishers, 1988), p.119.

²⁸ Gagan, p.11.

resources were available, and the need, evident.²⁹ The Jardine Auxiliary is an example of a group for whom home missions were gradually eclipsed by the more exotic and fundable foreign fields.

Mattie McEachran married St. Columba's minister, Will MacTaggart in 1907. She made her entrance as the minister's new wife at a meeting of the Auxiliary in October 1907 having just returned from her wedding trip to Scotland. She was young enough to be the daughter of most of the members, yet women commonly expected leadership from the wives of their ministers. The challenge must have been daunting for this 24-year-old. Fortunately, her social background in the Hollingshead household, her university education, her teaching experience, and her natural grace eased her through this transition. Nonetheless, the confining mantle of church leadership was not always comfortable for Mattie, and gave their summer island retreat in Muskoka special meaning. The island with its oriental arching bridge and stepping-stone paths represented both an escape from worldly concerns, and a place of contemplation. The island also demonstrates that cultural contact is a two-way street.

Mattie quickly assumed a leadership role and at that October 1907 meeting she volunteered to invite the next speaker. Her interest in foreign missions was evident in the papers she delivered in 1908 -- "Mission Work in Manchuria" and "Ways and Means of Support for our Home-[word struck] Missionaries". The striking out of the word "home" so that the sentence reads "Ways and Means of Support for our Missionaries" may indicate a broadening of interest in missions worldwide.

The missionary world was small, and often a family affair; for example, the Dinwoody family were four of St. Columba's original thirteen charter members.³⁰ The three Dinwoody daughters, Leah, Maud, and Jennie, all served as recording secretaries of the Jardine Auxiliary at various times; Mrs. Dinwoody served as vice president, and Mr. Dinwoody toured mission fields in China and Korea. It well may have been when Miss Margaret MacDonald spoke to the Auxiliary on 2 June 1909 that Miss Leah Dinwoody was recruited or confirmed an alliance with the missionary MacDonald. What is certain is that "Miss Dinwoody was appointed with [Miss MacDonald] to complete her language study"³¹ and that the two taught together in China.³²

At the Auxiliary's Annual Meeting in December 1910, the women received a communication from session requesting a change in the Auxiliary's constitution to state that the name of the society be the "Jardine Auxiliary of the Women's Missionary Societies (sic)." This appears to be a move away from affiliation with only the home

²⁹ *Ibid.*, The Methodists came to see that "missionary operations outside Canada's borders would attract far more attention, money and personnel than home missions."

³⁰ "St. Columba United Church," 7 page typed handout provided by staff of St. Columba United Church, n.d., p.2.

³¹ Margaret H Brown, "History of the Honan (North China) Mission of the United Church of Canada. Originally a mission of the Presbyterian Church of Canada: 1887-1961." 2 vols. Typed. (Toronto, 1970), XLVIII, p.3 and XLVII, p.12.

³² MacTaggart Papers. Photo journal "Glimpses of China 1922."

missionary society, and toward official affiliation with foreign work. In any case, the expressed goals of the society, like all such societies, were “to foster the missionary spirit throughout the congregation and to raise funds for missionary work” (13 December, 1910). Clearly defined rules and regulations were set out.

By March 1911 the newly formed Jardine Auxiliary of the Woman’s Missionary Society “held their first institute” and the Foreign Mission Committee, Secretary, Rev. R.P. MacKay, received “reports of missionary secretaries of each organization of the Church” (14 March 1911). The Auxiliary was becoming more structured, and by 1912 an executive committee considered meeting the day prior to the regular meeting to prepare the business to be presented to the society; henceforth, this was the form.

Home mission work continued at a quieter pace and this was reflected in how the women of the Auxiliary agreed to divide their fund-raising between home and foreign missions in 1912: \$25 to the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society, \$25 to the Women’s Home Missionary Society, and “\$25 reserved to be voted by the Society to missionary objects in which they were especially interested,” and “The balance to be placed in the general fund [text underlined] to be voted by the session to whatever cause they deem[ed] most worthy.” At this same meeting a motion was made by Mattie “to have a fund obtained by work or special contribution to be held by the Society for any worthy cause. To be distributed by them.” (AGM, 9 January 1912). This strategy was reinforced at the 14 January Annual General Meeting, wherein \$25 was voted “to be kept for our own society.” Clearly the women were engaged in a struggle to retain some control over the allocation of funds.

The financial pressures on the Auxiliary may be gleaned from the May 1913 minutes. Mrs. Wood read a letter from the Zenana Missionary Society³³ of India, acknowledging the receipt of the \$20 the Auxiliary

had contributed for the supply of a boy for one year. They asked that we take a girl if desirable at \$35 as there was not a boy at present ready. The Executive thought that at present we would take a boy owing to the special needs in our own church.

While this quotation raises many questions we may at least conclude that the Auxiliary preferred to select a specific project for which to raise funds, putting a face on fund raising, if you will, and to be directly involved in how the money was spent.

No doubt it was difficult to refuse the direct entreaties of missionaries on furlough such as Miss McCully, who addressed a special meeting of the Jardine Auxiliary in 1915 on the great needs of Hamheung Mission Station in Korea. “Only \$5.00 a month would support a Biblewoman or a girl in the boarding school” – of which their very own designated missionary, Ethel McEachran, Miss McCully pointedly remarked, was now Principal (4 March 1915).

³³ In this sense, ‘Zenana Missionary Society’ means the Woman’s Missionary Society in India. Literally, Zenana refers to Muslim or high-caste Hindu women’s quarters. See Brouwer, *New Women for God*, pp.97ff.

In May 1915 the Women's Home and Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies of the Presbyterian Church amalgamated to become the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Western Division. In fact, the women of the Jardine Auxiliary had already moved in that direction, and at that year's Annual meeting, the Secretary wrote "this [amalgamation] makes little difference [to the work of the Jardine Auxiliary] as we have for some time been dividing our effort between home and foreign work" (December 1915).

Fund-raising for mission work was a primary goal for the Auxiliary and over the years various projects were mounted; for example, for \$25 a woman could become a life member of the WMS, or could be so honoured by someone else; in 1921 seven life memberships were presented, garnering \$175. All successful fund-raising activities contain a strong social element and this was evident when members opened their homes for picnics, meetings and teas. Mission band "mite boxes" raised a surprising amount of money,³⁴ and a new-to-the-Presbyterians compartmentalized envelope system of systematic giving was successfully introduced in 1922. Of course, the most successful fund-raisers were guest speakers such as Rev. R.M.P. Scott's "Illustrated Lecture on Korea" which three hundred attended (17 November 1913), while two hundred attended Miss Craig's "Illustrated lecture on the missionary work among the Indians of the West" (13 May 1913).

It must have been exciting to hear Mrs. Rosalind Bell-Smith Goforth's address on Honan, China as well as any incidental insights she might have given about her husband, the colourful, and 'quite peculiar' Jonathan Goforth,³⁵ and equally, to hear Miss Tasker report on her Christian mission work among the Jews in Toronto in 1910. They voted to give Miss Tasker one dollar, and this to be done "immediately" (10 January, and 12 April 1910).

The Minutes record three ceremonial leave-takings for outgoing missionaries who became local heroines in the process: Leah Dinwoody (10 September 1912), Grace Beattie (1916),³⁶ and Ethel McEachran (1913). Leah Dinwoody, missionary to China, was a charter member of the Jardine Auxiliary and sponsored by that group. The situations of the other two women were more complex. Bloor Street Presbyterian Church designated Grace Beattie, missionary to Trinidad on May 17, 1916.³⁷ The following day, at St. Columba, Miss Beattie received "a shower by several societies of the Church" (18

³⁴ Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, p.57.

³⁵ See, for example, Rosalind Goforth, *Goforth of China*. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1937), and Alwyn Austin, *Saving China: Canadian Missionaries in the Middle Kingdom*. (Toronto: University Toronto Press, 1986), p.27.

³⁶ W.G. Wallace. *These forty years – and after: being the story 1887 – 1927, of Bloor St. United Church, Toronto told by W.G. Wallace* (Toronto: Rous and Mann, 1927), p. 60, wherein Miss Grace Beattie is described as destined for "the great mission field overseas." In the Jardine Auxiliary minutes (18 May 1916), Miss Beattley (sic) is described as "a member of this congregation and leaving shortly for the mission field of Trinidad."

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.60

May 1916) as "one who has filled a large place in the work of our congregation." Certainly such joint sponsorship provided a broader network of fundraisers.

It would be an error to assume that Ethel had been a life-long, active member of St. Columba or raised in a Presbyterian household.³⁸ Ethel grew up in a strong Methodist home in Maryborough Township, and was studying or teaching in rural Ontario in these early years. A prospective missionary could name his or her preference of sponsoring organization, and if unable to do so the Board office would arrange for a congregation to undertake the person "as their own missionary in which case [the designation service] should be in that Church."³⁹ It is probable too that Mattie and Will mediated on Ethel's behalf to arrange for St. Columba to sponsor Ethel.

At the designation service for Ethel, Will MacTaggart spoke solemn words of farewell. Ethel addressed the Auxiliary on China's growth -- the opening up of communications with the telephone, telegraph and the railroad -- and proclaimed, "the light of the gospel is being shed in the dark places of China" (17 June 1913). It appears that Ethel had little or no specific preparation for the Korean Mission field. It was not until 1926 that the Jardine Auxiliary introduced an annual mission study book.⁴⁰

While such farewells were highlights in the life of the Auxiliary, the women continued faithfully to do the group's everyday business: quilting, prayers, fund-raising bazaars and teas; boxes of clothing were sent to outfit an Indian boy. Mattie gave numerous talks and lectures on missions "adding personal sketches of missionaries she has known herself," drawing maps to illustrate her points, and upon one recorded occasion, using seventy stereopticon views of Korea. Missionaries home on leave were welcomed as speakers, customarily illustrating their talks. Miss McNeeley used dolls in 1920 to describe the culture of the Chinese people. When missionary guest speakers were not available, Auxiliary members prepared their own "instructive papers." Thus Mrs. Meade borrowed "Formosan idols" from Dr. Rev. G.W. MacKay to illustrate her talk (11 February 1913).

When missionaries came home on furlough or retired they actively joined the congregation and the Auxiliary. Over the years there were: Rev. A.H. Boyd and his family, Honan China; Rev. and Mrs. H.H. Smith, India; and, Dr. and Mrs. Bryce, India. Mrs. Davina (Robb) Menzies on leave in 1914 entertained the Auxiliary with tales of Christmas in China, started a Mission Study Class and became Honorary President. Leah Dinwoody, on leave in 1917, served as Auxiliary Secretary *pro tem* and Mrs. Bryce, President.

Correspondence with individual missionaries, particularly at Christmas, served to sustain and stimulate interest in missions. These letters were read with delight at monthly meetings, and so it was with Ethel McEachran and Leah Dinwoody. Miss Dinwoody

³⁸ Her adoptive parents, James and Charlotte Brandon, were Wesleyan Methodist.

³⁹ UCA, Letter from A.E. Armstrong, Assistant Secretary, Foreign Mission Board, to Rev. W.A. Hunter, April 8, 1913.

⁴⁰ UCA, *Jardine Auxiliary Review of 25 Years*, loose filed, undated, typed, page 7. Brouwer points out that no specialized mission study books were available until 1931. Presuming Brouwer is correct, the Jardine Auxiliary were on the forefront of mission study books. See Brouwer, "Home Lessons," p.111.

wrote her first impressions of China in 1913, and in response the Auxiliary agreed that a member write Leah on a monthly rotation. Often such letters were shared in church publications, an aspect some missionaries found tedious.⁴¹ Admittedly "There were some good workers on the field who could not write interesting letters about their work," wrote Mrs. J.A. MacDonald in 1907.⁴²

By 1917 the structure of the society was full blown with an Honorary President, President, two Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Auditor and six Secretaries serving in the capacities of Recording, Corresponding, Envelope, Literature, Supply, and Strangers. By 1922 the Board had added a third Vice President, Messenger Secretary, Home Helpers Secretary, Library Secretary, Pianist, Social Convenor and Press Secretary. After Church union in 1925 the officers of the 'Jardine Mission Auxiliary' included Community Friendship, Missionary Monthly, Christian Stewardship And Finance, Supply, Home Helps, Temperance and Christian Citizenship, Literature, Study Book, and a League Of Nations Representative.⁴³ The titles had become more specific and at the same time, more obscure, more formal and broader in scope. While the society's structure was more complex, the Auxiliary membership was not increasing.

The Auxiliary's response to the floods and famine in China in 1918 illustrates the increasing formality of the Auxiliary's structure and their lessened authority over spending. While they could not allocate funds for this cause as an association they could contribute, if they so wished as individuals (21 January 1918). Meanwhile, Miss Dinwoody, shortly returning to China, impressed on the Auxiliary "the necessity for the personal touch in mission work" and eloquently appealed to the Auxiliary that they "might . . . support at least one girl in the mission school -- cost per annum being \$20.24" (November 1918).

The February 1919 minutes note that there were seven missionaries from the congregation currently serving in the field and their photos were to be framed and hung in the Lecture Room of the Church. We surmise that the list included Ethel McEachran (Korea); Leah Dinwoody, (China); Miss Verne McNeeley,⁴⁴ (Shanghai, China); and Miss Grace Beattie, (Trinidad). The photos, sadly lost,⁴⁵ served as a constant reminder to the

⁴¹ Gagan, p.79.

⁴² *Home Mission Pioneer* IV (January, 1907), No. 1907-8, p.157.

⁴³ UCA, *Jardine Auxiliary Minutes*. Loose filed, undated news clipping: "Officers installed in Jardine Auxiliary: Mrs. G.L. Johnston Presides at St. Columba's Church Event."

⁴⁴ M. Verne McNeeley (1885-19?), served in Shanghai, China, by special appointment 1909-1914, as assistant to Dr. Donald MacGillivray. In 1914 she advised Dr. MacGillivray that she wished to work for and with women and children "as was her original intention." See Brown, Vol. XXI, p.127.

⁴⁵ Accommodating staff at St. Columba Church, spring 2000, had no knowledge of photos of missionaries. A caretaker recalled a box of photos stored somewhere, but could not locate them.

Church membership who "shared in her victories and kept her in sweet remembrance," and just possibly kindled the interest of others.⁴⁶

After WW I the church added 300 new members each year for five consecutive years. Indeed, the Church was rated as the third largest Presbyterian Church in Canada with a Sunday School of 1,000. This was a time of waves of immigrants to Canada, and the Auxiliary responded. Mrs. Anderson spoke on the "Chinese Incoming Tide to Canada" (14 November 1918).

Will MacTaggart was very busy in 1919. As he said,

there was an influx of Old Country [Scots] settlers. Lots were subdivided and each of the settlers built a modest home, adding doors and windows as they could pay for them. 'They were fine people . . . They wouldn't get into debt.'⁴⁷

In spite of the influx of immigrants Auxiliary membership was declining and in the May 1919 minutes a show of hands of those willing to bring a new recruit to the next meeting was requested. The 1921 Annual Report noted that membership in the Auxiliary was not commensurate with the size of the congregation. The Auxiliary members were growing older and new recruits were not on the horizon. Even so, in 1921, average monthly attendance was reported as thirty-three, consistent with earlier reports.

1925 saw, yet again, a new and larger church being built in the very same year that the congregation voted in favour of Church union with the Methodist Church and the Congregational Union to formally become St. Columba United Church. Church union was not accomplished without serious dissent. Only five hundred of the congregation withdrew to form their own Wychwood Presbyterian Church.

During the 1930s the financial situation was very bad for the missionary cause and members "were asked to pray each day . . . for spiritual help for our missionary problems."⁴⁸ By mid-century the Auxiliary's programming reflected a serious re-consideration of the missionary enterprise. Mrs. Hugh Taylor in 1942 chose as her theme "Is this the end of Christian Missions?" and in 1946 Mrs. Percival Foster, President of the National Council of Friendship, spoke on "The Art of Living Together." "We have to think of Canada as the centre of the world in this atomic age. It is the prime duty of Canadians to rid themselves of prejudices to other races and creeds" (June 1946). At St. Columba United Church, the women of the Jardine Auxiliary faithfully continued their work.

This study attempts to re-evaluate and demythologise the very real contribution these women made, based on the minutes of the Jardine Auxiliary. At the same time this

⁴⁶ *Ecumenical Missionary Conference New York, 1900: Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighbouring Churches, April 21 to May 1.* (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), vol. 1, p.135.

⁴⁷ MacTaggart Papers.

⁴⁸ UCA, Acc.#77.7166, Box 7, file 3. "WMS Jardine Auxiliary Review of 25 Years: 1925 - 1950," typescript, n.d., p.3.

study seeks to identify the myth-making element in the Auxiliary's activities that served to justify and perpetuate the missionary endeavour.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the missionary was seen as a mythical hero and healing prophet, who endured a great pilgrimage to far away, strange lands performing superhuman deeds in large, life-threatening situations to vanquish the barbarian and heathen anti-heroes. It is the classic tale of triumph of perceived good over perceived evil -- "pressing forward into the darkness of heathenism."⁴⁹ Most remarkable in this mythological system is that women were of equal importance to their male counterparts, and in the instance of missions for women, of greater significance. Women had to imagine such a world before actively creating it.

The minutes testify to the Auxiliary's contribution to this myth-making process: the Auxiliary's speakers served to perpetuate and strengthen the myth; the little dramas of the ceremonial leave-takings functioned as reaffirmation of the commitment to missions by the *deus ex machina*, the Auxiliary; the on-going correspondence created a dramatic and persuasive narrative form.

The Auxiliary endeavour as myth demonstrates a remarkable degree of flexibility to accommodate changing world circumstances and they did this with growing self-confidence and an aptitude for organization in a time when there was no precedent in the Presbyterian Church for female leadership. They shifted their focus from the less successful home mission effort to the then more realizable foreign mission field and they modified their language to accommodate a more formal and business-like stance. In their group discussions the Auxiliary began to question the goal of world evangelicalism, and we begin to see an examination of the nature of prejudice. It is evident that the missionary myth served to reinforce Church values of prudence and diligence.

Women's auxiliaries have suffered much ridicule through the years. "Frivolous," "time-wasting," "busy-work" is the language of such rhetoric. By mid-century missionaries and by extension the ladies of the Auxiliary were considered at best naive; at worst, cultural imperialists. The debate is ongoing as to just whether these women were the precursors of feminism. Alvyn Austin writes that the Woman's Missionary Society, and by extension our Jardine Auxiliary, was not a feminist movement in the modern sense but a "broad movement for the education, enfranchisement, and emancipation of women."⁵⁰ Rosemary Gagan disagrees. These women were feminists in "their passionate concern for other women and for their own prerogative."⁵¹

⁴⁹ *Ecumenical Missionary Conference New York, 1900: Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions, Held in Carnegie Hall and Neighbouring Churches, April 21 to May 1.* 2 vols. (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), vol. 1, p.134.

⁵⁰ Austin, p.93.

⁵¹ Gagan, p.8.

"We [women] have only just begun," pronounced Mrs. N.M. Waterbury in New York in 1900. *"We have begun to see faintly, dimly, what we can do, and we have already done what we thought we could not."*⁵²

⁵² "Results of Forming Woman's Missionary Societies," delivered by Mrs. N.M. Waterbury, Secretary Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society at Carnegie Hall on April 26, 1900. Published in *Report of the Ecumenical Missionary Conference on Foreign Missions*, 2 vols. (New York: American Tract Society, 1900), vol. 1, p. 215.